

Predestination of the Only-Begotten Daughter

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“Who am I?” Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon opened her talk. She was at East Garden on December 4, speaking to some 300 teenagers and young adults. Not waiting to sort out their replies, she answered her own question: “I am the only-begotten daughter.”

She then explained that Adam and Eve had a growing period in which to fulfill their responsibility and, as a result, receive the marriage Blessing. But they became self-centered and never received that Blessing. She told her listeners: “It is the same with you. Your essence is True Parents. Your responsibility is to receive the Blessing.”

Mother Moon’s talks such as this have stimulated much discussion of the term “only-begotten daughter.” Some consider it a “heresy.” A well-

known Korean lecturer is reported to have said, “The Only-begotten Daughter as Mother describes it does not exist.” The article citing him states that Mother Moon describes Only-begotten Daughter as “being born without Original Sin.” I think this does not do justice to her self-presentation as only-begotten daughter. In this article I explain why.



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Biblical and Historical Context

“Only-begotten” does not appear in contemporary Bible translations. And among older translations, by far the most influential that adopts it is the King James Version. There it appears exclusively in the writings of the Apostle John. (John 1:14; 1:18; 3:16; 3:18; cf. 1 John 4:9)

But John is not insistent; he also calls Jesus “the firstborn”:

“Jesus Christ ... is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.” (Rev. 1:4-5)

This attribution of “firstborn” also appears in Paul’s writings:

“For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.” (Rom. 8:29)

So the Bible provides latitude. “Only-begotten” conveys that Jesus is unique, and “firstborn” conveys he is the first among many.

Conflicts surrounding the first Nicene Council made acceptance of the term “only-begotten son” a litmus test for Christian faith. It was a rallying cry for the victorious party of bishops. Their formulation appeared in a dramatic passage in the Nicene Creed:

“...one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father [the only-begotten; that is, of the essence of the Father, God of God,] Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father...”

Hellenistic philosophy did not provide a foundation to understand the interplay of divine and human. For those fourth century Christians, it was one or the other. Being “begotten of God,” Jesus was one with the uncreated God, hence “begotten, not made,” or “uncreated.” On this they hinged his unique power to save the world. By the fifth century, “only-begotten son” became the marker of orthodoxy.

Still today, “only-begotten” conjures up an impregnable fortress of Christian faith: Jesus is the one and only name. And although most Christians would deny predestination, they nonetheless believe Christ’s sinless birth and death on the cross was God’s plan from the beginning of the world.

This puts Christians in a theological vise-grip. Not much wiggle room for Christ to return as a Korean couple and reshape the Gospel story. And Unificationists as well tend to view True Parents, or for some

True Father alone, as predestined, God's plan from the beginning, born sinless like no one else.

To loosen this vise-grip for us as well as Christianity, I offer an interpretation of the meaning of only-begotten. It is my interpretation only, but follows the Divine Principle outlined in Mother Moon's words quoted above.

Purely-Begotten, Misbegotten, and Only-Begotten

Adam and Eve were meant to marry with God's Blessing, on the foundation of fulfilling their responsibility. They failed to do so. To achieve God's thwarted purpose of creation, humankind has to set the foundation to receive a new Adam and Eve. We do so by undoing the first Adam and Eve's failure and fulfilling their responsibility. Not being whole and complete offspring of God, we do this through indemnity conditions.

Like the first Adam and Eve, the new Adam and Eve, in my understanding, have God alone as their Parent — Satan is not involved. Now we get into the "only-begotten" territory. God was indeed Adam and Eve's Parent, but God worked with an object partner to create them. Genesis 2 refers to the object partner as "the dust of the ground," and True Father also refers to the creation as one of our parents. People speculate whether Adam and Eve had anthropoid parents, or was it literal "clay" from which they were formed. That is immaterial to my point, which is that God had a horizontal object partner in the creation of Adam and Eve. This object partner was part of God's creation and was good. There was no Satan meddling in the birth of Adam and Eve. So Luke calls Adam the son of God. (Luke 3:38)

To bring forth the new Adam and Eve, who is going to be God's horizontal object partner? Human beings. So human beings need to make the conditions to separate an act of conception from Satan's meddling, to create an act of conception that is good, centered on God alone. Rev. and Mrs. Moon outline the major conditions for this to happen, which were set in Jesus' lineage.

The foundation for Jesus' birth was also the foundation for the birth of his would-be bride, whom Father Moon refers to as John the Baptist's younger sister. Rev. Moon, to my knowledge, said nothing about her birth, but he did say that if an only-begotten son is born, an only-begotten daughter will be born. So the conditions had to be in place in her lineage.

Now, are the only-begotten son and daughter born equally from God, a Genesis 1:27 model? Or is the daughter born out of the son, a Genesis 2:21-22 model? This was the *filioque* debate in Christian history: does the Holy Spirit proceed from the Father or from the Father and Son? Principle works with both models. This essay works with the Genesis 1 model; the Genesis 2 model will have to wait.

Next step: I believe *all* children are begotten of God. Angels do not create people. Principle teaches that the vertical Parent participates with the horizontal human parents in conception. Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and Hinduism refer to this as the "divine spark."

So every child is begotten of God, but can be "purely begotten," without Satan's claim, or "misbegotten," with Satan's claim. Which it is depends on the parents. If the parents are born of a lineage mingling God's love and Satan's love, which Unificationism calls "Satan's lineage," then their children are misbegotten; that is, they inherit the Original Sin.

On the other hand, if the parents fulfilled the conditions that Jesus' parents fulfilled, through the marriage Blessing, their child is "purely begotten," born without sin. It means God's object partner in the child's creation set the condition for God to claim the act of conception.



A depiction of the parable of the virgins

It took millennia for humankind to set this condition, culminating in the birth of Jesus and his would-be Bride. By our faith, Rev. and Mrs. Moon's parents stood on this condition. Further, all blessed couples stand on this condition. Thus, on Dec. 4, Mother Moon stated to the gathering of young people born of blessed parents, "Your essence is True Parents."

But being purely-begotten is only the beginning of the only-begotten story. Adam and Eve were purely begotten, but they fell. Jesus was purely-begotten and he grew into true maturity and

obediently gave his life for us. That is what makes him, and not Adam, God's "only-begotten son." To be "only-begotten" means to be born and live one's entire life in only one love.

Similarly, Isaac's absolute obedience made him Abraham's only-begotten son. (Heb. 11:17) "Only-

begotten” is about one’s life, not just one’s birth. The writer of Hebrews was not making claims for Isaac’s lineage, but for his absolute obedience. And we note well that this reference to Isaac shows that in the Bible, “only-begotten” does not refer just to Jesus.

And Mother Moon’s absolute obedience made her God’s only-begotten daughter. “The issue,” Father Moon once said, “was whether she could overcome everything and be victorious. Mother was victorious over all of it.” (*Chambumo Gyeong*, p. 209 and pp. 203-210 *passim*) She fulfilled her responsibility to stand as the only-begotten daughter and on that foundation she and Father Moon together could become True Parents, humankind’s original ancestors.

Postdestination

Was the advent of those specific two people as True Parents predestined? The answer is yes, according to the Divine Principle definition of predestination. As with every one of us, God predestined them on the basis of their nation, lineage, education and training, personal character, and time and place in the providence.

Divine Principle predestination is from birth, but one does not *realize* what one is predestined to be, and *become* what one is predestined to be, except by fulfilling one’s 5% portion of responsibility. In other words, a person’s predestination appears in their accomplishments. The proof is in the pudding; the tree is known by its fruit. I call it “postdestination.” You don’t realize it was predestined until it happens. And it happening depends on your 5%.

The legend of King Arthur illustrates this as well. In the story of the sword in the stone, no one, including Arthur, knew that he was predestined to be king until he fulfilled his 5% by pulling the sword from the stone. Only the one born to be king could do that; hence he was born to be king.

The Bible illustrates this in the Acts 4:11 teaching that the stone the builders rejected, Jesus, turns out to be the cornerstone. The builders don’t know which one is the cornerstone until they get to the corner. Acts 4:12 honors the fruit of Jesus’ life: “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.” What starts as contingent concludes as absolute. In the case of Christ, of True Parents, it becomes the linchpin around which history turns.

Jesus’ parable of the virgins is an account of the path of the only-begotten. In the parable, the first condition was to be a female virgin; the second was to be waiting for the Bridegroom. The next was to prepare your oil, knowing that he could be late. The foolish virgins thought he would adhere to the schedule; the wise ones knew that the schedule was up to him. Five of the ten virgins entered the wedding banquet, only to face more tests and conditions before being chosen. Recall the man in the wedding banquet who was cast out for not wearing wedding garments. (Mt. 25: 1-13; 22:11-14)

The one who fulfills all responsibilities is the only-begotten daughter predestined to be the Bride of the Lamb and True Mother of humankind. As God gives me light to see, this is who Hak Ja Han Moon is. So too we honor Rev. Moon as the only-begotten son, who fulfilled his responsibility to restore the house built on Jesus’ cornerstone, the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, worthy for her appearance.

Dr. Tyler Hendricks served in leadership roles with IOWC, Ocean Church, U.S. CARP, the International Religious Foundation, and HSA New England Region, before becoming President of the Unification Church of America (1995-2000) and of Unification Theological Seminary (2000-10). He publishes regularly on True Parents Way, directs the Center for Education at UTS, and co-hosts “Holy Marriage Blessing,” the radio ministry of the Unification Families of Kingston (NY), Sunday mornings at 7 a.m. ET on WKNY, 1490 AM (simulcast on the Web; programs archived at Holy Marriage Blessing).

Photo at top: *Reverend and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon at their wedding in Seoul, Korea on April 11, 1960*