

My Hopes And Challenges For A Cross-Cultural, International Blessing

Jeong-ah (Hope) Lee
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Good morning! I am Lee Jeong-ah, working at HJ GUNG. As there was a request for someone preparing for the Blessing to give testimony, I am standing here. Because I am still not blessed, there are a lot of things that are lacking and that I must be careful about in giving my testimony. So today, I would like to share about the conditions I set for receiving the Blessing. Since we are all individual embodiments of truth, what I did may not be the right way for everyone. Please see it just as something to refer to.

Before we begin, let me introduce myself briefly. I was born in a Korean-Japanese family. Growing up with parents of different nationalities, I naturally thought that I would also be blessed with someone with another nationality. In fact, I've been wanting to be blessed since I was 5 years old. I think I wanted to begin having my own family as soon as possible because it was fun and joyful to give and receive beautiful things. As a child, the Blessing was like marriage. It was all about meeting a man, raising children, and living a happy life. However, after growing up and coming to know what the Blessing signifies, I started to feel the weight and responsibility the Blessing entailed. I will read some words from True Parents that helped me feel the value of the Blessing.

The cross-cultural, international marriage Blessing is the optimal method of establishing the peace kingdom by building true families that will give rebirth to the lineage of the fallen human race. In the end, reconciliation and peace all come about through lineage. When blacks and whites, Eastern peoples and Western peoples, Buddhists, Christians, Jews and Muslims intermarry and carry on the blessed marriage tradition that True Parents have established, this naturally will form the realm of one family that establishes God's homeland and hometown. An ideal heavenly kingdom based on the ideal of One Family under God will appear. As we beat our swords into plowshares, a new world of peace will open up before us.
Cheon Seong Gyeong p. 1400 (English)

By receiving the cross-cultural, international Blessing, it is my hope that the world that Heavenly Parent and True Parents of Heaven and Earth desire will come as soon as possible. So, despite many difficulties, I persevered, and I have come this far. Of course, it won't be sufficient alone. So, please walk together with me! If you have any difficulties, please contact me. Though I am also lacking, we can put our heads together. From now on, I would like to share briefly about the conditions I was setting.

The first is this: I made a list entitled "My Beloved" over two years from 2019. When the time came to find a partner through the "parents' matching," I was confused about what kind of person to meet. So, thinking, "I hope my husband will be this kind of person," I made a list. Then at a certain point, when I looked at the list I had made, it was the person named 'Lee Jeong-ah' [me!] that I actually came to see objectively! After seeing in writing the values I usually live by, I came to realize that I was a person that is lacking in many ways.

Before wanting and wishing for such a person, I determined that I would become such a person. Also, through building up my mindset of not asking my counterpart to do things that I couldn't do, I revised the list. In other words, through this list, I let go of the desires I had for what my partner should be like, and I

was able to grow into a better person. Let me show you one of the edits I made: I wanted someone who can cook well, but I changed it to someone who can eat anything well. In addition to this, I deleted or fixed a lot of things. I would like to recommend this idea to you as well. I think of it as a chance to help myself realize what I really want, what kind of person I am now, and what to do next.

The 2nd condition: It was very difficult for me to find a partner for a cross-cultural Blessing. Even though I went to the "Blessing 4 you" matching site, I couldn't communicate well with the other person. So, my mother sent an e-mail to the head of the European Family Dept., but she received a reply saying that I was still young, and that no-one suitable comes to mind.

Then one day, my father gave me the idea of making my own business card and handing it out for the 100th anniversary of True Father's birth in 2020. You can't imagine how much I laughed the moment I heard that. But the more I thought about it, the better an idea I thought it was. So I went ahead with it. Together with my mother, I printed my business cards on photo paper and cut them out carefully. I printed my business card with my photo, my name, my mother's KakaoTalk messenger ID, and email.

My parents had a public mission in the United States, so whenever they met someone they knew, they would hand out my business card. We also stayed one night at the resort where our European and American families were staying. When she woke up early in the morning to meet her Slovakian friend, as they talked a friend of hers came to her mind, and she introduced my mother to her friend from the Czech Republic / France [?]. That person has now connected me and my prospective husband. The time has come when we need to jump with both feet like this to discover a lifelong relationship. It's very challenging and difficult, but I hope you will not give up.

The third condition: As a person living in the world of Satan, I have faced the risk of falling into temptation several times. However, I made effort to escape the temptation every time by thinking about my future husband. When I felt I was likely to give in to temptation, I bought couples pajamas and chastity rings including for the husband that I didn't already have. Looking at these, even though I had no husband in reality, I could feel in my emotions that I did - and I was able to resist the temptation. This experience made me realize that there is a difference in the sense of security it brings to the mind when something material is actually present and not.

[Things I would recommend to those who want to receive the Blessing]

Lastly, there is something I would like to say to those who want to prepare for the Blessing. There will always be a downside to anyone whom you meet. If you have the heart to make up for those shortcomings and fill them with love, then I think the time has come for you to receive the Blessing. In other words, the Blessing is not finding the person I want. It is good to prepare for the Blessing with the heart that I will love my partner. Just as you shouldn't eat something when it isn't ripe yet, I also think you shouldn't receive the Blessing when it isn't yet time, when you're not ready.

Just as Adam and Eve existed each as one person, not several, I think Heavenly Parents want us to meet one person and then we help create each other as better people. At first, it may be really difficult, but after a few years, I believe that you will have a love that shines more brightly than that of anyone else in the world. Thank you.

Pyeonghwa Nuri sermon at Cheon Won Church: The Truth Engraved in My Heart

Sang-seon Park
March 27, 2022



Greeting! Hello to all the family members who are joining Peace Nuri today and to all who pray for peace. How are you; I'm happy to see you! I would also like to greet all who are joining us online - glad to see you too!

Just now we heard the Hyojeong Sharing from Miss Lee Jung-ah, who is preparing for the Blessing this coming April 16th. Many are now preparing for the April 16th blessing; it would be great if we could hear all of their stories. I heartily hope for such opportunity in time to come. Today, Miss Jeong-ah Lee was invited; for this occasion of sharing peace and filial piety, we will have time to share their precious stories likewise. As a parent of a daughter who is still preparing for the Blessing, I wanted to concentrate and listen to her testimony, and as always I feel the stories of those who have overcome victoriously are empowering and moving.

(Slide: Lee Jeong-Ah's personal calling card)

Particularly the account of her making her own personal calling cards, getting up on her own two feet to introduce herself and try to find a partner, and how finally the day of the Blessing has come to fruition - isn't this a special story unique to Lee Jung-ah, perhaps unprecedented in the world! We'll be grateful if you would send Ms. Lee Jung-ah a round of applause, for her and for all other blessing recipients who are preparing for the upcoming Blessing. Thanks...

In fact there seems to be a connection between the contents of the sermon I prepared and the story of Ms. Lee Jung-ah. Today's Pyeonghwa Nuri sermon title is "The Truth Engraved in My Heart."

What made me think of this title? What is truth, or what is the truth? The question you ask is important, but more importantly, what I wish to impress upon you is that, even if you have come across the truth, it is not yet the truth until it is engraved in your heart.

There is inner truth and there is outer truth. Science is the search for the external truth, and religion is the search for the inward truth. Many religions have appeared in history, and many have disappeared over time. According to British historian Arnold Toynbee, historically, there were about 20 main civilizations around the world, and they were all rooted in religion. So, historically, there have been about 20 religions that could bear fruit in civilizations. However, as time passed, it is assessed that, out of all these, four major civilizations and core religions remain.

Religion has emerged to teach the greatest truth, but why would religious faith disappear? There may be various reasons, but I think it is because the truth has not been engraved into people's hearts. Even with the passage of time, the teachings that are engraved in people's hearts will never disappear, nor will the religion that teaches them. However, even if those teachings were once engraved in people's hearts, as time goes by, if they no longer remain in people's hearts, I think those teachings and religions will fade away.

(Slide: Whatever you do, do not eat!)

Let's think about what it means to engrave the truth into our hearts through the story of Adam and Eve,

the first human beings. After the first people, Adam and Eve, were born in the Garden of Eden, God gave them the word of blessing: "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and have dominion over all things." God warned them, "You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden, that is, from the tree of good and evil. In the day that you eat of it, you will surely die." The first truth that God revealed to mankind is this word. Because he showed us the way to live or die. Could there be a truth more important than to show you the way to live or die? No teaching is of any use after death. The most important thing is to live and not die. In the Garden of Eden after the creation of the world, the first truth that man came into contact with, that is, the first truth God taught, was regarding death and life.

Were Adam and Eve longing to find the truth about death and life? Did Adam and Eve go down the road in search of the truth? No. Adam and Eve never longed for the truth and never walked the path of the Way, but God revealed it to them. God is our Parent. It is only natural for parents to warn their children in advance if, in the course of raising their children, there is a danger that their children might die. This is what God, the Parent, has revealed to His children.

The sad fact is that Adam and Eve could not engrave the truth that God had revealed to them in their hearts. The reason why we can state that it was not engraved in their hearts is because of what happened to Adam and Eve after that. God warned Adam and Eve, "If you eat of the forbidden fruit, you will die." What happened after that?

In Genesis 3:1, one day, a snake approached Eve and asked, "Did God say not to eat of the forbidden fruit?" Eve answered, "God said that if you eat of the forbidden fruit, you will die." After hearing her reply, what did the snake say back? Genesis 3:4: "The serpent said to the woman, You will not die."

It is recorded in Genesis 3:6 that Eve listened to the serpent's words and first ate of the forbidden fruit and then gave it to Adam.

If the truth that God gave us, the word of death or life, had been engraved in their hearts, I think Adam and Eve would not have eaten the forbidden fruit so easily. Engraving in our heart has many meanings, but as long as your heart is beating, as long as you are alive, it will mean that you will not forget. Are there things that are engraved in your heart and never forgotten? There are good things and bad things. Many people live with fond memories and also scars in their hearts all the rest of their lives.

There are things in our lives that we engrave in our hearts. The wills left by our parents and ancestors are engraved in our hearts. The words of someone that gave me strength are long remembered. I will never forget the person who helped me a lot. On the other hand, if you make a mistake and suffer greatly, you may not forget it until you die.

If you are a student, you struggled hard to choose an answer for an important test, but when you find out that you picked the wrong answer, that test question is not forgotten for a long time, right?

That's what it means to be engraved in your bosom. It doesn't go away easily. It is not easily forgotten. It is something that cannot be easily forgotten.

When God said to Adam and Eve, "If you eat the fruit of the forbidden fruit, you will die," if they engraved those words in their heart, would they have fallen for the serpent's words so easily when the serpent approached them and told them they were wrong? Would they have had any doubt or confusion?

When God first delivered to Adam and Eve the truth concerning life or death, the word entered Adam and Eve's ears and was in their head; it was not engraved in their chest. The truth that enters the ear and settles in the head always summons its opposite, entering the ear and settling it in the head, causing confusion, doubt, and preventing the right choice from being made.

Then how can God's words of truth be engraved on Adam and Eve's heart? In order to understand this, we must first understand the meaning of "from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that is, do not eat from the tree of knowledge."

When Adam and Eve grow up, the day will come for them to have a family. Before that, when you become a teenager and come to know love for the first time, you will be in the stage of feeling love for the first time. At that time, it is not the time to start a family, so we should wait until God blesses us to build a family.

When is it that God bless us to build a family? Let's look at the words in 찬상경 p.401-8:

"Adam and Eve were to reach maturity and come into bloom, emitting a fragrance like a flower. Then God would have come to dwell in Adam and Eve, claiming the position of humankind's internal Father and Mother, and they would have created the human family."

According to this passage, when Adam and Eve mature and the spirit of God enters Adam and Eve, taking the place of an internal father and an internal mother, and they matures enough to form a family, Adam and Eve can establish a family under God's blessing.

(Slide: I Cor. 3:16)

In verse 16 of the third chapter of the First Book of Corinthians, it is written, "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?" As it says, God's Spirit should be able to dwell in you. For Adam and Eve, the time when God's Spirit can come and dwell in them is the time when they have formed a family with His blessing. When God said, "In the day that you eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you shall die," He meant that forming a family before His Spirit has come to dwell in you is the same as dying.

However, what actually happened before God's Word could come and take root in them? It was the serpent that came and lied to them. He lied to them, "Did God say you will die if you eat the fruit? No, you will not die." So God's Spirit coming to dwell in you can also mean that His Word has come to take root in you.

But what happened before the Word of God came in and took its place? The serpent's word came in and took its place instead. What was it that the serpent said? He said, "Did God say you will die if you eat the fruit? No, you will not die." Didn't he? He made the Word of God a lie. He called God a liar. In other words, he told them that their Parent was a liar. The serpent told them to listen to him rather than their lying Parent.

In short, God's Word that is His Spirit should have taken root in Adam and Eve; but instead the word of the serpent took root in them. Rather than becoming God's temple where His Spirit can come to dwell, they became the home of the serpent when the serpent's word took root in them. That is why, from God's perspective, they are as good as dead.

(Slide: Matthew 23:33)

In Matthew 23:33, Jesus strongly rebukes the scribes and Pharisees with the words, "You snakes, you brood of vipers! How long can you escape being sentenced to hell?" Since we have become the serpent's home, what could we be snakes and a brood of vipers?

If Adam and Eve had reached maturity in accordance with God's Word and formed a family with His blessing after His Spirit had come into them, at a time when they were blooming and giving out fragrance, His Spirit of God would have dwelt in that family. And once children were born and raised to maturity through His Spirit, that family would have become the temple and the kingdom of Heaven where God's Spirit dwells.

Once Adam and Eve formed such a family, they would finally come to realize the meaning of God's words, "You shall die if you eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil." Those words would have been engraved in their hearts and in their very marrows.

In contrast, if they had listened to the serpent's words and forsaken God's Word, wouldn't they have come to realize most keenly and profoundly that they would never be able to form such a blessed family where God's Spirit can dwell? Then they would have known for sure that the serpent had lied to them, and they would not have listened to whatever he had to say ever again.

In other words, the serpent, which is a metaphor for Satan, would not be able to come to Adam and Eve's family and cause doubt, create confusion, and lead them to make the wrong decision. And the lesson thus learned would be engraved in their heart and their very marrows.

And if Adam and Eve, with such a lesson engraved in their heart, had children and raised them, they would teach their children, "You shall die if you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." Or wouldn't they? They would. In fact, they would they speak those words to their children with all sincerity.

However, when Adam's and Eve's children heard those words, would those words be engraved in their hearts right away? Of course not. It would be the same as in the case of Adam and Eve. The words would enter through the ear and take root in the head at first. Then other words will enter through the ear and take root in the head, causing confusion, doubt, and wrong decisions.

How can children overcome this situation where they are confused and in doubt? Unless there is trust and love for their parents in their heart, and unless they are united absolute as one with their parents, the voice of the serpent can sound in their ear and enter their head at any time to cause confusion, create doubt, and cloud their judgment.

Before the truth is engraved in the children's heart, you need to teach them clearly, just as God taught Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, "You shall die if you eat the fruit." Given that this is a teaching that will determine whether they live or die, shouldn't you teach them most sincerely? However, no matter how seriously parents speak of that which can determine whether they live or die, their children will not be able to understand the true meaning of those words and engrave it in their hearts until they have formed families of their own.

Therefore, you need to endeavor to make your children believe and obey the words of their parents. But if the parents cannot be trusted, respected or loved by their children, how could the children believe and obey their parents' words? Moreover, when they are at an age where the words completely opposite to what their parents enter through their ears and take root in their head, where would they find the strength to overcome that period of confusion and doubt if not in the sincerity, trust and love of their parents?

What is more, if the parents themselves are incapable of making the correct decision on what is right or wrong, how could they possibly teach their children about the correct path to follow? Just as God taught Adam and Eve clearly about the path that would determine whether they lived or died, you, too, should be able to teach your children about the path that determines whether they live or die. If that truth is engraved in the heart of the parents, they should be able to teach their children through their sincerity and love.

(Slide: True Meaning of Freedom)

Unless the truth is engraved in your heart, you cannot have freedom in the true sense of the word. We sometimes have a wrong notion of what freedom really means.

Though the truth may have entered through the ear and taken root in your head, as I said earlier, other words can also enter through your ear and cause confusion, create doubt and cloud your judgment. Could you be free if your head is confused and you are unable to make clear decisions? No matter how good a car you drive, if you do not know the exact direction to go, you cannot be free. That is why in John 8:32, Jesus said, "And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

Being freed while in a state of confusion where you are unable to make clear decisions is not true freedom. When Adam and Eve did not know what the truth was and ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, their act did not stem from freedom. Though it is clear that no one forced them to eat the fruit and they ate it of their own accord, they did so when they were unable to decide between what is right and wrong and therefore did not have true freedom. In short, their act was not based on freedom.

Voice phishing is becoming a social problem these days. If you listen to the stories of people who have been victims of voice phishing, they go to the bank on their own feet, take out their money with their own hands and put it where the other person says, and they sustain a loss. Can you say that they sustained a loss by being free? No! The person was deceived and confused and unable to make a judgment. It cannot be said that he suffered because he was free.

When a young child, at an age when he cannot discern what is good or bad for the body, loves only sweet things, and his health is harmed, can we say that he has lost his health because of freedom? No. Freedom is where you know right from wrong. If you cannot accurately discern right from wrong, it cannot be said to have true freedom even if there is no one forces you to do something.

During Hyojeong Sharing today, we listened to Ms. Lee Jung-ah's words. Three weeks from now, she will participate in the Blessing Ceremony. When she forms a Blessed Couple and establishes a family, the spirit of God enters into Ms. Jung-ah Lee and she and her husband will create a family where God is dwelling, and that family will become a temple where God dwells: the Kingdom of Heaven.

When that time comes, the words that God seriously said to Adam and Eve, "If you eat, you will die" will be engraved in her heart, and the time will come later when Lee Jung-ah will have children and will also share those words with them. She will teach her children more seriously than when God spoke to Adam and Eve. And the children, overcoming the times of confusion and doubt well, and bringing victory, will be able to say, not just in words, but as the truth engraved in their heart and bone marrow, that it is a great blessing to raise a family.

Ms. Lee Jeong-ah becoming a Blessed Family, having overcome times of confusion and doubt and bringing victory, is something for which congratulations will be shared. It will be the day when the Spirit of God enters and dwells with their family. That is the day she receives the blessing among all blessings, which creates the Heavenly Kingdom in the family. And it will also be a day that real freedom is achieved.

(Slide: Congratulations for the April 16th Blessing Ceremony participants!)

Now, we have prepared time to congratulate not only Ms. Lee Jung-ah but also all those preparing for the April 16th Blessing. Today, we invited Ms. Lee Jung-ah as one representative so that we could hear her story, but we sincerely congratulate all the prospective families preparing for the April 16th Blessing. Then finally I will offer the benediction.

Now we will take a moment to congratulate Ms. Lee Jeong-ah on stage. Please welcome Ms. Lee Jung-ah to the podium with warm applause. Thank you!

Let us pray.