

Father's visit to Japan on his the First World Tour

Yong Chon Song
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Members welcome True Father to the church in Nanpeidai, Tokyo, on January 28, 1965

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Welcoming service



Japanese members of in the church in Nanpeidai, Tokyo, with Father on True Parents' birthday, February 7, 1965

On October 2, 1959 (the day Japanese members celebrate the establishment of HSA-UWC) the first official Unification Church worship service in Japan took place on the second floor of the Yoogeisha watchmaker's shop in Shinjuku, Tokyo. Only four people, including the first Korean missionary to Japan, Rev. Bong Choon [Sang Ik "Papasan"] Choi, were at that service. Through witnessing activities, by December 1962, churches had opened in nine locations throughout Japan and each district had a church leader.

On July 15, 1964, our members registered the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity as a religious corporation, with Osami Kuboki as its first president, and on November 1 of the same year, they completed building the headquarters church at Nanpeidai, Shibuya.

Fifty years ago, on January 28, 1965 -- seven years after Rev. Choi's arrival -- Father arrived in Japan, the first nation of the forty-nation First World Tour. During the world tour, Father designated Holy Grounds in 120 locations. In Japan, he designated eight-one each in the cities of Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka, Takamatsu, Hiroshima, Fukuoka, Sapporo and Sendai.

The plane landed at 5:20 pm. More than two hundred members welcomed him at Haneda Airport. Father waved to the members as he walked down the ramp. He had lived in Japan in his

student days, but this was his first visit to the nation as a True Parent.

That evening, after completing the entry procedures at the airport, a Japanese member drove (in his own car) Father, Ms. Won Pok Choi, Dr. Young Woon Kim and others to the headquarters church. The church's worship hall overflowed with members. More than two hundred and fifty were singing at the entrance of the building and in the hallways in preparation to welcome True Father and his entourage. The Welcoming Service began at 8:00 pm. The title of Father's sermon was "God's purpose and Our Goal." Some members at the service did not know that Father spoke Japanese. That Father knew Japanese so well moved many members that listened to him speak fluently for more than two hours. His sermon inspired members and filled them with his love. A veritable flood of tears issued from the eyes of those in the headquarters church that evening.

Reunion with Mrs. Mizuhashi

That evening, Father told Ms. Tomiko Ishii (later the wife of the sixth president of HSA-UWC Japan) that he wanted to see the place where he had lived as a student. Ms. Ishii asked Father if he remembered the name of the landlady. Father wrote the surname "Mizuhashi" on a piece of paper. The boarding house that Father had stayed at from 1941 to 1943 as a student in Japan was the house of Goto Mizuhashi and his

wife Ito Mizuhashi. While in Japan Father had studied at and graduated from the Waseda High School of Engineering, which was affiliated with Waseda University. During those years, Korean students had difficulty finding a place to stay. Boarding houses often refused them for being a "Chosenjin" [Korean]. Japanese discriminated against Koreans at that time. Father recalled that despite these circumstances Mr. and Mrs. Mizuhashi treated him with respect. They often brought rice cakes flavored with mugwort (a herb) in the countryside and shared them with those staying at their boarding house.

On January 29, Father revisited Mrs. Mizuhashi's house. The neighborhood had changed much since he had lived there, but Father relied on his memory to find their house and finally reunited with Mrs. Mizuhashi Ito after twenty-one years. At 7:30 pm of that day, a ceremony to confer the Unification Church flag occurred at the Headquarters Church; entertainment took place afterward. At around 11:00 pm, Father distributed handkerchiefs with the Unification emblem imprinted on them to all participants and continued to speak to them until 4:00 in the morning.



True Father designating a Holy Ground in Nagoya on February 2, 1965

First Holy Ground

On the morning of January 31, Father visited the Meiji Shrine and designated Japan's first Holy Ground in Tokyo. On that day, he presided over Sunday service in Japan for the first time and spoke for four hours on "Jesus' Final Hours and Our Resolution."

Through his sermon, Father emphasized, "Japan will be saved if the Japanese people can do the impossible. If the Japanese people take the lead in doing something that the people of the world are unable to do, they will become the race that leads the world, which is why you must love Japan. You must love Japan more than you love me. You must love the world more than you love Rev. Moon. You must love our Heavenly Father."

The longest-standing reputation

On February 1, Father and his entourage boarded the 1:00 pm Hikari shinkansen (bullet train) and departed Tokyo. They arrived at Nagoya Station at 3:30 pm. The entourage visited Nagoya Castle, TV Tower and other locations. They arrived at the Nagoya church at around 4:00 pm.

During the welcoming service, Father spoke for more than three and a half hours. He explained that Tokyo is a city of the East; in other words, it refers to the Garden of Eden that God had created. Nagoya refers to a very old house, in other words, a house with the longest standing reputation in the cosmos. He mentioned that it represents Adam's house and that it reminded him of his hometown. Entertainment followed dinner. The participants continued to spend time with Father until 4:00 am. February 2 was the first day of the first month on the lunar calendar. Father presided over Pledge Service at 5 am. In the morning, Father designated a hill at the Higashiyama Park as a Holy Ground and sanctified the area. After returning to church, he began to talk to the members again from 12:00 noon and answered questions.

Everybody seems like family

After departing Nagoya, Father and his entourage arrived at the Osaka church at 7:00 pm. At the welcoming service, Father stated, "Tokyo represents the Garden of Eden; Nagoya represents a house with a long-standing reputation, and Osaka reminds me of a large hill. Osaka is the hill upon which they raised the cross, where victory or defeat is to be decided."

I hope that the restoration of this area becomes a glorious turning point for Japan and the world." He also said, "Osaka strongly reminds me of a place where everybody seems like family. If all the people connect

in heart, centered on God, we will not have any problems with national borders.

If a person that truly loves Japan is a Japanese person, a person that truly loves the world and cosmos can be a global citizen and a person recognized and acknowledged by all of heaven and earth." Father then spoke for another three hours on the theme "The Course of Restoration is a Thorny Path" and had dinner after 11:30 pm. On February 3, he designated a Holy Ground on the grounds surrounding Osaka Castle.



True Father at the church in Fukuoka on February 5, 1965

Witnessing in a rural areas

Father and his entourage arrived at the Takamatsu church around 10:00 pm on February 3. As soon as he arrived Father emphasized to the members that they can pay any indemnity for issues that the people in the past were unable to resolve. He went on to speak for more than two hours on the mind-set that members should have when witnessing in rural areas. In the morning on February 4, members had breakfast with Father and had time to ask him questions. Later, Father went to Yashima Mountain and designated a Holy Ground in the woods on the summit, which commanded a splendid view of the Seto Inland Sea.

Hiroshima Castle

Father went to Hiroshima on February 4 and arrived at the church at about 8:00 pm. Members sang "Song of Victory" for Father, after which he began to speak to them. Father explained, "The three billion people of the world should understand God's historical heart, Jesus' inner heart, how Jesus felt while on the cross, and then define the standard of indemnity needed to restore that heart on earth. By doing so they should comfort God.

When God looks at you he can forget all his hardships. Therefore, you must reach a standard where you can give God new hope and courage." By the time he finished, it was well passed 3:00 in the morning. After breakfast on February 5, Father answered questions and then everyone enjoyed some entertainment. After this he visited the ruins of Hiroshima Castle and designated a Holy Ground within the castle grounds.

Become God's proud hometown

At around 8:00 pm on February 5, Father arrived at the Fukuoka church. He did not stop to rest but immediately began to speak to the members on the topic, "A Place to Go, a Person to Meet, a Place to Live." Father said, "I hope this place can become God's proud hometown. In order to become that, you will have to shed countless tears, sweat and blood. Fukuoka is a great place. It is blessed. Do not stain the reputation of this land, which played an important role in building this nation. You have to establish a tradition." On February 6, Father went to Nishi Park, where from one side you can see the entire city and from the other, you have a clear view of the Port of Hakata. There, he created a Holy Ground.

Celebrating True Parents' birthday

On February 7, 1965 (1.6 on the lunar calendar) Father led a prayer meeting on the second floor of our national headquarters building at midnight.

After this prayer meeting, Pledge Service was held in the first floor worship hall where Father prayed and spoke until 3:00 am. During Sunday service that day, Father's sermon lasted four hours. He had entitled it "Let Us Find Our Center and Unite."

Entertainment began at 8:00 pm. Father cut a one-meter-high birthday cake. Members then held a talent show for Father. Afterward, Father spoke for two hours. The birthday celebration ended at 3:00 in the morning.

True Mother had sent a letter to the Japanese members that was read the day after the birthday celebration.

"Beloved members in Japan, How much have you waited for True Parents? Today is a day of joy and longing. I'm sure each of you had been imagining what it would be like to see Father in the flesh.... Your dream is now fulfilled.

Dear members, I regret that I am unable to join you on this joyous day. That is my only regret. Beloved members, how did you feel after meeting Father? Were you happy or did you feel some distance? Please do not hastily reach a conclusion.

This is about your life; heart comes from your mind which will open your eyes. As you lead a life of attendance without regrets, I hope that you are embraced in Father's heart.

No matter what he says, he is saying it out of a parental heart that wishes to save you. With all your heart, I pray that you remain with Father, make effort until the day we fulfill God's will, until the day of victory. Let us advance until we see that day longed for by heaven and earth, and all humankind.

We should not be the only ones who experience the joy of the long-awaited day. We must share this joy with all the people of the world. So please do not fall behind but continue to go forward until that day."



True Father speaking at the church in Nanpeidai, Tokyo, on January 28, 1965

In the snow at Hokkaido Shrine

Father and his entourage arrived at Chitose Airport in Hokkaido at 2:10 pm on February 8. Fifteen members from Kushiro and Obihiro had come to our church in Sapporo to greet Father.

At around 4:00 pm, Father went to the

Hokkaido Shrine and in the snow, which reached his waist, he designated the Holy Ground. After dinner, Father spoke to the members saying, "We must awaken to a sense of mission for Japan. Those who are in some position on behalf of Heaven are not allowed personal peace of mind. You cannot understand God's desire without experiencing it. You must live within God's heart." The ensuing entertainment lasted until 2:00 in the morning. During this time Father shook the hands with each person.

Aoba Castle in Sendai

Father departed the church at 6:30 am on February 9 and took the 7:15 train to Sendai. He arrived in Sendai at night but then began to speak to the members from 1:40 am on February 10. He spoke for two hours on "The Place to Meet God" and went to sleep at 4 am. The next day, he visited Mount Aoba and designated the Holy Ground within the Aoba Castle grounds. Father then took a plane to Haneda.

Farewell ceremony

From 9:00 pm on February 11, a farewell party was held for Father and his entourage. Father spoke about "Becoming a Person Needed by All People" and emphasized "Unless you overcome the ordinary, God will have no need for you. All of you are Japanese but you do not need anything that is Japanese. God needs all of the world's three billion people. If a man can love Japan with deeper love than any Japanese has for Japan, his loving heart is historic, global and cosmic, and therefore he should have confidence. That person can attend God."

Departure to the United States

At 10:00 am on February 12, 1965, Father and his entourage departed Haneda Airport for San Francisco.

More than a hundred and fifty members came to the airport and sang holy songs. Members enthusiastically waved good-bye to Father as he climbed the steps from the tarmac to the cabin door of the plane.

Explosive growth via witnessing

Following Father's visit to Japan, on August 23, 1965, the headquarters church relocated from Nanpeidai to 1- 1-2 Shoto Cho, Shibuya, where it currently stands. Bong Choon Choi, who had laid the foundation for our church in Japan departed the nation on November 12 to apply his missionary efforts in the United States.

Through the grace received from Father's first visit to the Japanese members, the Unification Church in Japan experienced tremendous growth.

What was merely several hundred members before his visit multiplied to several thousands in a matter of years.

As we reflect on Father's visit to Japan fifty years ago, let us inherit the tradition of the blessed members who came before us and renew our efforts for greater growth.