

## Soon Ae Hong - Dae Mo Nim - Great Mother

Mal Sook Lee

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East Garden

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*Hong Halmonim, together with Mrs. Mal Sook Lee (center) and Mrs. Haruko Kanari (left), gather vegetables for True Parents' table.*

From the time that destiny drew her to meet True Parents, Hong Soon-ae devoted her whole being to praying for the protection and safety of the True Family. Until the moment of her Holy Ascension, she asked God, "Let any misfortune, pain or difficulties headed for True Parents come to me."

Grandmother Hong clung to the heavenly revelation she had received, as if it were life itself. Without a thought toward the recognition of her efforts by others, she played a pivotal role in the history of the Second Advent, enduring all sorts of pain and trials, armed with faith and perseverance alone.

Although known and revered as the mother of True Mother, Grandmother Hong bore no trace of arrogance, but sought to fulfill her mission of protecting the True Family as an ordinary member. Until her time of ascension, she put forth every ounce of her sincerity with whole-hearted devotion.

Remaining in our hearts is the profound and deep loyalty of Grandmother Hong, who at the brink of her own death was anxious only about the well-being of True Parents' Family. This shining example of filial piety shall be a light to our path as we follow the providential way.

Hong Soon-ae was born in Jeongju, South Pyong-an Province [the same township where True Father was born, now in North Korea], as the first daughter of two children born to Mr. Hong Yu-il and his wife Cho Won-mo. It is said that Grandmother Hong's name, Soon-ae, was given to her by the minister where her mother attended church.

From her childhood until 19 years of age she was raised in the traditional Christian faith, when her mother led her to join the "Holy Lord Order" while she attended the Sonkyung High School in Pyong-yang. From that early time, she devoted herself entirely to her life of faith.

On March 5, 1934, then a young woman of 20 years, Hong Soon-ae was joined in marriage with Mr. Han Seung-woon and gave birth to our True Mother, at 4:30 a.m. on January 6, 1943.

After meeting with severe difficulties in the process of searching for the true will of God, Hong Soon-ae finally met the Unification Church in November 1955.

Through offering her daughter, Hak Ja Han, our True Mother, as the eternal bride and partner to our True

Father on March 16, 1960, Grandmother Hong contributed to the establishment of the True Parents' position.

From that time, she invested her entire being to protecting True Parents' family, fighting fierce spiritual battles against Satan, until 9:30 pm on November 3, 1989, when she ascended into heaven to be at Heung-jin nim's side.



### **The foundation for God's ideal**

Only because Grandmother Hong accomplished her crucial mission and responsibility could True Parents - the substantial embodiment of God Himself - come to exist upon the earth. By serving and attending True Parents, sharing their joys and sorrows, Grandmother Hong's dedication of her whole life, sincerity and prayer, became the foundation upon which True Parents could fulfill their providential mission.

True Parents both have parents - four people in all. Yet amongst those four, it was only Grandmother Hong who, while living on the earth, heard the words of the Divine Principle and truly realized their meaning. Upholding the Principle, she attended and followed True Parents, walking the path of sacrifice, giving her whole body and soul for the victory of True Parents and the achievement of God's Will.

Imagine the pain that True Parents both felt about their physical parents who did not understand them while on earth. How could such pain have ever been resolved in True Parents' hearts had it not been for Grandmother Hong?

Just the offering of True Mother to God after bearing and raising her daughter in the midst of untold adversities would have been an unparalleled accomplishment. At her Seonghwa Ceremony, Pres. Kim Young-hwi said that he felt the value of this responsibility which she fulfilled was much greater than that of Mother Mary and Saint Anna combined. Yet above and beyond this, she fulfilled the truly significant role of grandmother to the True Children.

### **Utmost sincerity**

Grandmother Hong was a person of utmost cleanliness and purity. When the date of a certain ceremony was approaching, even a few weeks in advance, she would, with all her sincerity, prepare all the clothes she would wear that day.

Hong Soon-ae paid utmost care to every detail in the arrangement of all of the True Parents' and True Children's clothing. Father once said, "Wearing clothes laundered by someone with a sincere heart prevents accidents from happening." Grandmother Hong told us that when someone washes and irons True Parents' clothes, they should keep this sincere heart, and pray, "While wearing these clothes, may they go about comfortably, and may everything turn out according to their wishes." She always requested that the iron for True Parents' clothes, dishes for their meals, and all things that they might use be kept separately for them, for the sake of keeping spiritual order and purity.

She also told us that whenever possible, True Parents' laundry should be done by hand. She taught us that when arranging their clothes, the outer garments should be placed on top, with the underwear on the right side, and socks placed on the left. If there was not enough space to place Father's and Mother's garments separately, she told us Father's clothes should be on top, with Mother's underneath. This is another lesson she showed us: we have to set a standard of neatness and create a holy environment where God and the True Family can abide.

### **Supporting Mother's mission**

When True Mother was ready to deliver a baby, Grandmother Hong would not sleep. She put her whole self into protecting Mother and praying for an easy delivery. She would pray by Mother's side as if she were pouring out her very life on the front line. Until the time that True Mother had given birth to all her children, Grandmother Hong fought spiritual battles with Satan in which she staked her life and obtained his surrender.

Grandmother Hong offered her deepest prayer at Heung Jin Nim's birth, when due to difficulties True Mother was barely conscious for a period of three days. Her mother prayed until her mouth was dry, her lips cracked and bleeding. Whenever the children had difficulties, she felt it spiritually and prayed limitlessly until she felt the difficulty had passed. She would also take cold showers and fast for the children.



*Kwon Jin Nim and Hong Halmonim's - East Garden*

Hong Soon-ae's tradition was to awaken very early every morning. After washing and dressing herself, she would pray, then stand in front of the rooms of True Parents and True Children, offering three bows while praying for their health and that their day would pass without mishap or incident. When the children left for school, she stood at the gate to see them off with a prayer, and welcomed them home again with a prayerful heart.

When Parents went on a trip, even though she stayed at home, it was as if she were going with them. She always knew their itinerary so that her heart could be with them completely.

In the back garden at East Garden, Grandmother Hong carefully planted and cultivated vegetables that True Parents especially enjoy: tomatoes, unripened red peppers, sesame leaves, lettuce, crown daisy and so on. She would then select the best ones and place them on True Parents' table. And while watering the plants in the garden, she would speak to them saying, "You plants here, how lucky you are to grow in this lovely place

and to be served to True Parents! You flowers and trees, how lucky you are to be seen and enjoyed by True Parents!"

Grandmother Hong was especially kind to the security people and had such a grateful heart to them for the protection they gave True Parents. Whatever she had, she wanted to give them. Whenever they became tired or sick, she offered special prayers for them.

Grandmother Hong, who until the moment of her ascension took upon herself the task of protecting True Parents' wellbeing, would walk in the garden, gently touching and speaking to the trees, saying, "You trees, mountains, streams and rocks! You protect our Parents, understand? You can guard True Parents' family 24 hours a day!" Even to the things of nature, who could neither move nor answer her, she presented this heartfelt request. Who could surpass the depth and breadth of heart, the true heart of loyalty that Grandmother Hong had for God and True Parents?

When praying for something of special importance, Hong Soon-ae would fast, take cold showers, change into white clothes, and then offer prayer. Father started the tradition of praying at the Holy Ground in East Garden, but Hong Soon-ae was the one who went to the Holy Ground most frequently. She was the leader of that prayer, setting the tradition that people pray at the Holy Ground. Whenever she prayed she couldn't help crying, for she understood the history of Heaven and True Parents so deeply. Her tears were a symbol of true love.

Her constant prayer: "May I receive all the pain and difficulties of True Parents" - this and her total investment of sincerity was so powerful as to move Heaven, earth and all things. And so, Grandmother Hong and Mother became completely one with God's Will; Grandmother Hong becomes the Great Mother recorded forever in the history of the universe, while her daughter stands as the eternal True Mother. Where can we find, in all the 66 chapters of the Bible, a woman of such stature and greatness? Who in this world could follow such a standard of prayer and dedication to True Parents and the True Family? Where, among all women throughout the universe, can we find such a sincere victor of true love?

The tears she shed, of which nobody knew, the suffering she endured, her prayers, and the offering of her entire self throughout the course of her life permit us all to carve deeply into our hearts these special qualities of Grandmother Hong as we follow along in her footsteps.