

## 1800 Couples' 40th anniversary assembly in Japan

Yong Chon Song  
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*40th anniversary assembly of 1,800 Couples*

**Unification Movement – Japan:** On February 7th, the 1,800 Couples' 40th anniversary assembly was held at Miyazakidai International Training Center, Kawasaki City. 244 participants from across Japan gathered for the event.

Back in 1975 on January 21st, candidates were called to Hachimanyama Bowling Center in Tokyo, to be matched after receiving True Parents' words. Two weeks later, they found themselves in Seoul, South Korea. On the day of February 8th, after Holy Wine Ceremony, they were blessed and married at Jangchung Gymnasium in Seoul. From Japan, 811 couples participated.

40 years later, the anniversary began at 11 am with Cheon Il Guk anthem. A film entitled 'The moment of matching! The biggest celebration of the century!' was shown. Mr. Toshiaki Sasada, Chairman of the 1,800 Families Association, gave the opening remarks.

"We have all devoted ourselves to God's work in different areas such as overseas missionaries, pastors, educators or outreach staff. I hope we can reaffirm our bonds as brothers and sisters blessed by True Parents. This assembly will offer hope and courage to live the rest of our lives!"

Mr. Kunio Sano, Director of Family Education, read out the message from Rev. Yeon Cheon Song, Chairman of National Blessed Families Association. Excerpts of Rev. Song's message were as follows:

"True Parents proclaimed at that time, 'We have entered the age when we can move the world' and selected 94 members from the 1,800 couples to be sent to 94 countries. They courageously flew out to the world with the words of truth in hand.

There is no doubt that their life-risking missions have built cornerstones of the world foundation we have today. I offer my deepest respect and gratitude to the 1,800 families who will continue to walk the path of faith as Tribal Messiahs, in absolute faith, absolute love and absolute obedience to our True Parents of Heaven and Earth."

Following the congratulatory remarks by Mr. Yoshihiro Nakata, Chairman of the 777 Families Association, Mr. Kentaro Hatakeyama, Vice Chairman of the 1,800 Families Association, gave a presentation on 'The 40 years of 1,800 couples Part I: with True Parents'. After lunch, a professional singer and daughter of one of the 1,800 Families played piano.

The theme for the afternoon was '40 years of 1,800 couples Part II: fruits of the 40-year course and our future'. Testimonies of respective 40-year history were shared by brothers and sisters directly involved in overseas mission, Blessed Children education, outreach and media projects. It was a time to reconfirm how the 1,800 families were the key players in supporting and moving God's providence forward through True Parents.

Reflections:

"I was moved and encouraged by brothers and sisters I had not met for a long time, making a new determination as one of the 1,800 couples."

"It was a short but well-packaged day, full of important contents. I could completely enjoy the gathering."