

Endurance and Forgiveness

February 1944 – August 1945

The following is from the second part of the sixth chapter of an English book about True Father's life. The book was translated (at some speed) from a collection of autobiographical excerpts gleaned from True Father's speeches given over many years. These were arranged chronologically in a series of books entitled True Parents' Life Course (참부모 생애 노정). The English version was not published generally but was prepared for the benefit of the True Children in their younger years. This excerpt has been edited for Today's World.

In July 1944, the New York Times reported, "Japanese militarists have named [one] of their strongest men as governor-general of restless Korea." To take up that post, Gen. Abe Nobuyuki resigned as president of the Imperial Rule Assistance Political Society, the parliamentary wing of the totalitarian party then governing Japan. This portion of Father's life story opens with him speaking about his experience beginning a few months later (October 1944) when he was incarcerated in a Gyeong-gi provincial jail. Gyeong-gi Province surrounds the city of Seoul and straddles the modern-day division between North and South Korea.

I was routinely in and out of jail even when I was a student. I maintained courage in the face of torture under the Japanese. I am a man with much experience in that area. Their torture methods were very harsh. If young people these days were caught and tortured the way it was being done at that time, they wouldn't be able to control their bowels and would confess to having done things that they had not.

While Korea was under Japan, I spent time in prison. I suffered lashings and water torture from Japanese detectives from the upper division of the special branch. I went through all manner of treatment. I was whipped until my entire body was black and blue and I bled enough to fill several bowls. I was kicked in the belly by soldiers with their boots on; two people held my arms while two other people stamped on my stomach. What happens to the skin of the belly when you are tortured like that? Does it tear? Does it burst? After such an experience, go and sit on the toilet, then try to stand up. It was so painful.

I worked very hard to rid Korea of the Japanese Emperor, and for that I was tortured in prison. Try that and see what it is like. They hit me here with wooden sticks.... At that time, they wore leather shoes in the army. It was with their hobnailed boots that they stamped on me. People who haven't experienced this will never know what it is like.

No matter what was inflicted on me, even when I was given electric shocks, I did not speak. I would fight it, thinking, "Hit me! See which is bigger—your club or my determination." Throughout the day I was beaten with clubs. I thought, "Let's see how I do," and endured the situation.

Even when I was throwing up blood and bleeding from all ten fingers, I was praying, "How glorious it would be if my blood could represent the blood from ten nations and be given as a sacrificial offering in place of the blood of ten peoples."

I went through torture for nearly twelve hours until I was vomiting blood. There was a torture that drove a person insane in fifteen minutes. I can never forget it. Though I was tortured in that way for twelve hours, I miraculously survived. Once I was questioned for fourteen hours, going through torture so harsh that when it was over, I couldn't crawl more than twenty meters. I was resuscitated several times from near death. Though this process was repeated again and again, I didn't open my mouth.

The sound of my screams from bloody torture in prison was the sound of someone searching for the highest place where God's will could be realized. Unless you have been to the summit of screaming, you cannot complain!

At a place where I could speak with God about fundamental things, I called "Father" and prayed, "God, my blood is different from that of people of the past. I am not the kind of man who vomits blood, collapses and dies while complaining to You with a heart of betrayal. Please don't sympathize with me; rather, sympathize with this nation and with all humanity! Please open a way, with me in the lead, for all people to survive." This was my way of life.

"Go ahead and beat me! Is your love for Japan greater than my love for Korea?..." In this way, I put up a worthy fight. When I was incarcerated under the Japanese, I was grateful to have entered prison rather than being in the position of a traitor who betrays his own nation. I

thought that it would be good if my country could be liberated through my own death rather than my being saved. This is our traditional way of thinking in the Unification Church.

I came to understand the Korean people's misery, how badly they were treated, through being imprisoned in Japan. It was all training for me. Through walking with my companions along the course of suffering, torture and shedding tears in prison, I finally understood Korea's miserable situation. While I was incarcerated I felt a sense of duty—"Someone must liberate the people." Prison became a great teacher for me. My time in jail was a time to set a cornerstone in the providence of restoration that no one can destroy.

Silent at the risk of my life

I have crossed over the point of death several times. Even so, I risked my life because of my sense of responsibility toward my comrades and my faith in them, so in prison I fought alone. I didn't speak even when prison officials threatened to kill me. Once I decided to say nothing, I said nothing.

When the lives of one hundred people depended on me, how could I speak? I would rather have cut out my tongue. I didn't tell them anything. I decided that I wouldn't speak. "Beat me. Even though you beat me, it's my responsibility to win over you." Even though they went through all four legs of a desk—breaking each one into pieces from the force of the blows they administered, and making my body turn black all over from the bruising—I didn't talk.

I didn't talk even when I was beaten with wooden poles. A man must remain loyal. Once a man has made a promise, he must keep it even though it may destroy him. When a day of torture passes by like this, the day remains as a sorrowful one but at the same time, unforgettable.

I still remember the name of the man who tortured me in Tokyo, even now. No matter how much he tortured me, I did not give him any information. I said, "I will not talk." And that was the end of it. Try it for 365 days if you like. Even if I was unconscious and woke up several times, I would say, "What's going on? Let's sleep a little more." I would say such things and make jokes. "I want to sleep a little more; why are you guys waking me up?" In this way, even though they were inflicting torture on me, they became my friends. Whoever tortured me, I said, "Ha! That doesn't hurt. Do it like that; do it that way." That's all I said. They had not one bit of satisfaction. If they could have just gotten one word out of me.... "You may make some official statement, but once I am on the stand, I will not keep silent." That's what I said. If I am a real man, I must do as my heart dictates. I am that kind of man.

I would have been an excellent investigator. When Japan ruled Korea, in front of those smart prosecutors and judges, I acted

as if I were stupid. And I succeeded in fooling them. When they were recording my case, I acted as if I were very dull. They said, "How can a person like him be the one with all that responsibility? He's like a kindergarten pupil." So everything worked out. They were unable to dig up the most important information. They fabricated a report and made it official. It was not important. It was my strategy.... Sometimes you have to do those kinds of things. That's what you would call an able person.

Forgiving and blessing one's enemy

Even though they may lock me up in prison, they can't do the same to my mind or philosophy. "Hit me. If you beat me, you are striking the foundation God laid for me and the course I have walked along the way God has paved. Let's see how strong my heart is when it comes to loving my enemies. Hit me if you want to hit me. Do you think I would hate you?" I've been severely beaten, vomiting blood. I was beaten in place of the human race with its bitterness accumulated through history. They would whip me, and then I would forget it. How wonderful it is for someone to go through such a thing and be able to say, "God, please forgive them." We should go through that; to do so, we have to practice abnegation. Then it becomes simple.

In the days when Korea was under Japanese control, there was a man named Kumahata, a name I've never forgotten. Though we were taught to love our enemies, I would have kicked him without hesitation when he was stamping on me and hitting me. Then I thought, "Hey, you! Fine. Do as you want. I will endure this even though it may push me to the point of death." I didn't treat him as my enemy. Since it was my responsibility to pray for blessings for others, I looked for something in them that could make them worthy to receive a blessing. In my prison cell, that was what I studied. Since men have a conscience, in the morning when everyone else had gone out,



After the March 1919 independence uprising, Japan replaced its governor-general of Korea with Baron Saito Makoto, who quietly initiated a great upsurge in police presence, better intelligence-gathering and stricter control of the independence movement. Simultaneously, he conspicuously built more schools, allowed a great increase in civic groups and relaxed restrictions on non-threatening activities, such as Korean-language newspapers. Pictured above are some members of the Korean Language Society, formed as a result of that policy in December 1921. The Society published a journal, assisted needy scholars and produced a dictionary. Policies later changed, however. In late 1942, dozens of Korean Language Society members were arrested. Among them, lexicographer Lee Yun-jae (top right) and journalist Han Jin (bottom right) died in prison before Korea's liberation in 1945.

the torturers would apologize. That is a human quality. When we see that, we can see that people everywhere are the same. They can't deceive their consciences.

Preventive measures

Before being tortured, you should shed blood first—this will help protect you from dying. When someone tortures you, he will trample on some part of you, your belly or that area of your body. In order to bear that, you have to give yourself an enema in advance, getting it all out first.

You must create an outlet to allow the blood to flow. You could bite your lips or the flat of your tongue. If you bleed beforehand, the torture won't destroy you. It won't be as explosive; it won't tear you apart. God is surely the king of wisdom.... I saved many people by teaching them this. People like me do not follow a comfortable path; we do not go the easy way. Even though I have faced death many times, I have always overcome it.

A mother's tears

They gathered the little money they had and sent me abroad to study, but I ended up in jail there.

My mother came to the prison and wept. She might have said, "If you had thought of your mother, you would not have gotten involved in that kind of movement." But she never said anything. I had not done anything wrong my mother's son. As one born into the Moon family, I never shamed the family name. Centering on the traditional and unique philosophy of Korea, they could see that my conscience was clean. Even though I was in prison, I did not want a mother who pitied her son and cried. I needed a mother who would give advice and encouragement and who would tell me to carry on with hope for tomorrow.

It was impiety. There is no greater lack of filial piety.... Soon after I returned from Japan, the police summoned me, because they were afraid. It wasn't as if I got into fights with them. When my parents came to the police station in tears, I would shout like a thunderbolt descending on them from the clear blue sky. I said, "Your son is not a petty little boy. The tears in my eyes are to relieve the world's sadness and God's. These tears are not for you." That is what I told my mother about why I was treading this path.

Leaving prison

When you leave prison, you have to be kind to the people there. When you go through harsh torture for about six hours and pass out on the floor, the torturer sympathizes with you. The prejudice at that time was real but a torturer later wonders what has become of his victims. This explanation can never make sense at all to those who just chase after enjoyment.

When I was about your age, I was tortured a lot. Nevertheless, I didn't die though I was beaten and my body swelled to bursting through the water torture. I recovered in about two weeks. I ate well for two weeks and returned to normal. So, suffering is not something you want to experience when you are old, but before you have your family.

I have been incarcerated many times, but I was not destroyed by it. No one knows that I wept on the banks of the Han River, but I know.

Internal preparation

During a forty-year period, Japan tried to rid Korea of all her cultural traditions, even her language. I was imprisoned by the

Japanese during that time. The government also imprisoned and oppressed many other Koreans. In order to be called by God, you had to become a patriot, a devoted son or daughter, and a citizen devoted to society. Patriots are people who have resolved to offer themselves to the nation. Such people are needed for God's **providence**. **When God establishes the foundation** for the providence and expands it, Satan always opposes Him. Thus, as a young man I prepared myself for the public life to come.

From the 1920s onward, God was already prepared. That is when I was born. I have struggled to resolve life's hitherto unsolved problems, to reveal the heavenly way and to deal with all the problems related to religion and to love. I worked in this way until the time of Korea's liberation. How old was I at that time? I was twenty-six then.¹ I couldn't say anything about the Principle you are now studying. This was partly because God had told me not to and partly because I had promised God that I would begin my work immediately after Korea was liberated. One person alone cannot accomplish God's will; there have to be partners to work with.

There were times when I went high into the mountains near Seoul and wept bitterly. Where will this nation go? Where is she going, away from the heart of God, the great supervisor of the universe? **Before the liberation, I traveled everywhere, starting with Mt. Bugak.**² I bowed my head and prayed, "O Korea! Don't be sorrowful. Even though the world may be lost, you won't be. So long as I exist, Korea will not be lost." Our ancestors and God carry much bitter sorrow.

Staying in Seoul reminds me of the day I prayed while hiking to Mt. Samgak³ and walking around that area. Have you done that kind of thing? Though the world is unaware, we have to build the road of love. We have to build an altar to love. Though I long to tell of my serious suffering and prayers offered to God for the world's sake, there is something very heartbreaking about it, so I cannot speak.

When I started forging this road, I had already met and seen through all the famous Christian ministers in Korea. I had already evaluated them. They didn't know about me. From outer appearances, I was nothing but a bachelor and an unkempt passerby, but I looked inside them and wrote down what I saw in a report to Heaven. After making my report to God, I began my work.

I went to the underground churches first. Three years before the liberation, or from the time I was twenty-two, I began traveling to the underground churches. Because people had been tainted from bowing to the Japanese Emperor, genuine religious organizations all went underground. Though I was young then, I was well aware of religious organizations doing underground activities and other states of affairs in Korea.

Foresight and liberation

This man they call Reverend Moon is a clever person. [Laughter] I am not a fool. I am canny and see far into the future. Already, in my teens, I knew what would happen to Korea. Yesterday, my younger cousin told me, "What you said about Japan and Germany—that in 1945 Germany would be out of it in April and Japan in August—all happened." He said, "I thought a person had to graduate from a university to be well informed about the world and see the future." **TW**

1 Father was twenty-five by Western reckoning

2 A peak in northern Seoul, behind the presidential palace

3 Samgak means "three horns" and refers to a set of three peaks in the mountains on Seoul's northern perimeter.