

# Hak Ja Han

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**Hak Ja Han** (Korean: 한학자, Hanja: 韓鶴子) or **Hakja Han Moon** (born January 6, 1943 lunar calendar<sup>[1]</sup>) is a Korean religious leader.<sup>[2][3]</sup> She and her late husband Sun Myung Moon were the leaders of the Unification Church and are considered by church members to be the True Parents of mankind. They married in April 1960 and have 13 children and over 40 grandchildren, as well as a growing number of great-grandchildren.<sup>[4]</sup> She is called the True Mother and regarded as the perfect woman by church members.<sup>[1][5]</sup>

In 1992, she established the Unification Church affiliated-organization Women's Federation for World Peace, and traveled the world speaking on its behalf.<sup>[6][7][8]</sup> Han's influence within the Unification Church has steadily increased. She is Moon's designated successor as the leader of the Unification Movement.<sup>[1][5]</sup> In the American media Han is sometimes referred to as Mrs. Moon;<sup>[9]</sup> although in Korean culture as well as other East Asian cultures a married woman keeps her original family name, with the children taking their father's.<sup>[10]</sup>

Hak Ja Han



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## Korean name

Hangul	한학자
Hanja	韓鶴子
Revised Romanization	Han Hak-ja
McCune–Reischauer	Han Hakcha

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## Personal life and family

Han, whose mother later became a follower of Sun Myung Moon, was born on January 6, 1943 (lunar calendar).<sup>[1]</sup> Han attended an all-girls high school in Korea but did not go on to college. She speaks Japanese and English as well as Korean,<sup>[11]</sup> although she speaks English with a Korean accent.<sup>[12]</sup> In April 1960, at the age of 17, Han, by then a member of the Unification Church (which was officially founded in 1954),<sup>[13]</sup> married Moon who was then 40 years old.<sup>[14][15]</sup> Han has 13 children,<sup>[16]</sup> and as of 1993 had 20 grandchildren.<sup>[17]</sup>

On July 19, 2008, Han along with her husband and 14 others, including several of their children and grandchildren, were slightly injured when a church owned Sikorsky S-92 helicopter crashed during an

emergency landing and burst into flames in Gapyeong.<sup>[18][19]</sup> Han and all 15 others were treated at the nearby church-affiliated Cheongshim Hospital.<sup>[20]</sup>

## Role in the Unification Church

Unification Church members believe that Han and Moon's wedding established a "holy marriage" which Jesus had failed to establish. They also consider it established a holiday called True Parents Day,<sup>[21]</sup> as well as what Unification Church members refer to as the "True Family."<sup>[14][22]</sup> It is believed by them to be the beginning of a new Completed Testament Age<sup>[23]</sup> and to have fulfilled the prophesied Marriage of the Lamb in the Revelation of John.<sup>[24]</sup>

Han and Moon are together believed to be the new messiahs by Unification Church members.<sup>[4]</sup> Within Unification Church theology, the Moons are regarded as the "True Parents" of humanity and are addressed by its followers as the True Father and True Mother.<sup>[16]</sup> Church members have also referred to Han as "the Bride of Christ"<sup>[25]</sup> and the perfect woman.<sup>[26]</sup> She is seen within the movement as the Mother of humankind, the final chosen of God.<sup>[27]</sup> Han and Moon are also seen as the exemplars of the God-centered existence by Unification Church members.<sup>[28]</sup> In Unification Church services members bow down to Han and Moon when they are present and to pictures of them when they are not.<sup>[29]</sup>

In 1962, Moon and Han founded the Little Angels Children's Folk Ballet of Korea, a girls Korean folk ballet company meant to promote a positive perception of South Korea.<sup>[30]</sup> In 1984, Han spoke at a Unification Church sponsored academic conference in Washington, D.C. to a crowd of 240 which included professors from Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, University of Michigan and the Sorbonne in Paris.<sup>[31]</sup>

In 1993, U.S. Senator Trent Lott supported the bill True Parents Day in the U.S. Senate and in 1995 U.S. President Bill Clinton signed a bill into law called Parents Day; children are to honor their parents on this day.<sup>[32]</sup> This showed the relationship of the Unification Church to the Republican Party in the United States, according to news media.<sup>[32]</sup> In 1993, U.S. Senator Orrin Hatch introduced Han to a crowd at Capitol Hill; she stated at the event that she and Moon are the first True Parents.<sup>[32]</sup> Moon was in the audience watching her speech, along with members of the United States Senate and United States House of Representatives.<sup>[32]</sup>

## Wedding ceremonies

Han and Moon together preside over the mass wedding ceremonies for which the Unification Church is noted. (*See: Blessing ceremony of the Unification Church.*) In 1997, they donned crowns and gold-trimmed robes to lead a mass wedding and marriage rededication ceremony in Washington, D.C. for 20,000 couples, 2,500 of them Unification Church members whose marriages had been arranged by Moon.<sup>[33]</sup> According to one news report Han joined with Moon in pairing up couples who had never met each other, based merely upon looking at their photos.<sup>[34]</sup> In 1997, Han presided with her husband over a marriage affirmation ceremony for 28,000 couples, some married and some newly engaged, in New York City.<sup>[35]</sup> During the ceremony Han and Moon sprinkled holy water on the couples.<sup>[36]</sup>

## Women's Federation for World Peace

In 1992, Han established the Women's Federation for World Peace with the support of the Unification Church,<sup>[6][7][8]</sup> and traveled the world speaking at conventions on its behalf.<sup>[37]</sup> The Women's Federation's purpose is to encourage women to work more actively in promoting peace in their communities and greater society,<sup>[8]</sup> and it includes 143 member countries.<sup>[7]</sup> According to the *Unification News*, Han organized a Unification Church conference held in Tokyo in 1993, which was the first anniversary of the Women's

Federation for World Peace.<sup>[38]</sup> The keynote speaker was former Vice President of the United States Dan Quayle's wife Marilyn Tucker Quayle, and in a speech at the event Han spoke positively of Mrs. Quayle's humanitarian work.<sup>[38]</sup>

In 1993, Han traveled to 20 cities in the United States promoting Women's Federation for World Peace,<sup>[39]</sup> as well as to 12 countries.<sup>[8]</sup> At a stop in Salt Lake City, Utah she told attendants: "If a family is not centered on God's ideal of love, there will be conflict among the members of that family. Without God's love as an absolute center, such a family will ultimately break down. A nation of such families will also decline."<sup>[39]</sup> Her 1993 speeches in the United States focused on increasing violence in the U.S., and the degradation of the family unit.<sup>[40]</sup>

In 1995, Han spoke at a Women's Federation for World Peace event in Japan with former United States president George H. W. Bush.<sup>[41]</sup> Han spoke after Bush's speech and praised Moon, crediting him for the decline of communism and saying that he must save America from "the destruction of the family and moral decay."<sup>[41][42]</sup>

## Family Federation for World Peace

In 1996, Han went on a world tour, speaking on behalf of the Unification Church under its alternative name: the Family Federation for World Peace.<sup>[43][44][45][46]</sup> Her speeches were given in cities across the United States, as well as countries including Korea, Japan, Italy, and 16 other countries in South America and Central America.<sup>[44]</sup> In July 1996 she spoke at the Family Federation for World Peace's Inaugural World Convention at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C.<sup>[47]</sup> Han's closing address was the climax of the proceedings; it was called the "Founder's Address."<sup>[12][47]</sup>

## Coronation ceremony

On March 23, 2004, Moon and Han were honored at an Ambassadors for Peace awards banquet held by the Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace (which is sponsored by the Unification Church) in a United States federal office building in Washington, D.C. It was called a "Crown of Peace" ceremony. At the event, Sun Myung Moon stated he was the Messiah. Over 12 United States lawmakers were in attendance. The event was criticized by some as a possible violation of the principle of separation of church and state in the United States.<sup>[48][49]</sup>

## Universal Peace Federation

In 2006, Han spoke in New Zealand on behalf of the Unification Church-sponsored Universal Peace Federation and called for traditional families, religious and cross-cultural tolerance, and a \$315 billion "peace tunnel" across the Bering Strait connecting Russia and the United States.<sup>[34]</sup>

## Increasing influence

In 1992, Moon increased Han's position of authority within the Unification Church and announced "True Mother was elevated to True Father's level horizontally."<sup>[50]</sup> Hak Ja Han has been Moon's successor designate as leader of the Unification Church since 1993.<sup>[1][5]</sup> Massimo Introvigne of the Center for Studies on New Religions writes in *The Unification Church* (2000):

"The issue of succession is now of fundamental importance. The Reverend Moon will be eighty years old (by Korean age calculations, he turned eighty in 1999) in 2000. Mrs. Moon is fifty-seven years old. Since 1992 she has taken a more visible role, particularly in three world

speaking tours in 1992, 1993, and 1999. Mrs. Moon has also spoken on Capitol Hill, at the United Nations, and in other parliaments around the world. Her relative youth and the respect with which she is held by the membership may be a point of stability for the Unification movement."<sup>[13][51]</sup>

George D. Chryssides writes in *Exploring New Religions* (2001) that Han's importance with the church continues to grow. Chryssides predicted that she would lead the Unification Church and preside over blessing ceremonies after Moon's death, since she would then be "the remaining True Parent."<sup>[52]</sup>

In 2003, over 8,000 Unification Church members attended a ceremony in South Korea in which Han and Moon were remarried. This was said to be the fulfillment of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb written about in the Apocalypse of John.<sup>[1]</sup> Authors James R. Lewis and Jesper Aagaard Petersen write in *Controversial New Religions* (2005) that she "has exercised increasing influence in the Unification Church."<sup>[1]</sup> In 2009 author Jacob Neusner reported that church members believed that Han would continue to lead them after Moon's death since she is considered to jointly be the Messiah, with him.<sup>[21]</sup> In 2010 National Public Radio reported that Unification Church services in the United States invoked the name of Han along with Moon in their opening greetings to congregants.<sup>[53]</sup> In that same year, *Forbes* reported that Han was living in South Korea with her husband while their children took more responsibility for the day-to-day leadership of the church and its affiliated organizations.<sup>[54]</sup>

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## External links

- True Love King (<http://www.hakjahanmoon.net>), Website about Rev. and Mrs. Moon
- The Birth and Childhood of Hak Ja Han Moon (<http://www.ffwpu.asn.au/The%20Life%20of%20Reverend%20Moon/ch3319.htm>) at website of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification in Oceania
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- Biography of Mrs. Hak Ja Han Moon ([http://www.reverendsunmyungmoon.org/family\\_Hak\\_Ja\\_Han\\_Moon.html](http://www.reverendsunmyungmoon.org/family_Hak_Ja_Han_Moon.html)), at [www.reverendsunmyungmoon.org](http://www.reverendsunmyungmoon.org)

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