

## **3rd Essay Contest on Chung Hyo Ye**

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When I was five years old, I had an infection in my left knee bone. Due to this infection, I would stay up all night because of the pain it caused in my knee and my Mom would always come over and stay up with me massaging my knee while my Dad hurried around trying to find the best medication. Both of them took me from doctor to doctor until they found the right one who was willing to perform surgery on my knee and get rid of the infection. As the day of the surgery approached, my Mom prayed in the Mosque for me to be okay and my Dad arranged money for the cost of the surgery. On the day of the surgery both of my parents had circles of worry around their eyes and they sat on my bedside in the hospital to make sure I was feeling completely okay. My Mom held onto my hand while my Dad put his hand on my shoulder for comfort. I could tell that both of them worried but they tried to keep me happy by telling me jokes and reassuring me that everything would be okay. The last thing I remember before the surgery was my Dad's soothing voice and my Mom's soft kiss on my cheek. The surgery went perfectly and my leg no longer pains me but this entire experience helped me realize something important that Chung Hyo Ye strongly stresses, filial devotion.

Chung Hyo Ye affected me most importantly by helping me realize that my parents care and love me so much, it would be entirely reckless and irresponsible for me to treat them in any other manner. This wonderful Korean folklore helped me realize the importance of giving respect, devotion and love to my parents, I truly understand the value of Hyo. The Korean culture is truly beautiful for recognizing the importance of our parents and although I am a Muslim, I strongly believe in the teachings of Chung Hyo Ye. I strongly believe that anyone from any religion or any

background will agree with the importance of Korean culture and how they respect their elders, their countrymen, and the core morals that build up humanity. Korean folklore is universal and these morals that are stressed in these tales are important for keeping the world in balance.

I felt moved after reading these tales and I question myself and those around me. Can we also give our parents the same love that the Korean people have for centuries? Can we also give our countrymen our help and fraternal love? Can we live a virtuous life and not make immoral choices? I can not speak for others, however I know that after reading Chung Hyo Ye, I will plan to do as much as I can to ensure a "yes" to all of these questions. It is amazing that the 21st century world has invented so many gadgets and inventions, but none can compare to the importance of these Korean ideals. It is hard finding people today who can give even five minutes of their day to their parents or to their countrymen. Worldly greed has taken us all over so that we are consumed by a need to amass more and more monetary value while the greatest value are the Mothers sitting at home who nursed us while we little babies, or the Father who provided us with the food for so many years of our life.

On the news there are oftentimes stories of children who have killed their parents. It makes me shudder to think there are such people in the world while there are children in starving countries who yearn for parents love. I myself want to attend college and become a psychiatrist so that I can provide for my parents in their old age. I may be a girl but I am not without virtue, I want to do whatever I can to make sure

that my parents will never suffer more in their lives than they already have taking care of my sister and I.

These stories are so moving, that I sometimes tell my classmates about them and the importance of taking care of our parents and our countrymen while leading moral lives. They often have guilty looks in their eyes because they know that they haven't respected their parents, perhaps they haven't helped a fellow man, or perhaps they have done something else immoral. I tell them not to worry, tomorrow is a new day, repent from your mistakes and correct your mistakes. We can all become better people if we all follow the virtuous laws of Chung Hyo Ye and by simply following the Korean culture we can become better people. Every religion in the world supports these virtuous Korean laws whether it is Buddhism, Islam (my own religion), Christianity, or another religion.

I am enlightened after reading these stories, if it were not for them perhaps I would have continued to make mistakes but now I am more aware of the importance of respect to my parents, countrymen and following morals. My parents have suffered long enough in their lifetimes; it is up to me now to make things easier for them. This book will teach anyone and everyone who reads it carefully that they must repay every action with kindness and loyalty, in turn we will receive the same kindness and loyalty from others. I remember the sacrifices that my parents made for me at the tender age of five years old and after reading Chung Hyo Ye, I know that I will repay them for every sacrifice with love, respect and support.