



Korean Ladder Study Note

제사 / 차례상

Ancestral Rites and the Ritual Table

Level	Topic	Focus
C1 · Advanced TOPIK 5	Culture Food Culture	제사 / 차례상 Ancestral Rites and the Ritual Table

Study Links

[Open this lesson on Korean Ladder](https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-CULTURE-FCL-001)

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-CULTURE-FCL-001>

[Watch the full video on YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oSgZf7cfmvo)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oSgZf7cfmvo>

[Visit Korean Ladder for all free lessons](https://www.koreanladder.com)

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Core Idea

Okay, real question. When a Korean family lays out that huge table of food on a holiday — who is it actually for? Nobody sits down and eats it right away.

좋은 질문이에요. 그 음식은 조상을 위한 거예요. 조상 means ancestors — the family members who passed away. The table honors them.

오늘 두 단어가 핵심이에요. 제사 그리고 차례. 둘 다 ancestral rites — but they are not the same thing.

제사는 보통 돌아가신 날에 지내요. 제사 is the memorial rite held on the anniversary of a person's death — usually late at night.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	나물도 있고, 송편도 있어요. —	There's namul, and songpyeon too.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	과일하고 생선도 빠지지 않아요. —	Fruit and fish are never left out either.
Junho	과일을 동쪽에 놓으세요. —	Place the fruit on the east.
Hana	네, 전은 어디에 놓을까요? —	Okay, where should I put the jeon?
Junho	전은 가운데에 놓으세요. —	Put the jeon in the middle.
Hana	이제 차례상을 다 차렸어요. —	Now the table is fully set.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
조상 josang	ancestors (those who have passed)	좋은 질문이에요. 그 음식은 조상을 위한 거예요. 조상 means ancestors — the family members who passed away. The table honors them.
제사 · 차례 jesa · charye	two kinds of ancestral rite	오늘 두 단어가 핵심이에요. 제사 그리고 차례. 둘 다 ancestral rites — but they are not the same thing.
제사 jesa	death-anniversary memorial rite	제사는 보통 돌아가신 날에 지내요. 제사 is the memorial rite held on the anniversary of a person's death — usually late at night.
차례 charye	holiday morning ancestral rite	차례는 명절 아침에 지내요 — 설날, 추석. 차례 is the holiday rite, performed in the morning of Lunar New Year or Chuseok.
차례상 charye-sang	the ritual table (for charye)	맞아요. 그리고 그 음식을 차리는 상을 차례상이라고 해요. The table itself is the 차례상 — the ritual table.
차례상을 차리다 charye-sang-eul charida	to set the ritual table	상을 준비하는 건 차례상을 차리다 예요. 차리다 means to set or lay out a table. 차례상을 차려요 — we set the ritual table.
제사를 지내요 jesa-reul jinaeyo	We hold a memorial rite.	그리고 의식 자체는 지내다 로 말해요. Look at this sentence — 제사를 지내요. We hold a memorial rite.
지내다 jinaeda	to observe / hold (a rite)	Interesting — so 지내다 isn't 'to make' or 'to do.' It's more like 'to observe' or 'to hold' a rite. You spend time with it.



Grammar / Structure Notes

조상

조상 — ancestors (those who have passed)

The ritual food is offered to honor them.

제사 · 차례

제사 · 차례 — two kinds of ancestral rite

Same family, two different occasions.

제사

제사 — death-anniversary memorial rite

Held on the person's 기일 (death date).

차례

차례 — holiday morning ancestral rite

설날 (New Year) · 추석 (harvest festival).

차례상

차례상 — the ritual table (for charye)

상 = table; 차례상 = the rite's table.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
지내요	ji-nae-yo
제사를 지내요	jesa-reul jinaeyo
차례를 지내요	charye-reul jinaeyo
과일을 동쪽에 놓으세요	gwail-eul dongjjog-e noeuseyo
놓으세요	noeuseyo

Self-Check

- 1 Say 제사 / 차례상 three times: slow, natural, then inside a short sentence.
- 2 Write one original sentence that was not in the video.
- 3 Rewatch the YouTube lesson and pause when the same pattern appears.



Related / Subsequent Studies

Lesson	Why study it next	Link
김치 / 반찬 / 밥 Korean Table Basics	A1 Culture: compare 김치 / 반찬 / 밥 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-CULTURE-FCL-001
배달 음식 / 치맥 Korea's Delivery and Late-Night Food Culture	B2 Culture: compare 배달 음식 / 치맥 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B2-CULTURE-FCL-001
눈치 / 정 / 체면 The Social Concepts Behind Korean Behavior	C1 Culture: compare 눈치 / 정 / 체면 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-CULTURE-ETQ-001
사극 말투 하옵니다 / 마마 / 통촉하여 주시옵소서	C1 Culture: compare 사극 말투 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-CULTURE-MED-001

My Notes

Free Korean lessons, one rung at a time. This PDF, the website, and the video lessons are free for personal study.