

Toward 2020: What Went Wrong? and Where Are We Now?

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What Went Wrong?

I have received some interesting responses to my autobiography. One in particular sticks in my mind. Upon reading the book, one person asked, “If communism fell after seventy years, and we had that great foundation of young people in Russia hearing Divine Principle, what went wrong? Why did the new beginning that Father established not take hold in Russia and in the world?” It is a great question, and I would like to tackle it. I do not remember Father saying anything directly about this, but based on the original providence, one can get some idea. We do know that Father said that if he had been accepted in 1945 by the Christian church, then within seven years, the ideal world could have been established. By 1952 Father would have been in America, and communism would have collapsed.

We also know that Father’s forty year period in the wilderness indemnified this failure of the Christian churches. Their failure was restored in 1985 when Father was released from Danbury prison and welcomed by a host of clergy. A whole new level of the providence opened. And, seven years later, on Christmas Day of 1991, communism did indeed collapse. We created a good foundation in America with the clergy and in Russia centering on Divine Principle seminars. However, that good foundation just did not “catch on.” True Parents and our church did not rise to prominence in America or Russia although the providence did move forward. In 1992, on the foundation of True Father’s forty year course and the seven years after Danbury, Father and Mother did proclaim True Parents’ messiahship and the beginning of the Completed Testament Age. However, I remember Father saying that he made the proclamation not on the foundation of Christianity but on the newly created foundation of WFWP under True Mother’s leadership. WFWP stood in place of Christianity, and on its foundation, Father could make the declaration of messiahship.

This indicates to me that just as in 1945, there was a failure in the Christian foundation. I think the key here was Rev. Jerry Falwell. He supported Father in Danbury prison and occasionally and hesitatingly supported the Washington Times. Other core Christian leaders, Dr. Donald Sills, Rod Godwin, and Donald Grant all supported Father as well. They worked with the American Leadership Conference and the Religious Freedom Coalition, but in the end, none of these clergy really united with Father. Just as the providence was extended when the Christians failed in 1945, when these pastors did not unite with True Parents, it seems reasonable to ask if the providence was extended again.

Where Are We Now?

So, where are we now? I would like to take on this question as well because of information I learned just a week ago. As I already mentioned, we went through a forty year extension of the providence due to the failure of the Christian church in Korea. Since 1991, it seems to me that we may now be in another extension: a thirty year course from 1991 to the year 2020. After Father ascended, True Mother set a goal, “2020.” I believe that this is not just a business plan, but that there are things of providential significance to be accomplished in this period. After 1991, our church continued to move forward. The establishment of WFWP, the Family Federation, the large Blessings in '97, '98 and beyond, the establishment of ACLC, the fifty state ACLC tour, the Coronation of God's Kingship, the many international tours, the establishment of the Peace Palace, and the thirteen year course to Foundation Day were all successful. Finally we come to Foundation Day in 2013, the culmination of this effort.

As we counted down the days to Foundation Day, I remember asking people their opinion of what would happen on, or by, Foundation Day? I received some interesting answers. The one that struck me the most was that of a brother who said, “Nothing. Nothing is going to happen.” He was a well-respected leader, and it was not a cynical response. As we talked about it, he reminded me that Father has made many declarations, but they do not involve miracle-like events. In the back of my mind, I personally was wishing for a miracle-like event, but this brother helped me to remind myself that the providence is methodical and unfolds over time. He was right; there was no “miracle” on Foundation Day, but it does not mean that nothing happened.

I am writing this now because I have a new thought as to how the providence is unfolding. In his message at our Sunday service in Detroit, our brother Rev. Ed Taub mentioned that things are happening in North Korea. When I got home, I googled and read news articles, one from January and another from last November. The articles reported that without much news coverage or fanfare, North Korea has changed its economic system. One author, Stephen Evans, called it a “quiet revolution”; another, Andrei Lankov, called it a “seismic shift.” They both reported that Kim Jung Un has put in place policies, a series of “measures,” that have brought about sweeping reforms in the management of agriculture and business in North Korea.

The “measures” the news article referred to begin to be put in place in 2012 with what North Korea calls the “June 28 Measures.” June 28, 2012, was just before Father became ill and just as we were preparing for Foundation Day. The measures will be in full effect in 2015. It is interesting to note that 2015 happens to be the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the North Korean state. It had never occurred to me before, but it might be that just as communism as a whole went through a seventy year course, North Korea may be as well. These measures may be to North Korea what Glasnost was to Russia. North Korea may be in the same position as Russia was in 1987, the seventieth year after the founding of communism.

The June 28 measures allowed farmers to create their own production teams of five or six people and allowed them to keep thirty percent of their harvest. According to Andrei Lankov in his article, “Reforming North Korea,” the plan worked so well that in 2013 North Korea had its best harvest in decades. That year North Korea produced almost enough food to feed itself. Then in 2014, the North Korean cabinet of ministers and the Central Committee of the Workers Party put in place the “May 30 Measures” that allow farmers to now keep sixty percent of their harvest and enlarged plots of land. Further, under the measures set in place that day, public officials were given as much freedom as many private managers would have in capitalist market economies. Everything from bus companies to coal mines are beginning to be run like capitalistic free market enterprises. Public officials running them are essentially becoming private businessmen. We do not know where this will lead, but we can be sure it would be very difficult for the North to go back to its old ways.

The providence has been a long haul, and I remind myself that providential history indicates that while people may fail, providential periods do not. Just as the providence of the number seventy played itself out in the Babylonian captivity, the fall of the temple after Jesus' ministry, and the collapse of communism, it may be playing out again in North Korea. And, if this is true, we may see it continue to play out in other arenas. The year 2018 marks the seventieth anniversary of the founding of both the nation of Israel and the United Nations. We may have much to look forward to as we proceed toward 2020.