

Weaknesses in the Historical Parallels: Christian Kingdom

Benjamin Douglas - February 18, 2018

The 120 years of the United Christian Kingdom (beginning with Charlemagne being crowned in 800 A.D.) just doesn't hold up, for those who care to look at it honestly. In the relevant part of the Principle book, the phrasing careful dances around (almost to the point of dishonesty) the basic facts. Those facts don't fit the pattern listeners assume when they read the passage (or hear the lecture).

I accept the idea that the historical parallels should be allowed some wiggle room. If a 400-year period is off by 8 years, that's only 2%. But when the logical end of a historical period didn't fit the numerical pattern, Baek Moon Kim (or Rev. Ahn, or whoever) apparently chose a less logical date that fit better numerically. Sometimes the description in the Divine Principle book is pretty tortured as a result.

The "Christian Kingdom" was divided way before 919 AD -- a number of times, in fact. Yes, Pepin and Charles the Younger died, so the kingdom was only divided in two (instead of three) after Charlemagne's death in 814 AD. But the kingdom (parallel to the "United Kingdom" of Saul, David, and Solomon) *was* divided at that time. "The only part of the Empire which Louis was not promised was Italy, which Charlemagne specifically bestowed upon Pippin's illegitimate son Bernard."



(en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charlemagne#Divisio_regnorum). Sounds like a good Cain/Abel candidate, but the year is off by a whopping 92%! (14 years instead of 120).

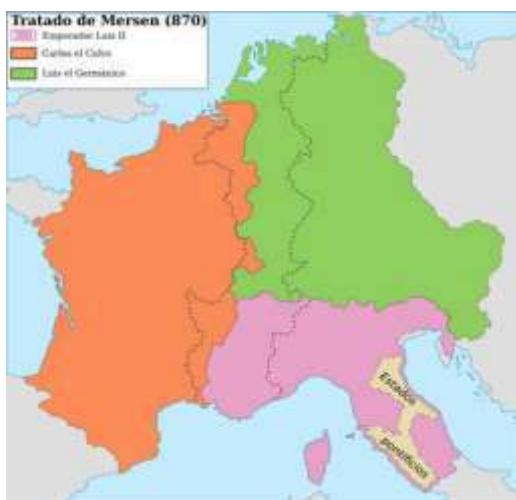
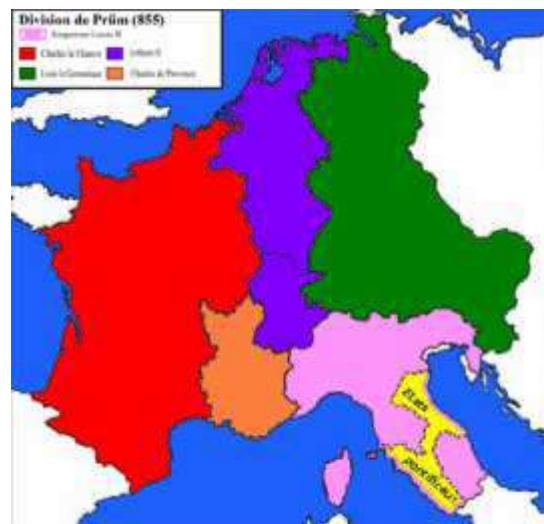


Then the "Christian Kingdom" was divided again in 843 AD with the Treaty of Verdun, bringing an end to CIVIL WAR.

[\(en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Verdun\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Verdun). (43 years instead of 120).

After the Treaty of Prüm

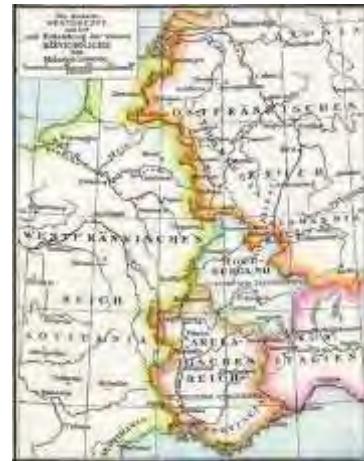
[\(en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Prüm\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Prüm) in 855 AD, the kingdom was divided into 5 pieces (55 years instead of 120).



The Treaty of Meerssen [or Mersen] in 870 AD

[\(en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Meerssen\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Meerssen) brought the number of pieces of the kingdom back down to three.

Then there was the Treaty of Ribemont (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Ribemont) in 880 AD (5 pieces). After 887 AD, there were 7 pieces. The "Period of the Christian Kingdom" was a period filled with wars among the brothers who ruled the kingdoms formerly united under Charlemagne. Perhaps from God's point of view, warring among brothers can still be considered unification. Is there a parallel in the present day?



The region -- the "Christian Kingdom" -- was split many times before 919. Members who think otherwise can be forgiven, as the Divine Principle book uses some sleight-of-hand to suggest that the kingdom was still united until 919 without actually saying so: "The parallel 120-year period...ended when his [Charlemagne's] royal line ceased in the eastern half of the realm...." Here "the realm" is presumed by the reader to mean the "Christian Kingdom," but in fact refers to the formerly united territory, now divided into smaller kingdoms.

When this division *actually* happened is important for the Principle narrative, because division indicated the failure to lay the Foundation of Faith and Substance. The comparison to the "United Kingdom" of Saul, David, and Solomon is so important that many lecturers called the period the "United Christian Kingdom" (sometimes calling the parallel period the "United Jewish Kingdom"). The idea that after a failure God symbolically divided good and evil by creating a "Cain" country and an "Abel" country -- by cutting the formerly united kingdom in half -- gets completely swept under the rug, and the unimportant fact that somewhere in the "realm" of the formerly united kingdom of Charlemagne his lineal descendant being king (regardless of what his descendants did in terms of Foundation of Faith and Substance) is used instead because it fits the numbers. We know that the king being a lineal descendant of Charlemagne is not important for the parallel, because Saul and David were not related.

So the other aspect of sleight-of-hand in the Principle book is the choice of the election of Henry the Fowler (Henry I) in 919 AD as the end of the period, as if the Foundation of Faith was preserved by nothing other than blood relations, without any regard for what these central figures did, or for the actual divisions and wars that tore apart the "realm."

Another way to look at this is the Principle says it "was also called the Carolingian Empire," which conveniently ignores the fact that the division of east and west happened in 843 AD, but at least the nomenclature can be defended on historical grounds. Unfortunately, the Carolingian Empire ended in 888 AD. Looks like the title of Emperor either ended in 888 AD (Carolingian Empire) or 899 AD (Carolingian Dynasty) or continued to 1806 AD, depending on how you look at it.

By the way, many lecturers mistakenly say that these central figures were in 3 stages or generations (like the 3 kings of Israel: Saul, David & Solomon) of: Charlemagne, his sons, and his grandsons, when in fact there were several more generations by 919 AD. Lothair I (Charlemagne's grandson who inherited the title of Emperor) died in 855 AD. He was succeeded by Charlemagne's great grandson, who died in 875 AD, then back to grandsons, then great-great grandson, then great-great-great grandson, etc.

Now to nomenclature: The Korean black book says 기독왕국 ("Christian Kingdom") and the English black book translated this literally. In 1996, the new translation was "Christian Empire," which is more historically accurate, but not what the Korean says. The Korean implies more of a parallel than can be defended by the facts.

In the 60s, 70s, & 80s when most members joined the church, you would have had to go to the library and really do some digging to check this kind of thing out. Now anyone with an Internet connection can do so easily. I guess we could call this the "Age of True Transparency."

If you **start** from the premise that the periods are legitimate parallels that begin and end on certain dates (like a faithful member believing it because the messiah said so), then a convoluted explanation of how God worked his providence in a circuitous route through the tangle of fallen human decisions might be satisfactory for them. But if you are being presented with historical facts in the context of a supposed pattern in history that testifies to Sun Myung Moon (or Baek Moon Kim) as the messiah, purportedly providing some evidence for that conclusion, the burden of proof should be on the presenter to defend breaking up the periods the way they are and conceptualizing them the way the Principle does. It's fair to ask: "Is this really the logically consistent way to conceptualize this period?" "Are these dates really the logical ones to begin and end the period?" and "Is it really parallel?"