

# Are We Witnessing a Miracle in North Korea?

It's too soon to say for sure, but if things continue to develop positively between North and South Korea, it would not be farfetched to think that we are witnessing a miracle unfold before our eyes. And I say this circumspectly.

After all, just a few months back, North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un was threatening nuclear war as he and President Trump rattled their sabers. The situation looked grim, and many pundits were concerned that Trump was provoking a madman with a powerful army and arsenal.

Worse still, North Korea has been one of the darkest, most closed countries on the planet for more than half a century. Whole families can be imprisoned. Christians suffer horrific abuse. Crowds are ordered to watch public executions.

Big Brother is always watching, while the nation is fed a steady diet of propaganda and lies. It's as if someone read Orwell's *1984* and said, "Let's do this in North Korea."

As for Kim himself, an editorial column by David A. Welch posted in January on the *Globe and Mail* noted that, "Mr. Kim is clearly not a run-of-the-mill leader. He has assassinated his brother, executed his uncle and had senior military officers killed by anti-aircraft fire for no more reason than failing to stand up quickly enough when he entered the room or nodding off in a meeting."

And yet, just days ago, we were reading these words: "North Korea's Kim Jong-un and South Korea's Moon Jae-in shook hands at the border and then held hands as they crossed the military line between the two countries.

"This is the first time a North Korean leader has set foot in

the country of South Korea in 65 years.”

Go back six months in time and ask yourself who would have imagined that, in the last week of April, 2018, the leaders of North and South Korea would meet at the border in mutual embrace? Or that the president of South Korea, President Moon Jae-in, would be recommending Donald Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize? (Honestly, I’m not sure which is more remarkable, the smiling pictures of the two Korean leaders laughing and holding hands, or the headlines about Trump deserving the Peace Prize.)

Again, we don’t know exactly how this will turn out, and we don’t know what natural circumstances produced this amazing breakthrough. But the breakthrough is so shocking and significant that I’m not only looking for natural explanations. I’m looking for supernatural explanations.

I’ve had the privilege of ministering in South Korea on 12 different occasions, spending many hours with the devoted Christians there. They are incredibly hardworking, incredibly passionate, incredibly visionary and incredibly prayerful. No one prays like the Korean Christians!

One megachurch pastor told me that, for several decades, he personally led the 6:00 a.m. prayer meeting at his church. He also led the early-morning prayer meeting that started at 4:30 a.m. The 6:00 a.m. prayer service was the later one.

He was a very busy pastor, nationally respected and sitting on many boards. Yet for decades, he found the time to lead these two prayer meetings, beginning at 4:30 a.m.

One night, I spoke at the 10:00 p.m. service of another megachurch. After they sang some hymns, I was asked to preach, then to walk through the building and lay hands on each of the several thousand believers gathered there, one at a time.

As you could imagine, this took some time. But what got my

attention was the fact that almost no one opened their eyes or looked around. They were all fervently praying. Even in the nursery, the mothers prayed with eyes closed, holding their little ones in their arms as they rocked back and forth.

But this was just the beginning. (Remember: We *started* at 10:00 p.m.) The service continued for hours after I left. It was their weekly, congregational, all-night prayer meeting.

To say it again: No one prays like the Korean Christians.

And this is why I'm wondering out loud if there has been unusual divine intervention between North and South Korea.

Before the Korean War, the majority of the nation's Christians were in the north, and they fled south or went underground when the country was divided. Then something remarkable happened. Christianity began to spread like fire through South Korea, with many of the world's most significant congregations based there today.

Yet these congregations are not complacent. There is a powerful enemy just miles to the north, an enemy that threatens to invade and devastate their nation. And so, for decades, they have prayed for divine protection from their hostile northern neighbor.

But they have also prayed with many tears for their oppressed northern siblings. These South Korean Christians grieve over the deprivation suffered in the north, over the persecution, over the famines. And when they saw the North Koreans weeping when their national leader died—they had worshipped him as if a god, just as they do today with Kim—these South Korean Christians also weep, praying that the veil of deception would be lifted.

Back in July 2016, I participated in an open-air worship service and prayer meeting at the demilitarized zone together with local and international Christians. It was chilling to

look over the border and think that, just a few hundred yards away, a whole nation lived virtually cut off from the outside world. Yet we prayed with fervor for the reunification of Korea, adding our voices to the millions of others who have cried out to God through the decades.

And now, less than two years later, near this very same location, the leaders of North and South Korea embraced. Do you understand better why I asked if we are witnessing a miracle unfolding before our eyes?

Again, I recognize that we don't know exactly where things are going. And even if both countries opted for reunification tomorrow, it would be a massively complex, difficult endeavor. How do you bring a closed nation into the light of day?

But to answer this, I go to the Scriptures: With man, it's impossible. "With God, all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26b).

Let's continue, then, to pray and watch and wait. We may be eyewitnesses to a 21st-century act of God.