

The Vision of Peace and Unification on the Korean Peninsula

Ezekiel 37: 1 ~ 10

There have been two recent historical events that have awakened the political interest of the whole world.

One was a summit between North Korea and the United States on June 12, and the other was the April 27 meeting between the two Koreas, setting the stage for North Korea and the United States to sit at one table.

Their goal is to denuclearize North Korea and establish a peace system on the Korean peninsula.

As you well know, discussions about peace on the Korean Peninsula have already begun, but the process will not be easy.

This process must be done by God and God must be with us. We believe that we should pray for this.

1

Today's text is Ezekiel 37. After the death of the famous King Solomon, Israel became a divided nation divided into the northern Israel and the southern Judah kingdoms.

Then the northern kingdom Israel was destroyed by the Assyrian kingdom, and the southern kingdom Judah was destroyed by the Babylonian kingdom.

At the time of the complete destruction of the nation of Israel, a young prophet called Ezekiel, who was taken captive from the kingdom of Judah into Babylon, was called by God.

It is about 586 BC.

While he was living in Babylon, he heard that Judah was destroyed.

An important national historical question emerged from the heart of this prophet who fell on the floor and prayed.

It was a question of whether his country, which had been damaged by a division just like the division of South and North Korea, could be restored to a single unified

nation.

And in prayer he receives two answers from God in the text of today.

One is, as in verse 19, "they will become one in my hand (God)".

Were God's people just waiting for God's sovereignty?

Then there was another message he received.

It is a word that has already been revealed in v. 17, "they will become one in your hand."

Not God's hand but a human hand, more specifically the hands of God's people. What is the meaning of these two different messages that have been heard in conflict?

Is it up to God or is it up to us?

These two very different messages could be reconciled so that it is God's hands in the time of God, but there would be work done with our hands.

2

So, what is the work of God's people who believe in the unity of the nation to be made by God's sovereignty?

1. Efforts of Peace

In Ezekiel 37, God prophesies the reunification of the nation of Israel and speaks of a vision of a unified nation.

The unified country says that it must be a peaceful country.

He calls the covenant to be with them a covenant of peace.

Based on such peace, the Lord says that their unified kingdom will be a firm and prosperous nation.

This vision is also a picture of the Korean Peninsula of tomorrow that America and Korea are now thirsty.

Read the verses of Ezekiel 37:26.

“I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant. I will establish them and increase their numbers, (and I will put my sanctuary among them forever).”

So, God made the prophet Ezekiel convey a very symbolic message to his people visually.

He asked Ezekiel to bring two sticks, one stick to write Judas, and another stick to write Ephraim (for North Israel), then join the two sticks together.

Cannot you see the heart of God trying to make the divided people into one?

Unification is not only a wish of the Korean people, but a desire of God himself.

Therefore, Christian efforts toward unification are God's ministry.

Today, we are concerned that the summit between the United States and North Korea, between Korea and North Korea will be politically motivated, but basically, apart from political understanding, we Christians should always be able to support the peace ministry of this land.

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Because it is the work of the Lord.

Listen to the testimony of the Apostle Paul.

(Ephesians 2:14) "He (Christ) himself is our peace, who has made the two and has destroyed the barrier, and the dividing wall of hostility".

We must learn the prayer of St. Francis who bowed before the cross when the atmosphere of the Crusades was dominating throughout Europe. "Lord, make us an instrument of peace"

2. Leadership in Peace

If we really desire peaceful reunification of the Korean peninsula, we must think more seriously about the responsibility the Lord has given us.

One of those responsibilities is to establish healthy leadership to take charge of the unified country.

That is the text of verse 22.

“I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. There will be one king over all of them...”

Who is the king?

The answer is written in verse 24.

"My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees."

The leadership of this unified nation is David's leadership.

Of course, at the time the Prophet Ezekiel had received these words, David was historically a man of the past.

Therefore, it would be more appropriate to say that David is not the literal David, but the leadership of David, or the leadership of the Messiah, who will come as a descendant of David.

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So, what is the nature of David's leadership?

David waited with patience, not trying to absorb the north by force, even when Judah's power overwhelmed Israel.

He did not delight in the death of Saul, the ruler of the north, and was grieved with him.

He had mercy on Mephibosheth, the grandson of Saul, who was suffering from disability, and he had the hearts of the people of the north and south together.

So, at the time God finally decided, he could be regarded as a leader of a people who had joined together in Judah and Israel.

So, David was able to carry out the task of unification of Israel without shedding blood.

What a wonderful leader?

Do not you need these leaders today?

David's leadership was the leadership of service, the leadership of compassion, and the leadership of peace.

Why do not we pray that these leaders will be set up in the future?

3. We must preach the gospel of the resurrection.

One of the questions that we cannot avoid when talking about unified Korea is what is the identity of unified Korea that we all want.

Unification supremacists argue that the Korean peninsula should be unified regardless of whether it is socialism or democracy.

But that is not the Bible's teaching.

The unified Israel that God showed to the prophet Ezekiel was not merely a single nation, but a holy nation in which the sanctuary could be rebuilt and serve God freely.

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Read the second half of Ezekiel 37:26.

"And I will put my sanctuary among them forever"

Therefore, the future Korean peninsula that we expect is a free nation to serve and worship God, not a totalitarianism or a socialist unification nation, in which the freedom of faith is shrunk and oppressed.

Above all, it is to be a holy nation to serve the holy God, whose idols are removed and purified from sin, as the text says 37:23.

“They will no longer defile themselves with their idols and vile images or with any of their offenses...”

Then, in what ways can we make such a unified Korean peninsula of the future?

The answer is the Word and the Holy Spirit. The prophet Ezekiel saw the vision of the resurrection of the nation of Israel as a great army when he declared the breath and the words toward the dead in the valley of the Israelites full of dead bones.

That's right. The answer is the gospel of the resurrection.

We believe that the unified Korean Peninsula should become a sanctuary to be

renewed with the Gospel of Resurrection.

Beloved believers, can the peaceful unification Korea come true? If so, how can we prepare for such peace?

We look forward to this peaceful future of the Korean Peninsula and to learn about the experience of Germany once in a divided state.

There were German Saints who dreamed of a peaceful unified nation.

They started a small prayer meeting quietly in 1982 at St. Nikolai Church in Leipzig, East Germany.

A small number of people gathered on Monday evenings and began to pray, dreaming of a unified Germany of the future, worshiping God as much as possible.

And seven years later, this prayer meeting began to become known.

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And finally, those who participated in this prayer meeting began to grow exponentially.

On Monday, September 11, 1989, at the evening prayer meeting, there were about 25,000 participants who did not enter the Sanctuary.

They stood and participated in prayer meetings, then went out into the streets for a peaceful silence march.

It was this prayer meeting and this peace march which, in about two months, peacefully destroyed the Berlin Wall that blocked the East and West.

I think of an American missionary who prayed for a lifetime for the peace and reunification of the Korean peninsula.

His name is Rev. Reuben Archer Torrey.

He was originally born in China as the son of an American Presbyterian missionary, Lucern Archer Torrey, and spent his childhood in China and Pyongyang.

He founded the Anglican Monastery in Taebaek, a coal mine in Gangwon Province in 1965, and tried to practice an egalitarian society in which there was no gap between the rich and the poor.

He left the world in 2002 with the call of the Lord. In his lifetime he said:

"In my opinion, the cup of prayer for God to act for the peaceful reunification of Korea is not taking place.

For the cup to be filled, intercessor to pray are more necessary than ever. "

That's right. If the cup of intercession is full, and the time will come, the Lord will rise.

The walls of the division will collapse, and a day of peace will come.

Then we will hold each other without bloodshed and sing the song of peace and unity in Christ.

Should we not pray together for the vision of this thriving peace?

This is God's desire which we see in Jesus.

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God wants, "In this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility." (Ephesians 2:16)

Jesus Christ has overcome all the divisions together and has reconciled everything to himself.

We hope that the two Koreas will exert their full power in the work of achieving complete reconciliation, peace, and new history by the power of the Holy Spirit in Jesus Christ.

"He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed." (Luke 4:18)

Jesus Christ not only heals the wounded people, but also proclaims the realization of their basic human rights as the goal of the kingdom of God.

I ask you to pray that the human rights violations such as detention and torture, forced labor in the political concentration camps, and public executions of North Koreans by the arbitrary arrest of the North Korean authorities will be promptly improved.

I urge you to pray hard for the Chinese authorities to immediately stop forcing the North Korean defectors to return to North Korea.

I urge our two churches to work together and pray for the Chinese authorities to grant legal refugee status to North Korean defectors.