The word of Jehovah came again unto me, saying, 

And thou, son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: and join them for thee one to another into one stick, that they may become one in thy hand. 

And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these? say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his companions; and I will put them with it, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in my hand. 

And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thy hand before their eyes. 

And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, whither they are gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all; neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.

And my servant David shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in mine ordinances, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their children’s children, for ever: and David my servant shall be their prince for ever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.

Abraham’s grandson Jacob’s name was changed to Israel (Genesis 32:28-29: 35:10). He had twelve sons and his favorite was Joseph. In their envy his older ten sons sold Joseph to a group of itinerate Ishmaelites. They in turn sold Joseph into slavery in Egypt. He eventually through the Lord’s providence rose to become second only to Pharaoh in the government of the nation Egypt. He married an Egyptian woman named Aseneth who
bore him two sons Manasseh and Ephraim (Genesis 41:50-20). Jacob and his family totaling seventy people then went down to Egypt from Canaan seeking food for there was a famine in the land. Many years later when Jacob was on his deathbed before he called his sons to bless them he blessed Joseph’s two sons Manasseh and Ephraim. They received an inheritance of the Abrahamic covenant that was passed down to Jacob.

After a period of four hundred years Moses led the Children of Israel (1444 B.C.) out of Egypt who numbered in excess of 1.2 million. During the wilderness wandering they were given an allotment of property in the Promise Land according to the twelve tribes (Numbers 34). They wandered for forty years before going into the Promise Land of Canaan under general Joshua. Joshua divided the land up according to the Lord’s allocation with property also going to Joseph’s sons Manasseh and Ephraim (Joshua 16; 17). Joshua entered the Promise Land about 1400 B.C. Approximately four hundred years later Saul became the first king of Israel. He was followed by David and he was succeeded by Solomon, David’s son. Solomon was the last king of the united monarchy. In 931 B.C. Solomon died leaving the kingdom of Israel to his son Rehoboam. Many refused to accept him as the king and a man named Jeroboam led a succession of the ten northern tribal regions into an independent nation that called themselves Israel. Rehoboam remained in the south in the kingdom called Judah. They were not united again until Israel was reborn as a sovereign state in 1948.


**ISRAEL TO BE JOINED**

Ezekiel 37:15-17

> 15The word of Jehovah came again unto me, saying, 16And thou, son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: 17and join
them for thee one to another into one stick, that they may become one in thy hand (ASV, 1901).

Ezekiel is now told to take two sticks and write upon them. One stick was to be labeled with the name Judah and the Children of Israel his companions, the other tribes. The other stick was to be labeled with the name Joseph and Ephraim and for all the house of Israel his companions, again the other tribes. In general, Ephraim is used as a synecdoche (part
referencing the whole) to refer to the whole Northern Kingdom of Israel. The tribe of Ephraim inhabited the northern part of Israel. Jeroboam I, the first king of the Northern Kingdom was from the tribe of Ephraim (I Kings 11:26) and the later prophets often refer to the Northern Kingdom by the name Ephraim (Jeremiah 31:6; Hosea 1:11). Israel was taken into captivity by Assyria in 722 B.C., and Judah was taken into exile by Babylon in 605, 597 and 586 B.C.

The essence of this prophecy is the merging of the two sticks into one unit. This stick or rod should have been a familiar symbol for the people of Israel. God used it to describe the twelve tribes of Israel whose names were commanded each to be written on a stick or rod (Numbers 17:2-10).

These sticks which Ezekiel is told to place together represent the reunification of the nation Israel into one sovereign country not divided as it was after the days of king Solomon.

**Ezekiel is to Answer the People**

Ezekiel 37:18-19

18 And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these? 19 say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his companions; and I will put them with it, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in my hand (ASV, 1901).

Ezekiel made one stick of the two by holding them together to portray to the people in public the reunification of the revived nation. Ezekiel avoided the use the name “Israel” for the Northern Kingdom, instead using the name “Joseph” or “Ephraim”. Since this was done publically as so many of his other displays of the Lord’s prophecies it prompted the people to ask, “Wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these?” God is saying that He will do these things that He is commanding Ezekiel to display through the sticks. This is the essence of this prophecy. God will display His power and providence to show the world that it is He who superintends all of world history, past, present, and future. The Jews were at an all time low morale point in their existence as prisoners of war in Babylon. They were sent there by God because of their sins. Sin always results in judgment.

Adam and Eve broke God’s rule and the result was a corruption of the creation. Sometimes people can break man’s laws and get away with it. No one gets away with breaking God’s rules. Sin will always catch up with us to accuse us, confront us and condemn us. This positive prophecy from God was an assurance that He still loved them and would restore them to a state better than but similar to what they experience during the united monarchy.

**Israel to be Gathered From The Nations of the World**

Ezekiel 37: 20-23
And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thy hand before their eyes.  
And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, whither they are gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all; neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.

At the time of this prophecy (cir. 580 B.C.) the northern ten tribes had been carried off to Assyria in 722 B.C. and the Southern two tribes were in Babylon since at least 605 B.C. Later the Romans destroyed the Temple in 70 AD which scattered the Jews into even more countries. Then after the Bar Kochba rebellion in 135 AD He further dispersed them. They have been wandering for many years in host countries all around the world before they started returning in the Zionist movement in the late 1800’s AD. All together there were or will be four stages of their return to fulfill the Lord’s commands.

1. The Zionist Movement  
2. The end of WW I and the establishment of the Mandate  
3. End of WW II and the creation of the sovereign State of Israel  
4. The National Regeneration of Israel and beginning of the Messianic Kingdom

The first three stages are all in the past. Their final regathering also will be as Jesus described in Matthew from the four winds. This final regathering will also include the inhabitants of Heaven in addition to those from the entire earth.

Matthew 24:30-31

Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

Stage four is a future event at the end of the Tribulation when they cry out to God in belief in their Messiah the Lord Jesus (Matthew 23:39).

Their sins will all be forgiven and they will have one king over them. Which means that the two segments Israel and Judah will be reunited into one unified nation similar to the monarchy of the past.

The Hebrew verb yaša means to save and appears three times in this book (Ezekiel 34:22; 36:29, 37:23). In the first occurrence is means redemption from external enemies or troubles. In the last two references, the word is used of salvation of personal sin. In the entire OT, only in Ezekiel is this word used of salvation from one’s own self. God will save them from themselves. This is just as Jesus offers salvation to the world first to the Jew, His people and then to the Gentile (Romans 1:16).
Matthew 1:21

21 She will bear a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins” (MEV).

RESURRECTED DAVID WILL BE KING OVER ISRAEL

Ezekiel 37:24-25

24 And my servant David shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in mine ordinances, and observe my statutes, and do them. 25 And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their children’s children, for ever: and David my servant shall be their prince for ever (ASV, 1901).

God identifies the leader of the unified Israel in the Messianic Kingdom as David the former king of Israel. He will be resurrected and restored as the king over the Jews. He will report to the King of the World Jesus. During this one-thousand year kingdom according to the nature of the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34) the Jews will all be sinless and as God says, “walk in mine ordinances, and observe my statutes, and do them.” They shall all live forever in the land of Eretz Israel. God closes this section of Scripture further clarifying David’s role as the “prince.” He will be king of Israel and a prince under King Jesus who will be the head of the entire world’s government.

THE NEW COVENANT WILL BE INAUGURATED

Ezekiel 37:26-28

26 Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. 27 My tabernacle also shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 28 And the nations shall know that I am Jehovah that sanctifieth Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore (ASV, 1901).

Finally Israel will be at peace with God and there will be universal peace amongst the nations. Corporate Israel finally believing that Jesus is their Messiah will receive the peace of God that surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4:7). They will be multiplied beyond all expectations and the Lord’s sanctuary will be set in Jerusalem and He will regularly be meeting with them again as He did with Adam and Even in the Garden of Eden before the Fall. The Lord’s sanctuary will be a Temple like no other of which He will give a lengthily and vivid description in chapters 40-48 of this book. It was only to this prophet Ezekiel that the Lord shared these revelations.

Next Week: THE GOG & MAGOG INVASION OF ISRAEL PART I

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