

## Chapter 10



# The Restoration of the Davidic Government Part IV

## The Symbolism of the Two Joined Sticks

The ancient house of Israel, the twelve original tribes were, subsequent to the occupation of the land of Israel, divided into two groups--the ten tribes known as the house of Israel and the two-tribe Kingdom, Judah. The two divided groups (tribes) have never been reunited. And this remains the status of the twelve tribes of Israel to this time.

There is a unique prophecy that predicts these two divided nations will be reunited. It is known as the prophecy of the 'two joined sticks.'

**"The word of the Lord came to me: Son of man, take a stick and write on it, 'For Judah, and the children of Israel associated with him'; then take another stick and write upon it 'For Joseph (the stick of Ephraim) and all the house of Israel associated with him': and join them together into one stick, that they may become one in your hand. And when your people say to you, 'Will you not show us what you mean by these?' say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am about to take the stick of Joseph (which is in the hand of Ephraim) and the tribes of Israel associated with him; and I will join with it the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, that they may be one in my hand.'" (Ezekiel 37:15-19 RSV)**

This prophecy hardly needs to be interpreted, as it is plain and self-explanatory. It shows tht the two ancient kingdoms, Judah and Israel, are to be gathered from among the nations where they have been scattered, and that they will become one great nation again--"a kingdom which shall never be destroyed" (Daniel 2:44 RSV).

**"When the sticks on which you write are in your hand before their eyes, then say to them, Thus says the Lord God; Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all sides, and bring them to their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; and they shall be no longer two nations, and no longer divided into two nations, and no longer divided into two kingdoms. They shall not defile themselves any more with their idols and their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will save them from all their backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. My servant David shall be king over them; and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall follow my ordinances and be careful to observe my statutes. They shall dwell in the land where yours fathers dwelt that I gave to my servant Jacob; they and their children and their children's children shall dwell there for ever; and David my servant shall be their prince for ever. I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will bless them and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My dwelling place shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Then the nations will know that I the Lord sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary,' is in the midst of them for evermore" (Ezekiel 37:20-28 RSV).**

Since God says that He will "multiply them" when they are again joined and restored into one kingdom, and that "the nations shall know that I the Lord sanctify Israel," the restoration is to occur during what is called, in Christian theology, probationary time--prior to the expected culmination of all things.<sup>1</sup>

The restoration of the Davdic government with the restoration of Israel is a unique, little understood, but highly textually substantiated forecast of unfolding circumstances in Earth's history at a point of critical social mass. To the Christian, these texts and predictive circumstances represent a substantial new eschatological view of the future and a renewed hope for the establishment of a just and vibrant society.

When the consolidation of the two kingdoms is an accomplished fact, then it will be apparent that the time has come for the proclamation of the gospel in all the world, with power and effectiveness.

### **The King's Dream**

There is a Biblical story which many Christians have heard, told in their churches and classrooms--it is the story of Daniel, and what the Babylonian, King Nebuchadnezzar, saw in a dream/vision. The story is found in the Daniel chapter 2 and is known as 'Nebuchadnezzar's Dream.' The story goes that the king had a dream which deeply impressed him--but he had forgotten the specifics of the dream. The king called on the wise men of the realm to help him remember the dream, but no one could help him. The story continues that the king became so angry that he threatened to have the wise men of Babylon executed for their failure (Daniel 2:12-13). At this point Daniel sought his God, and the dream was revealed to him. Daniel was then taken before the king. The record of the revelation of the dream is as follows:

**"Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus to him. I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who can make known to the king the interpretation. (The dream and the interpretation) The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, 'Are you able to make known**

to me the dream that I have seen and its interpretation?' Daniel answered the king, 'No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or astrologer can show to the king the mystery which the king has asked, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay in bed are these: To you, O king, as you lay in bed came thoughts of what would be hereafter, and he who reveals mysteries made known to you what is to be. But as for me, not because of any wisdom that I have more than all the living has this mystery been revealed to me, but in order that the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your mind.'" (Daniel 2:24-30 RSV)

#### The Great Image

"You saw, O king, and behold, a great image. This image, mighty and of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening. The head of this image was of fine gold, its breast and arms of silver, its belly and thigh of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it smote the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces; then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. This was the dream; now we will tell the king its interpretation." (Daniel 2:31-36 RSV)

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