

Ezekiel 37:15-28 ¹⁵ The word of the LORD came again to me saying, ¹⁶ "And you, son of man, take for yourself one stick and write on it, 'For Judah and for the sons of Israel, his companions'; then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and all the house of Israel, his companions.'" ¹⁷ "Then join them for yourself one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand. ¹⁸ "When the sons of your people speak to you saying, 'Will you not declare to us what you mean by these?' ¹⁹ say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "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, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.'" ²⁰ "The sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes. ²¹ "Say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; ²² and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king will be king for all of them; and they will no longer be two nations and no longer be divided into two kingdoms. ²³ "They will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people, and I will be their God. ²⁴ "My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes and observe them. ²⁵ "They will live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons and their sons' sons, forever; and David My servant will be their prince forever. ²⁶ "I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in their midst forever. ²⁷ "My dwelling place also will be with them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people. ²⁸ "And the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forever.'"

If we only had this portion of Scripture to identify which Israel is given promises for the future we might certainly conclude that God has plans of taking the national group of people we know as Jews

and reestablishing them back in the land we know as Israel in the present Middle East.

We would look at these passages and conclude that God is going to gather Jews from every corner of the earth and bring them into their own land, which is apparently what Ezekiel records in verse 21, "Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land;

And by the way, this is why many Christians believe that this is precisely what God will do during the supposed thousand year reign of Christ on this present earth when He brings the physical descendants of Abraham together and reestablishes them under His rule and thus finally fulfills the promises we see here in Ezekiel.

But Ezekiel is not the only place that addresses the future promises for Israel and as we saw last time the Israel that Ezekiel is addressing is all people from every tribe, tongue and nation as this everlasting covenant that Ezekiel addresses is not meant for only a national group but for all people groups, both Jew and Gentile.

Revelation 5:9-13 ⁹ And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and *purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.* ¹⁰ "You have made them *to be* a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth." ¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." ¹³ And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, *be* blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever."

You'll notice that both Ezekiel and John in Revelation are describing the exact same kingdom with the exact same King as ruling over them. Let's look at it.

In the context of Ezekiel 37 we see two sticks being united as one stick. The two sticks are representing two parts of the whole, which at the time of this writing would address both the northern

kingdom and the southern kingdom who had been taken into captivity.

The immediate promise would have demonstrated that God would bring the Jews back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple, which is the central place of worship for the Jews in those days, and so there is an immediate, though temporary fulfillment to this prophecy.

But this prophecy, when put into the context of a coming fulfillment in an everlasting covenant where the Spirit of God raises spiritually dead people from their graves or in a similar way brings dead bones back to life, cannot be limited to the physical descendants of Abraham, Jews from both Judah and Israel, being regathered to the land in a millennial kingdom on this present earth.

Why?

Because a millennial kingdom is just that, a thousand years. That is not an everlasting kingdom. That is still a temporal kingdom on a fallen cursed world.

Ezekiel is addressing a time in which all of Israel will be gathered from every corner of the earth. But the Israel that Ezekiel is pointing to is the Israel that Abraham would be a part of even though he never saw his descendants coming together as a physical people inhabiting the present day land we know as Israel.

The Israel that Abraham belonged to is the Israel that you and I in Christ belong to as we are spiritual descendants of Abraham because we are of the same faith as Abraham.

Galatians 3:5-9 ⁵ So then, does He who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? ⁶ Even so Abraham BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS. ⁷ Therefore, be sure that *it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.* ⁸ *The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU."* ⁹ *So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.*

The prophecy of the two sticks, though certainly representing both the southern and northern kingdoms during the time of Ezekiel, are not limited to just Jews being reunited together, but is a picture of a

future reuniting of the entire house of Israel that would include both Jew and Gentile. And this is precisely what Paul tells us.

Ephesians 2:11-22 ¹¹ Therefore remember that *formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh*, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," *which is performed in the flesh by human hands--* ¹² *remember* that you were at that time separate from Christ, *excluded from the commonwealth of Israel*, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ *But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.* ¹⁴ *For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall,* ¹⁵ by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, *which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances*, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, *thus establishing peace,* ¹⁶ and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. ¹⁷ AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; ¹⁸ for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then *you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,* ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

Notice what Paul says here. He states the Gentiles were not part of the commonwealth of Israel, and the covenants of promise, in verse 12.

In fact, it says there were excluded, which is to say the invitation did not go out to the Gentile world but was limited to Israel, but in verse 19 he says of the Gentiles that *you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,*

What household are Gentile believers now a part of, that they once were excluded from?

The commonwealth of Israel and the covenants of promise.

The physical descendants of Abraham, the Jewish nation, rejected the covenants of promise that Ezekiel is addressing.

Let us again address the covenants of promise that Ezekiel is laying out for us.

Ezekiel 37:21-23 ²¹ "Say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; ²² and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king will be king for all of them; and they will no longer be two nations and no longer be divided into two kingdoms. ²³ "They will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people, and I will be their God.

The promise is for one Kingdom with one people under God.

Ephesians 2:14-15 ¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who made both *groups into* one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, ¹⁵ by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, *which is* the Law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, *thus* establishing peace,

By the way, notice that Paul says that Jesus abolished in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances.

If Ezekiel were simply addressing Judah and Israel, who were most certainly divided and at enmity with each other, then if those two Jewish groups got back together in Jerusalem after the captivity, would the law of commandments contained in ordinances have been abolished?

No. In fact, when the Jews regathered in Jerusalem after the captivity what was central to their worship of God?

The temple as they were instructed to rebuild it.

But Paul says, the kingdom to which the believing Gentiles were grafted into along with the believing Jews, was a kingdom where Christ abolished the law of commandments as a means of worshipping and standing in a right relationship with God.

And this is the picture that Ezekiel continues to paint for us as he tells us how God will accomplish this.

Ezekiel 37:23 but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people, and I will be their God.

This exact language is used by the writer of Hebrews to describe the people of God, known as the Israel of God under the new covenant found in Christ, which is identified as the Church.

Hebrews 8:7-13 ⁷ For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. ⁸ For finding fault with them, He says, "BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE LORD, WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH; ⁹ NOT LIKE THE COVENANT WHICH I MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS ON THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT; FOR THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT, AND I DID NOT CARE FOR THEM, SAYS THE LORD. ¹⁰ "FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. ¹¹ "AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,' FOR ALL WILL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM. ¹² "FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES, AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE." ¹³ When He said, "A new *covenant*," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.

And it was Christ Himself who established that new covenant.

^{NAU} **Luke 22:20** And in the same way *He took* the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.

^{NAU} **Hebrews 9:15** For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were *committed* under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Those who have been called to partake of the new covenant are the one's that Ezekiel is addressing as those who will be God's people and He will be their God. And they will all live under one King.

Ezekiel 37:24 ²⁴ "My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes and observe them.

Now, we have discussed this before but it's worth noting again. At the writing of this prophecy by Ezekiel David has been dead for hundreds of years, approximately 400 in fact.

How can Ezekiel speak of this new united Kingdom with a promise of a King who will be their shepherd who is described as, "My servant David?"

This David is the same one of whom Jeremiah and Hosea also prophesied.

^{NAU} **Jeremiah 30:9** 'But they shall serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.

^{NAU} **Hosea 3:5** Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king; and they will come trembling to the LORD and to His goodness in the last days.

What last days is Hosea speaking of?

The time of the son of David coming to rescue His people.

Hebrews 1:1-4 ^{NAU} God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, ² in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. ³ And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

The son of David that Ezekiel speaks of is the same son of David recorded for us in the New Testament.

Matthew 1:1 ^{NAU} The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham:

Why is it so important that the genealogy of Jesus include David or Abraham?

Because without a physical genealogy Jesus would not be a true man and therefore not fit to represent men before the Father.

The Jews of Christ's day knew their O.T. Scriptures when it addressed this hope that Ezekiel speaks of when he describes their future King called David.

Matthew 12:23 ²³ All the crowds were amazed, and were saying, "This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?"

Later, as Jesus is about to enter Jerusalem to announce the end of His ministry He says this to His disciples.

Matthew 21:2-5 ² ... "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied *there* and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me. ³ "If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." ⁴ This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: ⁵ "SAY TO THE DAUGHTER OF ZION, 'BEHOLD YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU, GENTLE, AND MOUNTED ON A DONKEY, EVEN ON A COLT, THE FOAL OF A BEAST OF BURDEN.'"

Shortly thereafter the crowds recognized that this truly is the King that the prophets foretold would come to rescue them from bondage.

Matthew 21:9 ⁹ The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David; BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Hosanna in the highest!"

Unfortunately, many of those Jews were looking for another earthly king to deliver them from bondage, not the bondage of sin, but the bondage of Roman rule.

On another occasion Jesus addressed this whole issue of the Christ, being the son of David, with the Pharisees.

Matthew 22:41-46 ⁴¹ Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question: ⁴² "What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?" They said to Him, "*The son of David.*" ⁴³ He said to them, "Then how does David in the Spirit

call Him 'Lord,' saying, ⁴⁴ "THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I PUT YOUR ENEMIES BENEATH YOUR FEET ""? ⁴⁵ "If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his son?" ⁴⁶ No one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question.

What Jesus is asking the Pharisees is very instructive because He first establishes that these Pharisees actually understand that when the prophets, like Jeremiah, Isaiah and Ezekiel, speak of the Messiah they rightly identify the Christ as being the son of David.

And so, essentially the Pharisees say, 'of course we know that the Christ is identified as the son of David.'

They understood the Messiah to be a man sent from God. But Jesus corrects their thinking by asking them another question. The next question doesn't negate the fact that the Christ is a man, the son of David, but it then introduces another aspect of this Messiah that David himself introduces.

Every one of these Pharisees could have quoted the psalm that Jesus refers to. And this is Psalm 110, which is a psalm about the king ruling over Israel.

Psalm 110:1 ^{NAU} A Psalm of David. The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."

The reason Jesus asks the question regarding the Christ, whom the Pharisees all agree is the son of David, is because this son of David, according to David himself, is someone greater than David in nature.

"The Lord says to David's Lord." David's Lord is the one spoken of in the rest of the psalm who is identified as the King and by extension the Messiah who will save His people Israel.

Here's the problem for the Pharisees. What Lord are we talking about?

"The Lord says to my Lord?" In the Hebrew we have two words for Lord in this one sentence. The first word is Jehovah while the second word is Adonai.

Jehovah says to my Adonai, sit at My right hand.

We all know that Jehovah is the formal name for God the Creator, but Adonai is also a name for God that men would use so as to avoid the formal name which they thought too holy to utter. Abraham would be one example as he addressed Jehovah.

Genesis 18:26-27 ²⁶ So the LORD (Jehovah) said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare the whole place on their account." ²⁷ And Abraham replied, "Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord (Adonai), although I am *but* dust and ashes.

The Pharisees knew that when David said, Jehovah says to my Adonai, sit at My right hand, the light went off after the question that David was speaking of a son of his that would be king and the Christ and that He is identified as Adonai.

If they admit that the Christ, who is the son of David, is in fact God Himself, they must admit the Messiah they seek is not a mere man sent from God but is God/man. And if Jesus is representing Himself as the Christ then they must accept that He is that God/man sent to redeem a people for Himself.

Thus their response, or lack thereof, at the end of Jesus' question.

Matthew 22:46 ⁴⁶ No one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question.

The Pharisees were not looking for the son of David of whom Ezekiel speaks, but the son of David is none other than the Son of God who will come to establish an eternal kingdom on the eternal new earth, not this present earth.

And so when Ezekiel addresses this King He is identified as both Jehovah and Adonai.

Ezekiel 37:21 ²¹ "Say to them, "Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land;

Ezekiel 37:26-28 ²⁶ "I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an *everlasting covenant* with them. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set *My sanctuary in their midst forever*. ²⁷ "My dwelling place also will be with them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people. ²⁸ "And the nations will

know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when *My sanctuary is in their midst forever.*""

This future kingdom is an everlasting kingdom which in no way can be identified with a thousand years on this present cursed planet. When Christ comes back it will be to establish an everlasting kingdom with His people as King of kings and Lord of lords when His sanctuary will be in our midst forever.

This language is almost identical as we see the fulfillment of it in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 21:1-7 ^{NAU} Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "***Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them,*** ⁴ and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." ⁵ And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." ⁶ Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. ⁷ "He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.