

**WFN Lesson**  
**April 22, 2020**  
**Ezekiel 37:15-28; 39:25-29**

**A Re-United Kingdom**

-“The book of Joshua presents Israel’s entrance into Canaan as a military conquest accomplished by the militia of a united Israel. Nonetheless, it is unlikely that the acquisition of the land was as simple as that. Various Israelite groups settled in regions of Canaan. Gradually and independently of one another, they became dominant in their respective regions. The book of Judges makes it clear that the tribes engaged in concerted action when under pressure from a common threat. Even so, it was difficult to get more than the tribes immediately affected into action (see Judg. 4-5). It was not until the Philistines posed such a great danger to all the Israelite tribes that they agreed to unite under Saul. David was able to parlay his military success against the Philistines and others into political unity among the tribes and the establishment of a national state. This unity was fragile and did not outlive Solomon his successor.

“Ezekiel stands in the tradition that believed that political unity among the tribes under the leadership of a Davidic monarch was the divine will...one God, one people, and one king. This perspective came to dominate the biblical tradition” (Vawter & Hoppe, 169).

-Unfortunately, Ezekiel’s idealistic vision did not come to fruition

-We continue to see different levels of tension and animosity between the North and South, even in Jesus’ day. There were proud Southern Jews, Galileans (which were from the North; Jesus and the 12 disciples were from this area), and Samaritans (a “half-breed” of Israelites from the Northern Kingdom and Gentiles that the Assyrians deposited into the Northern Kingdom of Israel).

-We’re waiting on Jesus to restore all these things (and more!): North and South, Jew and Gentile, the original Israel with the New Testament understanding of God’s people (the Church universal)

**A King over All**

-Ezekiel typically uses the word “prince” when talking about Israel’s messianic figure

-In Ezekiel’s mind, *Yahweh* is king. Ezekiel is okay with having a human figure (“prince”) act as the human leader of God’s people, but Ezekiel doesn’t really want the monarchy as it used to be to return. He envisions the “prince” fulfilling more of a priestly role than political role (see Ezekiel 46:1-18).

-However, in Ezekiel 37:22, Ezekiel actually uses the word “king” a few times in talking about a leader who can unite the two kingdoms—a rare occurrence.

-Jesus fulfills Ezekiel’s vision quite perfectly, as he not only fulfilled the prophets’ hopes and descriptions for a messianic figure, but also *was* God, the true King of Israel.

-Read: Ephesians 1:7-10; Jesus came to tear down false structures (cf. Matthew 10:34), uniting all peoples under his banner, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:10-11).

-Read: Jeremiah 33:14-16; Jeremiah also envisioned a future leader for Israel, who would act as a more perfect David (the idealized Israelite king). He actually refers to this person as a “righteous branch,” which uses similar imagery to Ezekiel’s two united sticks in Ezekiel 37.

### **Restoration Hope**

-Read: Ezekiel 39:25-29; God promises a return from exile, bringing all of God’s people back *together*. God promises an outpouring of God’s Spirit (something we’ve already seen in Ezekiel 11 & 36), and that God will no longer be hidden from God’s people.

### **Memory Verse**

-Ezekiel 37:22b—There will be one king over all of them and they will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms.

### **Fun Activity**

-Fun with Magnets: If you have some magnets lying around (on the fridge, as a part of a toy, etc.), pull them out and have a little fun. Try out a number of things, displaying both repulsion and attraction. Talk about how Ezekiel’s vision of the two sticks becoming one displays a similar image to two magnets coming together (it’s even cooler because the “North” and “South” Kingdoms, at opposite ends, can be paralleled to the “Positive” and “Negative” poles of magnets). For bonus fun, pull out a compass (if you have one) and test out the magnets with it!