

# “The Sign of Two Sticks”

By Kelly Koshatka

*“Moreover, 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 one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou meanest by these? Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes” (EZ. 37:16-20).*

In Ezekiel 37:15-28 God told Ezekiel to take one stick and write on it, “The Kingdom of Judah”, and then to take another stick and write on it, “The Kingdom of Israel.” Ezekiel was further instructed to hold the two sticks end to end in his hand so that they would become as one stick in his hand. A Hebrew translation reads, “Bring them close to each other so that they become one stick joined together in your hand” (v.17). When the people asked Ezekiel what his actions with the sticks meant, the Lord told Ezekiel to tell them, “Out of the two I will make one stick and hold it in my hand.” (v. 19 GNV.) Another translation reads: “ they shall be joined in My Hand.” Next the Lord instructs Ezekiel to “Hold up before their eyes the sticks ... and let the people see them.”(v.20) At this point the sticks are being held together as one in Ezekiel’s hand before the people of the house of Israel. Ezekiel further explains that God will gather them into their own land (v.21), and not just gather but “I will make them ONE nation... with One King.” (v.22a) And listen to these words... “And they shall no more be two, neither shall they be divided into two any more at all.” (v.22b) In God’s Hand, In God’s eyes, and in God’s heart we are “one stick”. We may look around and see separation and feel division, but in His Hand we are one.

## **LOOK AT THE STICK!!**

Basically God told Ezekiel to hold up the Cross in front of the people (the two sticks) and show them that He has from two made one new man. Through Christ’s death and in His resurrection, the two sticks are now one. Paul said it this way, “*To make in Himself of two one new man, so making peace. And that He might reconcile both unto God IN ONE BODY by the cross*” (Eph. 2:15b-16a). God’s servants hold up the Cross that we might learn to fix our eyes on Jesus as He now is in His resurrection.

There is an assembling that God is doing. He knows the One we have become in His Son, and He knows how to assemble us according to the one we already are “in His Hand”. Having determined to know nothing save Christ and Him crucified, may we ever set our hearts to see Jesus in His fullness remembering that we are now seated together in

heavenly places in Christ Jesus, who is sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Eph. 2:6, Heb. 1:3)

**“Bring them close to each other so that they  
become one stick joined together in your hand.”**

The Lord brings us “close to each other” sometimes with the intention of conforming us to the image of Christ as His One Body. To work within us the Nature of Christ that is to fill the temple it is necessary for circumstances to prove to us if we are functioning and being tempered together in the Divine Nature, or just doing our best to be like Jesus. There is much to say about ‘untempered mortar’ in the Book of Ezekiel (Ez. 13:10-16). If what we are building with and being held together by is not truly the Life of Christ, then we are setting a course for destruction. The mortar that God wants to build us together with is the pure mortar of the Nature of His Son, the Lamb. The new man we are to put on is Him in Whom “Christ is all and in all” as opposed to the mindset of striving to “get along with each other” through means and methods that are not Christ as Life (Col. 3:11). This nature can only be tested and proven in us as it is given opportunity to manifest in love towards our brother. As Christ lives in us, God’s love is knitting us together in the bond of perfection. This word “bond” in the Greek means “a joint or a ligament”. In Colossians it states that the supply of Life to these joints and ligaments comes from the Head. *“And not holding the Head, from whom all the Body by joints and bands have nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.”* Col.2:19) At the end of the Book of Judges there is this testimony given, *“So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, knit together as one man.”* (Jdg.20:11) This “one man” and “one stick” that was brought forth in Christ’s resurrection is Christ all and in all.

**Perfection is Corporate**

*“If we love one another God dwelleth in us , and his love is perfected in us”* I Jn. 4:12) The perfection God is looking for is not found in our individual stature, but in the Corporate expression of His Son. *“Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined”* Ps. 50:2. The One we are conforming to must be Christ, or we have not built according to the true Pattern. Only through His Life alone, as we behold the “one stick” He has made us in Himself, can we proceed to build properly. *“For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ”* (I Cor. 3:11). Jesus prayed that as it is in heaven, so it would also be in earth. (Lk. 112b)

**A Valley of Bones... An Army of One**

Interestingly enough, the parable concerning the two sticks immediately follows Ezekiel’s vision concerning the valley of dry bones where the bones came together, bone to its bone (Ez. 37:7). This shows that even beyond bones being brought together or sticks being joined as one in Christ, there is a great manifestation of His Life that we will bear corporately. These bones continued to assemble and form until the flesh came upon

them, skin covered them, breath came into them, and they stood up as one on their feet having become an exceedingly great army. (V. 8-10)b May our hearts capture the glorious end of God's work in us as He awakens and forms us as one in His Son.

### **The Purpose Behind the Gift**

In Ephesians 4:11-13 it speaks of the purpose behind God giving different gifts within His Body. In one translation it reads of *verse 12*, "*For the perfect assembling of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the building up of the Body of Christ.*" And of course the next verse speaks of the end of such endeavors, "*Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.*" (v.13)

As we truly "see this one stick" by the Spirit unveiling the Risen Christ, may we be faithful to be found of those who are "edifying itself in love." (Eph. 4:16b)\*\*\*