



"In war, resolution. In defeat, defiance. In victory, magnanimity. In peace, good will."

—Winston S. Churchill

**28-Jun-13**

## **The Scepter of the Kingdom of God (Part Two)**

In Part One, we saw that God's scepter promise, given to the tribe of Judah in [Genesis 49:10](#), descended from monarch to monarch of the royal [house of David](#). When Jerusalem fell to Babylon, however, the direct male line was cut off. The prophet Jeremiah, fleeing Jerusalem to Egypt, was entrusted with King Zedekiah's daughters. Their story reveals how the breach between the two sons of Judah, Pharez and Zerah, was healed. [God](#) removed the crown of David from the ruling line of Pharez and placed it on the head of a descendant of Zerah.

According to tradition, in 569 BC, an elderly white-haired patriarch, sometimes referred to as a "saint," came to Ireland, which had been colonized centuries before both by Israelites from the tribe of Dan and by Jews of the line of Zerah. With the old patriarch was an Eastern king's daughter with a Hebrew name, Tea Tephi (or Tamar Tephi). The old man was Jeremiah, and the princess was a daughter of King Zedekiah of Judah.

Jeremiah's party also included a prince, the son of the King of Ireland, who had been in Jerusalem at the time of the Babylonian siege. There he had become acquainted with Tea Tephi, and they had married shortly after

Jerusalem fell in 585 <sup>BC</sup>. Their young son, now about 12 years of age, accompanied them to Ireland. Upon ascending his father's throne, this Irish prince took the name Herremón.

As the daughter of Zedekiah, Tea Tephi, was heir to the throne of David. When Herremón, a descendant of Zerah, married this Hebrew princess, a descendant of Pharez, and their son sat as king over Israelites, the ancient breach was healed. This dynasty continued, unbroken, down through all the kings of Ireland. It was overturned and transplanted in Scotland in <sup>C. AD</sup> 487 when a prince of Ireland's royal line was crowned King Fergus I. In <sup>AD</sup> 1603, it was overturned again and transplanted to England when Scotland's James VI was crowned James I of England, a line that continues today. These "overturns" fulfilled the prophecy in [Ezekiel 21:25-27](#).

This continuing British monarchy employs two scepters in its regalia. The scepter with the cross, known as the Royal Scepter, has the largest cut diamond in [the world](#), weighing 530 carats. Symbolizing the monarch's power as the ruler of his people, it is considered the "Ensign of Kingly Power and Justice." The second scepter, the Rod with the Dove, is a slender rod of gold with 199 diamonds, 58 rubies, ten emeralds, and four sapphires. It symbolizes the king's paternal function as guardian and guide. From the earliest times, it has been the "Rod of Equity and Mercy." The dove is said to be symbolic of divine inspiration.

During the coronation service, the archbishop delivers the Royal Scepter into the king's right hand, and then he puts the Rod with the Dove into the king's left hand. Then he says:

God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed, direct and assist you in the administration and exercise of all those powers which he hath given you. Be so [merciful](#) that you be not too remiss; so execute justice that you forget not mercy. Punish the wicked, protect and cherish the just, and lead your people in the way wherein they should go.

When Christ returns to earth to rule, He will take over an existing throne ( [Luke 1:32](#)). Jesus is both the "Root" and the "Offspring" of David ( [Revelation 22:16](#)). As the Root, the throne is His by right as the divine King

of Israel. Secondly, as David's lawful, fleshly offspring, Jesus can also claim the throne by His right of inheritance, continuing David's dynasty forever.

The prophet Jeremiah further affirms that Christ is coming to sit on an existing throne. He was imprisoned in Jerusalem when he wrote Jeremiah 33, a prophecy of events at the [return of Christ](#). He writes:

"Behold the days are coming," says the LORD, "that I will perform that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah: In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David a Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. . . . For thus says the LORD: 'David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of Israel'" ([Jeremiah 33:14-15](#), 17).

When God inspired His prophet to write these words, David's throne was being rooted out of Judah. Yet, God had already arranged for his dynasty to rule in other lands until Christ should come and claim it for Himself. Thus, the scepter promise in [Genesis 49:10](#) continues until it will culminate at Christ's return: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh [the Messiah] come."

The apostle Paul writes in [Hebrews 1:8](#), quoting from [Psalm 45:6-7](#), "But to the Son He says: 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.'" A "scepter of righteousness" is a symbol of a righteous government. The Greek word behind "scepter" is *rhabdos*, which refers to a ruler's staff or scepter.

This same word is rendered as "rod" in the [book of Revelation](#). For instance, [Revelation 2:27](#) reads, "He shall rule them with a rod of iron; they shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels." The word "rule" is translated from the Greek *poimaino*, which means "to tend as a shepherd, guide, govern." His "rod of iron" is a scepter of strength or power. The same idea is found in [Revelation 12:5](#) ("She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron") and in [Revelation 19:15](#) ("Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron").

[Jesus Christ](#) will rule with power and authority judging the nations. *Poimaino* is a softer word for "rule" than other Greek words. He would have shepherded the nations with a gentle rod, but because of their hardened unbelief, He will have to rule them with a rod of iron.

At His return to earth, in setting up the [Kingdom of God](#), He will occupy the greatest position of rulership under God the Father ([I Corinthians 15:24-28](#)). Along with His throne and His crown, He will receive the scepter of the Kingdom, a scepter of righteousness that is both a shepherd's staff to guide with mercy and equity and a rod of iron to rule with absolute kingly power and authority.

- Martin G. Collins

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## From the Archives: Featured Sermon

### [The Purpose of Israel](#)

by Richard T. Ritenbaugh

Ancient Israel cyclically fell into captivity only to need rescuing again. Was ancient Israel a "failed run" at God ruling a people or did their experience serve a more transcendental purpose? Serving as a model nation, ancient Israel was continually admonished to be separate and pure. God chose ancient Israel 1) to be separate, 2) to demonstrate His love to them, 3) to keep His promises to Abraham, and 4) to make a covenant with them. Without the heart softener of God's Holy Spirit (the key ingredient of the New Covenant), no nation (no matter how racially pure) could ever keep the Old Covenant. In the resurrection, ancient Israel, having served as a negative example, will finally understand the missing connections.

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## From the Archives: Featured Article

### [Searching for Israel \(Part Nine\): The Migration of a Monarchy](#)

by Charles Whitaker

Many clues to Israel's modern identity deal with the ruling line of David—and its Zerahite counterpart. Charles Whitaker pieces together and follows the biblical and historical evidence to add more proof to Israel's whereabouts today.

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