

# City of David, Which Is Zion – Not Synonymous with Jerusalem

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There is an important distinction between the City of David and Jerusalem that will be explored in this study. Once this difference is identified, it should explain why words like "Zion", "Jerusalem", and "New Jerusalem" cannot be regarded as synonymous. There are also spiritual lessons connected to this difference.

In ancient times, the City of David was not included with Jerusalem, but regarded as a separate location.

Now Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel, to King Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might **bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord from the City of David, which is Zion** (1Kgs. 8:1; cf. 2Chr. 5:2; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted; emphasis added).

One of Solomon's wives resided temporarily in the City of David during the time that God's temple complex in Jerusalem was being constructed. As the following scripture confirms, the City of David was outside the wall of Jerusalem.

Now Solomon made a treaty with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and married Pharaoh's daughter; then he brought her to the City of David **until he had finished building** his own house, and **the house of the Lord, and the wall around Jerusalem** (1Kgs. 3:1; emphasis added).

Because the ark of God's covenant was located in the City of David, Solomon regarded that site

as "holy" and therefore moved his wife from that location to a newly constructed house inside Jerusalem as soon as it was feasible.

Solomon brought Pharaoh's daughter up from the city of David to the house which he had built for her, for he said, "My wife shall not live in the house of David king of Israel, for **the places to which the ark of the Lord have come are holy**" (2Chr. 8:11; RSV; emphasis added).

Prior to entering the City of David, the ark of the covenant of the Lord had been in Shiloh (1Sam. 4:4), and then captured by the Philistines who retained it for seven months (1Sam. 5:1; 6:1). Next, it was transported to the Levites dwelling in Beth Shemesh (1Sam. 6:14-15). Because the ark was not handled according to God's legislation, many of the people in Beth Shemesh were killed (1Sam. 6:19-21). Consequently, it was transported to Kirjath Jearim where it remained for twenty years (1Sam. 7:1-2). The main lesson, in all these activities involving the ark, is that God's presence is to be regarded as holy and deeply respected as such (1Sam. 4:21-22). Therefore any deviation in His legislation, pertaining to the handling of His ark, carried serious consequences (1Chr. 13:7-10). This principle applies to every word of God, including His law and commandments (Mt. 4:4).

The City of David, also referred to as "Zion", was located in Gibeon which is just north of Jerusalem([https://www.britannica.com/place> Gibeon](https://www.britannica.com/place/Gibeon)).

It was regarded as a royal city located in the tribal territory of Benjamin (Jos. 18:25), and was sanctified as a Levitical city (Jos. 21:17).

David built houses for himself in the City of David; and he prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched a tent for it (1Chr. 15:1).

For the tabernacle of the Lord and the altar of the burnt offering, which Moses had made in the wilderness, **were at that time at the high place in Gibeon** (1Chr. 21:29; emphasis added).

And Zadok the priest and his brethren the priests, (were) before **the tabernacle of the Lord at the high place that was at Gibeon**,<sup>40</sup> to offer burnt offerings to the Lord on the altar of burnt offering regularly morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in the Law of the Lord which He commanded Israel (1Chr. 16:39-40; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Just as the City of David, or Zion, was located north of Jerusalem in Gibeon, so the throne of Almighty God is located in the north,

Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is **Mount Zion on the sides of the north**, the city of the great King (Ps. 48:2; emphasis added).

Satan sought to take control of this same location in the north because it is the source of universal power and authority.

For you (Satan) have said in your heart: "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars (angels; cf. Rev.1:20) of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation **on the farthest sides of the north**; <sup>14</sup>I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, **I will be like the Most High**" (Isa. 14:13-14; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

The writer of Hebrews brings together Mount Zion, the city of the living God (instead of the City of David), and heavenly Jerusalem in a state of perfection that includes those of the first resurrection, God's faithful angels, and God the Judge who will eventually make the spirits of all men perfect by leading them to repent of their sins.

But you (God's faithful human servants) have come to **Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem**, to an innumerable company of angels,<sup>23</sup> to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect (Heb. 12:22-23; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Jeremiah compared Zion to a "far country" where God dwells. Therefore, it is not a physical city on this earth. For those dwelling in heavenly Zion, the "cry of God's people" would be regarded as coming from a distant location.

Listen! The voice, the cry of the daughter of my people from **a far country: "Is not the Lord in Zion? Is not her King in her?"** (Jer. 8:19; emphasis added).

This is the same "far country" that Christ referred to in a parable that depicted his return to heavenly Zion.

Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a wine press in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vine dressers and **went into a far country** (Mt. 21:33; 25:14; Lk. 15:13; emphasis added).

As God does not dwell in temples built by human hands, Zion cannot refer to a physical location.

However, **the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands...** (Ac. 7:48a; cf. 17:24; emphasis added).

Because Almighty God foreknew that the physical city of Jerusalem would be destroyed due to the sinful actions of its priests and civil leaders, He did not compare it to Mount Zion, heavenly Jerusalem, or New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2). Instead, God compared the City of David to Zion

because David was a man after God's own heart who sought passionately to obey God's law and commandments until the day of his death (2Sam. 23:1-7),

And when He had removed him (King Saul), He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, "**I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will**" (Ac. 13:22; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

In God's metaphoric language, a physical city associated with Jewish worship is compared to the location of Satan's throne because it represents many of his deceptions and lies. One of Satan's deceptions is to appear "righteous" or "godly." Therefore, it should come as no surprise that his human instruments, who are in positions of religious authority, also appear to be righteous (cf. Mt. 23:27-36; 2Cor. 11:14-15).

I (Christ) know your (angel of the church in Pergamos) works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells (Rev. 2:13; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Indeed I (Christ) will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie – indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you (Rev. 3:9; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Because Jerusalem currently represents Satan's values in a very cunning manner (Gen. 3:1), God is angry with it.

Awake, awake! Stand up, O Jerusalem, you who have drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of His fury;

You have drunk the dregs of the cup of trembling, and drained it out. <sup>18</sup>There is no one to guide her among all the sons she has brought forth; nor is there any who takes her by the hand among all the sons she has brought up. <sup>19</sup>These two things have come to you; who will be sorry for you? - Desolation and destruction, famine and sword – by whom will I comfort you? <sup>20</sup>Your sons have fainted, they lie at the head of all the streets, like an antelope in a net; they are full of the fury of the Lord, the rebuke of your God (Isa. 51:17-20).

Jerusalem is also compared to Sodom and Egypt because it shares Satan's value system. Even at the end of Christ's millennial rule on earth, when Satan is released from the restraints that were put on him (Rev. 20:1-3), Jerusalem's false religious practices will be temporarily revived,

Now when they (God's two witnesses) finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. <sup>8</sup>And their dead bodies will lie in the street of **the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified** (Rev. 11:7-8; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

There is even a comparison between Jerusalem and Babylon because both systems represent Satan's values to one degree or another.

Depart! Depart! Go out from there (Jerusalem; cf. Isa. 52:2-3), touch no unclean things; go out from the midst of her, be clean, you who bear the vessels of the Lord (Isa. 52:11; Ed. note in parenthesis).

And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her (Babylon; cf. Rev. 18:2), my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4).

Christ pointed out that the value system of the Jewish religious leaders, who controlled the Temple in Jerusalem, was no different than that of Satan's and, as a consequence, they were perverting those who believed in, and followed, their doctrines/traditions.

**You are of your father the devil**, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it (Jn. 8:44; emphasis added).



**YET I (ALMIGHTY GOD) HAVE  
INSTALLED MY KING (JESUS CHRIST)  
UPON ZION, THE HILL OF MY HOLINESS.**

*Psalms 2:6; cf. 9:11; Ed. notes in parentheses*

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, **you make him twice as much a son of hell** (Gr. *Gehenna*; garbage dump outside Jerusalem where the bodies of criminals were burned) **as yourselves** (Mt. 23:15; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

So God's use of countries and cities, including Sodom, Egypt, Jerusalem, and Babylon, simply identifies false religious systems which break God's law and commandments to one degree or another. These will eventually be removed and replaced by the Kingdom of God, which is a monarchy that will have Jesus Christ as its rightful leader (Rev. 19:16). In the case of Jerusalem and its inhabitants, God is clear that they need to be redeemed from their sinful conduct.

Break forth into joy, sing together, **you waste places of Jerusalem!** For the Lord has

comforted His people, He has **redeemed His people** (Isa. 52:9; emphasis added).

In contrast to the countries and cities associated with Satan's value system, everyone who has ever lived will appear before God in Zion. Therefore, in the ultimate use of the word, Zion represents a spiritual place because no one can appear before God while they are still composed of flesh and blood (1Cor. 15:50).

They go from strength to strength; **every one of them appears before God in Zion** (Ps. 84:7; emphasis added).

Almighty God installed His son in heavenly Zion.

Yet I (Almighty God) have installed My King (Jesus Christ) upon Zion, the hill of My holiness (Ps. 2:6; cf. 9:11; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Therefore, when Zion is mentioned in scripture, it should be distinguished from the physical city of Jerusalem. Due to the ark of God being located outside of Jerusalem in the City of David, and because David sought to obey God's law and commandments, the City of David "temporarily represented" heavenly Zion; just as the physical city of Jerusalem with Solomon's temple "temporarily represented" God's heavenly temple.

After these things I (John) looked and behold, **the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven** was opened. <sup>6</sup>And out of the temple came the seven angels... (Rev. 15:5-6a; Ed. notes in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Sadly, the physical temple was destroyed in 70 CE after the religious leadership in Jerusalem refused to repent, even though they were given forty years from the time of Christ's death.

Going back now to Hebrews 12:22, Zion is associated primarily with heavenly realities.

Therefore, when Zion is used in scripture, it will more often than not picture a spiritual activity that has occurred in the past, or is occurring in the present, or will occur in the future; depending on the context. In the following example there is a country associated with polytheism and it is being judged by those who have been “raised up”, or resurrected. Therefore, it is a future scenario.

For I have bent Judah, My bow, fitted the bow with Ephraim, and **raised up your sons, O Zion**, against your sons, O Greece, and made you (sons of Zion) like the sword of a mighty man (Zech. 9:13; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

The apostle Paul commented on this future scenario when he was addressing the brethren in Corinth.

Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life (1Cor. 6:3).

In the latter part of Zechariah 9:13, the actions of the sons of Zion are compared to “the sword of a mighty man” because they will be using the word of God to judge the actions of those who have been in a state of rebellion against God’s word (Isa. 66:16),

For the word of God is living and powerful, and **sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.** <sup>13</sup>And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account (Heb. 4:12-13; emphasis added).

These sons of Zion were previously fallible human beings (clay pots), but due to God’s

workmanship in their lives they were led to repentance and will be part of the first resurrection of the dead.

The precious sons of Zion, weighed against fine gold, **how they are reckoned as clay pots**, the work of the hands of the potter (Lam. 4:2; cf. Isa. 64:8; emphasis added).



DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT WE SHALL  
JUDGE ANGELS? HOW MUCH MORE,  
THINGS THAT PERTAIN TO THIS LIFE.

[1 Corinthians 6:3](#)

The daughters of Zion are comparable to the five foolish virgins mentioned Matthew 25:1-13 because they are aware of God’s will, but they have not prepared themselves for His kingdom (Mt. 25:1-13).

Moreover the Lord says: “Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with outstretched necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, making a jingling with their feet, <sup>17</sup>Therefore the Lord will strike with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will uncover their secret parts (Isa. 3:16-17).

The good news is that those who comprise the daughters of Zion will eventually realize the error of their ways, repent of their sins, and be restored in their relationship with God.

When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the bloodshed of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning (Holy Spirit; cf. Ac. 2:3-4), <sup>5</sup>then the Lord will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night. For over all the glory there will be a covering (canopy). <sup>6</sup>And

there will be a tabernacle for shade in the daytime from the heat, for a place of refuge, and for a shelter from storm and rain (Isa. 4:4-6; Ed. note in parenthesis).

The time frame of these events is after Christ's return and extends to the period of the second resurrection as the following scripture confirm.

Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup>And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." (Rev. 21:4)

So Zion is primarily a word identifying spiritual realities/activities, while Jerusalem is more often than not used to describe the shortcomings of man's religious systems which are all influenced negatively by Satan (Mt. 23:37-39).

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