

ETERNAL JERUSALEM:  
JERUSALEM/ZION IN BIBLICAL THEOLOGY  
WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION TO “NEW JERUSALEM” AS THE NAME FOR THE  
FINAL STATE IN REVELATION 21–22

by

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## SUMMARY

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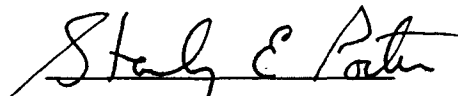
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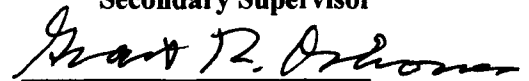
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## ABSTRACT

Dissertation Title: Eternal Jerusalem: Jerusalem/Zion in Biblical Theology with Special Attention to “New Jerusalem” as the Name for the Final State in Revelation 21–22.

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The thesis of this dissertation is that the picture of the New Jerusalem in Revelation draws upon antecedent Jerusalem/Zion theology to provide a meaningful depiction of the final state of believers in Jesus as both communion with God and life as a community. This biblical theological study uses a canonical approach that includes an examination of extra-biblical Second Temple literature as an aid to accessing NT understandings of OT texts. Previous studies of Jerusalem do not cover the entire canon, focus on historical or literary issues rather than theology, or access only OT texts clearly alluded to in Rev 21–22 rather than the entire theological tradition about Jerusalem, which culminates in the “New” Jerusalem.

The Pentateuch foresees Jerusalem’s role as place of contact between God and Israel. In the Historical Books, David completes the conquest of Canaan by taking Jerusalem and establishing YHWH’s cult there. But because of the sin of the kings and people God abandons the city for a time. Jerusalem after the return from exile is still less than ideal. In the Psalms, Jerusalem is depicted as God’s inviolable holy mountain. The prophets proclaim punishment for sinful Jerusalem but future restoration to the kind of ideal state described in the Psalms. Jerusalem/Zion can be seen as the ultimate goal of both the First and Second Exoduses.

Non-canonical Second Temple literature emphasizes the pre-Davidic role of Zion as place of God’s contact with humanity. The Babylonians could not have taken the city without God’s co-operation, and even then, the Temple furnishings were secretly preserved. Zion’s cosmic importance and eschatological role are often emphasized, with emergence of belief in a heavenly Jerusalem.

In the New Testament, earthly Jerusalem rejects the Messiah, and so forfeits its role as link to glorious eschatological Jerusalem. Old Testament prophecies of renewal are instead fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus, emergence of the church, and ultimately the New Jerusalem.

Revelation 7 and 21–22 use renewal of Zion passages from the prophets to depict the final state as a place of deep intimacy with God, community among all believers, intense experience of life, and complete eternal safety from sin and evil. This was God’s plan since creation. Jerusalem as the goal and focus of God’s people on their journey towards him in the Old Testament foreshadows the New Jerusalem as their destination at the end of the age.

The dissertation closes with suggestions for practical application and further study.

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## INTRODUCTION

### *Significance of the Study*

People have always wondered if there is conscious human existence after death, and, if so, what it is like. They also wonder what the ultimate fate of the world and the universe will be. These are not idle questions because beliefs about what happens after death affect people's decisions about how to live their lives now.<sup>1</sup>

The New Testament speaks of the end of the world and a new creation, and holds out hope of eternal life with God for those who believe in and follow Jesus.<sup>2</sup> One of the main passages dealing with the final state of believers and of the cosmos is Rev 21–22. Some scholars think that this passage is not about life in an age to come.<sup>3</sup> In the introduction to his book on Rev 19:11—22:15, Mathais Rissi complains, in response, that many scholars have failed to take John seriously as a prophet of the future of the world.<sup>4</sup> It is important to find out what John is saying. If John really is describing the future, he is saying that believers in Jesus can gain both solid hope and definite direction for shaping their lives here and now in anticipation of what is to come.

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<sup>1</sup> As Thomas, *Revelation 8–22*, 545, notes, “Sound doctrine regarding the future is strong motivation for intelligent Christian living and responsibility.”

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Matt 19:29; John 3:16; 5:24; 10:27–28; 14:3; 2 Cor 5:1–9; Phil 1:23; Col 3:1–4; 1 Thess 4:14–17; 1 Tim 1:16; 2 Pet 3:13–14; Rev 21:3, 7; 22:3–5.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. Comblin, “Liturgie”; A. Y. Collins, *Combat Myth*, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Rissi, *Future of the World*, 1–2. Rissi gives examples of some approaches that have clouded John's message.

In the book of Revelation, the final state of believers is depicted as a city called the “New Jerusalem.” This name is highly significant, and has implications for how the Bible envisions this final state. The theological meaning of Jerusalem and Zion<sup>5</sup> is developed through the Old Testament. That Old Testament theology undergoes reinterpretation in the New Testament in the light of the coming of the Messiah, Zion’s king. The book of Revelation shares this New Testament understanding. “Jerusalem” is chosen as the name for the final state of believers in Revelation as an intertextual device that invites readers to bring the antecedent Jerusalem traditions from other texts they know into their understanding of the final state.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, it is important to understand what these theological traditions of Jerusalem are and how they illuminate the picture of the New Jerusalem. The result clarifies our understanding of the biblical view of the final state in significant ways. It should also help clarify what, according to the Bible, God’s aims and purposes are, and how believers can cooperate with them.

Many scholars have written about aspects of Jerusalem and the New Jerusalem. Their work is surveyed below. However, a study is needed to pull together the disparate pieces of work done on discrete aspects of the theology of Jerusalem/Zion, and suggest

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<sup>5</sup> The terms (Mount) Zion, Jerusalem, holy mountain/hill, God’s sanctuary, God’s house, God’s Temple, God’s courts, and the city of God are all closely connected. Though my study is specifically on Jerusalem/Zion, the other terms cannot be disassociated from these two names. In the Psalms, for example, God is said to dwell in his holy mountain (43:3), his city (46:4), Zion (74:2,7; 76:2; 132:13), his courts (84:1-2) and Jerusalem (135:21).

<sup>6</sup> See Desrosiers, *Introduction*, 86–88. He explains intertextuality this way: “When texts are read by individuals or groups they are brought into interaction with other texts that these same individuals and groups have met before. This encounter situates the work in a web of meaning where the different texts intersect one another. . . . [Thus in Revelation] The meaning comes not solely from the original context of the source nor from the new one into which John embedded this same source, but in the interaction between the two” (p. 86). For more on intertextuality in Revelation, see Moyise, *OT in Revelation*, 108–38. Bauckham, *Theology*, 18, notes, “Revelation is saturated with verbal allusions to the Old Testament. These are not incidental but essential to the way meaning is conveyed. . . . The Old Testament allusions frequently presuppose their Old Testament context and a range of connexions between Old Testament texts which are not made explicit but lie beneath the surface of the text of Revelation.” And Michaels, *Interpreting Revelation*, 107, says that Revelation is “an excellent example—perhaps the best New Testament example—of a phenomenon known in literary criticism as *intertextuality*.” See further n. 46 below.

their relevance for people today trying to understand and be motivated by what the final state of believers will be.

### *The Method of the Study*

This dissertation is a study within the broad field of biblical theology. Many definitions have been provided for this discipline, but for the use of this dissertation, biblical theology will be defined as an organized description of the teaching of the Bible regarding God and his dealings with humanity and the world.<sup>7</sup>

### *A Short History of the Discipline of Biblical Theology*

The church has always engaged in theological reflection on Scripture.<sup>8</sup> Before the Enlightenment, Scripture, viewed as normative, was sometimes used as a mine of proof-texts for Christian doctrines. The delineation of biblical theology as a separate discipline, however, is usually traced to J. P. Gabler's address, "An Oration on the Proper Distinction between Biblical and Dogmatic Theology and the Specific Objectives of Each," made in 1787 to the University of Altdorf.<sup>9</sup> Gabler's idea was that biblical theology would use historical-critical methods to dig the timeless truths out of Scripture, and dogmatic theology would organize these truths into a system of doctrine applicable to

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<sup>7</sup> Scobie, *Ways of our God*, 3, defines biblical theology as "the ordered study of what the Bible has to say about God and his relation to the world and humankind." Rosner, "Biblical Theology," 3, similarly defines it as "what the Bible teaches about God and his dealings with the human race."

<sup>8</sup> Even Scripture itself does theological interpretation of previous Scripture. Scobie, "History of Biblical Theology," 11, gives as examples the summaries of "salvation-history" in Deut 26:5-9; Neh 9:7-37; Pss 78, 105, 106; Acts 7 and Heb 11. For comments on the biblical theological reflections of the Church Fathers, see Bray, "Church Fathers."

<sup>9</sup> The original title of Gabler's address was *De justo discrimine theologiae biblicae et dogmaticae regundisque recte utriusque finibus*. It was published after his death in his *Kleinere Theologische Schriften* (Ulm: 1831), 179-98. It is available in English in a translation by John Sandys-Wunsch and Laurence Eldredge, "J. P. Gabler and the Distinction between Biblical and Dogmatic Theology: Translation, Commentary and Discussion of his Originality," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 33 (1980): 133-44, reprinted in Gabler, "Oration," 489-502. For a brief history of the discipline of biblical theology, see Scobie, *Ways of our God*, 9-45, and *idem*, "History of Biblical Theology." Ollenburger, "Constructing a Relationship," 112-24 also comments on recent controversies over the role of biblical theology.

contemporary concerns. Although it was not Gabler's intention to divorce biblical theology from the dogmatic concerns of the church, with the use of historical-critical methods biblical theology came to be practised as a historical description, complete in itself, of the theology of the biblical writers or their sources.<sup>10</sup> It has often merged into study of the history of ancient Near Eastern religion, an endeavour that does not restrict itself to the Bible for source material. This approach to biblical theology makes any kind of "application" problematic.<sup>11</sup> K. J. Vanhoozer notes, "Solutions as to how to reconcile the descriptive and prescriptive have been in short supply."<sup>12</sup> Some scholars have even concluded that the biblical materials are so diverse that biblical theology as a synthesis of the whole is impossible.<sup>13</sup> Biblical theology in this guise appears to have nothing constructive to say to the church. For many people, this is lamentable.<sup>14</sup>

The so-called "biblical theology movement" from around 1945 to 1960 revived interest in the theology of the Bible as a whole and the idea that it referred to something real, something related to Christian faith.<sup>15</sup> It saw revelation in God's acts, the history recorded in Scripture. It also claimed a dichotomy between the Hebrew and Greek mind, privileging the Hebrew way of thought as a vehicle for truth. One of its techniques was extensive word studies and the production of biblical "wordbooks" such as the *TDNT*.

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<sup>10</sup> E.g. Barr, *Concept*, 1–17, contends for the idea that biblical theology should be purely historical description.

<sup>11</sup> Perhaps many scholars, assenting to "Lessing's ditch" (belief that the "contingent" truths of history cannot support "necessary" truths of reason), see no way to connect the history of what biblical writers believed to what is universally true. See Lessing, "On the Proof of the Spirit and of Power."

<sup>12</sup> Vanhoozer, "Exegesis and Hermeneutics," 54.

<sup>13</sup> E.g. Whybray, "OT Theology?," 169–70, who thinks the OT is too diverse to have a theology of the whole, though he concedes the possibility of NT theology. Marshall, *NT Theology*, 17–23, finds it necessary to defend the legitimacy of NT theology against the attacks of scholars like Heikki Räisänen (in his *Beyond New Testament Theology: A Story and a Program* [London: SCM Press, 1990]). Räisänen is one of those who think that synthesis is neither possible nor legitimate.

<sup>14</sup> E.g. Childs, *Biblical Theology*, 9; Brueggemann, *Theology of the OT*, 14–15.

<sup>15</sup> For a discussion of the methods, literature and critiques of the biblical theology movement see Bartholomew, "Introduction," 4–10. For a summary of the main tenets of the biblical theology movement, see Childs, *Biblical Theology in Crisis*, 32–50.

James Barr's criticism of the mindset of this enterprise and its methodology was one of the factors that contributed to the wane of the movement.<sup>16</sup> Childs has also noted unresolved issues such as the locus of revelation and authority, the relationship of the two Testaments, and how to do this kind of biblical theology with all genres of Scripture.<sup>17</sup>

In the ongoing search for a way of making the Bible relevant to people today, several approaches have been developed. Some focus on the Bible as literature, noting that the Bible manifests a unity of plot and interconnectivity.<sup>18</sup> Such scholars analyze the Bible as a "story" with or without any need for historicity, yet generating a worldview. Some concentrate on sociological approaches, where biblical material is analyzed according to anthropological and sociological categories, often based on models of contemporary pre-modern societies.<sup>19</sup> Others concentrate on the role of the reader, evaluating the Bible's material from the perspective of the oppressed, such as the poor, racial minorities and women.<sup>20</sup> These "liberation theologies" tend to concentrate on a canon-within-a-canon, accepting only certain parts of Scripture as normative. Others have developed various "canonical" approaches.

### *A Canonical Approach*

In an attempt to overcome the problem of meaning and relevance some scholars have called biblical theology to a mission of informing the church about what the Bible teaches as a guide to the church's life, work and thought.<sup>21</sup> This is a major motivation for

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<sup>16</sup> Barr, *Semantics of Biblical Language*.

<sup>17</sup> Childs, *Biblical Theology in Crisis*, 51–55, 62–82.

<sup>18</sup> E.g. Frye, *The Great Code*, demonstrated this.

<sup>19</sup> E.g. Malina, "Social-Scientific Methods," and "Honor and Shame in Luke-Acts"; others who do social-scientific interpretation include Jerome Neyrey and Philip Esler.

<sup>20</sup> E.g. for Revelation: Richard, *Apocalypse: A People's Commentary*; Pippin, *Death and Desire*.

<sup>21</sup> E.g. Childs, *Biblical Theology*, 85–89; Martens, "Biblical Theology," 19; Scobie, *Ways of our God*, ix; Möller, "Nature," 53.

what has come to be called the “canonical approach” to biblical theology.<sup>22</sup> Another motivation is the desire to treat the Bible in terms of its own self-understanding. One of the first scholars to champion the idea of a canonical approach was Brevard Childs. His biblical theology takes into account the hermeneutical implications of the belief that the biblical writings belong to the Christian canon.<sup>23</sup> As canon (i.e. rule of faith) Scripture makes demands on the church, so the findings of a theological investigation of the contents of Scripture will necessarily have implications for a Christian systematic theology.

A canonical approach to studying the Bible is justified by a number of considerations.<sup>24</sup> Historically, the church has been the context in which the Bible has been preserved and regarded as valuable and authoritative.<sup>25</sup> The fruits of the study of the Bible are most likely to be used by the church.<sup>26</sup> From a literary standpoint, a canonical

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<sup>22</sup> Wall, “Canonical Context,” 275, states, “the canonical perspective assumes that the act of interpreting the Bible must be influenced, even guided, by its intended role as the biblical rule of faith for the Christian faith community.” “Guided” may be too strong a term for the approach taken here. But the investigation is shaped by the kinds of questions asked, in this case, questions whose answers are needed by the church. Regarding Revelation, Wall says, “A canonical perspective toward Revelation accepts its message as constitutive for and necessary to a vital faith” (p. 278). From another perspective, Sanders, *Canon and Community*, 28–29, comments on the necessity of making the results of biblical theology accessible to believing communities in each succeeding generation. Sanders (pp. 61–68) proposes doing this by using the “canonical process,” that is, reinterpreting Scripture the way canonical texts reinterpret previous texts. To him this means that “the true shape of the Bible as canon consists of its unrecorded hermeneutics” (p. 46). Though lauding his motivation, this dissertation does not make use of his methodology because Sanders does not allow the original, authorial meaning of the text to have enough authority in the interpretation process. On Sanders, cf. Wall, “Canonical Criticism,” 295.

<sup>23</sup> Childs, *Biblical Theology*, 70.

<sup>24</sup> Thiselton, “Canon, Community and Theological Construction,” 1–3, discusses objections to a canonical approach. They include postmodern “fragmentation and suspicion of ‘grand narrative,’” and a tendency to see “canon” as a mere historical accident, formulated due to forces outside of the church. Thiselton challenges both of these objections. For further answers to these and other objections to the whole enterprise of biblical theology, see Balla, “Challenges to Biblical Theology,” and his monograph, *Challenges to New Testament Theology*.

<sup>25</sup> Childs, *Biblical Theology*, 8, notes, “Biblical Theology has as its proper context the canonical scriptures of the Christian church not because only this literature influenced its history, but because of the peculiar reception of this corpus by a community of faith and practice.”

<sup>26</sup> The Bible is the church’s canon, not because the church decreed or created the canonical list, but rather because the church recognized the authority these writings had for them long before having to compile a list. See a defense of this view in Balla, “Challenges to Biblical Theology,” 23–24.

approach makes sense because the text addresses itself to Christians in Christian community as its ideal or model readers.<sup>27</sup> The text's own intention is that its teaching be applied to shape the faith and life of the readers.<sup>28</sup> Another consideration is that a canonical approach approximates the way the Bible itself operates when later biblical texts treat earlier texts as authoritative. For example, the author of Revelation appears to have viewed the Old Testament as authoritative and divinely inspired.<sup>29</sup> A canonical approach takes the biblical text seriously in its own approach to previous Scripture and to the believing community.

The hermeneutical implications of the belief that the biblical writings belong to the Christian canon affect what are appropriate sources, presuppositions, and procedures for biblical theology. The sources are the canonical texts in their final form.<sup>30</sup> Charles Scobie explains further that this means that the sources are limited to the canon,<sup>31</sup> that they include the whole canon, that the canon is in the form used by the church<sup>32</sup> and that

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<sup>27</sup> See e.g. Luke 1:1–4; John 20:31; Rom 1:7; 1 Pet 1:1; Rev 1:4, 11; etc., and regarding the OT as addressed to Christians, Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 9:10; 10:11. Also, because the NT books are canon, their message is judged to be addressed to all Christians, not just the particular churches or believers mentioned in each book. In the OT, of course, the original model readers are Israelite believers.

<sup>28</sup> E.g. Exod 24:12, "I will give you the stone tablets with the law and the commandment which I have written for their instruction"; Ps 119:105 "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (the entire psalm is on this theme); Luke 1:3–4, "I decided . . . to write an orderly account . . . so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed"; John 20:31, "these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name"; 1 Tim 3:14–15, "I am writing these instructions to you so that . . . you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God"; 2 Tim 3:16, "all scripture . . . is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness."

<sup>29</sup> So also A. Y. Collins, *Crisis and Catharsis*, 145. With Bauckham, *Theology*, 4, I see an allusion to Amos 3:7 in Rev 10:7, "the mystery of God will be fulfilled, as he announced to his servants the prophets." In this verse, John says that God spoke to the OT prophets and their prophecies will be fulfilled. John's extensive use of allusions to the OT in Revelation points in the same direction. Cf. also John 10:35; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:20–21.

<sup>30</sup> Childs, *NT as Canon*, 48.

<sup>31</sup> For a justification for including a study of the non-canonical Second Temple literature in this work, see below.

<sup>32</sup> The question of whether the "deutero-canonical" books should be included in the "canon" of a canonical approach is a delicate one. Seitz, "The Canonical Approach and Theological Interpretation," 90–96, justifies regarding only the books of the Hebrew Bible as canonical OT on the basis that there is canonical



attention is given to everything in that canon.<sup>33</sup> The canonical approach of this dissertation means that the investigation's focus is on the theology presented in the final form of the canonical text. Therefore there will be little attempt to reconstruct the history of the text as is done in source criticism.<sup>34</sup>

As part of the necessary historical background for exegesis, however, this method will also include examining the Second Temple non-canonical materials that could reflect the understanding that the New Testament authors had of the Old Testament material.<sup>35</sup>

New Testament authors were not referring to modern understandings of the Old Testament, but to the Old Testament as understood by themselves and their contemporaries. As Susanne Gillmayr-Bucher points out:

If we are looking for inner-biblical references . . . not only biblical texts have to be considered, since no text is handed down in a vacuum. Rather, all biblical texts are always embedded into a tradition of teaching and religious doctrine as well as a text tradition and a tradition of translations. The text another text refers to thus might not be the original text, but an

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authority for it—the NT does exactly this. This is also the approach of this dissertation, although the voices of the deuterocanonical books are also examined. The order of the canonical books has not always been the same. For the OT see e.g. McDonald, *Biblical Canon*, Appendix B, 439–44. For the NT see e.g. Hahneman, *Muratorian Fragment*, 164, and McDonald, *Biblical Canon*, Appendix C, 445–51, for a comparison of fourth and fifth century lists of canonical books. However, the contents and order of both the OT and the NT were relatively stable by the sixth century (Gamble, “Canonical Formation,” 191–92). Sweeney, “Tanak versus Old Testament,” 358–70, argues that the Greek order of the OT is the “Christian” order, and affects interpretation. He says, “The Christian Bible. . . is organized according to an historical perspective that posits a progressive movement through history toward an ideal of eschatological redemption in the messianic age” (p. 359). Similarly, Scobie, *Ways of our God*, 67–68, sees the Tanak ending with an emphasis on Torah and Temple in Chronicles, while the Christian canon ends with the prophets and an expectation of future fulfilment. One could argue, however, that Chronicles ends with hope for renewal (2 Chron 36:23) and the prophets end with the threat of further judgment (Mal 4:1–6). Which order is used for the study undertaken here does not seem to be significant. For the purposes of this work I am using the number and order of books in the final form of the canon used by the broad ecclesiastical tradition to which I belong, that is, the form commonly used in the Protestant churches.

<sup>33</sup> Scobie, “New Directions in Biblical Theology,” 6–7.

<sup>34</sup> This is the canonical approach to events, outlined in Sailhammer's method in *OT Theology*, 109–10. See further justification for use of the canonical text rather than its purported sources in Waltke, *OT Theology*, 54–55.

<sup>35</sup> Scobie, *Ways of our God*, 58, emphasizes that biblical theology is built only out of canonical material, yet admits “The biblical theologian should be aware of these developments [non-canonical Second Temple literature] and may well note that certain trends or ideas that surface in these works are also found in the NT.”

interpretation of the original text current at the time the new text was written.<sup>36</sup>

I. H. Marshall, in his introduction to a book on Scripture citing Scripture, also notes, “the use of Scripture in the so-called intertestamental literature throws a flood of light on the NT use of the OT, it is inevitable that this topic is also considered.”<sup>37</sup> In a canonical biblical theology, the non-canonical Second Temple writings are not sources for theology, but a study of them alerts interpreters to how New Testament writers might be reading the Old Testament.<sup>38</sup>

A canonical approach takes account of the canonical context of each book within the collection of texts. This context means that these texts are intended to be read together and to be used to interpret each other. Some who use a canonical approach make much of the significance of the ordering of the books in sequence.<sup>39</sup> There are two main orders of the Old Testament books (the Hebrew order, reflected in the MT, and the Greek order reflected in various early translations of the Old Testament into Greek), and it is uncertain with which of these John<sup>40</sup> was more familiar as he wrote Revelation.<sup>41</sup> The canonical order will be taken into consideration regarding what material is prior and what subsequent, although it is recognized that in the pre-final form of the text, this may not

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<sup>36</sup> Gillmayr-Bucher, “Intertextuality,” 17. As an example, Knowles, *Jeremiah in Matthew’s Gospel*, 288–89, 308, finds this to be true of Matthew’s references to Jeremiah.

<sup>37</sup> Marshall, “Assessment,” 1.

<sup>38</sup> Enns, “Biblical Interpretation,” 164, 165, notes, “The manner in which the NT authors handled the OT is firmly at home in the hermeneutical world of Second Temple literature”; and “The NT’s use of the OT is a phenomenon that cannot be treated in isolation from the hermeneutic milieu of Second Temple biblical interpretation.”

<sup>39</sup> Childs, *NT as Canon*, 52–53. Cf. Klein, Blomberg and Hubbard, *Introduction*, 116–18; Sweeney, “Tanak versus Old Testament,” 356.

<sup>40</sup> The identity of the author of the book of Revelation has often been discussed. His identity is not crucial to this dissertation, except that he appears to belong to the first-century church depicted in the rest of the NT. His self-designation “John” will be used throughout this dissertation. For more discussion see e.g. Beale, *Revelation*, 34–36.

<sup>41</sup> See discussion in Kowalski, *Rezeption*, 252–70, and Moyise, “Language,” as to whether John knew or used the Hebrew text of the OT or a Greek (LXX) text. The evidence is divided, and John may well have been familiar with both.

have been the historical order of the composition of earlier stages of the material.

However, the order of the books, except that Revelation is last, does not play a significant part in the argument of this dissertation.

Biblical theology has always had to grapple with how to organize its material.<sup>42</sup>

This dissertation deals with only one topic, which means there is no need to find a way to organize various themes. However, the material is organized in the stages of Scripture's broad narrative. The biblical books are considered in canonical order, using the order most commonly used by Christians. It is significant for this dissertation that Revelation is the last book of the Christian canon.<sup>43</sup> It acts as a Christian updating of the Old Testament prophecies, and carries the Christian message and hope on to the end of the world and beyond. Whether or not it was written before Hebrews or Matthew, in the final shape of the canon it is Scripture's last word.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> To organize the presentation of theological material from the Bible, some scholars have opted for using the categories of systematic theology (God, Humanity, Sin, Salvation, etc.) and listing what each part of the Bible had to say under each topic. The problem with this, Scobie notes ("History of Biblical Theology," 16) is that it tends to impose "an alien scheme on the biblical material, omitting important biblical themes (e.g. wisdom, the land), and imposing an artificial unity on the diversity of the biblical books." Others have used a chronological approach, making evaluations as to the order of composition of the biblical materials based on historical-critical reconstructions, and tracing ideas as they developed from earlier to later writings. This method has produced varied results because the dating of most of the biblical (especially Old Testament) materials is still disputed. Instead, some scholars take the biblical books in their canonical order and look for progression only in broad categories based on stages in the broad narrative of Scripture such as the patriarchal, monarchical and post-exilic stages, or life of Jesus, early church and eschatology. Others have chosen what they consider to be a central theme as an organizing principle (e.g. Eichrodt, *Theology of the OT*, who chose the theme "covenant"). The difficulty of finding only one theme to which all the biblical material can be effectively related has caused some scholars to choose instead a cluster of themes (e.g. Scobie, *Ways of our God*).

<sup>43</sup> Wall, "Canonical Context," 279, claims that the ordering of the NT books was intentionally done by the church to "maximize its usefulness as the rule of Christian faith."

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Wall, "Canonical Context," 280, who says, "Revelation is the Bible's 'conclusion' and should be interpreted as such." It concludes the story begun at creation and the fall of humanity, forming an *inclusio* with Genesis and giving theological coherence to the Bible.

The presuppositions of this canonical approach include the idea that the Bible has authority as the norm for Christian life and faith.<sup>45</sup> The canonical texts have been preserved by people who believed this, and who collected and shaped the material in the interest of producing and sustaining faith.<sup>46</sup> The Bible's authority is based on other presuppositions, including that the Bible conveys divine revelation, and all its varied material is related to the plan and purpose of one God, the God to whom believers are committed.<sup>47</sup> Such presuppositions look for coherence and congruity in the overall message as well as in the message about any theme or topic wherever it is mentioned throughout the entire canon.<sup>48</sup> Thus it is legitimate to look for illumination of the thought of Revelation in other Old and New Testament writings.<sup>49</sup> There are theological links to Revelation in many parts of Scripture, including the Torah, Psalms, Prophets, Gospels, and New Testament epistles.<sup>50</sup> The author of Revelation himself combines materials from

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<sup>45</sup> Waltke, *OT Theology*, 29–48, using a confessional approach, takes as foundational that Scripture is revealed by God, divinely inspired so as to be free of error, and understood by the human reader as the Holy Spirit illuminates him or her. To him, this implies, among other things, that Scripture is authoritative and infallible for faith, that revelation is in the text, that the Bible is a unity, and that the human writers of Scripture may not always have understood the full meaning intended by God when they wrote.

<sup>46</sup> Childs, *NT as Canon*, 51. This gives the authors/redactors a common worldview, and to some extent, social setting, which also provides continuity.

<sup>47</sup> Scobie, "New Directions in Biblical Theology," 6.

<sup>48</sup> Sweeney, "Tanak versus Old Testament," 356, writing from a Jewish point of view, likewise notes, "the individual messages and theologies of the Bible are presented to the communities that accept them as sacred scripture in the form of one Bible, and that Bible constitutes the context in which its component messages and theologies are interpreted." Thus the very idea of the canon requires interpretation of each part in light of the whole.

<sup>49</sup> See Marshall, *NT Theology*, 18–20, for a defence of limiting his NT theological study to the NT canon. A similar defence for using the OT canon is made by Waltke, *OT Theology*, 36. Non-canonical works, however, illuminate the biblical material by congruity with or contrast to the biblical material, or by emphasizing certain aspects. They supply valuable and necessary clues to the hermeneutical environment in which the writers of the NT read, interpret and use the OT.

<sup>50</sup> E.g. for a positive evaluation of the links between the Gospel of John and Revelation, including possible identical authorship, see Osborne, *Revelation*, 4–6. Marshall, *NT Theology*, 57–174, notes the common features between Revelation the other Johannine writings, but due to the differences between them (perhaps because they address different interests), prefers to leave the question of common authorship open. He notes Revelation's links to apocalyptic material in the Gospels and epistles. Though links can be observed between Revelation and other NT books, this is usually explained as dependence on a common tradition, rather than any direct dependence; e.g. Beale, *Revelation*, 396, on Rev 6:12–13 and Matt 24:29.

many parts of the Old Testament canon. Thus the intertextual<sup>51</sup> and cross-referential character of Scripture itself suggests a biblical-theological approach that expects congruity.

The diversity of Scripture, however, is important as well. The Bible's messages have been mediated by human individuals facing diverse issues, in diverse eras and using diverse genres; if the entire canon is truly "canon," divergent texts should all be heard in their own voices and none be ignored. This diversity must be as fully acknowledged as the congruities.<sup>52</sup> As Thiselton notes, a plurality of voices gives depth as the voices supplement each other.<sup>53</sup> This need not result in contradiction, as Thiselton's comment on Bakhtin's treatment of Dostoyevsky reveals: "even a plurality of voices may lead us in a coherent direction, using, rather than suppressing, the voice of 'the other.'"<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Paulien, "Dreading the Whirlwind," 16–18, summarizes Moyise's presentation of three ways the term "intertextuality" is used in biblical studies. They are "intertextual echo," i.e. noting references to earlier texts in a later text and what meaning is so conveyed to the later text; "dialogical intertextuality," i.e. noting how references to earlier texts affect the meaning of both later and earlier texts; and "postmodern intertextuality," i.e. noting how involving any and all previous texts can give alternative meanings. The first of these is common in biblical studies. The second is important in the theological interpretation of texts, and will play an important part in my canonical approach. Since both earlier and later biblical texts are part of the same canon, later texts do play a role in interpreting earlier texts. In some respects, intertextuality may be seen as a function of the reader. It is true that if the reader has no acquaintance with the previous texts to which what he or she is reading refer, he or she experiences no intertextuality. But the extensive or explicit use that some parts of Scripture make of the earlier texts makes it plausible to conclude that the authors expected their readers to have experience of these prior texts, and intended intertextual links to be made (see Porter, "Further Comments," 104–5). Besides contributing perceived meaning to the later texts, these links are intended to produce further clarity in understanding earlier texts so as to make readers see them as in congruity with the later texts. Thus, readers are not free to create just any meaning from unlimited intertextual sources, but are guided by the (inspired) author to limited meanings using limited sources. See Childs, "Critique of Recent Intertextual Canonical Interpretation," 177.

<sup>52</sup> For further discussion of the tension between unity and diversity in Scripture, and how to keep them in balance, see Blomberg, "Unity and Diversity of Scripture."

<sup>53</sup> Thiselton, "Canon, Community and Theological Construction," 24. See also Sanders, "Foreword," 9, who writes, "The limited pluralism of the Bible is best understood . . . as intrabiblical dialogue which is both self-correcting and mutually informing."

<sup>54</sup> Thiselton, "Canon, Community and Theological Construction," 25.

Biblical theology has two main tasks, analysis (what each text says) and synthesis (comparing and putting together what various texts say).<sup>55</sup> The first stage (analysis) requires exegesis of discrete passages and books, work which must take into consideration things like the place of the passage in the overall narrative of the Bible, the particular occasion of its composition, and its genre. Subsequent stages (synthesis) involve putting together the material until there is a broad integration of the Bible's themes.

A biblical theology that attempts to include all that the Bible teaches is a mammoth project. A dissertation like this can only hope to make a contribution to one of its parts, investigating one topic within part of one theme.<sup>56</sup> But the procedure follows the two stages outlined above. Passages dealing with the topic must be exegeted, and a synthesis made of the material in each book or each section of the canon, and finally, of the whole Bible.<sup>57</sup>

Brevard Childs finds rewarding the method in biblical theology of tracing a theme, but warns that it runs the danger of distorting the biblical material by dividing things that belong together or joining together things that should be kept separate. He says the success of the method depends on "how critically and skillfully it is

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<sup>55</sup> See discussion in Marshall, *NT Theology*, 23–27. Application has not always been included in biblical theology, but there is a growing number of scholars calling for biblical theology to become relevant to the life of the church. This dissertation will attempt to give some suggestions for application of its findings at the end of the work.

<sup>56</sup> For example, the New Jerusalem is located by Scobie in his larger scheme under the theme "God's People" and the sub-theme "Covenant Community" and the sub-sub theme "New Testament Consummation." Scobie, *Ways of our God*, 504. His discussion of Jerusalem in the OT however is under the sub-theme "Land and City," 541–66. This illustrates the difficulty of demonstrating both "vertical" and "horizontal" relationships of a topic in a scheme such as Scobie's.

<sup>57</sup> Waltke, *OT Theology*, 50, notes, "a significant part of the task of Old Testament theology lies in tracing . . . themes through the various books."

employed.”<sup>58</sup> It is true that organizing biblical concepts into coherent themes may distort the material, since the material is originally presented in a variety of genres including narrative, poetry, occasional literature such as speeches, sermons and epistles, and so on, which do not always lend themselves to systemization. In addition, the themes are linked horizontally as well as vertically, a situation that may be hard to convey in a written account. However, collecting and organizing the material outweighs the disadvantage of the distortion in that it can help one to mentally conceptualize certain aspects of the whole theme with its relationships. It is often possible to put into more consistent practice ideas that have been organized in this way.<sup>59</sup> There is precedent for such organizing in the work of the writers of Scripture itself. For example, Paul treats “sin” in Rom 3:10–18, and Hebrews 11 treats the themes of “faith” drawing on many Old Testament passages.<sup>60</sup>

### *The Choice of the Topic*

The Bible speaks of many matters, but often yields its most useful insights when we approach it with specific questions. There are two ways to formulate questions. One is to bring questions from one’s own context. This is how some New Testament writers use parts of the Old Testament.<sup>61</sup> Such an approach is necessary for the Scripture to continue

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<sup>58</sup> Childs, *Biblical Theology*, 15–16.

<sup>59</sup> See Möller, “Nature,” 56. A number of biblical theologians are attempting to formulate biblical theologies that take in the whole canon of Scripture. It seems likely that there is not just one single theme around which all the ideas of Scripture can be arranged. There are, however, a limited number of major themes that overlap with each other and can be used to organize an overall view of the teaching of Scripture. Scobie (*Ways of our God*) has attempted a biblical theology using this method. He has been criticized for making everything a bit too neat (e.g. by Möller, “Nature,” 57, who, however, recognizes the advantages of the method), but he does make the material reasonably coherent. Waltke, *OT Theology*, says, “the discipline of Old Testament theology is necessarily reductionistic.”

<sup>60</sup> Arguably Jesus himself did a theme study on the road to Emmaus as he “explained to them the things concerning himself in all the Scriptures” (Luke 24:27). Compare Heb 3 and 4 on “rest” and Zech 1:1–6 and 7:1—8:23 on “repentance” using material from earlier prophets.

<sup>61</sup> For example, Jesus answering questions about the resurrection using the story of the burning bush (Mark 12:26 par) or Paul showing who are the true Israel by using the story of Sarah and Hagar (Gal 4:22–31).

to shape faithful practice in the Christian community of each succeeding generation.<sup>62</sup>

Some of the questions that Christians bring are not directly addressed in Scripture, and work must be done to find biblical principles that will inform their decisions.

Another source of questions is to look for those that the Bible itself seems to be addressing. These questions are explicit in some texts, but not in others. For example, in 1 Corinthians, Paul cites questions asked by the Corinthians and writes specific replies (1 Cor 7:1). Proverbs states that its purpose is to instruct the young in wisdom (Prov 1:1–7). Joshua 1:8 implies that Scripture instructs on how to be successful, and 2 Tim 3:15–17 says that Scripture equips one for a useful Christian life. Investigating the topics openly addressed is less likely to impose alien categories on Scripture and pays attention to the biblical agenda.

The meaning and relevance of the New Jerusalem in Rev 21–22, the question chosen here, is one that comes from Scripture itself. Rather than starting with a question from contemporary culture, the dissertation seeks to understand a biblical topic. But some of the questions being asked of this topic do come from contemporary concerns. They are questions such as, “Why is the final state of believers in Jesus given the name Jerusalem? Is such particularity appropriate in the global Christian culture and pluralistic context in which we live? What is the nature of the relationship between the New Jerusalem and Old Testament Jerusalem, a relationship that is signaled by the use of the same name?”<sup>63</sup> And from the point of view of application: “Does the picture of the New Jerusalem inform believers about how their lives should be lived here and now and motivate them to

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<sup>62</sup> Addressing pressing questions in current culture is advocated by Childs, “Reflections,” 9. He mentions gender issues, ecology and liberation theology as examples, and hopes that biblical theology will be able to “hammer out concrete theological proposals commensurate with the witness of the Bible.”

<sup>63</sup> In Rev 21:10 the city is called just “Jerusalem” without the adjective “new.”



live this way?” Other times and other places might ask different questions of the same biblical material.

### *Treating the Topic*

Bearing in mind Childs’s warning about improper joining and dividing of material, an issue that needs attention in this dissertation is the close relationship in Scripture between the Land and Jerusalem and between the Temple and Jerusalem.<sup>64</sup> In various passages, the Land, city and Temple can almost or actually stand for each other. They seem to merge completely by the end, as the New Jerusalem in Rev 21 is the whole new earth (γῆ, land), and it *has* no temple (Rev 21:22), even as it seems to *be* a temple (cf. Rev 3:12). Yet to make this a study of the Temple would make the work too long and overlap unnecessarily with work done by others.<sup>65</sup> The dissertation will acknowledge the relationship of Temple and city, yet focus on Jerusalem.<sup>66</sup> The Land seems to drop out of view in the New Testament, a process that begins in some of the Second Temple material, where Jerusalem takes on the role of the Land. Here, the study will again focus on Jerusalem, noting how in Revelation parts of the Land theology are included in the picture of Jerusalem.<sup>67</sup>

Three bodies of material are examined in this dissertation leading up to the study of Jerusalem in the book of Revelation. We do not know how many of the non-canonical writings or of the New Testament documents John had read before writing Revelation, and he does not seem dependent on them, but he appears to have been very familiar with

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<sup>64</sup> Waltke, *OT Theology*, 512–87, makes Jerusalem a subtopic under the larger theme of the Land.

<sup>65</sup> Such as Beale, *Temple*.

<sup>66</sup> Sometimes, of course, material about the Temple may imply something about the city.

<sup>67</sup> Bedard, “Finding a New Land,” contends that, overall, the concept of the resurrection replaces the concept of the Promised Land in the NT. He notes (p. 140) that the New Jerusalem is depicted as the Promised Land in Rev 21.

major parts of the Old Testament. The Old Testament section of this dissertation investigates material that must have informed John's concept of Jerusalem and influenced his use of the name "Jerusalem" for the final state. John received at least most of the Old Testament as a collection already formed.<sup>68</sup> He merged material from various parts of the Old Testament into a seamless whole.<sup>69</sup> For example, in the picture of Babylon he uses oracles from Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Habakkuk, Nahum, and Zechariah about Babylon, Tyre, Nineveh, Edom, and Jerusalem.<sup>70</sup> The Exodus plagues form the background for many of Revelation's plagues;<sup>71</sup> Moses (Exod 7:17) and Elijah (1 Kgs 17:1) as well as Zerubbabel and Joshua, or perhaps Haggai and Zechariah (Zech 4:14) are models for the two witnesses in Rev 11,<sup>72</sup> and so on.

Many studies of the New Jerusalem treat only the Old Testament passages that are clearly referred to in the book of Revelation. Although the writer of Revelation does not overtly use all the Old Testament passages about Jerusalem/Zion in his picture of the final state of believers, the very use of the name Jerusalem is a form of intertextuality that

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<sup>68</sup> It is more cautious to say "collection" here than "canon." See Beckwith, *OT Canon* (his conclusions pp. 434–37), for a defence of the view that the OT canon was formed and accepted by a plurality of Jews by the time of Jesus. McDonald, *Biblical Canon*, 103–5, disputes this, and gives a much more nuanced view, but agrees that "the Law and the Prophets were widely received as authoritative Scriptures in the early Christian churches, along with a less well-defined category that included the Psalter, other Wisdom literature, and perhaps writings such as Daniel" (p. 104).

<sup>69</sup> The UBS4 Greek Text lists allusions and verbal parallels to the OT in Revelation from all the OT books except Joshua, Ruth, Ezra, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Jonah, Habakkuk and Haggai. See Fuller, "Image of Babylon," 36–37, for evidence that John was also alluding to the Babylon oracle in Habakkuk. John appears to be less concerned than modern scholars about the "discrete voices" of OT writers.

<sup>70</sup> Babylon oracles: Isa 13–14; 21:1–10; 47:1–15; Jer 25:12–38; 50–51; Hab 2; Zech 2:6–9 with possible allusions also to Gen 11:1–9; Tyre oracles: Isa 23:1–18; Ezek 26:1–28:19; Edom oracle Isa 34; Nineveh oracle in Nah 3:4; Jerusalem oracles Jer 25:10; Ezek 16, 23. For detailed discussion of these oracles see Fuller "Image of Babylon," 22–55.

<sup>71</sup> See Beale, *Revelation*, 465–67, for discussion of how the trumpet judgments of Rev 8:6–11:19 are modelled on the Exodus plagues of Exod 7–10.

<sup>72</sup> See Caird, *Revelation*, 134–36, for discussion of the OT background to the two witnesses. Strand, "Two Olive Trees," thinks they represent the Spirit-inspired prophets. Boda, *Haggai, Zechariah*, 275, thinks that in Zechariah they are likely Haggai and Zechariah. In any case, John combines allusions to multiple OT passages.

may evoke any of the traditions about Jerusalem that have gone before.<sup>73</sup> John sees himself as a prophet,<sup>74</sup> drawing together all the prophecies of the Old Testament<sup>75</sup> (which to him are authoritative)<sup>76</sup> and bringing them up to date in light of the new stage in their fulfilment brought about by the coming of Jesus the Messiah.<sup>77</sup> This study therefore considers it legitimate to investigate all Old Testament traditions about Jerusalem before going on to look for evidence of whether or not they have been alluded to in Revelation.<sup>78</sup> What is left out may be as significant as what is included. Each Old Testament section relevant to Jerusalem/Zion theology receives brief exegetical treatment before a synthesis of that theology in the Old Testament is attempted.

The study of Second Temple non-canonical literature, on the other hand, is undertaken to reveal common ideas held about Jerusalem by many Jews at the beginning of the New Testament era, ideas that might have nuanced John's interpretation of the Old Testament material he uses. This literature highlights some areas of the Old Testament

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<sup>73</sup> Dumbrell, *End of the Beginning*, "Introduction," (no page numbers) defends the method of investigating all the OT material on a theme that appears in Revelation, even if the passages in question are not all alluded to in Revelation. However, to give John his distinctive voice, the study will not assume that he is drawing on a tradition unless there is some evidence, and will also look for ideas distinct from those in the OT.

<sup>74</sup> For argument that John sees himself as a prophet in the tradition of the OT prophets, see Hill, *NT Prophecy*, 70–75, Fekkes, *Isaiah*, 38; and Bauckham, *Theology*, 5.

<sup>75</sup> Fekkes, *Isaiah*, 38, notes, "John's use of previous prophetic and apocalyptic tradition is almost exclusively limited to the OT."

<sup>76</sup> A. Y. Collins, *Crisis and Catharsis*, 145, notes that the effectiveness of John's rhetoric depended on John and his readers assuming the authority and reliability of the OT. Bauckham, *Climax*, 263 n. 32, agrees that OT prophecy is authoritative for John.

<sup>77</sup> John is in constant dialogue with Scripture that precedes him. The following summary of the findings of Beate Kowalski in her study of the use of Ezekiel in Revelation could be applied to Revelation's use of the entire OT: "Revelation is not so much a 'rereading' (*Wiederlesen*) of the Old Testament as it is a 'further-reading' (*Weiterlesen*) of the Old Testament. While there is both continuity and discontinuity between Ezekiel and Revelation, John seems to expand the meaning of the Old Testament text in light of his vision of the Christ. On the other hand, so critical is the usage of the Old Testament to the meaning of the vision that the book cannot be understood apart from these allusions" (Paulien, "Review of Kowalski, *Rezeption*," 4). Bauckham, *Climax*, 263 n. 32, notes that John provides "the culmination of the whole prophetic tradition."

<sup>78</sup> For recent discussion of the ways to classify and assess the uses of the OT in Revelation, see Köstenberger, "Use of Scripture," 249–52.

picture of Jerusalem that have a much smaller place in the Old Testament than they do in Revelation. It provides background to some directions that the New Testament, and Revelation in particular, take with Jerusalem theology. The method here is a synchronic one. Material about Jerusalem is collected from the individual documents and grouped according to topics.<sup>79</sup> The topics are ordered around the stages of Old Testament history (creation, patriarchs, David and Solomon, exile, return, and eschaton).

The New Testament study has another focus. It is looking for a first-century Christian consensus about the role and significance of Jerusalem. If a consensus is found, and Revelation shares it, Revelation's view of the New Jerusalem can be placed and interpreted in the context of this consensus. The method adopted is similar to that for the Old Testament section of the dissertation, to examine each book for its own teaching on Jerusalem, and finish with a synthesis.<sup>80</sup>

### *Purpose and Aims of the Study*

This work contends that the theology of Jerusalem/Zion in the Old Testament informs the content of the term "New Jerusalem" to give us a clearer picture of the nature of the final state of the redeemed in Rev 21–22. This study of Jerusalem in Revelation seeks to:

1. Discover the sources of New Jerusalem theology in Old Testament

Jerusalem/Zion theology.

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<sup>79</sup> The non-canonical materials were never a "corpus" in antiquity, of course. They seem so to us because they have now been collected by scholars like R. H. Charles and James H. Charlesworth. This study will make use only of writings in Charlesworth's *OTP* that are there dated early enough to reflect views current around the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century C.E.

<sup>80</sup> The approach of Marshall, *NT Theology*, 9: "The approach taken here is to let each of the individual books . . . speak for themselves and then to attempt some kind of synthesis of their teaching."

2. Investigate how developments in the Jerusalem/Zion theology of non-canonical Second Temple Jewish literature act as a lens for the interpretation of the Old Testament view of Jerusalem used in the picture of the New Jerusalem in Revelation.

3. Demonstrate how Jerusalem/Zion theology is developed in the New Testament in the light of the coming of Jesus as Messiah.

4. Investigate what the book of Revelation teaches regarding the New Jerusalem, taking into account the Jerusalem/Zion theological antecedents.

5. Suggest how the theology of the New Jerusalem in Revelation can contribute to a biblical theology of the final state of believers in Jesus.

The contribution that this study hopes to make is to produce a theology of the New Jerusalem that takes the Old Testament Jerusalem/Zion theology as a starting point, recognizes Christian development of this theme, relates it to expectations of Christians today about their final destination, and suggests how Christians can live their lives in this world in light of their expected future.

The thesis of this dissertation is that the picture of the New Jerusalem in Revelation draws upon antecedent Jerusalem/Zion theology to provide a meaningful depiction of the final state of believers in Jesus as both communion with God and life as a community.

### *Past Studies of Jerusalem/Zion Theology*

Jerusalem is a fascinating topic that has been studied in many ways. This dissertation does not intend to explore issues in purely historical and geographical studies

of Jerusalem,<sup>81</sup> or literary<sup>82</sup> and social scientific studies<sup>83</sup> of the book of Revelation. Neither is it purely a historical study of the development of the theological concept of Jerusalem, though such a study is relevant to its concerns.<sup>84</sup> It is concerned rather with the antecedent theological ideas, mainly from the Old Testament, that inform John's use of the name "Jerusalem" for the final state, and what content these antecedents give to that name.

The main works where comprehensive accounts of the theology of Jerusalem/Zion in the whole Bible can be found are theological dictionaries. Some of the more useful articles are by Schultz,<sup>85</sup> Fohrer and Lohse,<sup>86</sup> King<sup>87</sup> and Dillard.<sup>88</sup> Such articles are, by nature, too brief for a full exploration of the topic. And they do not venture into areas of application.

Sarah Ann Sharkey, writing in 1986, noted that previous studies of the development of the theme of the heavenly Jerusalem concentrated only on the temple image, or only on the city image, limited their interest to a certain kind of literature (such

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<sup>81</sup> For example, works like Levine, *Jerusalem*.

<sup>82</sup> There has been a plethora of studies on the rhetoric of Revelation from both the literary and the sociological perspective. An example of literary studies is Räßle, *The Metaphor of the City in the Apocalypse of John*, who looks at the city image as signifying human community, which is independent (Babylon) or in relation to God (New Jerusalem). She is concerned mainly with the rhetorical effect that persuades the readers to establish loving and egalitarian community here and now. Huber, "Like a Bride Adorned," investigates how the New Jerusalem is viewed as a woman and a bride as a way of studying the use of metaphorical language in general as a tool for persuasion in the book of Revelation. Another literary approach is reader-response criticism, such as Tina Pippin's study of the women images in Revelation (*Death and Desire*), which ignores the first-century context in favour of her own.

<sup>83</sup> For example, books on the community-shaping function of the book of Revelation for the first-century church, e.g. Barr, ed., *The Reality of Apocalypse: Rhetoric and Politics in the Book of Revelation*, and Futral, "The Rhetorical Value of City as a Sociological Symbol in the Book of Revelation."

<sup>84</sup> As is, for example Elizabeth Ann Gaines's dissertation, "The Eschatological Jerusalem: The Function of the Image in the Literature of the Biblical Period," which looks at how the image was used historically, and Sarah Ann Sharkey's dissertation "Heavenly Jerusalem," which studies the history of the development of the image. Both of these dissertations were written over 20 years ago.

<sup>85</sup> Schultz, "Jerusalem," in *NIDNTT* 2:324–30.

<sup>86</sup> Fohrer and Lohse, "Σιών, Ἱερουσαλήμ etc.," in *TDNT* 7:292–338.

<sup>87</sup> King, "Jerusalem," in *ABD* 3:747–66.

<sup>88</sup> Dillard, "Zion," in *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* 4:2200–2203.

as prophetic or apocalyptic) or did not provide a detailed study of the relevant texts.<sup>89</sup> The situation is not much different today, though Sharkey has provided a good beginning.

Unfortunately, her work remains buried in an unpublished dissertation.

Sharkey's dissertation attempts to answer the question, "How did the concept of Jerusalem develop from an originally limited geographical and historical city and temple into an important theological symbol of eschatological hope for Israel and, in turn, for the early Christian community?"<sup>90</sup> She suggests that the Zion tradition developed in the Old Testament era basically in four stages: (1) In the time of David and Solomon, Zion was considered to be the "unconditional locus of God's presence" and as such was impregnable. (2) In the preaching of the prophets, God's presence and protection were declared to be conditional, based on the obedience of the people. Conquest was threatened if the population did not repent. (3) During the exile, God seemed to abandon Jerusalem for a while, but new prophets gave a promise of restoration more glorious than the original. (4) After the return from exile, disappointment that this restoration did not happen led to shifting the hope of restoration to the eschatological and transcendent realm.<sup>91</sup> But through all these stages, "the key element in the development of the image of Jerusalem is the notion of divine presence."<sup>92</sup> God's presence is seen as first unconditional, then conditional, then mobile, finally as transcendent.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Sharkey, "Heavenly Jerusalem," 6. Though Sharkey does not deal with such studies in detail, an example would be Porteous, "Jerusalem-Zion," who thinks there was a process of idealizing Jerusalem until it was seen as the transcendent reality of justice and peace in the eschatological community of redeemed humanity. He wants to erase the scandal of particularity that the use of the name "Jerusalem" occasions. Schmidt, "Jerusalem als Urbild und Abbild," takes a similar approach. Cf. also Causse, "Mythe."

<sup>90</sup> Sharkey, "Heavenly Jerusalem," 1.

<sup>91</sup> Sharkey, "Heavenly Jerusalem," 73–75.

<sup>92</sup> Sharkey, "Heavenly Jerusalem," 75.

<sup>93</sup> Sharkey, "Heavenly Jerusalem," 76.

Sharkey sees the move to transcendence intensified in Second Temple literature, where hope for the future is projected outside of this world and beyond history.<sup>94</sup> However, a renewed earthly Jerusalem is generally envisioned.<sup>95</sup> In contrast, the New Testament uses Jerusalem symbols but transfers them to the church (as locus of God's presence), while at the same time seeing Jerusalem as located in heaven.<sup>96</sup> Sharkey sees the use of the name "Jerusalem" in Rev 21–22 as a combination of the temple motif, which speaks of God's presence, and the city motif, which speaks of human community.<sup>97</sup>

The present work, rather than attempting to make a critical reconstruction of the historical development of the Jerusalem/Zion concept, takes the Old Testament picture of the importance and history of Jerusalem as depicted in the text itself. The text presents Sharkey's stages (2) and (3) and sometimes (4) as co-existing in the pre-exilic prophets, and stage (1) contemporary with them in the Psalms. Such a clear chronological development of the concept as she proposes is not readily discernible.

Also, the picture of Jerusalem in the Pentateuch and some Psalms presents God's relationship to Zion as predating David. This dissertation shows how this aspect of the picture was intensified in Second Temple Literature, and helps make sense of the way Jerusalem and Eden are combined in the New Jerusalem.

This dissertation builds on the work of many others besides Sharkey. Works on Jerusalem/Zion theology can be roughly divided into (1) studies of Jerusalem/Zion in the Old Testament or parts of the Old Testament, (2) studies of Jerusalem/Zion in the non-

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<sup>94</sup> Sharkey, "Heavenly Jerusalem," 92.

<sup>95</sup> Sharkey, "Heavenly Jerusalem," 129.

<sup>96</sup> Sharkey, "Heavenly Jerusalem," 217–18.

<sup>97</sup> Sharkey, "Heavenly Jerusalem," 286–87.



canonical Second Temple Jewish literature, (3) studies of Jerusalem/Zion in the New Testament or parts of the New Testament, (4) studies of Jerusalem in the book of Revelation, especially chapters 21–22, (5) works on the temple theme in Revelation, (6) works on the Land theme, and (7) works on the city theme.

*Study of Jerusalem/Zion in the Old Testament*

The Old Testament contains a rich theology of Jerusalem/Zion. Much work has been done on this by Old Testament scholars, but they seldom make any links to the New Testament.

Josef Schreiner wrote one of the pioneering works on this topic (1963).<sup>98</sup> His is a historical investigation of the growth of Jerusalem/Zion theology. Like many other writers of historical-critical studies, he accepts critical reconstructions of the growth of the Old Testament text and sees references to Jerusalem in the Pentateuch, for example, as post-exilic insertions. He divides his study into three parts: Jerusalem the chosen place, Jerusalem the seat of Yahweh's king, and Jerusalem the secure city of God. He thus deals with three main areas of Zion theology: God's presence, God's rule, and Zion's inviolability/security. Schreiner does not deal at length with the concept of Jerusalem/Zion as a sinful human community.

In Ben Ollenburger's book, *Zion the City of the Great King* (1987), Zion is a symbol of the fact that YHWH is king there over Israel and the world. As king he is deliverer of his people and it is his prerogative to be the *only* deliverer of Zion from both human and cosmic enemies.<sup>99</sup> This is why idolatry is so reprehensible.

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<sup>98</sup> Schreiner, *Sion-Jerusalem*.

<sup>99</sup> Ollenburger, *Zion*, 19.

Although some of Ollenburger's speculation about Israel's enthronement ceremonies may be questioned, the kingship of YHWH is indeed one of the important themes attached to Zion in the Old Testament and it reappears in Revelation's picture of the New Jerusalem. However, it is only one theme of several.

Christoph Barth (1991) has a chapter entitled "God Chose Jerusalem" in his Old Testament Theology, *God with Us*.<sup>100</sup> He argues that God created Zion and established it as his sanctuary before he brought Israel in to share it. When Israel took over Jerusalem, the city was "israelized" and Israel was "jerusalemized."<sup>101</sup> He says that God's purpose in choosing Zion was to set up a just society and that this purpose will finally be realized in the New Jerusalem.<sup>102</sup>

*Zion, City of our God* is a collection of essays produced by the Tyndale Fellowship Old Testament Study Group at Cambridge in 1996.<sup>103</sup> In this book, John Monson provides a good overview of the motifs of the Zion tradition and briefly explores how Israel appropriated the architecture and the political and religious function of temples in the ancient Near East for the Jerusalem Temple.<sup>104</sup> Richard Hess defends the antiquity of the Zion traditions against those who argue that they originated in Hezekiah's time or later.<sup>105</sup> Martin Selman shows how Chronicles "affirms Jerusalem's continuing significance after the exile"<sup>106</sup> especially as a place to meet God; and Gary Knoppers

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<sup>100</sup> Barth, *God with Us*, 234–303.

<sup>101</sup> Barth, *God with Us*, 241.

<sup>102</sup> Barth, *God with Us*, 289–98.

<sup>103</sup> It was published in 1999 as Hess and Wenham, eds., *Zion*.

<sup>104</sup> Monson, "Temple of Solomon."

<sup>105</sup> Hess, "Hezekiah and Sennacherib."

<sup>106</sup> Selman, "Jerusalem in Chronicles," 43.

examines 2 Chron 20 as a holy war story that highlights the importance of the Temple for security and spurs on post-exilic readers to rebuild it.<sup>107</sup>

One of the most useful essays in this collection is by Thomas Renz.<sup>108</sup> He concludes that the Zion tradition was “concerned with YHWH’s responsibility for the maintenance of the cosmic and historical order of his creation.”<sup>109</sup> But, in Ezekiel, because of Israel’s sin, God leaves Zion, negating the Zion tradition. The tradition will be recreated along with the Temple when YHWH returns and holiness is restored. Thus, it is not Zion but God’s presence that provides the inviolability and other elements of the Zion tradition that make Zion secure for God’s people.<sup>110</sup>

Another contribution is Leslie Hoppe’s *The Holy City: Jerusalem in the Theology of the Old Testament* (2000). He treats Zion in various sections of the literature: the Psalms, Deuteronomic history, prophets, and non-canonical Second Temple literature. Hoppe believes that Isa 1–39 democratizes and demythologizes the Zion tradition to emphasize that what God wants most is a just social order with economic justice for the poor.<sup>111</sup> In his consideration of the Second Temple literature, he also argues that human effort and violence did not work to establish Zion. Instead, Jerusalem’s glorious future will be an act of God.<sup>112</sup> Rather than striving for control of Jerusalem, Jews today must gather around the Torah and Christians around Jesus.<sup>113</sup> By this approach Hoppe hopes to encourage a peace process in the Middle East today that avoids violence and provides social justice for all the region’s inhabitants. His emphasis on social justice in the Zion

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<sup>107</sup> Knoppers, “Jerusalem at War.”

<sup>108</sup> Renz, “Zion Tradition in Ezekiel.” Renz includes an excellent bibliography.

<sup>109</sup> Renz, “Zion Tradition in Ezekiel,” 84.

<sup>110</sup> A final essay in this volume by Rebecca Doyle is a historical study that concludes that even if there was any pre-Davidic Molek cult in Jerusalem, it was not confused with the worship of YHWH.

<sup>111</sup> Hoppe, *Holy City*, 58, 65. In this emphasis, Hoppe follows Barth, *God with Us*.

<sup>112</sup> Hoppe, *Holy City*, 151, 162.

<sup>113</sup> Hoppe, *Holy City*, 166.

theology of the Old Testament is sometimes made at the expense of other themes also prominent in the material, such as fellowship with God and victory over evil powers.

In the Old Testament, Zion as dwelling place of God sometimes appears as a cosmic mountain analogous to the sacred mountains of the gods of Canaan. Richard Clifford's book, *The Cosmic Mountain* (1972), has been the standard source for information on the Canaanite concept of cosmic mountains, and how this concept appears in the Old Testament's view of Zion. He notes areas of convergence and divergence that bring the biblical view of Zion into sharper focus. Moshe Weinfeld (1983) provides a balance to the Canaanite ideas by discussing holy mountain and city motifs from Mesopotamia.<sup>114</sup> There are many other works that deal with specialized areas of Jerusalem/Zion in the Old Testament. For example, Jon D. Levenson (1985) investigates how Zion absorbed some Sinai traditions and merged them with mythical cosmic mountain traditions.<sup>115</sup>

Other works are studies of the Jerusalem motif in certain parts of the Old Testament. J. J. M. Roberts's area of expertise (1982, 1987) is the Israelite beginning of Jerusalem/Zion under David.<sup>116</sup> Roberts argues that David's conquest of Jerusalem was the event of God's choosing the city as his abode. It was at this point that Zion took on the typical characteristics of Canaanite holy mountains, and the Zion tradition was forged. This kind of approach has to treat passages that depict God's earlier relationship to Zion as later interpolations.

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<sup>114</sup> Weinfeld, "Zion and Jerusalem."

<sup>115</sup> Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*. Levenson contends that, in the OT, the Davidic covenant is under the Sinai covenant, while, in the NT, the Davidic covenant of election by grace is depicted as replacing the Sinai covenant (p. 216).

<sup>116</sup> A number of his essays published previously, together with new ones, have been collected by Batto and Roberts, in *David and Zion*.

In his book on the theology of the Psalms, Hans-Joachim Kraus (1986) has a section that deals with Zion.<sup>117</sup> This is important because the Psalms are often cited as sources of information about the Zion tradition. Kraus details evidence in the psalms that the various elements of the Zion tradition originated in pagan holy mountain ideas. This tradition in turn influenced the prophets. Thus Kraus defends the idea that the Zion tradition was formed in the early stages of Israel's monarchy using ideas current in the Canaanite cultural milieu.

Barry G. Webb (1990) addresses Isaiah's material on Zion.<sup>118</sup> He sees the transformation of Zion as the key to the structure of the whole book. Zion's punishment will lead to a purified remnant, which will lead to a transformed Zion and ultimately a transformed cosmos. Webb's analysis makes it easy to see how the treatment of Zion in Isaiah provides ideas for the New Jerusalem of the book of Revelation.

Julie Galumbush (1992) examines the view of Jerusalem as wife of Yahweh in Ezekiel.<sup>119</sup> She compares the picture of Jerusalem as an unfaithful wife in Ezek 16 and 23 with views of Jerusalem elsewhere in Ezekiel. She concludes that the wife metaphor is dropped for the restored and purified Jerusalem of the final chapters of Ezekiel.<sup>120</sup> This is striking, considering that the wife metaphor is retained for eschatological Jerusalem in both Isaiah and Revelation.

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<sup>117</sup> Kraus, *Theology of the Psalms*, 78–84. See also Satterthwaite, "Zion in the Songs of Ascents," who demonstrates how the Zion Tradition is embedded in Pss 120–134.

<sup>118</sup> Webb, "Zion in Transformation."

<sup>119</sup> Galumbush, *Jerusalem in the Book of Ezekiel*. Renz, "Zion Tradition in Ezekiel," discussed above, deals with Jerusalem in Ezekiel from another angle.

<sup>120</sup> Galumbush, *Jerusalem in the Book of Ezekiel*, 125.

F. W. Dobbs-Allsopp (1995, 2004) writes about the Daughter of Zion, particularly in Lamentations.<sup>121</sup> He thinks that the book of Lamentations expresses a bitter negation of the Zion tradition.<sup>122</sup> But if Roberts is right that part of the Zion tradition was that Israel had to be fit to live in Zion,<sup>123</sup> Zion's acknowledgement of sin in Lamentations gives the book a place within the tradition.

Isaac Kalimi (2005) has written several pieces on Jerusalem in Chronicles.<sup>124</sup> He notes the way Chronicles highlights the link between Zion and David's line and contends that the Chronicler focuses on Jerusalem, perhaps to encourage Jews in Mesopotamia and elsewhere to return to Palestine and strengthen Jerusalem as the defining centre of national life.

Others look at Jerusalem in the post-exilic prophets, especially Zechariah. Carol and Eric Meyers (1992) explore Zechariah's picture of Zion without a human king.<sup>125</sup> Since God is Zion's King, Zion's rule is universal, and Zechariah sets Zion into a global context. She will be chosen again, and become the sacred centre of the whole earth and for all nations. This foreshadows Revelation's use of Jerusalem/Zion as the centre for redeemed humanity from all nations.<sup>126</sup>

In most of these studies, not enough emphasis is given to the fact that Jerusalem/Zion has the dual role in the Old Testament of being *both* inviolable cosmic

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<sup>121</sup> Dobbs-Allsopp, "The Syntagma of *bat*," and "R(az/ais)ing Zion." Other contributions to the study of Zion in Lamentations include O'Connor, *Lamentations*; Lee, *Singers*; Heim, "Personification of Jerusalem."

<sup>122</sup> Dobbs-Allsopp, "R(az/ais)ing Zion," 21.

<sup>123</sup> Roberts, "Zion in the Theology of the Davidic-Solomonic Empire," 94.

<sup>124</sup> Including, "The Capture of Jerusalem," "Jerusalem—The Divine City," and other essays in *Ancient Israelite Historian*.

<sup>125</sup> Meyers and Meyers, "Jerusalem and Zion after the Exile."

<sup>126</sup> Knowles, *Centrality Practiced*, gives historical evidence for how Jews of the Persian period kept Jerusalem central in their lives by returning to settle in or near it, limiting animal sacrifice to the Jerusalem Temple, making regular financial contributions to the Temple, and, for some, going on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, although she concludes, "the practice of centrality was neither univocal nor consistent" (p. 128). Knowles's is primarily a historical rather than a theological study.

mountain of God *and* capital city of sinful people vulnerable to God's judgment.<sup>127</sup> The tendency is always to concentrate on one aspect or the other. The interplay of these two roles shapes the theology of the city that emerges when Israel contemplates the exile. According to the prophets, their seeming incompatibility will finally be resolved by a divine transformation of human nature. It becomes increasingly apparent that the mountain itself will also be transformed. This dual nature of Jerusalem becomes important in the book of Revelation.

*Study of Jerusalem/Zion in Second Temple Literature*

Material dedicated to the views of Jerusalem expressed in non-canonical Second Temple Jewish literature is not as plentiful. Josephus, who lived at the end of this period, is a mine of information, giving his own views on the history and significance of Jerusalem. He represents at least one strand of opinion in his times.

There are hints in the Old Testament that Jerusalem/Zion had a role in God's program even before the city was conquered by David. These hints are developed dramatically in some of the Second Temple literature. This literature also proposes several solutions to the crisis of theodicy occasioned by the destruction of Jerusalem and the disappointingly feeble restoration that followed. Disparate future scenarios are envisioned for the city, including restoration of the glory of the present city in this world, renewal of the entire cosmos and divine revelation of heavenly Jerusalem on earth, and the city simply fading into obsolescence as it is replaced by heavenly realities.

One type of literature common in this period is apocalyptic.<sup>128</sup> A number of scholars have examined how Jerusalem is depicted and used in Second Temple

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<sup>127</sup> This duality is noted by some, e.g. Schreiner, *Sion-Jerusalem*, 256; and Sharkey, "Heavenly Jerusalem."

<sup>128</sup> For a discussion of apocalyptic literature and apocalypticism, see J. J. Collins, "Apocalyptic Literature," and Aune, Geddert and Evans, "Apocalypticism."

apocalyptic literature. J. J. Collins (1998) does not try to relate the theme to the rest of biblical theology or to the theology of non-apocalyptic works.<sup>129</sup> His treatment is very general. Though M. Leppäkari (2006) attempts to relate the treatment of Jerusalem in apocalyptic literature to the larger issue of Jerusalem/Zion theology, her treatment is brief and relies on summaries of other scholars, since it is just background to the sociological study of contemporary Zionists that she is undertaking.<sup>130</sup> Shmuel Safrai discusses the rise of the concept of the heavenly Jerusalem from a Jewish point of view.<sup>131</sup> Though he takes much of his evidence from Jewish literature written after the first century C.E., he sees *1 Enoch* as documenting the Second Temple era shift to eschatological expectation of a heavenly temple and city, and *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* appropriating that concept for comfort after the 70 C.E. destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.

The Dead Sea Scrolls are another important source for the study of theological developments in the Second Temple era. Material on Jerusalem from the Scrolls is surveyed by Lawrence Schiffman (1996)<sup>132</sup> and Philip Davies (2003).<sup>133</sup> Schiffman divides the references to Jerusalem into three categories: to the Jerusalem of history (its destruction mourned, its present corruption decried), the Jerusalem of religious law (the dwelling place of God, to be kept holy as the “camp”) and eschatological Jerusalem (Jerusalem restored as the holy city). Davies, on the other hand, believes there was a progression of distancing from Jerusalem and its Temple in three stages: the Jerusalem Temple as the ideal, typified by the *Temple Scroll*, then an approval in principle but criticism of the present Temple regime, typified by the *Damascus Document*, and finally,

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<sup>129</sup> J. J. Collins, *Jerusalem and the Temple*.

<sup>130</sup> Leppäkari, *Apocalyptic Representations of Jerusalem*.

<sup>131</sup> Safrai, “Heavenly Jerusalem.”

<sup>132</sup> Schiffman, “Jerusalem in the DSS.”

<sup>133</sup> Davies, “From Zion to Zion.”



a rejection of the earthly Jerusalem Temple in favour of the heavenly one, typified by the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*. Davies admits, however, that he can only suspect that such a progression occurred.<sup>134</sup>

More information on specific texts is available, for example, in Carol Newsom's book on the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* (1985),<sup>135</sup> which describes the heavenly temple and worship in it.<sup>136</sup> Another useful source is Michael O. Wise's article on the New Jerusalem texts in the *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (2000).<sup>137</sup> These texts appear to describe a future earthly temple, with probably the first example of a square plan such as is found in Revelation. However, the text is too fragmentary to draw very many conclusions.<sup>138</sup>

Overall, a comprehensive study of all the material about Jerusalem in the Second Temple literature is lacking, and a contribution will be attempted in this dissertation.

#### *Study of Jerusalem/Zion in the New Testament*

Another group of studies investigates the attitude of the New Testament writings to Jerusalem/Zion. They note the use and modification of Old Testament Zion theology made by New Testament writers in light of the coming of Jesus the Messiah. The coming and work of Jesus Christ cause a reinterpretation of many aspects of the inherited theology. Jesus' cleansing of the Temple, his predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem, Paul's use of the promise theme from the Old Testament to mean justification rather than

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<sup>134</sup> Davies, "From Zion to Zion," 166.

<sup>135</sup> Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*. The many monographs on various documents of the DSS could not all be used for this dissertation.

<sup>136</sup> In the Qumran Isaiah peshet, there is also a kind of temporary temple on earth, formed by the community. It seems to replace the defiled Jerusalem temple, but will no longer be needed when the Temple is cleansed and re-established.

<sup>137</sup> Wise, "NJ Texts."

<sup>138</sup> Wise, "NJ Texts," 744. Historical background on the competition between Jerusalem and Gerezim as reflected in the texts of this period is provided by Hjelm, *Jerusalem's Rise to Sovereignty*.

the Land, and his claim that the Jerusalem above, in contrast to Jerusalem on earth, is the mother of believers, are examples of this. The book of Hebrews says that believers have already come to Mount Zion, which is contrasted to Mount Sinai, and is clearly different from earthly Jerusalem. Some interpreters make much of the fact that the book of Acts appears to make Jerusalem the centre from which mission proceeds and the place to which Paul keeps returning. But this may be purely pragmatic. And a good case can be made for Antioch rather than Jerusalem as the centre of Paul's mission. Overall, it appears that Jesus and the church become the fulfillment and restoration of Zion and Temple for the church age.

J. C. de Young (1960) sees the most important meaning of Jerusalem to be intimate communion and fellowship between God and his people.<sup>139</sup> The city began this role as the place where God chose to establish his special relationship with his people and the place where they found fellowship with God in worship.<sup>140</sup> But when Jerusalem rejected and killed Jesus, it lost this role and became part of the world system.<sup>141</sup> Henceforth, Christians look to the heavenly Jerusalem where there is true fellowship with God forever, fulfilling all that the earthly Jerusalem stood for but could not achieve. De Young briefly discusses what the New Jerusalem image in Revelation leads us to expect for the final state of believers in Christ. It represents fellowship with God, and fellowship with the redeemed community in God's presence.<sup>142</sup> However, de Young deals with Old Testament material only briefly as it touches on the New Testament texts he discusses.

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<sup>139</sup> de Young, *Jerusalem in the NT*.

<sup>140</sup> de Young, *Jerusalem in the NT*, 28, 51.

<sup>141</sup> de Young, *Jerusalem in the NT*, 75, 98.

<sup>142</sup> de Young, *Jerusalem in the NT*, 164–65.

Some interpreters are primarily concerned with what attitude Christians today should have to Israel and Jerusalem. They are addressing issues of Zionism, Christian Zionism and Christian attitudes to Palestine and Palestinians.<sup>143</sup> They look at Old Testament attitudes to Jerusalem/Zion, which are usually cited as the foundation of Zionistic thinking, and carry the discussion forward into the attitude of Jesus and the apostles.

Prominent among these is Peter W. L. Walker. Walker began his studies of Jerusalem with a dissertation on fourth-century Christian attitudes to earthly Jerusalem.<sup>144</sup> He continues his work today by writing and editing materials that promote both a biblical understanding of the theological role of Jerusalem and the Land, and dialogue among the stakeholders in the modern Middle East. He contends that in the New Testament Jesus and the church take over the role of Jerusalem and the Temple. His major work expounding this is *Jesus and the Holy City*. Although the title might lead one to believe that Walker is just dealing with the Gospels, this is a major survey of material on Jerusalem in the entire New Testament. Walker argues that Old Testament prophecies of the restoration of Israel and Jerusalem were fulfilled by the work of Jesus, and that throughout the entire New Testament there is no role for earthly Jerusalem in God's program after 70 C.E.<sup>145</sup> His treatment of the New Jerusalem, however, is very brief, likely because eschatology is beyond his focus.

Walker has edited a number of volumes of discussion devoted to illuminating a biblical position on the issue of Jerusalem today. One of them is *Jerusalem Past and*

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<sup>143</sup> Hoppe, *Holy City*, cited above, has some of these concerns.

<sup>144</sup> Published as *Holy City, Holy Places?*

<sup>145</sup> E.g. Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 294–95. Walker agrees with R. Bauckham and N.T. Wright on this issue and quotes them in his argument.

*Present in the Purposes of God.* In this book, Gordon McConville looks for evidence that God's presence with his people is the important concept and that Jerusalem as a location is only incidental. He does not believe that the Old Testament contains any tradition of Zion being God's permanent dwelling-place, a place God protects unreservedly. Instead, the Old Testament opposes this tradition. This leads to his contention that Christian Zionism is misguided.<sup>146</sup> This is one way of tackling the Zionism problem, but it does so at the expense of Old Testament concepts about Zion that are important to the picture of the New Jerusalem in Revelation.

In the same volume, Tom (N. T.) Wright defends the view that Jesus brought about the promised restoration of Israel and that he replaces Jerusalem and the Temple. Old Testament Jerusalem was just a metaphor for the heavenly or New Jerusalem, which exists now in the intention or mind of God.<sup>147</sup> Heavenly Jerusalem is the human community of the redeemed in the coming kingdom, whereas earthly Jerusalem became the "Babylon" of Revelation. All parts of Old Testament prophecy about Jerusalem have already been fulfilled in Christ.<sup>148</sup> This approach also ignores much of the future aspect of Jerusalem theology yet to be fulfilled in the New Jerusalem.

Walker's interests require him to work on a Christian theology of the Holy Land as well as the city. Since the two are so closely related, his writing about the Land often has bearing on Jerusalem as well. In two articles, "The Land in the Apostles' Writings," and "The Land and Jesus Himself," Walker contends that to the New Testament writers Jesus Christ has fulfilled the promise of the Land. To be "in Christ" fulfills the promise that God's people would be "in the land." In Paul, "terminology that had originally

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<sup>146</sup> McConville, "Jerusalem in the OT," 28.

<sup>147</sup> Wright, "Jerusalem in the NT," 69.

<sup>148</sup> Wright, "Jerusalem in the NT," 74.

applied to Jerusalem and to the land was now applied instead to the salvation experienced in Christ.”<sup>149</sup> Believers are now in the Promised Land spiritually and will inherit the whole earth when it is renewed. Walker says, “Jesus was leading his people to a new promised land, the place to which he himself had gone ahead as the pioneer, namely the ‘heavenly Jerusalem’ (Heb 12:22).”<sup>150</sup> Walker contends that this was the view of Jesus himself who counted himself as the fulfilment of the Temple and predicted the destruction of it and of Jerusalem. He saw his resurrection as the restoration of Israel, refusing to get involved in political liberation movements. In the same volume O. Palmer Robertson demonstrates that even in the Old Testament itself there are indications that the physical Land and an earthly Jerusalem are not the final goal to which God’s people are moving.<sup>151</sup>

Walker and his circle are interested in demonstrating that the Christian theological trajectory from Old Testament Jerusalem does not lead to the present day city of Jerusalem in the Middle East. Therefore, they contend that those who follow the Bible ought not to treat contemporary Jerusalem and Israel any differently from any other city or nation. The urgency of finding a rationale for fairness to all parties in the current Middle East peace process seems at times to have made them overstate their case. Important theological concepts are attached to Jerusalem and these tell us something about the final state that bears this name to a greater extent than these authors are able to allow. Though the trajectory does not lead to modern earthly Jerusalem, it does lead to some kind of Jerusalem, and there is enough continuity between Old Testament

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<sup>149</sup> Walker, “The Land in the Apostles’ Writings,” 86.

<sup>150</sup> Walker, “The Land in the Apostles’ Writings,” 91.

<sup>151</sup> Robertson, “New-covenant Perspective.” 121–41.

Jerusalem and the New Jerusalem to make a study of the first relevant to understanding the second.

Some studies of Jerusalem work with only part of the New Testament. Jesus' view is discussed by Peter Stuhlmacher (1989)<sup>152</sup> and Kim Huat Tan (1997).<sup>153</sup> Stuhlmacher contends that despite Jesus' denunciation of earthly Jerusalem, he (and Paul) still envisioned Zion as the future location of ultimate salvation.<sup>154</sup> Tan believes that Jesus ended his days in Jerusalem because he accepted the Zion traditions and his aim was to effect the restoration of Zion. Luke's view is discussed by Charles H. Giblin (1985)<sup>155</sup> and James Bradley Chance (1988). Giblin sees Luke's Gospel as a warning to Theophilus and all Greco-Roman society about what will happen to any city that rejects Jesus. Chance maintains that Luke, unlike most early Christians, did not transfer the prerogatives of Jerusalem and the Temple to Jesus and the church.<sup>156</sup> Instead, first-century Jerusalem was to become the end-time Zion, locus of salvation. Thus Luke would have found the destruction of Jerusalem problematic to his theology. Chance's thesis is challenged in this dissertation.<sup>157</sup>

Examples of those who treat Paul's view are Johannes Munck (1959),<sup>158</sup> F. F. Bruce (1968),<sup>159</sup> and Stuhlmacher (mentioned above). Munck believes Paul saw Jerusalem as theologically important, so his efforts were aimed at bringing offerings and

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<sup>152</sup> Stuhlmacher, "Stellung Jesu."

<sup>153</sup> Tan, *Zion Traditions*.

<sup>154</sup> Stuhlmacher, "Stellung Jesu," 146.

<sup>155</sup> Giblin, *Destruction of Jerusalem*.

<sup>156</sup> Chance, *Jerusalem*.

<sup>157</sup> Gaston, *No Stone on Another*, (e.g. p. 487), speculates that the Synoptic Gospels changed what from Jesus was a prophetic threat of judgment against Jerusalem if she did not repent to a prediction of Jerusalem's destruction and the end of God's special work with Israel. Gaston's is a historical-critical and source-critical study, and his conclusions come from his source-critical reconstructions. As this dissertation is working with the final form of the text, Gaston's work was not found useful.

<sup>158</sup> Munck, "Paul and Jerusalem."

<sup>159</sup> Bruce, "Paul and Jerusalem."

converts from the nations to Jerusalem to glorify the end-time focus of God's kingdom. While Bruce basically agrees with Munck, Stuhlmacher sees a shift in Paul from focus on earthly Jerusalem to expectation of the heavenly one.

Kiwoong Son (2005) claims that most major themes of the book of Hebrews can be understood in relation to Zion symbolism.<sup>160</sup> He is more interested, however, in the contrast between Zion and Sinai, with Zion representing a transcending of the nationalistic and ritualistic world-view of Judaism. So "Zion symbolism" to him means the transcendent and universal aspects of the Jewish tradition,<sup>161</sup> rather than the Old Testament Zion theology.

Much useful work has been done on Jerusalem/Zion theology in the New Testament. Of the major works, however, de Young does not interact in much depth with the Old Testament. Walker and Wright are so taken up with fulfilment in the church age that they have little to say about the New Jerusalem. Other treatments are less than comprehensive.

#### *Study of Jerusalem/Zion in the Book of Revelation*

There have been numerous studies of the New Jerusalem as it appears in the book of Revelation. Some of the more detailed literary studies provide useful insights for the exegesis of the text. J. Comblin (1953) sees the description of the New Jerusalem in Revelation as primarily a spiritual description of the church in John's time and throughout the church age.<sup>162</sup> Similarly, A. Y. Collins (1976) sees the New Jerusalem portion of Revelation as the final stage of the ancient combat myth, the stage depicting

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<sup>160</sup> Son, *Zion Symbolism in Hebrews*.

<sup>161</sup> Son, *Zion Symbolism in Hebrews*, 82.

<sup>162</sup> E.g. Comblin, "Liturgie."

final salvation.<sup>163</sup> The whole story in Revelation is meant to be “an interpretation of human experience in which ancient patterns of conflict are used to illuminate the deeper significance of currently experienced conflict.”<sup>164</sup> She does not think the book depicts a future city or existence. Barbara Rossing (1999) explores the rhetorical force and use of the “two women *topos*” in the book of Revelation.<sup>165</sup> Her focus is on the persuasive strategies of the book that try to get readers to make a political choice against Rome and join God’s alternative political economy in this world.<sup>166</sup> None of these studies deals with the New Jerusalem as the final state of believers outside of this world and this age although many of them have valuable observations about Rev 21–22.

Some historical-critical studies explore the background of the New Jerusalem in ancient Near East sacred city ideas,<sup>167</sup> in astrological speculation of the ancient world,<sup>168</sup> in Jewish apocalypses,<sup>169</sup> and in pagan mythology.<sup>170</sup> Some propose various source documents for the book, especially the last two chapters. For example, R. H. Charles proposed that the order of the verses in Rev 20–22 had become disarranged, and were reassembled by an inept editor.<sup>171</sup> Thus, to him, some of the material on the New Jerusalem actually belongs in the description of an earthly Jerusalem during the

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<sup>163</sup> A. Y. Collins, *Combat Myth*, 226–31.

<sup>164</sup> A. Y. Collins, *Combat Myth*, 3.

<sup>165</sup> Rossing, *Choice between Two Cities*.

<sup>166</sup> Rossing, *Choice between Two Cities*, 164–65.

<sup>167</sup> E.g. Dougherty, *Fivesquare City*.

<sup>168</sup> Malina, *New Jerusalem*, 54–56.

<sup>169</sup> Bauckham, *Climax*, 39, believes it is “impossible to prove his [John’s] specific literary dependence” on any Jewish apocalypse, though he finds these works and Revelation share some apocalyptic traditions. He treats four such on pp. 40–83, and shows that John often treats them in unique ways. None of the four he treats, however, features in Rev 21 or 22.

<sup>170</sup> E.g. A. Y. Collins, *Combat Myth*. Other pagan backgrounds or parallels to some of the images of Revelation explored by commentators include the dragon (see e.g. Osborne, *Revelation*, 458–59), or the pregnant woman of Rev 12 (see Beale, *Revelation*, 624–25).

<sup>171</sup> Charles, *Revelation*, 2:144–54.



millennium. But the text can make good sense interpreted as it stands in its canonical form.

Most theological studies take the New Jerusalem more seriously as an eschatological entity and seek to find out what reality is claimed for it. They usually trace Jerusalem through Scripture and look for biblical-theological antecedents for their focus.

Mathais Rissi (1972)<sup>172</sup> believes that there is only one battle and victory of Jesus Christ in Revelation and that is at the cross. Therefore, the battle is already past when Revelation is being written.<sup>173</sup> Consequently, the millennium after the victory of Christ is the church age. Two of Rissi's emphases are problematic. The first is his universalism. From the fact that there is a "first resurrection" and a "second death," he postulates a "second resurrection" which is emergence from the lake of fire. Rissi thinks that those in the lake of fire will be able to repent and enter the New Jerusalem, thus gradually depopulating the lake of fire. This interpretation is partly driven by his second emphasis, on a distinct role for Israel as opposed to the church. All Israel must be saved, so unbelieving Israelites will be able to leave the lake of fire and enter through the gates, which, after all, are for them, since they bear the names of Israel's tribes.<sup>174</sup> Apart from these unlikely interpretations, Rissi has many fine insights. He ably defends the distinction between heavenly Jerusalem in the church age and the New Jerusalem.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> Rissi, *Future of the World*.

<sup>173</sup> Rissi, *Future of the World*, 26.

<sup>174</sup> Rissi's interpretation ignores the writer's technique of inverse parallelism at the end of Revelation. Just as the evil entities of Dragon/Satan, Beast, False Prophet and Babylon disappear in reverse order to their introduction, so the order of deaths and resurrections is inverted: first death (of all people), first resurrection (of saints), second resurrection (of sinners to be judged), and second death (of the condemned).

<sup>175</sup> Mealy, *After the Thousand Years*, has an even more unusual theory. He solves the problem of the millennium by suggesting that it comprises the first thousand years of the existence of the New Jerusalem. At the end of that time, the unbelieving dead are resurrected prior to their final judgment. They have a final chance to bow to God, but instead, follow Satan in an attack on the New Jerusalem.

The first section of William Dumbrell's book (1985) deals with the New Jerusalem.<sup>176</sup> He concludes that in the New Jerusalem of Revelation, "Zion theology with all its implications is now realized."<sup>177</sup> Dumbrell's view of why Jerusalem is used as the picture of the final state is that a city is a political symbol. Like Ollenburger, Dumbrell believes Jerusalem symbolizes God's government over the Kingdom of God. When he considers the new Temple, he sees it as the palace of the King, and the new creation is a renewal of God's reign. Though this provides a unifying theme for Dumbrell's work, his focus on God's kingship causes him to miss or downplay other important themes like fellowship among the saints and communion with God.

Richard Bauckham has a chapter entitled "The New Jerusalem" in his *Theology of the Book of Revelation* (1993).<sup>178</sup> He treats the New Jerusalem as the desirable alternative to the city of Babylon (which represents human society in opposition to God), then in its own right as place (paradise, holy city and temple), people, and presence of God. Bauckham is skilled at finding the Old Testament sources of the ideas in Revelation. He hints at what believers should expect in the final state, but does not develop this line of thought.<sup>179</sup>

Sung-Min Park wrote a dissertation in 1995 whose core is an exegesis of Rev 21:1—22:5.<sup>180</sup> He sees the New Jerusalem (1) in Rev 21:1–8 as a microcosm of the New World (based on the *Vorbild* of Isa 65–66); (2) in Rev 21:9–27 as a temple (based on the *Vorbild* of Ezek 40–48); and (3) in Rev 22:1–5 as an Eden (based on the *Vorbild* of Gen

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<sup>176</sup> Dumbrell, *End of the Beginning*. The other four sections deal with the new Temple, new Covenant, new Israel and new Creation.

<sup>177</sup> Dumbrell, *End of the Beginning*, 31.

<sup>178</sup> Bauckham, *Theology*, 126–43.

<sup>179</sup> In Bauckham, *Bible and Mission*, 65–81, Bauckham uses his insights about Jerusalem to discuss the tension between particularity and universality in the gospel message.

<sup>180</sup> Park, "Regained Eden."

2–3). He starts his work with a quick survey of New Jerusalem material in the Old Testament, Second Temple literature, and the New Testament other than Revelation. Park’s investigation of the antecedents of the Jerusalem concept is much briefer than what is attempted in this dissertation, because his focus is the exegesis of the New Testament passage rather than tracing a theme forward from the Old Testament. In his discussion of the Old Testament, he treats only the Zion Tradition, and the contribution of Isaiah, Ezekiel and Zechariah. In the New Testament, he has no discussion of the Gospels and Acts. His choice of three *Vorbilder* provides good structure but limits the conceptual sources for the whole New Jerusalem picture. Park’s fourth chapter discusses places where Jerusalem is mentioned in parts of Revelation other than chaps. 21 and 22, noting the continuities with and differences from the New Jerusalem of the final two chapters. He concludes that in the Old Testament, Jerusalem is an eschatological “symbol of God’s final work of salvation for all the nations.”<sup>181</sup> He says that the book of Revelation continues this use and goes beyond it by eliminating a temple that is separate from the city and by including all nations among the city’s inhabitants. The New Jerusalem depicted in Revelation is the consummated kingdom of God, a place of perfect communion with God and a place without any curse or possibility of falling from grace.<sup>182</sup>

Each of the treatments listed above has its own limitations. Some do not pay enough attention to the implications of the New Jerusalem for eschatological experience of the saints. Rissi’s unusual ideas about Israel and the lake of fire, Dumbrell’s excessive

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<sup>181</sup> Park, “Regained Eden,” 332.

<sup>182</sup> Park, “Regained Eden,” 338.

focus on the political side of the image, and Park's only brief consideration of the entire background of the Jerusalem image for Revelation leave room for another contribution.

*Study of the Temple Theme*

In some respects, Jerusalem derives its theological importance from the presence of the Temple, and a few studies on the theology of the Temple have been used for this study of Jerusalem. R. E. Clements (1965) explores the "meaning and theological significance of the Jerusalem temple as a witness to the presence of God in Ancient Israel."<sup>183</sup> He sees the New Jerusalem getting its significance as the place of God's presence from the fact that the Temple where God met with people was in Jerusalem.<sup>184</sup> The idea of a heavenly Jerusalem developed because the earthly one, rebuilt after the exile, was such a disappointment.<sup>185</sup>

Greg Beale (1999) has written a study which parallels this dissertation in a number of respects, but which, rather than focusing on Jerusalem, focuses on the Temple.<sup>186</sup> Seeing the Garden of Eden as the first temple, which Adam as priest was supposed to extend to cover the whole world, Beale traces the recurrence of the garden-temple theme in the tabernacle, Solomon's Temple, and the New Jerusalem. Perhaps because of his focus on Eden as the prototype of the final state, Beale almost totally ignores the contribution of Zion theology to the picture of the New Jerusalem. This dissertation tells the side of the story omitted by Beale.

Robert Briggs (1999)<sup>187</sup> has chapters on Jewish temple imagery in the Old Testament and other Jewish writings that he deems anterior to Revelation. His conclusion

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<sup>183</sup> Clements, *God and Temple*, ix.

<sup>184</sup> Clements, *God and Temple*, xi.

<sup>185</sup> Clements, *God and Temple*, 127.

<sup>186</sup> Beale, *Temple*.

<sup>187</sup> Briggs, *Temple Imagery*.

is that the non-canonical literature had “virtually no influence on the temple imagery of Revelation apart from those affinities which have mutual precursors in the OT.”<sup>188</sup> His treatment is limited to texts that treat specific aspects of the Temple that appear in Revelation, such as the lampstand, pillar, altar, ark and Temple building. This is a background study, looking for literary sources used in Revelation, rather than a theological study.

Pilchan Lee, in his book *The New Jerusalem in the Book of Revelation* (2001), is primarily interested in the question of why there is no temple in the New Jerusalem.<sup>189</sup> He compares this to the view at Qumran that the community functioned as the true temple, albeit only temporarily until the Temple in Jerusalem could be rebuilt and purified. In Revelation the New Jerusalem, which symbolizes the Christian community, acts as the temple. Lee’s work is thus much more narrowly focused than the title of his book would lead one to believe, and he does not deal with Zion traditions, only texts dealing with the restoration of the Temple and Jerusalem.

Because the Temple as dwelling place of God and place of prayer and sacrifice played such an important role in giving theological significance to or receiving significance from Jerusalem, it cannot be ignored in this study. However, Jerusalem is much more than the Temple, and these works address only part of the topic.

#### *Study of the Biblical Theology of the Land*

Studies of the biblical theology of the Land also touch on the topic of Jerusalem. The most useful to this study have been those by W. D. Davies (1974),<sup>190</sup> Walter

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<sup>188</sup> Briggs, *Temple Imagery*, 144, cf. 216–19.

<sup>189</sup> Lee, *New Jerusalem*.

<sup>190</sup> Davies, *Gospel and Land*.

Brueggemann (2002),<sup>191</sup> and Bruce Waltke (2007).<sup>192</sup> Davies contends that Jerusalem acts as the “quintessence of the land.”<sup>193</sup> The city became the symbol of Israel’s transcendent hopes, with its “duality” of heavenly and earthly affinities.<sup>194</sup> Another related concept was the Temple, which, in turn, became the “quintessence of Jerusalem.”<sup>195</sup> Brueggemann sees the Land as the symbol of salvation that results in prospering. He takes his study into the New Testament, but surprisingly stops short of any consideration of the new creation and the New Jerusalem in the book of Revelation. This would have completed his argument that the “promise” in the New Testament is still, in some sense, a promise to possess the Land.

Waltke treats the theme of the Land in the Old Testament, and includes under this theme the topics of Jerusalem and the Temple. He takes many references to Jerusalem as synecdoche for the whole Land, especially the Land as holy place of worship. He correctly sees life in the Land in the Old Testament as a foreshadowing and type of life in Christ, and ultimately of life in the New Jerusalem in Revelation.<sup>196</sup> One aspect of Waltke’s work is that he does not seem to take the “holy mountain” aspect of Zion seriously. He says the Old Testament gives only an “impression” of inviolability, but that Israel always knew that Zion’s security was conditional. Belief in inviolability was a pagan concept.<sup>197</sup> Waltke appears to say that Zion was only theologically significant for the period when God chose it for his dwelling place, that is, from David to the exile.<sup>198</sup> Yet he says God ordered Abraham to offer Isaac on Mount Zion, and notes Exod 15:17

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<sup>191</sup> Brueggemann, *The Land*.

<sup>192</sup> Waltke, *OT Theology*, 512–87, esp. pp. 546–47, 554, 566–76.

<sup>193</sup> Davies, *Gospel and Land*, 131.

<sup>194</sup> Davies, *Gospel and Land*, 143.

<sup>195</sup> Davies, *Gospel and Land*, 152.

<sup>196</sup> Waltke, *OT Theology*, 583.

<sup>197</sup> Waltke, *OT Theology*, 546–47.

<sup>198</sup> Waltke, *OT Theology*, 537, 542, 545–46.

that says God founded Zion (in the time of Moses). His account of Ezra-Nehemiah also seems to posit God's connection with Jerusalem at that time.<sup>199</sup> This down-playing of the significance of Jerusalem/Zion appears meant to pave the way for a rejection of theological significance for the present city in the Middle East, and the New Testament's transfer of significance to Jesus, life in Christ, and the New Jerusalem, but it also detracts from the theological content of old Jerusalem that is to be invested in the New Jerusalem.

### *Study of the City Idea*

A study of the New Jerusalem has some relation to works that treat Jerusalem as a holy city relating to modern humanity's situation in the great secular cities of our time. Two of these are Jacques Ellul's *The Meaning of the City* (1970) and James Dougherty's *The Fivesquare City* (1980). These studies relate the biblical view of cities to people's actual lives and expectations. Ellul sees in Jerusalem a paradigm of God's relation to all cities. It is the City of Man. Though cities per se, including Jerusalem, are manifestations of human rebellion against God, God can get a foothold in humanity's world by choosing one city, Jerusalem, to redeem and transform it.<sup>200</sup> Thus Ellul depicts Jerusalem as originally a sinful human community, which is transformed into a place to meet God. Some parts of the Bible, however, invert this order in respect to Jerusalem. Dougherty discusses the idea of a "holy city" as a religious symbol in literature. He stresses the city as a symbol of religious experience. The New Jerusalem is a metaphor both for the Christian hope and for how Christians can live in the secular cities of the world today.

Other writers work more closely with biblical exposition. J. A. Jelinek (1992) notes the role of Jerusalem as a contrast to Babylon, the anti-city, and traces the city

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<sup>199</sup> Waltke, *OT Theology*, 549.

<sup>200</sup> Ellul, *Meaning of the City*, 94–111.

metaphor through the Old and New Testaments to its use in Revelation.<sup>201</sup> Jelinek is more interested in the fact that the final state is called a city than that it is Jerusalem. One of his difficulties is that he calls the city in Revelation a metaphor, while treating it as the primary reality.<sup>202</sup>

Jelinek is also limited in his conclusions by adherence to a covenantal dispensational theology that requires separate eschatological consideration be given to Israel and to the church. The most troubling aspect of the classical dispensational view of the New Jerusalem is the way it tends to maintain distinctions between saints from Israel and saints from among the Gentiles, even in the eternal state of the New Jerusalem, despite the New Testament merging of these groups (e.g. Gal 3:28). For example, Walvoord says, “All saints . . . must necessarily participate in the city, just as many of them did also in the millennial scene, without destroying the distinction between different companies of saints.”<sup>203</sup> The result of my research in Chapter Three is that I basically agree with scholars like N. T. Wright and Peter Walker who see the restoration of Israel before the new creation primarily in the resurrection of Jesus and establishment of the church, and I have not engaged in extensive dialogue with those who expect the rebuilding of a literal Jerusalem in the Millennium.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Jelinek, “City Metaphor.”

<sup>202</sup> Jelinek, “City Metaphor,” 270, has to say, “When the New Jerusalem is compared to a city, then, the comparison is, in at least certain aspects, a literal one.” He seems to be saying here that the city is a metaphor for an actual city, which is a strange way of putting it.

<sup>203</sup> Walvoord, *Revelation*, 323. An example of an author espousing the type of dispensational theology that envisions a literal earthly millennial rule of Christ and the saints on the earth before the dissolution of this world is Robert L. Thomas (1995). He deals at length with it at the end of his commentary in an excursus on the Kingdom of Christ. (Thomas, *Revelation 8–22*, 545–65). However, he is uncertain about Jerusalem’s role in the Millennium, as he says, “‘The beloved city’ is the scene of the final great conflict after the Millennium, and is *most probably* the Jerusalem that belongs to this creation” (p. 564, italics mine).

<sup>204</sup> For the case against NT expectation of a future Jewish kingdom, and a restored earthly Jerusalem as God’s headquarters during the millennium, see Waltke, *OT Theology*, 574–76; 585–86.



The studies of the New Jerusalem described above do not really grapple with the theological reasons why the final state of Christians at the end of all history is viewed as a *specific* city, that is, Jerusalem, and what implications this fact has for the expectations about the final state that Revelation leads its readers to embrace and in which they must find motivation for their lives. These are matters that this dissertation seeks to address.

### *Structure of the Dissertation*

The dissertation is structured by the sections of material under consideration. Following this Introduction, which treats introductory matters of purpose, methodology and scholarly resources used for the study, Chapter One deals with Jerusalem/Zion theology in the Old Testament. Material on Jerusalem/Zion is examined in canonical order, in four major blocks: Pentateuch, Historical Books, Psalms and Prophets. Each block ends with a summary, and the chapter as a whole finishes with a comparison and synthesis of concepts.

Chapter Two treats material on Jerusalem found in non-canonical Jewish literature from the Second Temple period, specifically Josephus, and those writings commonly called the Apocrypha (or deuterocanonical writings), Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and Dead Sea Scrolls.<sup>205</sup> It notes how this material develops themes found in the Old Testament and deals with threats to the older Jerusalem/Zion theology. This chapter is organized according to chronological stages of Jerusalem's history: origins of Jerusalem, Abraham and Jerusalem, establishment of the Temple and Jerusalem under David and Solomon, the first destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple,

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<sup>205</sup> E.g. Briggs, *Temple Imagery*, 144, uses the same set of sources for this period.

views of Jerusalem in Second Temple times, Jerusalem's cosmic importance, and eschatological scenarios.

Chapter Three looks at the views of Jerusalem/Zion in the New Testament apart from Revelation. As in the Old Testament chapter, the material is examined in canonical order except that Luke and Acts are treated together as coming from the same author. There are summaries of Matthew, Mark, Luke-Acts, John, Paul, Hebrews and the General Epistles. This chapter explores how Jerusalem/Zion theology in the Old Testament is developed or augmented in the New Testament.

Chapter Four is an investigation of the use of Jerusalem/Zion in the book of Revelation itself. Sections on Jerusalem in Rev 1–3 and 4–20 demonstrate how Revelation's view of current Jerusalem matches that of the rest of the New Testament. The last two chapters of Revelation focus on the New Jerusalem in a way that no other New Testament writer does. The study of Rev 21:1—22:5 defends the view that the New Jerusalem is the replacement of both heaven and earth and combines God's dwelling with human community. Special attention is given to the depiction of intimacy with God, community, life, and security in the city. The chapter closes with an examination of how Old Jerusalem is a model for the New Jerusalem.

Chapter Five examines some of the implications of the study for a theology of the final state of believers, addressing such topics as how literal the picture of the New Jerusalem is meant to be, what the nature is of the continuity and discontinuity between Old and New Jerusalem, the sets of relationships present in the New Jerusalem, and the conditions of life there. It also presents some implications from the study for how to live the Christian life today.

The Conclusion states the findings relative to the aims given in the introduction by summarizing the argument of each chapter, and suggests further areas of study.

CHAPTER ONE  
THE TRADITION ESTABLISHED: JERUSALEM/ZION  
IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

*Introduction*

The New Jerusalem in the book of Revelation does not appear out of a vacuum. The city named “Jerusalem” has a long history in the Old Testament, where it is invested with great theological importance. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the theology attached to Jerusalem in the Old Testament in preparation for seeing how that theology contributes to the meaning of the New Jerusalem in Revelation.<sup>1</sup> The chapter will treat the material in canonical order, examining the material in four blocks: the Pentateuch, the Historical Books, the Psalms and the Prophets.

*Jerusalem/Zion in the Pentateuch*

Although the Pentateuch tells the part of the biblical story that predates Israel’s establishment in Jerusalem/Zion, this part of Scripture foreshadows and prepares the way for that to happen. Although the names “Jerusalem” and “Zion” do not appear in the Pentateuch, there are links to later parts of the Old Testament canon that indicate that certain parts of the Pentateuch do speak in some ways about that city.

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<sup>1</sup> No study was made of the books of Esther, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon and Nahum since, apart from a brief glance in Eccl 1:12, they do not mention Jerusalem and so were deemed not relevant to this study.

The story moves toward Jerusalem as Abraham is called from Ur to go to Canaan (Gen 12:1, 5), the area in which Jerusalem is located.<sup>2</sup> Secondly, Abraham meets Melchizedek beside a place called “Salem” (linked to Zion in Ps 76; cf. Ps 110), where he offers tithes and receives a blessing (Gen 14:17–24). Thirdly, God promises Abraham that his descendants will inherit the land, including the land of the Jebusites (Gen 15:21). In the accounts from the book of Joshua onward, it becomes apparent that the Jebusites lived only in and around Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup> Fourthly, Abraham offers his son Isaac in the region of Moriah, connected to Zion by a saying about “the mountain of the Lord” (Gen 22:1–18; cf. 2 Chron 3:1). Fifthly, when Moses and the Israelites cross the Sea of Reeds, they sing a song expecting God to lead them to his sanctuary and holy mountain (Exod 15:13–17), terms used of Jerusalem in passages like Ps 2:6; 20:2; and Isa 27:13. Sixthly, a large number of verses in Deuteronomy (starting with Deut 12:5) speak of “the place that the Lord your God will choose,” the “place where he will put his Name,”<sup>4</sup> and notify the Israelites that this will be the only authorized place of cult activity, where they are to gather to sacrifice and worship. These phrases are used of Jerusalem in passages such as 2 Chron 7:12; 29:6; Ps 132:12–14; Isa 18:7; Neh 1:9. (cf. 1 Kgs 5:5; 8:16–17; 9:3, where

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<sup>2</sup> Waltke, *Genesis*, 301, links God’s call to Abram to go to the new land in Gen 12:1 and God’s call to him to go to Moriah in Gen 22:2, since only in these two OT passages is the expression אֶל־הַיְהוָה used. “God’s first call to Abraham was ‘go to the land I will show you’ (12:1). His last call is ‘go to the region of Moriah . . . on one of the mountains I will tell you about’ (22:2).” Waltke (p. 305) believes Moriah was Jerusalem. He sees these passages as a frame enclosing the narratives of the testing of Abraham. But it is also possible to see in this link an indication that the journey to Jerusalem is the last stage of Abraham’s journey to Canaan.

<sup>3</sup> In Num 13:29 the spies report that the Jebusites live in the hill country along with the Hittites and Amorites, but since Jerusalem is in the hill country, this report could still be true if the Jebusites lived only in Jerusalem. They are not connected to any other town or city in the OT.

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of “Name theology” see Schniedewind, “Evolution.” Schniedewind suggests that the Chronicler took the “Name” to mean the presence of God, to emphasize the importance of the Temple and “by implication God, through his name, would come to rest in the Second Temple as he had in the First Temple” (p. 239). This and identifying the Temple Mount with Mt. Moriah “emphasizes the temple site as the place where the divine and human meet.”

the Jerusalem Temple is the “house” where God has put his Name). Of these six indications of Jerusalem in the Pentateuch, four require further comment.

*Abram and Melchizedek: Genesis 14:17–24*

When Abram is returning from rescuing Lot and the people of Sodom from Kedorlaomer and his allies, the king of Sodom comes out to meet Abram in the Valley of Shaveh. The redactor notes that this is the King’s Vale (Gen 14:17). This place is also mentioned in 2 Sam 18:18, and appears to be right by Jerusalem.<sup>5</sup> Then Melchizedek, the king of Salem, brings bread and wine (Gen 14:18). Melchizedek is priest of “God Most High” (Gen 14:18), a deity that Abram identifies with YHWH (Gen 14:22). Melchizedek’s priesthood implies that cultic activity in service of YHWH is already going on regularly at Salem. Melchizedek blesses Abram and receives a tithe from him (Gen 14:19–20), fulfilling typical priestly functions (e.g. Num 6:23; 10:38).

Salem’s origin is not given, and it appears and disappears abruptly in Gen 14, as without history as Melchizedek its king (cf. Heb. 7:13). But “Salem” is identified with Zion in the MT of Ps 76:3 (v. 2, ET). Josef Schreiner, though speculating about the origin of the Melchizedek story in Canaanite lore, believes that in the Pentateuch setting, Salem is identified with Jerusalem and the story probably functions to tell how Jerusalem became God’s holy city and shrine, and to underline Abraham’s connection with Jerusalem.<sup>6</sup> Salem here functions as a worship site for Abram, where he makes offering

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<sup>5</sup> Josephus, *Ant.* 7:243, says that the King’s Vale is 2 stadia from Jerusalem, which would be just outside the city. Walton, *Genesis*, 419, thinks it is probably where the Kidron and Hinnom valleys meet. For a fuller discussion of the location see Jonkar, “šwh,” *NIDOTTE* 4:60.

<sup>6</sup> Schreiner, *Sion-Jerusalem*, 69. He thinks Abraham’s connection with Jerusalem was a point that would be important in Judah’s polemic against Northern Israelite claims for Bethel, which was connected to Jacob. Weinfeld, “Zion and Jerusalem,” 103, sees an additional connection between Ps 76’s Salem and the story of Abraham at Salem because both speak of presenting gifts to God there (Gen 14:20b; Ps 76:11). He also sees the name Salem (related to the Hebrew word *shalom*, which means “peace”) as a theological expression that Jerusalem is the utopian “city of peace.” Many commentators (e.g. Driver, *Genesis*, 164;

and receives blessing from God's priest.<sup>7</sup> As Gunkel says, "The two entities which later form such a deep connection, the holy people and the holy city, come into contact for the first time here. Here for the first time Israel receives the blessing from its sanctuary."<sup>8</sup>

*The Sacrifice of Isaac: Genesis 22:1–19*

In Gen 22:1–19 God commands Abraham to sacrifice his son on a mountain in the land of Moriah.<sup>9</sup> Abraham's obedience is essential to the positive outcome of the story, yet in the end it is not the sacrifice that Abraham supplies that is offered. Both the son and the ram are ultimately supplied by God. There is divine initiative in choosing the place and providing the sacrifice. Abraham offers to God what cost nothing either to himself or to any other human being, emphasizing God's providence.<sup>10</sup> The proverb that results from this incident, "On the mountain of YHWH it will be provided/he will be

Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary*, 1:206; Simpson, "Genesis," 569; von Rad, *Genesis*, 179; Waltke, *Genesis*, 233; Walton, *Genesis*, 419; Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 316) think that the final form of Genesis intends to refer to Jerusalem here.

<sup>7</sup> von Rad, *Genesis*, 180–81, has this passage connect Abraham with the Davidic king and the king's right to impose taxes on the Israelite tribal countryside. But since it is tithe and not tax that Abraham pays, and blessing he receives, this seems to be more of a cultic connection.

<sup>8</sup> Gunkel, *Genesis*, 281. Schreiner, *Sion-Jerusalem*, 70, quotes this passage from the German edition. Cf. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 93, who says the incident foreshadows "the priestly and royal significance of the city from David's time on." de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 2:310, also recognizes that "By linking Abraham with the future capital of David, the text is trying to justify Israel's very ancient connections with Jerusalem."

<sup>9</sup> Schreiner, *Sion-Jerusalem*, 70, like others, speculates that the original of this would have been "land of the Amorites" and that Moriah is an emendation, perhaps of the Chronicler, who wanted to make pre-Solomonic sacred claims for the Temple site. However, the canonical form of the text links the eventual Temple site with the place where Abraham sacrificed Isaac, and thus testifies to belief that Zion was sacred before the time of David. Puech, "La pierre de Sion," 693, maintains that Moriah is a name for Jerusalem because Amorites lived there then. Seybold, "Jerusalem in the View of the Psalms," 13–14, maintains that Ps 76 identifies Zion and Salem with Moriah, by reading לְמֹרֶה in Ps 76:11 as "to Morah." Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary*, 1:249; and Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 111, link the name Moriah to the verb מֵרָא, used for "provide/see" in vv. 8 and 14. Thus Zion is the ultimate place of revelation and provision. Moberly, "Specimen Text," 130, takes this pun as evidence that Moriah is intended to be seen as Jerusalem. Moriah is a place where God sees and is seen (vv. 8 and 14). The two main mountains of God's appearing were Sinai and Jerusalem. Since the story takes place in Canaan, this must be Jerusalem. The Pentateuch shows the patriarchs as Torah compliant even before Sinai, says Moberly, and here Abraham sacrifices at the place God chooses (cf. Deut 12:5 etc.). Childs, "Critique of Recent Intertextual Canonical Interpretation," 180, thinks that to make the point of the story that Abraham was "Torah compliant," however, is to invert the canonical order of Genesis and Exodus, and to remove much of the force of Gen 22.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. David in 2 Sam 24:24 where Araunah would have had to bear the cost, and have become the real offerer. This is a precedent for Jerusalem and its cult being received as a divine gift.

seen” (Gen 22:14), links this incident to Zion which is “the mountain of YHWH” (e.g. Isa 2:3) where God is seen (cf. Ps 102:16).<sup>11</sup> Since Mount Moriah is identified as the site of the Temple in 2 Chron 3:1, this passage appears to have been meaningful to the Chronicler and later Judaism for Jerusalem-Zion theology.<sup>12</sup> God showing the place to Abraham is parallel to God choosing Zion in the time of David.<sup>13</sup> Divine initiative and provision are key concepts in the story.

*The Song of the Sea: Exodus 15:1–18*

The song that Moses and the Israelites sing after their deliverance through the Sea of Reeds in Exod 15:1–18 contains two main sections. Verses 1 to 12 celebrate God’s defeat of the Egyptian enemies. Verses 13 to 18 celebrate the conquest of Canaan, the anticipated second part of God’s redemption.

In your lovingkindness you have led the people whom you have redeemed; In your strength you have guided *them* to your holy habitation . . . You will bring them and plant them in the mountain of your inheritance, the place, O LORD, which you have made for your dwelling, the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established (Exod 15:13, 17 NASB).<sup>14</sup>

This part of the song mentions God’s mountain, dwelling place and sanctuary in Canaan to which he is leading the Israelites. These three terms are used of

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<sup>11</sup> Speiser, *Genesis*, 163, 166, says this comment is “connected with the Temple Hill in Jerusalem,” an addition by a later redactor (but part of the theology of the canonical text as it stands). See also Barth, *God with Us*, 236, where Barth links the Gen 14 and 22 narratives to Jerusalem, as evidence of it being God’s dwelling place “from a very early time.”

<sup>12</sup> Alexander, “Retelling,” 115, thinks that the equation of Mount Moriah with the Temple mount could be deduced midrashically from Gen 22:14, so he does not find it surprising that 1 Chron 3:1 and Josephus (*Ant.* 1:224–226) make the connection.

<sup>13</sup> Safrai, “Heavenly Jerusalem,” 13, reports that the Aggada locates Jacob’s dream near Bethel as being on Mount Moriah, the future site of the Temple. Jacob wakes with the cry, “This is none other than the house of God and this is the gate of heaven” (Gen 28:17).

<sup>14</sup> As Enns, *Exodus*, 301–303, demonstrates, the use of the English future tense to translate this part of the song is not required by the Hebrew grammar. The future is used by translators because of the context in the narrative.



Jerusalem/Zion in other canonical material (e.g. mountain, Ps 48:1–2; cf. 78:54;<sup>15</sup> Isa 2:3; dwelling place; 2 Sam 15:25; 1 Kgs 8:13 [cf. Ps 43:3; 74:2; 76:2];<sup>16</sup> sanctuary, Ps 20:2; 78:68–69. The term “planted” also points to David’s capital and the Jerusalem Temple, 2 Sam 7:10; cf. Ps 92:13).<sup>17</sup> Whatever the compositional history of the song,<sup>18</sup> there is a strong possibility that in its present form it refers to Zion as the ultimate goal of the Exodus,<sup>19</sup> especially in view of the concentration in v. 17 of terms associated with Zion. The phrase “you will bring them in and plant them” is like Exod 23:20, where God tells Moses that he will send his angel “to bring you to the place that I have prepared”; it implies that God has been there before them to get a place ready. The verb translated “have prepared” in Exod 23:20 is כִּנְּוּ, which often connotes preparation of a cultic site.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>15</sup> See Brenner, *Song of the Sea*, 137, for a discussion of this verse. Although הַר is usually translated “hill country” in this verse i.e. all of Canaan, v. 68 speaks of the sanctuary, so that the people’s arrival is ultimately to Zion. The alternate meaning, “mountain,” may be in view.

<sup>16</sup> The Hebrew words for dwelling are not the same in vv. 13 and 17. In v. 13 it is נִדְוָה, a term that implies a dwelling place of flocks, picturing God as a shepherd. It is used only elsewhere of God’s dwelling place in Jer 31:23 where it stands in apposition to the term “holy mountain.” In v. 17 it is a form of שָׁכַן, the term for God’s dwelling found in 1 Kgs 8:13. In Ps 43:3 and 74:2 the words are from the root שָׁכַן, Ps 76:2 uses terms that connote a lion’s lair. These words all belong to the same semantic domain, however.

<sup>17</sup> Some scholars think these terms refer only to Canaan generally, e.g. Noth, *Exodus*, 125; von Rad, *OT Theology*, 1:299; Cole, *Exodus*, 124–26; and Dumbrell, *End of the Beginning*, 169, who objects that “place” is used elsewhere of the whole Promised Land. But in verses like Deut 12:5; Isa 18:7 cf. Isa 60:13; 1 Kgs 8:13; John 11:48, the term refers specifically to Jerusalem.

<sup>18</sup> Some commentators believe that the archaic language of the song indicates that it is a very early composition (e.g. Cross and Freedman, “Song of Miriam,” 239–40) while others think that it must be quite late (e.g. Noth, *Exodus*, 123). Brenner, “Song of the Sea,” argues that it was written as a liturgical hymn for the Second Temple. As Childs, *Exodus*, 245 demonstrates, there is no scholarly consensus on the date.

<sup>19</sup> Childs, *Exodus*, 252, comments about Exod 15 that it “recounts the redemptive history from the exodus, through the conquest, to the securing of Zion.” Childs acknowledges (pp. 245–48) that the history of the composition of the song may be long and involved, but this is his judgment of the meaning of its final form. Schreiner, *Sion-Jerusalem*, 209–10, argues that only Zion can be meant by these expressions, and Brenner, “Song of the Sea,” 138, makes it specifically the Jerusalem Temple. Cole, *Exodus*, 124–26, resists seeing a reference to Zion in Exod 15 because he feels Moses could not have foreseen God’s sanctuary at Jerusalem and to admit such a reference would be to abandon Mosaic authorship. This is not a problem to Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary*, 1:56, who say, “This [the Jerusalem sanctuary] was the goal, to which the redemption from Egypt pointed, and to which the prophetic foresight of Moses raised both himself and his people in this song.” Kaiser, “Exodus,” 395, takes a similar position.

<sup>20</sup> It is here used in the Hiphil. Cf. Isa 2:2/Mic 4:1 where the mountain of the Lord will be established in the last days (Niphal). The Hiphil and Niphal of this verb both appear to be used for this kind of preparation. See Koch, “כִּנְּוּ etc.,” 96.

*The Place the Lord your God Will Choose*

Deuteronomy records Moses' speech to the Israelites in the plains of Moab as they are poised to enter the Promised Land. One of the prominent features of Deut 12–31 is the instruction that after the Israelites arrive in the land they should worship and celebrate festivals at a certain place in the land that the Lord will choose, where the Lord will put his Name to dwell (Deut 12:5, 12, 14; 14:23; 16:5–7, 11, 16; 26:2 etc.). The place is not named,<sup>21</sup> nor does Moses say how the people will know that God has chosen it. It is important to note that this place is not one that the people will choose, but that God will choose. But these passages prepare the reader and foreshadow the choice of Jerusalem, since Jerusalem is later called the place God has chosen and where he has put his Name (1 Kgs 9:3; 2 Kgs 21:4, 7; 2 Chron 6:6; Ezra 6:12; Neh 1:9).

Many scholars see these verses in Deuteronomy as “the Deuteronomic doctrine of cult centralization,”<sup>22</sup> and place the time of composition, or at least final redaction, of the book later on in Israel's history, no earlier than Josiah's reform, and often in post-exilic times.<sup>23</sup> The Historical Books do depict constant violation of the “one sanctuary” principle without condemnation before the building of the Temple (e.g. Samuel in 1 Sam 9:12–25; 16:2–3; Solomon in 1 Kgs 3). But this may reflect a view that the real place had not yet been chosen, and until it was, it was no violation to use various other locations.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Smith, *Deuteronomy*, 163, speculates that it would be anachronistic to put the name in at this stage of the narrative before Israel had entered the land, and that for the post-exilic audience, the name would be unnecessary since naturally understood as Jerusalem.

<sup>22</sup> Ollenburger, *Zion*, 61.

<sup>23</sup> E.g. Hoppe, *Holy City*, 46–47.

<sup>24</sup> In the Joshua and Judges eras, one could be “before the Lord” at Shiloh (Josh 18:1, 8; 21:1–2), Shechem (Josh 24:1), Mizpah (Judg 20:1) and Bethel, where the ark was for a time (Judg 20:27; 21:3–4). After Shiloh was destroyed, Samuel or the people sacrificed at Beth Shemesh (1 Sam 6:14–15), Mizpah (1 Sam 7:9), Ramah (1 Sam 7:17), Zuph (1 Sam 9:12), Gilgal (1 Sam 11:15), and Bethlehem (1 Sam 16:2–3). One could be “before the Lord” at Nob (1 Sam 21:19) where the Tabernacle seems to have been relocated. The

This explanation seems to be the one given by Pseudo-Philo, “For until the house of the Lord was built in Jerusalem and sacrifice offered on the new altar, the people were not prohibited from offering sacrifice there [Shiloh]” (*L.A.B.* 22:9).<sup>25</sup>

Those who favour a late date for the composition of the cult centralization texts in Deuteronomy have no doubt that they refer to Jerusalem.<sup>26</sup> Those who see an early origin for the texts think that they may have initially applied to Shechem, Shiloh or Bethel, only later being applied to Jerusalem.<sup>27</sup> Certainly the books of Kings and later material appear to apply these texts to Jerusalem alone. Although Jer 7:12 (cf. Ps 78:60) says that Shiloh was the first place to be so chosen (where the Tabernacle was set up in Joshua’s day: Josh 9:27; 18:1),<sup>28</sup> the following two verses imply that Jerusalem was the subsequent choice.<sup>29</sup> Even if Deuteronomy is not referring directly to Jerusalem, it sets up the expectation of a central shrine in which Israel will do the kinds of things that Abraham did at Salem and Moriah (i.e. pay tithes, receive priestly blessing and make sacrifices).

#### *Summary of Jerusalem in the Pentateuch*

If the terms Salem, King’s Vale, Moriah, Jebusites and the mountain of the Lord are all meant to be read in canonical context as referring to Jerusalem/Zion, Genesis hints

sanctuary at Dan, however (Judg 18:31), may have been seen as an illegitimate shrine because of its idolatrous associations.

<sup>25</sup> Weinfeld and others (“Zion and Jerusalem,” 88–88) take the diversity of places of sacrifice in pre-Temple times as evidence of an earlier Israelite tradition that eschewed the idea of a central shrine, but this interpretation ignores Pseudo-Philo’s explanation and the views of von Rad *et al.* (see below).

<sup>26</sup> E.g. Smith, *Deuteronomy*, 163; Schreiner, *Sion-Jerusalem* 158; Cunliffe-Jones, *Deuteronomy*, 87; Butler, *Joshua*, 105.

<sup>27</sup> von Rad, *Deuteronomy*, 94; Woudstra, *Joshua*, 166; Mayes, *Deuteronomy*, 221–23, agrees, but acknowledges that to the writer of the Deuteronomistic history, Jerusalem is the only place so chosen (1 Kgs 8:16; 11:32; 14:21; 2 Kgs 21:7).

<sup>28</sup> The Gibeonites were to serve it in the place the Lord would choose. At that time they served, apparently, in Shiloh, later, more conveniently for them, in Gibeon. See 1 Kgs 3:4; 2 Chron 1:3, 5. Josh 9:27 appears still to anticipate God’s choice of the place as being future, even though the commanded altar at Mt. Ebal had already been constructed (Josh 8:30) and tabernacle service was going on at Shiloh.

<sup>29</sup> Although Jeremiah is warning that Jerusalem, just like Shiloh, will be “de-chosen” because of its sin, he still holds out hope for a renewed and glorious eschatological Jerusalem (e.g. Jer 3:17).

that there were connections between Abraham and Jerusalem. He met a priest of YHWH there, and worshipped by paying tithes and receiving a blessing. He also received provision of food and drink there from God's priest. Soon after this, God promised him that he would inherit the land, including the land of the Jebusites (i.e. Jerusalem). Later, God showed him the place to make his greatest sacrifice, and there he had an encounter with God and received the provision of a sacrifice to offer. These stories give precedents for Zion to be the place to meet God, to worship and sacrifice, and to receive provision and blessing.

The links between Exod 15 and Zion are the terms "mountain of your inheritance," "your dwelling place" and "sanctuary." Exodus 15 reinforces the impression that God already had a mountain that was his dwelling place and sanctuary in Canaan before the Conquest.<sup>30</sup> He was leading the Israelites there, which presumably means that God would show them the place. This place was the final goal of the Exodus. Deuteronomy emphasizes that there would be a place chosen by God for making sacrifices and offerings, worshipping and encountering God. It would be in the land that the Lord would give to his people.

The Pentateuch does not name Jerusalem or Zion. It contains only hints that can be linked to Zion by reference to further canonical materials.

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<sup>30</sup> Some think that God began to have a sanctuary in Zion only when David moved the ark there, e.g. McConville, "Jerusalem in the OT," 25, and Waltke, *OT Theology*, 541, 546, but the tradition of a pre-Davidic sanctuary on Zion is hinted at in the Psalms (78; 87) and Isaiah (28:16) as well in the Pentateuch.

*Jerusalem/Zion in the Old Testament Historical Books*

*Jerusalem in Joshua and Judges*

In Joshua, Jerusalem is depicted as one of the Canaanite strongholds opposed to Israelite hegemony. Jerusalem's king Adoni-Zedek organized the first concerted resistance to Israel's conquest (Josh 10:1–5) and though he was killed (Josh 10:23–26) there is no mention of capture of the city. When Joshua apportioned the land, Jerusalem fell just inside the territory of Benjamin on the border they shared with Judah (Josh 18:16, 28; cf. 15:8). However, both tribes seem to have had the responsibility of taking over the city, since both are reported to have failed (Josh 15:63; Judg 1:21).<sup>31</sup> The men of Judah were commissioned by God to go out to continue the conquest of Canaan (Judg 1:1–2, 8) and they did take Jerusalem, but apparently failed to keep it, because in David's time it was in Jebusite hands (2 Sam 5:6–8; cf. Jud 19:11–12).<sup>32</sup>

*David's Conquest of Zion: 2 Samuel 5:6–10*

It is surprising, given Deuteronomy's emphasis on "the place the Lord will choose," that we have no record of God indicating that Jerusalem was "the place" before it became David's capital. God sent no message to tell David to capture Zion; no prophet

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<sup>31</sup> So also Woudstra, *Joshua*, 255. Waltke, *OT Theology*, 94, 589, sees the author of Judges assigning failure to capture Jerusalem to Benjamin rather than Judah as part of that book's strategy to provide an introduction to the story of successful David replacing unsuccessful Saul. Judges is not, however, in stark contradiction to Joshua, since Joshua also assigns the city to Benjamin.

<sup>32</sup> Kalimi, "Capture of Jerusalem," 95, thinks that the capture of Jerusalem by Judah recorded in Judg 1:8 is just an ideological addition by the redactor who wanted it to appear that Israel fully obeyed the command to conquer all the land. However it is quite likely that Judah conquered the city and then could not keep control, the view of many interpreters, including Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the OT*, 2:254, and Cundall, "Judges," 53–54. Bright, "Exegesis of the Book of Joshua," 691, points out that according to the OT, several cities in Canaan had to be conquered more than once, and Sizoo, writing the "Exposition" on the same page, suggests that Jerusalem may have become divided, with the Israelites being able to occupy only part. Matthews, *Judges and Ruth*, 40, comments, "It seems clear, both from David's need to conquer Jerusalem in 2 Sam 5:6–10 and from his subsequent occupation and expansion of it, that Judah's action in the Judges account might be better understood as a raid." At any rate, the Israelites did not have permanent control of Jerusalem until the time of David.

told him that this would be the place.<sup>33</sup> David's motivation in acquiring Jerusalem can only be inferred.<sup>34</sup> Scholars often assume David made Jerusalem his capital primarily for military and political reasons.<sup>35</sup> It was between the north and south, hitherto occupied by no Israelite tribe and therefore neutral territory, easily defended and accessible by road to both sides of the central mountain range.<sup>36</sup> But within the context of the biblical story, there is a significant *theological* reason why David had to conquer Jerusalem and perhaps why it should become the site of the central shrine.<sup>37</sup> David had to conquer Jerusalem to complete the divinely ordained Conquest of Canaan.<sup>38</sup>

The text of both Samuel and Chronicles makes an explicit link between the Conquest of Canaan and the capture of Jerusalem by identifying the Jebusites as “the inhabitants of the land” (יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ; 2 Sam 5:6; 1 Chron 11:4). The Pentateuch uses this phrase to describe those whom God will hand over to Israel (Exod 23:31), and those whom Israel is commanded to drive out (Num 33:52; cf. Exod 34:12, 15; Josh 9:24; Judg 2:2 etc.).

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<sup>33</sup> Kalimi, “The Capture of Jerusalem,” 99, notes “the Chronicler’s avoidance of describing the conquest of Jerusalem as a fulfillment of God’s command.” The same could be said of 2 Sam 5.

<sup>34</sup> Anderson, *2 Samuel*, 88, comments, “It is also interesting that the text is silent about any political motives or any other considerations which may have influenced David’s actions.” Anderson thinks perhaps David had to respond to Jebusite taunts. But the text may be silent because David’s personal motives were not the divine motives being served by his actions and required by the narrative.

<sup>35</sup> Following Albrecht Alt, *Jerusalems Aufstieg*, 1925, cited in Barth, *God with Us*, 240.

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, Bright, *History of Israel*, 200, and Bodner, *Power Play*, 53.

<sup>37</sup> Brueggemann, *1 and 2 Samuel*, 232, notes, concerning the story of David’s rise to power in 2 Sam 3, “The narrator lets us see the operation of Yahweh’s determined promise through these unwitting characters, their devious words, and their self-serving actions. Through the sordid narrative, the kingdom has advanced a step toward Jerusalem.” The history has two sides, a divine side and a human side.

<sup>38</sup> Bright, *History of Israel*, 201, comments that David’s conquest of Jerusalem and presumably of all other Canaanite territory in his realm, which must have preceded his embarkation on foreign wars, was “the completion of the conquest of Canaan.” Although the defeat of the Philistines (2 Sam 5:17–25) preceded the conquest of Jerusalem, that task appears to have been completed later (2 Sam 8:1) just before David embarked on the subjugation of peoples outside the Land proper. Schreiner, *Sion-Jerusalem*, 210 comments: “Der Psalm Ex 15,1–18 bekennt, dass Israels Landnahme in Jerusalem mit der Erbauung des Tempels ihren vollgültigen Abschluss fand.” See also McConville, “Jerusalem in the OT,” 22, who says that David’s conquests finally allowed Israel “to enjoy that ‘rest’ from their enemies which had been entailed in the promised land.”

The link to the Conquest is also reflected in God's comments as he made his covenant with David in 2 Sam 7:10 following the capture of Jerusalem: "I will provide a place for my people Israel, and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed."<sup>39</sup> This verse recalls Exod 15:17, the part of the Song of Moses concerning the Conquest, "you will plant them in the mountain of your inheritance," and God's promise to Moses in Exod 23:20, "I am going to send an angel in front of you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared."<sup>40</sup>

Jerusalem also had to be conquered if the promise of God to give Israel the land was to be fulfilled. In Genesis, God promised Abram and his descendants the land of a number of nations, including the Jebusites (Gen 15:21) and this promise was repeated throughout the Pentateuch and in Joshua and Judges, with the Jebusites always last in the lists.<sup>41</sup> Another name for Jerusalem is "the Jebusite [city]" or "Jebus" (Josh 15:8; 18:16, 28; Judg 19:10–11; 2 Chron 11:4–5). Clearly, for God's promise to be fulfilled, Israel had to possess the city of the Jebusites, which was Jerusalem.

<sup>39</sup> Hertzberg, *I & II Samuel*, 285–86, says that it is not certain that the verbs of 2 Sam 7:10 should be translated as future, since these consecutive perfect verbs are not preceded by an imperfect or imperative. He suggests present tense, since the temporal ambivalence suggests reference to both what God has done to that point and what he will still do. Perhaps it may also reflect that God's action is in progress in David's conquest of Jerusalem.

<sup>40</sup> 2 Sam 7:10 is the first passage to use the planting metaphor for Israel in Canaan/Jerusalem after Exod 15:17, with the possible exception of Num 24:6 in Balaam's oracle, where the picture (of aloes planted by a river) is slightly different. Three concepts co-ordinate the Exodus passages and 2 Sam 7:10: planting (נָטַע) with the same subject (God) and object (Israel) in Exod 15 and 2 Sam 7; setting up (כָּוַן in Exod 15; 23; מִשָּׁב in 2 Sam 7), and a place (הָרַר and מִצְבֹּן in Exod 15; מִקְדָּם in Ex 23 and 2 Sam 7). This sets up a triangular link expressing the activity of God in preparing the place and establishing his people there.

<sup>41</sup> Gen 15:19–21; Exod 3:8, 17; 13:5; 23:23; 33:2; 34:11; Deut 7:1; 20:17; Josh 3:10; 12:8; 24:11; Judg 3:5. Perhaps the fact that the Jebusites always come last indicates that they will be the last to be conquered, or that their territory is the final goal. Interestingly, in the postexilic lists (Ezra 9:1 and Neh 9:8), the Jebusites are no longer listed last. Jelinek, "City Metaphor," 105, comments, "It is not by accident that in the listing of the names of the territories which would be given to Abraham's descendants, the land of the Jebusites (later Jerusalem) is positioned last (v. 21). The great reward that awaited the people of Israel included the city in which the king of righteousness, Melchizedek, dwelt."

When Saul became the first king, his task was to fight Israel's battles (1 Sam 8:20). As a Benjaminite he should have included the occupation of Jerusalem on his agenda, but he was probably too busy with the Philistines and Amalekites (1 Sam 14–15), ultimately failing in both ventures. When David (from Judah) became king of all Israel, he was at last in a position to do what Saul had neglected.<sup>42</sup> He needed no further specific command from God to know what he should do. Once he had conquered Jerusalem, given past Judahic failure to control the city, the best way to consolidate his achievement was to live there.<sup>43</sup> As there were excellent reasons for making it his capital, this was probably no hardship. Whether or not David was personally motivated to conquer Jerusalem because taking it was part of the unfinished Conquest, 2 Sam 7:10 shows that this was God's purpose behind the scenes granting David success.<sup>44</sup>

A number of scholars emphasize that, according to 2 Sam 5:6, David did not use troops of Judah to conquer Jerusalem, but his personal forces.<sup>45</sup> He named the city after himself, "the City of David." John T. Willis comments, "Therefore, politically neither the Northern Kingdom of Israel nor Judah has any claim to it." This, says Willis, is "crucial for understanding the role of Zion or Jerusalem in Old Testament theology."<sup>46</sup> Although Jerusalem came to be identified with Judah after the reign of Solomon, theologically it

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<sup>42</sup> David took Goliath's head to Jerusalem in 1 Sam 17:54, perhaps as a warning to the Jebusites of things to come. So Bodner, *Power Play*, 53.

<sup>43</sup> Woudstra, *Joshua*, 255, comments, "Judah's capture of the town, recorded in Judg. 1, may have been ineffective if it was not followed by subsequent occupation."

<sup>44</sup> Groves, "Zion Traditions," 1020, comments, "Yahweh, acting through his chosen king (David), completed the conquest by capturing Zion," and (p. 1023), "In the biblical narrative Zion was the final Canaanite holdout in the promised land. With its fall, the conquest of Canaan begun by Joshua was completed. Having chosen David to act on his behalf, Yahweh took Zion and completed the conquest." 1 Chron 22:18 depicts David as recognizing that his conquest of Jerusalem was the culmination of the Conquest.

<sup>45</sup> Many commentators, such as Brueggemann, *1 and 2 Samuel*, 240, have contrasted the 1 Chron 11 account which says David and "all Israel" marched against Jerusalem. The lists of David's men in 1 Chron 11:10–39, however, show that to the Chronicler, "David's men" and "all Israel" had by this time become practically synonymous. The point remains the same—Jerusalem does not belong to any one tribe.

<sup>46</sup> Willis, "David and Zion," 137–38.



continued to be the legitimate temple site of both kingdoms, and perhaps it was to be viewed as the personal property of the Davidic kings who had the right to rule from there over all Israel (Ps 2:6).<sup>47</sup>

As in the Conquest as a whole, divine favour played a part in the conquest of Jerusalem. The Jebusites were confident that David could not take the city (2 Sam 5:6).<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless David took the fortress of Zion.<sup>49</sup> Second Samuel 5:10 and 12 (cf. 7:9a) attribute the success of David to the fact that YHWH was with him. Just as the Israelites conquered Canaan due to divine favour, and not their own skill (Deut 1:30; Ps 44:3), and this legitimated their ownership of the land (Num 14:8–9; Ps 44:2), so David, as he completed the same humanly impossible Conquest by God’s favour, was legitimated in his ownership of Jerusalem and the whole land (cf. 2 Sam 7:10).<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> The prophets on both sides do not accept the division as permanent. For example, Amos exhorts the northerners not to seek Bethel but to seek YHWH (Amos 5:4–5), perhaps a veiled exhortation to worship in Jerusalem. Hosea prophesies about a Davidic king over the reunited nation (Hos 1:11; 3:5). The link between Jerusalem and the Davidic kings is so strong that one can scarcely be contemplated without the other.

<sup>48</sup> This may be evidence that the Jebusites already had a belief in the inviolability of Zion. So, for example, Otto, *Jerusalem*, 38–41; Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 142 n. 61; Kraus, *Theology of the Psalms*, 78–79. The application of Melchizedek imagery to the Davidic house in Ps 110 may be more evidence for the survival of Jebusite ideas in the ideology of David’s Jerusalem. See a summary of speculation about pre-Israelite Jebusite religion in Steck, *Friedensvorstellungen*, 26. Discussions about beliefs about Zion are usually related to what has been termed “Zion Traditions.” See a summary of its elements in n. 83 re Roberts, “Zion in the Theology of the Davidic-Solomonic Empire,” 94, below. Ollenburger, *Zion*, 59–61, insists that the Zion tradition was prior to the Davidic covenant although some commentators have seen the Zion tradition as the creation of David’s public relations efforts, aimed at legitimatizing his rule. Rissi, *Future of the World*, 41–42, comments “With surprising speed, belief in the promise of God to the Davidides, and in the presence of God, was linked unbreakably with the city, so that Jerusalem as a royal city and a religious symbol survived not only the collapse of the united monarchy, but all the catastrophes that were to follow, even the loss of the sacred Ark and the Temple.” The speed and tenacity of these beliefs are not so surprising if, in fact, they had a history previous to David’s conquest.

<sup>49</sup> The Hebrew of this verse is unclear, but the conquest is depicted as a daunting task. The city had successfully resisted Israelite control for a very long time. Kalimi, “Capture of Jerusalem,” 103, 107, says the passage stresses how hard Jerusalem was to conquer as a foreshadowing of how significant the conquest was and how important the city would become.

<sup>50</sup> If it is true that there was some pre-Davidic belief in the inviolability of Zion, David’s conquest must have had some effect on Jebusite beliefs. Later in the narrative Araunah the Jebusite appears, the only Jebusite who is named, and perhaps a representative of them all, who is ready to offer his property to YHWH (2 Sam 24:18–25; Zech 9:8 indicates that the Jebusites became integrated into Israel). David’s conquest of Zion therefore may have been a contributing factor toward the merging of Baal, El and YHWH

*David Brings the Ark to Zion: 2 Samuel 6*

If some sacred mountain associations existed already for Jerusalem, it is not surprising that, in taking them over for the God of Israel, David would think of bringing the ark there. Even if no such prior traditions existed, bringing the ark to the city would provide David with religious legitimacy for his reign and capital.<sup>51</sup> Some scholars see God himself working behind the scenes to get himself ensconced in Zion.<sup>52</sup>

There is no record in 2 Samuel that David asked God *whether* this would be a good idea. (2 Chron 15:13 states that they did not even ask God *how* it should be done.) The ark was in the house of Abinadab in Kiriath Jearim, where it had been kept since it was returned by the Philistines (1 Sam 6:1—7:1). Israel had not reunited it with the Tabernacle and throughout the reign of Saul the ark seems to have been neglected by the nation.<sup>53</sup> Perhaps it seemed obvious to David that a return to prominence for the ark would be a proper way to honour God. It was also normal for ANE kings to enshrine the national god in the capital city.<sup>54</sup>

The death of Uzzah, however, brought home to David that he had only presumed God's approval. Second Samuel 6:9–10 says, "David was afraid of the Lord that day and

traditions in the resultant Zion tradition. Barth, *God with Us*, 241, expresses it that Israel confiscated the titles and prerogatives claimed by pagan gods and gave them to YHWH their rightful owner. See also Roberts, "Zion in the Theology of the Davidic-Solomonic Empire," 99–100, who says, "Since Zion was the abode of Yahweh, the divine king, any of the language used to describe the abode of the comparable Canaanite deities whom Yahweh had despoiled could now be transferred to Zion."

<sup>51</sup> Brueggemann, *1 and 2 Samuel*, 253, notes the continual ambiguity of David's actions in bringing the ark and wanting a Temple in Jerusalem. David has genuine piety, but also considerable political acumen.

<sup>52</sup> Barth, *God with Us*, 241, sees in the movements of the ark God leaving Shiloh and moving purposefully toward Jerusalem independently of David's intentions. Anderson, *2 Samuel*, 100, thinks that is the impression the author of 2 Sam 6 may be intending to give.

<sup>53</sup> Bright, *History of Israel*, 186, thinks this was because the Philistines kept control of it.

<sup>54</sup> Willis, "David and Zion," 131. Willis thinks that bringing the ark to Jerusalem follows directly from David's defeat of the Philistines at the end of 2 Sam 5. It was because of the Philistines that the ark had been eclipsed. Now that they were decisively defeated, and God had shown himself superior by helping David to do this (2 Sam 5:19, 23–25), it was time to celebrate "by transporting the ark in a victory march to Jerusalem."

said, ‘How can the ark of the Lord ever come to me?’ He was not willing to take the ark of the Lord to be with him in the city of David.”

Instead, the ark went to the house of Obed-Edom. Later, however, David took the fact that God was blessing Obed-Edom’s house as a sign that God really was pleased to have the ark on the move toward Jerusalem (or that whoever had the ark had the blessing)<sup>55</sup> and he made another attempt, this time successful, to bring the ark to the city.

To Willis, this uniting of ark and Jerusalem is the story of YHWH choosing Zion. “Through [YHWH’s] earthly vassal . . . David, he ‘chooses’ Zion-Jerusalem as his dwelling place. He has David and his followers defeat the Jebusites, occupy the city, and bring the ark of the covenant there.”<sup>56</sup> However, the incident of Uzzah shows that all David’s initiatives in this matter were not necessarily endorsed by YHWH. The Pentateuchal material indicates that God had chosen Zion long before the time of David. As Anderson comments, “In all these events Yahweh remained a free agent, not subject to any human manipulation.”<sup>57</sup> In 2 Samuel, God does not give any evidence (except the success of David) of his choice of Zion until the covenant with David in chap. 7.

*Zion and the Davidic Covenant: 2 Samuel 7*

When David had finished bringing the ark to Jerusalem, he implied to the prophet Nathan that he was thinking of making a permanent temple for the ark (2 Sam 7:2). At first, Nathan encouraged the king (v. 3). But that night, YHWH gave Nathan a more nuanced message for David (v. 4).

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<sup>55</sup> Anderson, *2 Samuel*, 105, reports that the LXX Lucianic recension adds “and David said, ‘I will turn the blessing to my house.’” Barth, *God with Us*, 241, agrees with this interpretation of the blessing on Obed-Edom. Murray, *Divine Prerogative*, 132–33, thinks that God’s blessing indicated that God wanted the ark to *stay* at Obed-Edom’s house. However, the successful transfer of the ark is evidence against this view.

<sup>56</sup> Willis, “David and Zion,” 140.

<sup>57</sup> Anderson, *2 Samuel*, 108.

The message started with an emphatically placed “you.” “Are *you* the one who will build?”<sup>58</sup> This does not necessarily imply disapproval of the project, but rather of David as builder.<sup>59</sup> The import of 2 Sam 7:6, 10 and 1 Kgs 8:16 may be that up to the time of David, God had not yet revealed his choice of “the place” mentioned in Deuteronomy. A permanent structure could not be mandated for a temporary “place.”<sup>60</sup> The implication of v. 7, “Did I ever say to any of their rulers . . . ‘Why have you not built me a house of cedar?’” could be that such a structure could be put up only when God had overtly indicated that the permanent place had been chosen. The problem was not just the building of a house,<sup>61</sup> but the desire of a human being to take the initiative and be in control of the significance, timing and planning of the project.<sup>62</sup> David’s initiative in deciding to build a temple was therefore uncalled for, just as there was some question about his initiative in bringing the ark to Jerusalem. It was only God who should make the decisions about building his sanctuary. In 2 Sam 6:17, David had prepared a place for

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<sup>58</sup> Anderson, *2 Samuel*, 118, comments, “The pronoun ‘you’ is, most likely, emphatic and . . . may indicate that the negation concerns, primarily, the person (i.e. David), rather than the action itself.” Cf. v. 13 with an emphatic “he” as the divinely chosen builder.

<sup>59</sup> McCarter, *II Samuel*, 196, 198, sees this as the meaning of the final form of the text, though he thinks that a negative attitude to any temple building was in some of the source material. Other scholars see in 2 Sam 7:5–7 evidence of an anti-temple party in Israel, e.g. Clements, *God and Temple*, 57–58; de Vaux, “Jérusalem et les prophètes,” 486–87; Weinfeld, “Zion and Jerusalem,” 93, but the text is not necessarily hostile to a temple. There was a ה'יבל at Shiloh (1 Sam 1:9) and that situation was not condemned, but there is no record of God’s *command* to build one there, therefore Shiloh’s permanent status was never established. Anderson, *2 Samuel*, 119–20, wonders whether the Shiloh temple was built for some other purpose than the worship of Yahweh and its destruction was therefore interpreted as a sign that God was not in it, but the canonical material has no hint of this. Groves, “Zion Traditions,” 1023, suggests that the concern of the writer of 2 Sam is that having a permanent temple was too much like pagan Canaanite worship conventions (cf. Deut 12:4, 30–31). He says the Historical Books use the name “Zion” for Jerusalem sparingly because it had pagan associations (p. 1023). Such motives are not expressed in the text.

<sup>60</sup> This implies that Shiloh was not the final “place” of Deut 12:5–14 etc.

<sup>61</sup> The text hints at a concern that a permanent building would limit people’s conceptions of God to one who needs housing or one who only lives in a narrow geographic location. Solomon’s prayer addresses the issue (1 Kgs 8:27), and acknowledges that the Temple is more for the benefit of the people than for God.

<sup>62</sup> So de Vaux, “Jérusalem et les prophètes,” 485, and McCarter, *II Samuel*, 198. The same thing happens about appointing a king. Deuteronomy has regulations for the king, so envisions one in future, but God says the request for a king in 1 Sam 8 is a rejection of God. The problem is possibly human impatience and lack of faith that forces developments before God’s plan is ripe, not necessarily the emergence of a new, competing tradition, as envisioned by Weinfeld, “Zion and Jerusalem,” 75.

the ark in Jerusalem. But God did not allow David to think that David was in control of this process. It was God who had elevated David and given him his victories (2 Sam 7:8–9), which must include the conquest of Jerusalem (2 Sam 6:10, 12). It may be that to make this clear, David was not allowed to follow his own initiative in building God a house in that city.

In any case, David was not qualified for the project. Although he thought he had finished building his own house (2 Sam 7:1–2) before thinking of building for God, he had actually not been able to build his “house” at all. God would build David’s house and provide a “place” for God’s people (v. 10).<sup>63</sup> From the son (בן) for himself that God would raise up while building David’s house (v. 14), would come the building (בנין) of God’s house. David could not co-opt God to his own agenda, rather, he had to let God use him for God’s agenda.

The Israelites had not been told how to recognize when God was choosing a place, but the conquest of Zion by the divinely favoured king, the fact that it represented the completion of the Conquest, perhaps the city’s previous cultic significance (Gen 14 and 22, and maybe Jebusite tradition reflected e.g. in Ps 110), God’s acceptance of the moving of the ark to the city, and finally, and most decisively, his designation of David’s son to build a permanent temple there, were the signs of God’s choice. At the end of 2 Samuel, God pointed out the place where David was to put an altar for worship of the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah (2 Sam 24:18, 25).<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> See McCarter, *II Samuel*, 203–4, for a defence of the view that the “place” in this verse must be the Temple.

<sup>64</sup> McCarter, *II Samuel*, 516, says that the final editor “as in chap. 7, was concerned to show that the initiative for the erection of the altar came from Yahweh, not David.” David’s preparation for the Temple in purchasing the site is greatly expanded in Chronicles to include provision of building materials (1 Chron 22), worship organization (1 Chron 23–24) and building plans (1 Chron 28).

In conquering Jerusalem and bringing the ark there, David united two important strands of tradition about God being Israel's God (a phrase prominent in the "covenant formula").<sup>65</sup> The first was in the promise of the Land to Abraham (Gen 17:7), where the phrase "[I will] be your God and the God of your descendants" was first used.<sup>66</sup> The second was in Exod 29:44–46 where God spoke of the Tabernacle (containing the ark) as the way he would dwell among the Israelites and "be their God" (cf. Exod 25:8, 22; 33:16).<sup>67</sup> "Be your God" language also appears in 2 Sam 7. In his response to God in 2 Sam 7:18–29, David readily agreed that God should build him a house, and made reference to the fact that God drove out "nations and their gods from before your people, whom you have redeemed from Egypt" (v. 23). This meant driving those nations and gods from the land of Canaan and, most recently, from Jerusalem as the final act of that conquest. God had "established your people Israel as your very own forever," terminology which reflects God's statement in v. 10 that he would provide a place for his people and plant them. Both verses contain "be your God" language as expressed in the gift of the Land, as in the Abrahamic covenant.<sup>68</sup> David was God's agent in the finalization and completion of this gift of the Land. He was also the agent of bringing the ark to Jerusalem, thus uniting the traditions of "be your God" associated with both the giving of the Land and the designation of the ark and Tabernacle as the place where God

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<sup>65</sup> For discussion of the covenant formula, which is the various forms of "I will be their God and they will be my people," see Rendtorff, *Covenant Formula*.

<sup>66</sup> The phrase is connected with the gift of the Land in Exod 6:7–8; Lev 25:38; Ezek 36:28; Zech 8:8. 2 Sam 7:23–24 and 1 Chron 17:21–22 mention the expulsion of the other nations, which implies the gift of the land.

<sup>67</sup> God's dwelling among the Israelites as part of being their God is also mentioned in Lev 26:11–12; Ezek 27:37; Zech 2:10; and Zech 8:8 (LXX).

<sup>68</sup> In v. 10: "for my people Israel"; in vv. 23–24: "the one nation on earth that God went out to redeem as a people for himself . . . You have established your people Israel as your very own forever, and you, O Lord, have become their God."

was dwelling in Israel's midst (Exod 29:45).<sup>69</sup> This emphasizes the idea of Jerusalem/Zion as the place where God and his people have fellowship, where God is their God.

*David Leaves the Ark in Jerusalem: 2 Samuel 15:24–26*

The text's view of the relationship between God and Jerusalem is illustrated by David's attitude during Absalom's rebellion. Zadok, Abiathar and the Levites brought the ark out of the city as David fled Jerusalem before Absalom. They appeared ready to carry it off with David but he prevented them. True, he needed them as spies in Jerusalem, but as far as his relationship to God went, David said, "If I find favor in the Lord's eyes, he will bring me back and let me see it and his dwelling place again. But if he says, 'I am not pleased with you,' then I am ready; let him do whatever seems good to him" (2 Sam 15:25–26). Brueggemann sees this as evidence that David did not want to manipulate God for personal benefit.<sup>70</sup> More importantly, it can be taken as evidence that David saw God's dwelling in Zion as the permanent fact and his own part in the story as contingent.<sup>71</sup> David had now accepted that it was not David who caused YHWH to dwell in Zion, but YHWH who caused David to dwell there. Jerusalem was the place of God's dwelling regardless. David knew that he had sinned, offending YHWH, and deserved to be cast away from God's presence (Ps 51:11).<sup>72</sup> Psalm 132 reflects his attitude well—although David wanted to find a place for the Lord (vv. 3–5), it was really YHWH

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<sup>69</sup> Brueggemann, *Theology of the OT*, 663, says of this verse, "The statement suggests that being 'their God' is equivalent to being available and accessible and this is the only important evidence given here of being 'their God.' Presence is everything."

<sup>70</sup> Brueggemann, *1 and 2 Samuel*, 303.

<sup>71</sup> Blaikie, *2 Samuel*, 233, comments, "When the ark had been placed on Mount Zion, God had said, 'This is My rest; here will I dwell'; and even in this extraordinary emergency, David would not disturb that arrangement."

<sup>72</sup> There is no hint in this story of any belief in the "inviolability of Zion" independent of human behaviour. David does not see Jerusalem as a safe place for himself, likely because he has offended God. Arnold, *1 & 2 Samuel*, 580, agrees that David knew that what had happened was "just punishment for his sins."

himself who chose Zion (v. 13) and he would make a horn grow for David there (v. 17). God, after all, was in charge, and David had learned to leave the initiative to God.

*Building the Temple in Jerusalem: 1 Kings 5:1—9:9*

According to Exodus, it was God who first had this idea of living with his people, as he commanded Israel to build the Tabernacle (Exod 25:8–9). The tabernacling presence of God traveled around with the Israelites. His presence among them made it mandatory for them to be holy (e.g. Num 5:1–3; Deut 23:12–14; cf. Exod 33:5; Num 35:34).

As Solomon became established on the throne, however, God's dwelling place was going to be established in a permanent building on his holy mountain. In one way, this had been God's mountain all along (Exod 15:13, 17; Ps 78:54) and the Temple was for the use of God's people who had now come to join him there.<sup>73</sup> In another way, God was just arriving with his people (2 Sam 7:6) and he was coming to dwell in this place.<sup>74</sup> Now that Solomon had "rest" (1 Kgs 5:4; cf. Deut 12:9–12) it was time for him to fulfill

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<sup>73</sup> Cf. Clements, *God and Temple*, 55, who says Zion did not become YHWH's abode because the Temple was built there. The Temple was built there because Zion was already YHWH's abode.

<sup>74</sup> Solomon notes in 1 Kgs 8:27–30 that God does not actually and fully dwell in any earthly spot. His dwelling place is heaven. But his "name" is there. Goldingay, *OT Theology*, 570, suggests the house is "a kind of extension or outpost of the heavens."



God's word to David that his son would build the Temple (1 Kgs 5:5; cf. 2 Sam 7:13).<sup>75</sup>

Solomon, unlike David, presumed to build because he had a divine command.<sup>76</sup>

In 1 Kgs 6:1 the founding of the Temple is put into a time sequence that started with the Exodus.<sup>77</sup> Solomon mentions the Exodus at the beginning (1 Kgs 8:16) and end of his speech (1 Kgs 8:21) and at the end of his prayer (1 Kgs 8:51, 53). This gives the impression that establishment of God's Temple in Jerusalem is the culmination of the process that began when Israel left Egypt, that is, the Jerusalem Temple was in some way the goal of the Exodus.<sup>78</sup>

Besides being a "house" for God, the Temple is for the benefit of the people. Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple in 1 Kgs 8:22–53 concentrates on how the people will use the Temple in prayer. But it is not just the Temple toward which Israel can pray. First Kings 8:44 says that Israel going to battle should pray "toward the city that you have chosen and the house that I have built for your name." When they are even farther away, in exile (1 Kgs 8:48), they are to pray toward the Land God gave, the city

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<sup>75</sup> It might seem that there was a long delay between Israel's entry into the land and God's choice of the permanent place to put his name (1 Kgs 6:1). Some have said that the idea of having a central place did not arise until much later, perhaps in the time of Josiah. Others have suggested that the whole idea was a political move by David (see, for example, McConville, "Jerusalem in the OT," 23, 25). But theologically, the answer is more likely that Jerusalem was the final goal of the Exodus and it could not be "chosen" until it was in Israelite hands. The conquest of Jerusalem made the conquest of the land complete and finalized Israel's wandering period. McCarter, *II Samuel*, 217, suggests that Deut 12 envisioned the establishment of the central place once Israel had arrived at "rest" in the land (Deut 12:10), and the time of the Judges was not such a time. The time of rest did not arrive until David was secure in Jerusalem (2 Sam 7:1), and more definitively, until the time of Solomon (1 Kgs 5:3–5).

<sup>76</sup> Gray, *I & II Kings*, 152, emphasizes the divine sanction needed to cancel "the presumption of man's provision of a temple for God." He gives other ANE examples.

<sup>77</sup> Gray, *I & II Kings*, 159, and others, take this notice that the Temple was started 480 years after the Exodus as a post-exilic addition, based on some conventional numbering system, and intended to place the founding of the Temple exactly half way between the Exodus and the founding of the Second Temple. So also Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 550. Goldingay, *OT Theology*, 566, makes it "12 generations after the exodus." Interestingly, the parallel passage (2 Chron 3:1–2) takes the link farther back, to Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac on Mt. Moriah.

<sup>78</sup> Konkel, *I & 2 Kings*, 124, says, "The details of the temple are chronologically linked to the salvation event, which the temple represents." But it is more likely that the Temple represents salvation as the goal of the deliverance than the delivering event.

he chose and house Solomon built. Thus it is not merely the Temple as a building, but its geographical location in Jerusalem and in the Land that is a focus for the presence of YHWH. Notice also that the Land and city are God's contribution, while the Temple is Solomon's. This seems to make the location more basic as God's chosen place than the building.

The basic plan of the Temple was the same as that of the Tabernacle,<sup>79</sup> and the same ark was installed in it. The Tabernacle was built from plans revealed by God on Mount Sinai (Exod 25:9, 40; 26:30; 27:8; Num 8:4). When everything was properly done (Exod 39:43—40:33), God's presence entered visibly in the covering cloud and glory that filled the Tabernacle (Exod 40:34—35). The Temple, like the Tabernacle, was a model of heaven in Israel's midst.<sup>80</sup> As God was enthroned in heaven, he was in a sense enthroned in Zion on or above the ark, and ruled Israel and the world from there (Ps 96:10; 99:1—2). First Kings 8:10—13 has God visibly enter the Temple by the cloud of glory filling the house, just as he filled the Tabernacle. This emphasizes God's direct presence in the Jerusalem Temple.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Childs, *Exodus*, 547—48, gives a brief history of the interpretation of the details of the Tabernacle. Philo (*Vit. Mos.* 2:88, 101—5) and Josephus (*Ant.* 3:180—87; cf. on the Temple *J.W.* 5:212—18) believed that the Tabernacle represented the cosmos. The courtyard was the material world and the tent was the spiritual world. Many of the Church Fathers followed this interpretation. Origen however (*Hom. Exod.* 9) said that the Tabernacle has moral analogies to the mysteries of Christ and his church, and the Reformers also used it typologically. Beale, *Temple*, e.g. 31, has returned to many aspects of Philo's interpretation.

<sup>80</sup> Visions that prophets had of God on his throne contained cherubim (Ezek 10; cf. Isa 6:2) and a kind of blue pavement or sea (Exod 24:9—10; Ezek 1:22, 26; 10:1), with smoke (Isa 6:4) or cloud (Dan 7:13) which gives credibility to the idea that the Tabernacle, with its carved cherubim, "sea" and cloud of incense was a copy of a sanctuary that already existed in heaven, or of heaven itself. This accords with ANE beliefs that a god's temple was a copy of his "remote other-worldly abode" (Clements, *God and Temple*, 2). Ps 11:4 probably indicates that God sits on his throne in a heavenly temple. There thus seems to be more OT textual evidence for seeing the Temple as a model of heaven than as a model of the universe. As noted above, Goldingay, *OT Theology*, 570, suggests the temple is "a kind of extension or outpost of the heavens."

<sup>81</sup> See Groves, "Zion Traditions," 1021, for argument that the dwelling of God's "Name" in the Temple means the same thing as God's presence. See also Schniedewing, "Evolution."

*God Defends and Blesses Jerusalem/Zion*

The books of Kings continue the story of the monarchs who ruled in Jerusalem.<sup>82</sup> During the time of David and the early reign of Solomon, when these two kings sought to please God (1 Sam 13:14; 1 Kgs 3:10–14; cf. 9:4–5) God gave victory over surrounding nations to David (2 Sam 5:25; 7:1, 9, 11; 8:1–14; 10:18–19). Solomon had peace on every side (1 Kgs 5:4), and kings and people from all nations came to Jerusalem to hear the words of wisdom that God had given him. They brought along the wealth of the nations to Jerusalem (1 Kgs 10:1–10, 24–25; cf. 2 Chron 9:1–12, 23–24). These passages can be related to what is usually called the “Zion Tradition.”<sup>83</sup> Based mainly on a study of the Psalms, it included the notions that God would keep his dwelling place on Zion inviolable, and make it his headquarters for ruling the whole world in an ever-expanding empire that would draw all nations to the true God.<sup>84</sup>

A prominent incident that seems to have reinforced this idea was the deliverance of Jerusalem under Hezekiah when it was threatened by the Assyrians (2 Kgs 18–19).<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> They also contain, of course, the parallel accounts in kings of the northern kingdom of Israel, but our study here is of Jerusalem. The calves that the northern kingdom worshipped at Bethel and Dan were meant to replace the Jerusalem Temple and worship of them was one of the main sins for which Israel was exiled (2 Kgs 17:16, 21–23). The larger sin, was of course, idolatry in general.

<sup>83</sup> Roberts, “Zion in the Theology of the Davidic-Solomonic Empire,” 94, gives a summary of the Zion tradition that includes features from both ANE and Israelite tradition. The elements of the Zion tradition are: (1) YHWH is the Great King; (2) He chose Jerusalem for his dwelling place, which implies (a) regarding Zion’s topography that it is on a high mountain and is watered by the river of paradise; (b) regarding Zion’s security that God protects it from the powers of chaos and from enemy kings; at YHWH’s rebuke, the enemy is defeated, war ends and plunder is taken; the nations acknowledge YHWH’s suzerainty; (c) regarding Zion’s inhabitants, they share the blessing of God’s presence but must be fit to live in his presence. Much of the evidence for this tradition comes from the Psalms; see discussion below.

<sup>84</sup> There is much debate about the origins of the “Zion Tradition.” Some think it comes from pre-Israelite Jebusite traditions about Zion, perhaps reflected in 2 Sam 5:6. Others think it was the production of David’s royal propaganda, while still others (e.g. Clements, *Isaiah*, 84) think it became fully developed only after the deliverance from Sennacherib in 2 Kgs 18–19 and par. By attributing some Zion psalms to David (Ps 68) and Asaph (Ps 76) the canonical text puts Zion traditions back at least to David’s time.

<sup>85</sup> So Groves, “Zion Traditions,” 1021, 1024. Clements, *Isaiah*, 84, thinks this incident was the origin of belief in Zion’s inviolability. Childs, *Isaiah and the Assyrian Crisis*, 93, 102, tends to think that the story in 2 Kings was shaped to reflect it. The final form of the text depicts the deliverance as God’s defence of his

The story is told as a contest between the king of Assyria and the Lord, and as a contrast between the Lord and the gods of other lands (2 Kgs 18:22–35, par. Isa 36:4–20).<sup>86</sup> Hezekiah trusted the Lord, and prayed for help in God’s house, the way Solomon had envisioned in 1 Kgs 8:33–34, 37–40, and Jerusalem was delivered. God’s defense of Zion was seen to be real, and the prophecy was fulfilled: “From Jerusalem a remnant shall go out, and from Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this” (2 Kgs 19:31). God defended Jerusalem “for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David” (2 Kgs 19:34; 20:6b). Here God is depicted as having a stake in the prosperity of Jerusalem, though perhaps the emphasis is on God vindicating himself against the insults of the Assyrians.

#### *Jerusalem Defiled and Doomed by Sin*

Despite the relatively good start made by David and the early Solomon, the books of Kings outline the sin that led to Jerusalem’s destruction. It started in 1 Kgs 11:7, which records, “Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon.” Solomon’s action led to David’s dynasty losing the ten northern tribes (1 Kgs 11:11), yet for the sake of David and also for the sake of Jerusalem, the city God had chosen, God left the descendants of David there to rule (1 Kgs 11:13, 32). These verses imply that keeping David’s line in Jerusalem was partly due to the special status of Jerusalem, and God’s desire to preserve it. According to 1 Kgs 15:2, this was because Davidic kings helped to establish Jerusalem. On the other side of the coin, 2 Kgs 18:19

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own honour (2 Kgs 19:34; 20:6b) as well as a response to Hezekiah’s appropriate appeal to YHWH (19:19–20).

<sup>86</sup> So also Childs, *Isaiah*, 275, 277.

implies that keeping Jerusalem intact was part of God's faithfulness to David.<sup>87</sup>

Jerusalem and the Davidic kings were so closely linked that Jeroboam decided to build the shrines at Bethel and Dan because he believed that worship in the Jerusalem Temple was linked to loyalty to the Davidic kings (1 Kgs 12:27).<sup>88</sup>

During Rehoboam's reign, the people of Judah sinned. They "built for themselves high places and pillars and Asherim on every high hill and beneath every luxuriant tree. There were also male cult prostitutes in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord dispossessed before the sons of Israel" (1 Kgs 14:23-24). The result was Shishak's attack on Jerusalem. He "took away the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house, and he took everything, even taking all the shields of gold which Solomon had made" (1 Kgs 14:26). Judah's sin left Jerusalem vulnerable (cf. Deut 28:25).

This kind of divine retribution for sin and blessing for obedience is often seen as a staple interest<sup>89</sup> of the "Deuteronomistic History" recorded in Deuteronomy to 2 Kings.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Groves, "Zion Traditions," 1019, comments, "Although it was not the case in other parts of the OT, the Zion traditions in the Historical Books understand the Davidic traditions and Zion traditions as being inextricably bound together. Yahweh's promise to preserve David's household is bound up with his promise to preserve Zion/Jerusalem, David's capital city." Solomon (1 Kgs 8:26-30) understood the promises of perpetual kingship for David's house to imply perpetual kingship in Jerusalem, and thus promise of protection for the city.

<sup>88</sup> Groves, "Zion Traditions" 1021, says that the high places in both the northern and southern kingdoms were condemned "because Yahweh was not there; he was in Zion/Jerusalem." Also (p. 1024), "kings in the north were judged for failing . . . to return to worship in Jerusalem."

<sup>89</sup> Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy*, 307, writes, "At the core of deuteronomistic literature lies the concept of national reward." This (p. 313) includes possessing the Land if the nation is obedient to God.

<sup>90</sup> The concept of the Deuteronomistic History was introduced by Martin Noth in his 1943 book *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien* (English title *The Deuteronomistic History*). Noth suggested that an exilic editor shaped the books of Deuteronomy through 2 Kings as a single history to emphasize how God worked through history in response to moral decline with warnings, punishments and finally the exile. This idea is epitomised in the blessing and cursing sections of Deut 27-28. Noth felt that the editor did this to explain why Jerusalem was destroyed, though later scholars see additional motivations, and often several layers of editing before the final form was reached. An expanded analysis of the deuteronomistic nature of this part of the Bible can be found in Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy*. For a history and exposition of the theory of the Deuteronomistic history, see Richter, "Deuteronomistic History"; for briefer treatment, Howard, *Introduction to OT Historical Books*, 77-78, 179-82, and Nelson, *Historical Books*, 62-74.

Yet another theme, God's graciousness, worked in tension with the retribution theme. Thus the account does not always show Jerusalem secure under good kings and attacked under bad kings.<sup>91</sup> Good king Joash had to buy off Hazael with the Temple treasures to save the city (2 Kgs 12:17-18). During the reign of good king Amaziah, Jehoash king of Israel broke down a large section of Jerusalem's walls, cleared out the royal and Temple treasuries, and carried off hostages (2 Kgs 14:13-14). Bad king Ahaz successfully resisted the siege of Jerusalem by Rezin and Pekah (2 Kgs 16:5) and was able to secure protection for the city by political and religious alliance with Assyria, even though this included changes to the Temple and its worship (2 Kgs 16:7-18). Bad King Manasseh defiled the Temple with pagan altars, and the city with bloodshed (2 Kgs 21:4, 7) yet he had the longest reign of all the biblical kings, and when he died Jerusalem was at peace (2 Kgs 21:18). Good king Josiah did all he could to cleanse Jerusalem and all Israel of idolatry (2 Kgs 23:3-20) yet he died in battle and his son was barred from reigning in Jerusalem (2 Kgs 23:33).

Nevertheless there is an undercurrent, continually referred to, that the nation as a whole was accumulating guilt. The high places were not taken away even under the good kings (1 Kgs 15:14; 22:43; 2 Kgs 12:3; 14:4; 15:4, 35; with the exceptions of Hezekiah and Josiah, 2 Kgs 18:4; 23:8). Manasseh's sins especially accumulated a weight of guilt that could not be overcome (2 Kgs 23:26-27). Often, when Jerusalem prospered, there was a notice it was only by God's mercy not because of covenant keeping (1 Kgs 11:36; 15:3-4; 2 Kgs 8:19; 19:34; 20:6). Manasseh's sin and the sins he led the nation to commit were not punished in Manasseh's time, but set in motion the process that led to

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<sup>91</sup> The blessings and punishments in most cases affected Jerusalem directly, as the examples below illustrate.

Jerusalem's destruction (2 Kgs 21:10–15) that could not be deflected even by Josiah's reforms (2 Kgs 23:26–27; 24:3–4). The idea seems to be that it was not the character of the king alone, but the actions of all the people that God considered. The result, the destruction of Jerusalem and exile of the people, is explained in 2 Kgs 24:20: "For through the anger of the Lord this came about in Jerusalem and Judah until he cast them out from his presence." This verse gives the impression that God stayed in Jerusalem while sending the people off into exile. However in 2 Kgs 23:27 God also said, "I will cast off Jerusalem, this city which I have chosen, and the temple of which I said, 'My name shall be there.'" God appeared to be abandoning the city as well.

#### *Summary of Joshua to 2 Kings*

This section of the study has argued that in the Historical Books, Jerusalem/Zion was seen as the final goal of the Exodus. The conquest of Jerusalem was the crowning completion of the Conquest of the Promised Land, the place of rest. Jerusalem was God's gift to his people, and he brought them into it. The city was chosen by God to be "the place" mentioned in Deut 12–31 where God's Name and presence were, and where the people could contact God. As the ark was brought into Jerusalem, two strands of the promise of God to "be God for" his people were brought together: God gave them the Land and God dwelt among them by means of the ark. Thus Jerusalem epitomized the place of fellowship with God and of divine provision. When the Temple was built, it was really God's initiative, since he gave the instructions and provided the son of David who would do the work. A close connection was set up between David's house (the chosen kings) and Jerusalem (the chosen place).<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Ollenburger, *Zion*, 59–61, thinks it was the Deuteronomists who joined together David's and Zion's election in Ps 132:13. Certainly the two are linked in 1 Kgs 8:16. In the MT this verse can be translated,

Though Solomon spoke of building a house for God (1 Kgs 8:13, 20–21), he recognized that God did not really need a house (1 Kgs 8:27). The Temple was more for the people as the place where they could pray and find forgiveness and help.

The ideal Jerusalem was the capital of an expanding kingdom to which all nations would come to bring gifts of homage and to receive divine wisdom (as in the early reign of Solomon). It contained the Temple which was a sort of outpost of heaven on earth. But the fortunes of Jerusalem were not just determined by God's protecting presence. They depended also on the obedience of the people to God. For the sake of Jerusalem and David, God extended gracious help for a long time, but finally the sins of the people (especially idolatry) resulted in the people being sent away from Jerusalem in exile, and God himself abandoning the city. This suggests a double significance of the city as both God's holy mountain and the capital of a sinful nation. The book of Kings ends with human sin seemingly able to trump divine choice, as God's chosen city lies in ruins.<sup>93</sup>

### *Jerusalem in Chronicles*

The Chronicler makes more explicit much of the theology already discussed in Joshua to Kings. David's capture of Jerusalem is still seen as the culmination of the Conquest. As in 2 Samuel, the Jebusites are part of "the inhabitants of the land" to be overcome to inherit the Land (1 Chron 11:4). David makes it clear that he has completed

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"Since the day that I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I have not chosen a city from any of the tribes of Israel in which to build a house, that my name might be there; but I chose David to be over my people Israel." However, Kalimi, "Jerusalem—The Divine City," 127–29, argues that this verse originally contained the same text as 2 Chron 6:5–6: "Since the day that I brought my people out of the land of Egypt, I have not chosen a city from any of the tribes of Israel in which to build a house, so that my name might be there, and I chose no one as ruler over my people Israel, but I have chosen Jerusalem in order that my name may be there, and I have chosen David to be over my people Israel." He argues that the omissions in Kings are due to *homoioteleuton*, evidenced by the fact that the Qumran version of 1 Kgs 8:16 contains the fuller text.

<sup>93</sup> The elevation of Jehoiachin in exile in the last verses of 2 Kings may indicate hope for some kind of renewal.



the Conquest as he sums up his achievements in 1 Chron 22:18, “He [YHWH] has delivered the inhabitants of the land into my hand and the land is subdued [i.e. conquered] before the Lord and his people.”<sup>94</sup>

The Chronicler makes it more specific than Kings that God’s request for an altar at the threshing floor of Araunah is an indication of where the Temple should be built. The fire from heaven on the sacrifice there is a clear sign from God.<sup>95</sup> David’s response is, “The house of the Lord God is to be here, and also the altar of burnt offering for Israel” (1 Chron 22:1). This follows a note that God’s angel himself had made the Tabernacle (currently at Gibeon) inaccessible to David (1 Chron 21:29–30), confining him to this spot instead.<sup>96</sup>

The reigns of David and Solomon in Jerusalem are idealized by the Chronicler. David’s sin with Bathsheba, murder of Uriah and troubles with Absalom are omitted, as well as Solomon’s foreign wives and idolatry. Like Kings, Chronicles pictures all nations coming to Jerusalem to hear Solomon’s wisdom and bring him gifts (2 Chron 9:22–24).<sup>97</sup>

In the account of building the Temple, 1 Kings never states directly that the Temple is being built in Jerusalem, though this is assumed (e.g. 1 Kgs 8:1). Second Chronicles 3:1 is very specific about this, however, giving five descriptions of the place for the Temple: in Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to

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<sup>94</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 402, notes that here David echoes Deut 12 which says the central place will be established when Israel has reached the state of “rest.” Japhet says, “This is the only instance in Chronicles where an explicit reference to the conquest of the land is to be found. . . the terminology originally connected with the conquest . . . is here transposed to the time of David.”

<sup>95</sup> Braun, *1 Chronicles*, 218, sees the text echoing various OT theophanies, and relates it to the fire that fell for Elijah in 1 Kgs 18:38, emphasizing God’s active choosing.

<sup>96</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 389.

<sup>97</sup> Braun, *1 Chronicles*, xxxvii, is surprised that the dogma of retribution is given first in 1 Chr 28:9 to Solomon because the dogma is not used in the account of the reigns of David and Solomon. However, that David mentions it to Solomon may reflect that later accounts of the prosperity of Solomon and Jerusalem under him, may be the immediate application of the dogma here. Solomon has to be a blessed person because he fulfils the mandate to build the Jerusalem Temple.

Solomon's father David, on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, the place provided by David. These descriptions place the Temple unmistakably in Jerusalem, link the location to Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, to a specific instruction from God to David, to the co-operation of the Jebusites and to the initial work by David.<sup>98</sup>

Chronicles does preserve God's objection to David's temple building plan (1 Chron 17:4), making it stronger if anything, as a negative statement (You shall not build! Cf. 2 Sam 7:5). But the reason is different than in 2 Samuel. First Chronicles 22:8–9 and 28:3 explain that David was not allowed to build the Temple because he had shed blood.<sup>99</sup> Solomon, a man of peace, was the correct person to build it because God would grant him "rest" (vv. 9–10).

Nevertheless, Chronicles gives more emphasis than 2 Samuel to David's role in making Jerusalem/Zion the meeting place of God and his people, especially in the way he made liturgical arrangements (e.g. 1 Chron 16:4–36; 23–27), and other plans for the Temple (1 Chron 28–29). The account of the dedication of the Temple in Chronicles emphasizes that God had "chosen" the place of the Temple for himself as a place of sacrifice (2 Chron 7:12, a verse not in 1 Kgs 8) and adds to 1 Kgs 8:3 that the Jerusalem Temple is "chosen" (2 Chron 7:16), as well as 2 Chron 6:6, which talks of the choosing of Jerusalem. God has not chosen any other city.<sup>100</sup>

Second Chronicles depicts the building of the Temple in a way to emphasize its continuity with the Tabernacle. The Chronicler adds to the Kings account the information

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<sup>98</sup> Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 94–95, notes the link with Mount Moriah makes Zion the place where both Abraham and David have visions of YHWH, and says, "the sanctuary serves to perpetuate a visionary experience of God." He translates Gen 22:14c as "on the mount of YHWH he can be seen." So also Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 204; Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 551–52.

<sup>99</sup> I.e. peace or "rest" has not yet come in David's time. So Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 330.

<sup>100</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 589, notes that the text pictures the choice of both David and Jerusalem as unprecedented. They are unique.

that David had received plans for the Temple from the Spirit of God (1 Chron 28:11–19) parallel to the way that Moses received plans for the Tabernacle (Exod 25:9, 40).<sup>101</sup> Verse 19 says, “‘All this,’ David said, ‘I have in writing from the hand of the Lord upon me and he gave me understanding in all the details of the plan.’” This detail helps to emphasize that the Jerusalem Temple is the divinely ordained and sanctioned place of God’s presence among his people just as the Tabernacle was in its own time.

The idea that YHWH defends Jerusalem may be included in the story, not found in Kings, of Jehoshaphat’s campaign against the Moabites and Ammonites, when the people of Judah were led by the choir praising God (2 Chron 20). Judah and Jerusalem feared that the invaders would “drive us out of the possession you have given us to inherit” (2 Chron 20:11).<sup>102</sup> The possession included Jerusalem, where they were praying and where they had built the Temple (v. 8).<sup>103</sup> The people gathered from all Judah to Jerusalem to pray for God’s protection promised in 2 Chron 7:12 (2 Chron 20:9 specifies that they were acting on the basis of Solomon’s prayer, i.e. in 2 Chron 6:21, 28, 34–35, for victory over attackers). When they were delivered, they gathered again in Jerusalem to celebrate. The result of the whole affair was that surrounding nations feared God, so there was rest and peace on every side (2 Chron 20:29–30). The story seems to be more about God’s defense of the entire community than just the city of Jerusalem, but Jerusalem is a crucial location because in it is the Temple where the efficacious prayer can be made.

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<sup>101</sup> This increases the role of David in Temple building. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 493.

<sup>102</sup> See Knoppers “Jerusalem at War,” 62–73. The Divine Warrior motif is at work here, as it is in accounts of eschatological threats to Jerusalem such as Zech 14.

<sup>103</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 790, notes, “Here, the true culmination of the people’s settlement in their land is the construction of the Temple.”

The inviolability of Zion is prominent in the Kings account of how God delivered Jerusalem from Sennacherib. God will deliver the city “for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David” (2 Kgs 19:34; 20:6b). In 2 Chron 32, this oracle from Isaiah is missing, but Hezekiah’s likeness to David is emphasized in the previous chapters.<sup>104</sup> Hezekiah enjoys the same prosperity as David and Solomon. Perhaps the “pilgrimage of the nations to Zion” part of the tradition comes through. As a result of Hezekiah’s faithfulness and deliverance, many bring gifts to the Lord in Jerusalem, and since Hezekiah is “exalted in the sight of all nations from that time onward” the nations are likely among those who bring the gifts (2 Chron 32:23).<sup>105</sup> The Chronicler may be emphasizing the need for his readers to be faithful and come to Jerusalem with resources to rebuild it.

Chronicles, according to Kalimi, emphasizes the holiness of Jerusalem, its importance for the Davidic line, and its eternal chosenness, to encourage the post-exilic Jews to return and rebuild the city for the renewal of both Temple and royal dynasty, and to promote a renaissance of the nation as God’s people.<sup>106</sup> Selman sees Jerusalem depicted in Chronicles as the meeting place of God and his people, so that after exile, it is a place to find God again.<sup>107</sup> The observations above demonstrate that, to the Chronicler, Jerusalem is still important as the place where God lives among his people, and he emphasizes the role of the community in making this fellowship possible. If they worship

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<sup>104</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 905, thinks this is because the Chronicler has such a high opinion of Hezekiah that Isaiah’s role becomes almost unnecessary. Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 255–58 notes that the writer classes Hezekiah with David and Solomon, and so is perhaps hesitant to include an oracle that reveals how very pressed Jerusalem under Hezekiah really was.

<sup>105</sup> Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 258, notes, “Just as Solomon was exalted in the eyes of the nations (9:23–24) so is Hezekiah.”

<sup>106</sup> Kalimi, “Jerusalem—the Divine City,” 127–40. See also Beentjes, “Jerusalem in the Book of Chronicles,” 17, on the emphasis Chronicles gives to Jerusalem.

<sup>107</sup> Selman, “Jerusalem in Chronicles,” 55–56.

and pray and trust God as they should, Jerusalem will be a place where fellowship with God and his deliverance are experienced.

### *Jerusalem in Ezra-Nehemiah*

These two books record the story of rebuilding the Temple and city of Jerusalem after the exile in three phases. It began as God moved both Cyrus (to make the decree to rebuild the Temple: Ezra 1:1–4), and the Jews (to volunteer to return: Ezra 1:5). The text states that the decree was in fulfillment of the prophecy of Jeremiah (i.e. Jer 29:10–14; cf. 25:11–12) that after seventy years, God would bring the exiles back to Jerusalem.<sup>108</sup> Thus the book starts with a notice that God was keeping his promises of a future for the city. There is clear continuity with Solomon's Temple in that articles that had been taken from it were returned to the Jews and carried back to Jerusalem (1:7–11); the same families that served in the old Temple came to serve again (Ezra 2); and the same rituals prescribed by David were used (Ezra 3:10). The altar was rebuilt and sacrifices resumed (Ezra 3:3), and laying the foundation for the rebuilding of the Temple caused a lot of joy (Ezra 3:10). The Temple building was started in the same month that Solomon's Temple began (cf. 1 Kgs 6:1 and Ezra 3:8).<sup>109</sup> Thus the book begins with a great move of God that appeared to be starting the restoration of Jerusalem. There is a note of discontinuity and incompleteness, however, in that there was as yet no priest with Urim and Thummim (Ezra 2:63).<sup>110</sup> The text does not say it, but another glaring omission is a king.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> The text does not mention Isaiah's prophecies about Cyrus (Isa 44:28; 45:1, 13). Both Ezra and Isaiah depict Cyrus as moved by God. See McConville, *Ezra*, 7. McConville (p. 9) suggests that the author does not refer to other prophecies of restoration because so much of the predicted glory was yet to materialize. Levering, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, 44, points out that Isa 60:10–11 said foreigners would bring in resources to build the new Zion.

<sup>109</sup> Noted by Myers, *Ezra*, 28 and McConville, *Ezra*, 22.

<sup>110</sup> Coggins, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, 20.

<sup>111</sup> Levering, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, 49.

But soon opposition arose from people who had been deported to Palestine by the Assyrians and wanted to be part of the project (Ezra 4:1–3). When the returnees refused to let them help, these people did all they could to discourage and frustrate the builders from completing both the Temple and city. The harassment continued until the time of Artaxerxes (Ezra 4:4–23).<sup>112</sup> Meanwhile, in the time of Darius,<sup>113</sup> permission to resume work on the Temple was obtained (Ezra 6:3–12), and with the encouragement of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah (5:1–2; 6:14) the Temple was completed (6:13–15) and dedicated (6:16–18) in 516 or 515 B.C.E.<sup>114</sup> This first section of the story mentions why the former Temple had been destroyed: “Our fathers angered the God of heaven” (Ezra 5:12).

In the second phase, Ezra arrived in Jerusalem and started teaching the Law (Ezra 7:1–8).<sup>115</sup> He brought along silver and gold given by the king, which perhaps was an initial phase of the wealth of the nations coming to Jerusalem (Ezra 7:15).<sup>116</sup> The king wanted sacrifices to be made on his behalf (Ezra 7:23, cf. 6:10).<sup>117</sup> But Ezra certainly did not think that the glorious future God promised for Zion had arrived. As far as he was

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<sup>112</sup> Artaxerxes I (465–424 B.C.E.). For a defence of the view that this was the king under whom Ezra went to Judea, see Boda, “Ezra,” 279. Ezra 4:1–23 appears to be a digression on various attempts to stop building in Jerusalem. So also Coggins, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, 25, 30. The insertion of this passage, which includes later efforts to stop the building of the city (Ezra 4:12), in the middle of the account of the rebuilding of the Temple, may indicate how intimately the two were felt to be related.

<sup>113</sup> Darius reigned 521–486 B.C.E.

<sup>114</sup> Various commentators note the similarities in wording between the account of the dedication of Solomon’s Temple in 2 Chron 7 and this account in Ezra 6, e.g. Coggins, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, 40; McConville, *Ezra*, 22. This again shows continuity between the two temples.

<sup>115</sup> Ezra appears to have arrived around 458 B.C.E. (Longman, “Persian Period,” 489). The note of Ezra’s law teaching again illustrates the incompleteness of the restoration, since Jer 31:31–34 said that people would not need to be taught under the new covenant (McConville, *Ezra*, 50–51). Levering, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, 83, sees Torah teaching as an essential follow-up to temple building. The Temple without a holy people is useless (cf. Jer 7:3–4).

<sup>116</sup> McConville, *Ezra*, 17, suggests rather that it was analogous to Israel coming out of Egypt with spoil from the Egyptians. Both references may be valid.

<sup>117</sup> Persian kings commonly required all cults to pray for them, see survey in Myers, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, 62. Though historically this was not a special privilege accorded to the Jews, it may have theological meaning in the text, i.e. indicating Gentiles seeking God’s favour in Jerusalem.

concerned, exilic conditions were still in force. The respite had been “brief,” the people were only a “remnant,” they had only a “little” relief, and they were still “slaves” in “bondage” (Ezra 9:8–9). Nevertheless, God had granted them new life to rebuild the Temple and had given them protection in Judah and Jerusalem (Ezra 9:9). Ezra prayed before the house of God. But his emphasis was on the Torah, which he taught to the people (Ezra 7:10) and led them to obey (Ezra 9–10).

In the third phase, Nehemiah arrived.<sup>118</sup> In his prayer for the city (Neh 1:5–9), he cited Moses and paraphrased Deut 28:64 and 30:1–5 in a way that indicated that he did not think Israel had yet been restored from exile. For his paraphrase of Deut 30:5 (“He will bring you to the land”), Nehemiah quoted God as saying, “I will bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause my name to dwell” (Neh 1:9).<sup>119</sup> This seems to indicate a tradition of applying the Deuteronomy passage to the fate of Jerusalem.<sup>120</sup>

Nehemiah seemed to believe that God was not indifferent to Jerusalem’s fate since it was God who put it in Nehemiah’s heart to do something for Jerusalem (Neh 2:8). His first concern was the rebuilding of the walls. He was able to mobilize the population (Neh 2:17—3:32) and resources (Neh 7:70–72), and keep up morale in the face of enemy threats (Neh 4, 6) and internal social problems (Neh 5). The walls and gates were successfully completed, providing security for the city (6:15—7:3). But gates without obedience to God’s law were not enough.<sup>121</sup> In Neh 8, Ezra taught the people the Law, and in chap. 9 the whole nation confessed God’s past mercies and the rebellious

<sup>118</sup> Nehemiah arrived in 445 B.C.E. (Longman, “Persian Period,” 489).

<sup>119</sup> Ezra 6:12 shows that to Nehemiah, Jerusalem is meant by the place where God made his name to dwell. McConville, *Ezra*, 76, calls the prayer “a free representation of the thought of Deut. 30.”

<sup>120</sup> Since many passages in the prophets seem to also be using the cluster of concepts in Deut 30:1–10 to speak of the return from exile, sometimes mentioning Jerusalem for “the land” (e.g. Jer 31:8–12; Jer 32:36–40; Ezek 20:34–44) Nehemiah was probably not innovating in using the passage this way.

<sup>121</sup> Levering, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, 117, notes that in both Ezra and Nehemiah, Torah teaching and obedience has to follow building for the building to have its desired effect.

reaction of their ancestors and nation. In their list of God's mercies in giving Israel the Land, there is no mention of Jerusalem or the Temple.<sup>122</sup> However, the people did take on themselves the responsibility to take care of God's house (10:31–39; cf. 12:44–47; 13:11), and adequate numbers agreed to live in the city (11:1–19).<sup>123</sup> The people participated wholeheartedly in the dedication ceremony (Neh 12:27–43).

At the end of the book, Nehemiah gave his version of why Jerusalem had been destroyed, as he stopped people from working and carrying loads into Jerusalem on the Sabbath: “Didn’t your forefathers do the same things so that our God brought all this calamity upon us and upon this city? Now you are stirring up more wrath against Israel by desecrating the Sabbath” (Neh 13:18). Jerusalem had been restored, but was still in danger if the people did not obey God.

McConville notes the ambivalence of Ezra-Nehemiah to the success of the restoration program:

Following all the doubts to which the exile had given rise, the community in Judah is re-established as the covenant people, possession of the historic land—or at least the part of it that contained Jerusalem—constituting the sign and seal of their recovered status . . . but there is nevertheless strong feeling . . . that the full potential for a relationship between God and his people has not yet been realized.<sup>124</sup>

At the end of his comments on Nehemiah, he says, “Indeed, at every moment of triumph in the book there has been a ‘but’.”<sup>125</sup> The book of Nehemiah ends with

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<sup>122</sup> Perhaps this is because the people were supposed to take on themselves the responsibility of rebuilding, so the priests and prophets did not stress the city and Temple as gift from God. Ezra’s earlier prayer of confession in Ezra 9:8 does mention God’s kindness in establishing the remnant in his holy place.

<sup>123</sup> Levering, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, 195–96, relates this to the fact that God lived with his people in Jerusalem. They needed to live there with him (Ps 48:10–14).

<sup>124</sup> McConville, *Ezra*, 4.

<sup>125</sup> McConville, *Ezra*, 150.



Nehemiah struggling yet again with the sins of the people.<sup>126</sup> This seems to leave the future of Jerusalem in doubt.<sup>127</sup>

Tamara Eskenazi argues convincingly that the relationship between Temple and city is one of the main features of Ezra-Nehemiah.<sup>128</sup> For the author of Ezra-Nehemiah, the Temple is only one feature of the “house of God,” which consists of all Jerusalem. Whereas the account of the dedication of the Temple is small (Ezra 6:16–18), and even after it was built restoration had not happened (Neh 9:36–37), the dedication of the city wall was a huge affair, attended by priests and Temple personnel (Neh 12:27–47). The priests, Levites, people, gates and wall were all purified (12:30). She concludes, “It is a vision in which all of Jerusalem is God’s unique sanctuary.”<sup>129</sup>

#### *Summary of Jerusalem/Zion in Chronicles/Ezra-Nehemiah*

This part of the Historical Books was written for Jews after the exile to strengthen their Jewish identity and encourage them to seek YHWH in Jerusalem so that divine blessing could be poured out again.<sup>130</sup> Jerusalem was the proper location of the cult by which one could seek YHWH. The ideal Jerusalem is given more prominence than in Kings, in Chronicles’ portrayal of the reigns of David and Solomon (1 Chron 11–2 Chron 9). The sins of these kings are omitted and their temple/worship concerns expanded. The

<sup>126</sup> McConville, *Ezra*, 149. To McConville (p. 157), this indicates that no restoration of physical/political Jerusalem could ever fulfill OT prophecies such as Isa 60:1–3; 61:1–4. The covenant people were just not able to meet the terms of the covenant because they could not avoid unfaithfulness to God.

<sup>127</sup> Because of this, some commentators have seen Ezra-Nehemiah as the description of a “dead end.” Levering, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, 32, cites Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*. VI. *Theology: The Old Covenant*, translated by Brian McNeil and Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis; edited by John Riches. San Francisco: Ignaitus, 1991, 370. Levering, pp. 33–35, points out that the great accomplishments of the returned exiles should not be discounted. Because of their faithfulness, the biblical witness continued to be available in the world. Jerusalem, the Temple and the Scriptures were all essential to the further work of God recorded in the New Testament. But in this Levering admits that the post-exilic restoration of Jerusalem was far from complete.

<sup>128</sup> Eskenazi, *In an Age of Prose*, 53–56, 71–73, 83–87, 104–109, 119–22, 176–89.

<sup>129</sup> Eskenazi, *In an Age of Prose*, 189.

<sup>130</sup> Duke, “Chronicles, Books of,” 171–72.

Temple can only be built once “rest” is achieved. Chronicles ends on a hopeful note for Jerusalem: Cyrus proclaims return to Jerusalem and rebuilding of the Temple (2 Chron 36:22–23).<sup>131</sup> A restored Jerusalem and Temple are the hope of the future.

Ezra starts out on this hopeful note (Ezra 1–3) and although great things are actually accomplished in Ezra-Nehemiah, and all Jerusalem takes on the former role of the Temple as the sacred area, the city is not fully restored. There is no story of God’s visible presence entering the new Temple,<sup>132</sup> and no hint of restoration of the Davidic kingship. The people’s sin still seems to hinder blessing (Neh 13:10, 15–18, 23). As Groves comments, “Against the backdrop of a hopeful, eschatological future as articulated in the prophetic and psalmic Zion traditions, the Historical Books of Ezra and Nehemiah gave a much more sober-minded picture of the future.”<sup>133</sup> Zion has hope, but she is still struggling, and human sin still threatens her future.

### *Jerusalem/Zion in the Psalms*

The Psalms are the main source for ideas that are usually known as “Zion Theology” or the “Zion Tradition.” This tradition includes the notions that YHWH dwells in Zion, he rules the world from there, his presence defends the city, and that Zion has a central role in the cosmos as the place where there is a special link between heaven and earth. These ideas are related to Canaanite notions of the sacred or cosmic mountain. From Zion as such a mountain, fertility and prosperity flow, and to it the whole earth

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<sup>131</sup> Scholars like Sweeney, “Tanak versus Old Testament,” 359, and Scobie, *Ways of our God*, 67–68, suggest that having Chronicles end the Tanak indicates for Jews that Jerusalem and its traditions reach their goal in the rebuilding of the Temple and re-establishment of religious life in Jerusalem, rather than looking forward to the coming of Messiah and a new age.

<sup>132</sup> Levering, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, 57, comments, “Rather ominously, this cloud of glory does not return.”

<sup>133</sup> Groves, “Zion Traditions,” 1025.

comes in submissive pilgrimage.<sup>134</sup> Although this picture is often the one used in the prophets for the glorious Jerusalem of the future, it is also a view of Zion's current status in many Psalms (esp. Pss 46, 48, 76). Only a few Psalms picture Zion as a vulnerable earthly city (such as Pss 74, 79, 102 and 137).

### *YHWH Establishes Zion*

Mount Zion is part of the world, all of which was created by God. God's act of creation included creating mountains. Psalm 65:6 addresses God "who formed the mountains by your power." Psalm 89:13 (v. 12 ET) says, "You founded the world and all that is in it. You created the north (צפון) and the south (דרום); Tabor and Herman sing for joy at your name." Some interpreters here see in the words "north," and even "south," the names of mountains mentioned in parallel with the other mountains Tabor and Herman.<sup>135</sup> צפון in the Old Testament can mean both "north" and a specific mountain to the north of Israel, which was the well-known sacred mountain of Baal.<sup>136</sup> Zion is called צפון in Ps 48:2. The fact that God created mountains, and mountains that were specifically sacred mountains, including one identified with Zion, hints in the Old Testament tradition at a belief that God created Zion as a holy mountain right from the beginning.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>134</sup> Renz, "Zion Tradition in Ezekiel," 79–80, has a good summary of the usual understanding of the Zion Tradition. See also Monson, "Temple of Solomon," 6–8 and n. 83 above on Roberts, "Zion in the Theology of the Davidic-Solomonic Empire," 94.

<sup>135</sup> The word "south" (דרום) was interpreted by the LXX as "sea," reading דרם. This might indicate a contrast between the highest mountain or a most sacred place, and the sea as deepest or most chaotic place. On the other hand, some interpreters see דרם as the name of another sacred mountain. Mowan "Quattuor montes sacri in Ps 89,13?" 11–20, cites a tradition of four sacred mountains reflected in this verse, and argues that דרם in Ps 89:13 is Mount Amanus (in southern Turkey), an identification accepted by de Vaux, "Jérusalem et les prophètes," 506; Dahood, *Psalms II*, 314; and Sabourin, *Psalms*, 355.

<sup>136</sup> Kraus, *Theology of Psalms*, 79; Day, *Yahweh and the Gods*, 108–9.

<sup>137</sup> Cf. Isa 14:32, "The Lord has founded Zion, and the needy among his people will find refuge in her." Barth, *God with Us*, 236, thinks that Ps 93 links creation and the setting up of God's throne in Jerusalem.

In the Psalms, it is not really Solomon who builds the sanctuary of God on Mount Zion,<sup>138</sup> but YHWH: “He has set his foundation on the holy mountains; the Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob” (Ps 87:1–2a); and, “But he chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion, which he loved. He built his sanctuary like the heights, like the earth that he established forever” (Ps 78:68–69).<sup>139</sup>

There are affinities to Exod 15:13, 17 in Ps 78:54, “Thus he brought them to the border of his holy land, to the hill country [גִּבְעוֹת], often translated elsewhere as mountain] his right hand had taken.” This indicates that the land (perhaps even a mountain) had been conquered by God and was his holy land before the Israelites arrived (cf. Isa 14:32).

#### *Glorious Zion in the Psalms*

Many of the Psalms purport to come from the formative era of David when Zion was being set up as joint dwelling place of God and his people, and Psalms that come from other eras may also reflect the ethos of that period. In the Psalms, the defining idea about this place, from which all other ideas flow, is that God dwells there.<sup>140</sup> This is due

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The lines, “The world is firmly established/ it cannot be moved./ Your throne was established long ago/ you are from all eternity”(vv. 1b–2) may refer to the heavenly throne (Ps 11:4; 103:19). But in Ps 9:11, God is enthroned in Zion (cf. Jer 3:16–17 where God’s throne and Jerusalem are identified), and the parallelism of both the world and the throne being established (יָסַד) may indicate that God’s throne in Zion is intended. Waltke, *OT Theology*, 537, says that the biblical writers reject the ANE idea of a permanent holy place, sacred from creation. He has probably somewhat overstated his case. There are some indications of it in the OT text. Second Temple non-canonical literature certainly espoused this ANE idea, which did not seem to those writers incompatible with the OT.

<sup>138</sup> Ps 132:1–5 pictures David determined to find a dwelling place for YHWH, but building is not mentioned. The place David wants to find in vv. 13–14 is not called the Temple but Zion (Schreiner, *Sion-Jerusalem*, 175). “Find” implies discovering something that already existed. Allen, *Psalms 101–150*, 270–71, supports the interpretation that David is speaking of the location of the initial tent set up to house the ark, not the Temple, so the verse is not about David building God’s sanctuary.

<sup>139</sup> Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 106, interprets this passage as a claim that God constructed the temple in mythic times, before choosing David. The choice of David is mentioned in the following verse, as if it was subsequent. Goldingay, *Ps 42–89*, 512–13, says the psalm is “attributing to God the actions of people such as David and Solomon,” though God’s building is grander than their Temple. Barth, *God with Us*, 238, argues that Zion is God’s creation, possession, and dwelling. Cf. YHWH’s sanctuary building in Isa 28:16.

<sup>140</sup> This of course is not incompatible with God also dwelling in heaven. See Kraus, *Theology of the Psalms*, 76.

to his own choice (Ps 132:13; cf. 68:16). Since God dwells in Zion, he rules as King from there (Ps 24; 48:1; 68:24; 84:3; 95:3; 99:1–5; 149:2). His throne is there (Ps 9:11) and it is his headquarters for rule over both Israel (Ps 68:16, 24; 146:10) and the world (Ps 68:29; 99:1–5). He also reigns there through his appointed human king (Ps 2:6; 110:2; cf. 45:2, 7; 122:5). The books of Kings, and to an even greater extent, Chronicles, link the chosen human king (David and his line) with the chosen city. This theme appears as a clear but minor one in the Psalms (Ps 2:6; 110; 132).<sup>141</sup> Much more prominent is the idea that God is the King in Zion.

One of the main functions of a good sovereign is to ensure that justice is done in his realm. The context of the verses cited above includes the kingly work of God in Zion to judge justly (Ps 9:7–8, 16, 19; 99:4), rebuking and punishing the wicked (e.g. Ps 2:5; 9:5; 68:30; 110:6) and taking care of the righteous and oppressed (Ps 9:4, 9–10; 68:5; 146:7–9). As a result, Zion becomes the place from which God sends help to his people (Ps 3:4; 14:7; 20:2; 53:6; 128:5; 134:3). Zion is also the place where God's glory, beauty and virtue are shown to people (Ps 26:8; 27:4; 48:9; 50:2; 76:4; 84:1; 87:3; 102:16; 132:14).

Another consequence of God's dwelling in Zion is that this is where people come to meet with him (Ps 74:4; 84:7; cf. 65:4; 84:4; 92:12–13) and worship him (e.g. Ps 48:1; 65:1; 99:5, 9; 102:21; 122:4; 135:21; 147:12). People go there on pilgrimage (Pss 84, 122). This is the primary location of divine-human contact, though, of course, in another sense, God is everywhere, and his care is not geographically restricted (Ps 139:7–12).

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<sup>141</sup> Other Psalms emphasize God's relationship to the Davidic king but do not relate this directly to Zion, e.g. Pss 18; 72; 89 (but cf. Ps 89:12, 18).

The fellowship with God and his care experienced in a special way in Zion makes the city a place of joy and delight (Ps 9:14; 27:6; 48:2; 136:16; 137:6) both for people and for God (Ps 149:2, 4). Therefore the psalmists express love for and delight in Zion (Ps 26:8; 27:4; 48:12; 84:1; 122:1–3; 137:1–7). People pray for Zion (Ps 51:18; 74:12; 129:5). Zion is valued both for the relationship with God and the fellowship among God's people experienced there (Ps 122:8-9). God loves it too (Ps 78:68; 87:2).

Since God dwells in Zion, it is to be expected that he will protect and defend his own headquarters. God also loves and helps Zion because he loves and helps his people (it is clear from Ps 129 that Zion sometimes stands for Israel). The psalmists say that since God is in Zion, she will not fall (Ps 46:5). God makes her secure (Ps 48:3-8). Mount Zion cannot be shaken but endures forever (Ps 125:1). There, God breaks the arrows of any who attack her (Ps 76:3). The Most High will establish her (Ps 87:5) and bless her (Ps 132:13-18). Even after the disaster of 587 B.C.E., psalm writers expect God to restore and defend his city (Ps 69:35; 102:13, 16) and rejoice when he does (Ps 126:1; 147:2).

#### *Zion as a Canaanite-Style Holy Mountain*

In the Zion Psalms, such as Pss 46, 48, 76, 122 and 132, and other Old Testament passages,<sup>142</sup> Jerusalem/Zion is often described in terms parallel to terms used of the sacred mountains of the Canaanite gods El and Baal in the literature of Ugarit.<sup>143</sup> Both El and Baal build themselves temples on their mountains, as YHWH does on his. El dwells

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<sup>142</sup> Kraus, *Theology of Psalms*, 83, notes that the themes of Zion Theology are common in Isaiah, who lived and ministered in Jerusalem. He also sees them evident in Micah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zephaniah and Deutero-Isaiah.

<sup>143</sup> Beale, *Temple*, 29–30, mentions three ways in which Israel and her Canaanite neighbours would have had shared traditions about holy mountains: common lingering memories of Eden, Israel's takeover of Canaanite claims and applying them to YHWH for polemical reasons, and a shared cultural environment. Kraus, *Theology of the Psalms*, 78, explains that many features attributed to Zion in Pss 46, 48, 76, *et al.* come from ancient Canaanite cultic traditions. These psalms are not "eschatological," but appropriate Canaanite images and apply them to Zion.

in a tent on his mountain, from which he issues decrees. Rivers of fertilizing water flow from El's mountain, and El apportions kingships from his mountain.<sup>144</sup> Likewise, YHWH dwells in a tent on Zion (Ps 76:2). He teaches his law there (Isa 2:2–4; Mic 4:1–4; though decrees were also issued from Sinai) and blesses from Zion (Ps 20:2; 128:5; 133:3; 134:3). Rivers flow from Zion (Ps 46:4; cf. Isa 33:20–22; Ezek 47:1–12; Joel 3:18; Zech 14:8),<sup>145</sup> in a manner reminiscent of Eden (Gen 2:13), and YHWH controls kings from Zion (Ps 2:10–12).

In the Ugaritic lore, Baal won his mountain by battles with *Mot* (Death) and *Yamm* (Sea). He celebrated his victory with thunder and lightning, scattering enemies who attacked his mountain. Baal was enthroned on his mountain and ruled from there. It was the mountain of his inheritance.<sup>146</sup> In language appropriated from or parallel to this Canaanite tradition, YHWH rules as king from Zion (Ps 9:11; 68:16, 29; 99:1–2; 132:14; 146:10; Isa 6:1; cf. the mountain of his inheritance Exod 15:17), where he dwells (Ps 68:16, 18; 132:13; Isa 8:18). YHWH has overcome the sea monster and controls the waters (Ps 74:12–15). Zion is attacked by YHWH's enemies (Pss 2, 46, 48, 76), but he thunders and saves Zion (Ps 2; 29; 48:6; cf. 68:32–34; Ps 76:1–3).

The holiness of God and his mountain extend into the surrounding land (Josh 22:19; Ps 78:54; cf. Hos 9:3). But Zion is depicted as God's headquarters not just over Canaan but over the whole world. God's people gather there in pilgrimage (Ps 84:5–7; cf. Deut 16:16), but so will all nations (cf. Isa 2:2–4; 55:5; Zech 8:20–23).

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<sup>144</sup> Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 48–57. Most of the following comparisons are taken from Clifford.

<sup>145</sup> Kraus, *Theology of the Psalms*, 80.

<sup>146</sup> Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 138–45; Day, *Yahweh and the Gods*, 91–102, 107–16.

One of the motifs of the Zion tradition that has been of great interest to scholars is the “inviolability of Zion.”<sup>147</sup> This motif is significantly different in the Zion tradition from its counterpart in Canaanite myth, where Baal is yearly defeated and rises again. Clifford notes, “Yahweh . . . unlike Baal, is not a seasonal deity who suffers periodic defeat by Mot. His mountain is therefore impregnable and becomes a symbol of the secure place.”<sup>148</sup> The difference therefore is not due to any difference between the mountains, but to the vast difference between the two gods concerned. Canaanite Baal can be defeated by Mot, even Canaanite El can be intimidated,<sup>149</sup> but this is unthinkable for YHWH. As long as he defends Zion, it is impregnable.<sup>150</sup> Enemies may gather against it, but YHWH will scatter them. This tradition is reflected in such passages as Pss 46, 48, Isa 29:5–8, 31:1–9, and Zech 14:12.<sup>151</sup>

This consideration of Ugaritic Holy Mountain traditions brings into focus certain aspects of the Psalms’ treatment of Zion as a unique place in the world. It is the link between heaven and earth, and the place where a concentration of God’s presence can be found in the world.

### *Chastened Zion*

Even in the Psalms, where Zion is so often exalted, there is a recognition that only if people are righteous is their welcome in Zion assured (Ps 15:1–2; 24:3–4; cf. 132:12). Thus there is a tension in the psalmists’ view of Zion. If it were only God’s headquarters,

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<sup>147</sup> Schmitt, “The City as Woman,” 96, notes, however, that recent scholarly attention is shifting from debate about the date and provenance of Zion’s inviolability tradition to interest in the depiction of Jerusalem as a woman.

<sup>148</sup> Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 153.

<sup>149</sup> Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 47.

<sup>150</sup> Kraus, *Theology of Psalms*, 82, notes that it is only God’s presence that makes Zion invincible (Ps 46:5–7, 11; 48:3). Zion has no inherent inviolability.

<sup>151</sup> Kraus, *Theology of Psalms*, 81, suggests that the human enemies represent the primeval chaos of the sea which has been demythologized in Israelite usage.



he would keep it pure and holy, and it would always be glorious and inviolable. The reader may wonder, however, what happens when those without clean hands or pure hearts ascend the hill of the Lord?<sup>152</sup> In some of the Psalms, this glorious Zion has been demolished by enemies.

Four Psalms contain laments over Zion. Pss 74, 79, 102 and 137, written in exile, reflect the terrible things that have happened to Zion. The writer of Ps 74 sees Zion as “everlasting ruins” (v. 3). Enemies have smashed and burned the Temple (Ps 74: 4–7) and there are no miracles or prophets to make the people feel that God even cares (v. 9). “Why have you rejected us forever?” he asks (Ps 74:1), and later, “Will the foe revile your name forever?” (74:11), “Rise up and defend your cause!” (74:22).<sup>153</sup> Similar is Ps 79: “O God the nations have invaded your inheritance; they have defiled your holy temple, they have reduced Jerusalem to rubble” (v. 1). The psalmist “seeks to motivate God by drawing attention to the way God is affected.”<sup>154</sup> It is *God’s* possession, temple and city that have been destroyed. Psalm 102 appears to be an individual lament (Ps 102:1–11), but the writer’s trouble seems to be part of Zion’s. The author expects God to restore Zion because of God’s covenant.<sup>155</sup> He still expects the nations to come to Zion to worship YHWH (Ps 102:21–22). In Ps 137, the exiles in Babylon weep while remembering Zion (v. 1). Unlike Lamentations, but similar to Obadiah, Pss 74, 102 and 137 do not admit any guilt on Zion’s part, and even in Ps 79:8–9 where sin is admitted, it

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<sup>152</sup> The anonymous city of Ps 55 is probably also Jerusalem (Kidner, *Psalms 1–72*, 200, and Taylor, “Psalm 55,” *IB* 4:290, contra Dahood, *Psalms II*, 238, who follows Gunkel in thinking the psalmist is living in a foreign city, or VanGemeren, “Psalms,” 394, who sees it as the “city of man”). If the superscription of Davidic authorship is taken seriously, this may have been during the rebellion of Absalom. The psalmist longs to escape from this city and find security elsewhere (Ps 55:7–8).

<sup>153</sup> Goldingay, *Ps 42–89*, 436, notes the fourfold repetition of “forever.” The desolation of Zion dishonours God, and so cannot possibly last forever.

<sup>154</sup> Goldingay, *Ps 42–89*, 520,

<sup>155</sup> Allen, *Psalms 101–150*, 21, says, “So [Jerusalem’s] despicable a state is a contradiction in terms and can by no means represent God’s last word.”

is inconsequential compared to the outrages that Zion and God's name have suffered. This is in contrast to Ps 106 where, after the long history of Israel's sin, the psalmist says: "Therefore the Lord was angry with his people . . . he handed them over to the nations" (vv. 40–41). The psalm's final petition is "gather us from the nations" (v. 47).<sup>156</sup> Psalm 106 has little about Zion's distress, but vindicates God, showing the reason for the woes lamented in Pss 74, 79, 102, and 137. Such biblical passages that cry out for mercy and redress for Zion without taking note of the way Zion sinned and brought the calamity on herself betray a strong belief that God cannot permanently avoid caring for Zion. There is a special relationship there which must have a future, and Zion's sin cannot sabotage the plan.

### *Zion's Future*

The Psalms have no great eschatological vision.<sup>157</sup> Apart from the psalms of lament over ruined Zion, they seem to see Zion as already being God's *de facto* holy mountain. There is an expectation that in the course of history, God will make his rule and his king in Zion victorious over the whole world (Ps 2:8–9; 110). Mount Zion abides forever (Ps 48:8; 125:1); God will live there forever (Ps 68:16; 132:14) and reign there forever (Ps 146:10). Thus, in the face of Zion's destruction, the Psalms of Lament appeal to God to make this true (Ps 74:22; 79:6–13; 106:47; cf. Ps 137:7), or confidently assert that it will still be true (Ps 102:12–22). The returned exiles sing in Psalm 126 of their hope of future joy (v. 6). There is no mention of a divine eschatological act beyond this age that will restore Zion to its intended glory.

<sup>156</sup> Perhaps remembering the promise of Deut 30:5 etc. for just such a situation, the psalmist expects that restoration will indeed happen, now that the people are repenting (cf. Neh 1:8–9).

<sup>157</sup> Kraus, *Theology of Psalms*, 78, disputes Gunkel's evaluation of Zion psalms as eschatological. These psalms describe present Zion in idealized theological terms. Anderson, *Psalms 1–72*, 355, 367, thinks Ps 46 and 48 were associated with the Jerusalem cult, and that Ps 48 was not originally eschatological.

But there was obviously a gap between the ideal depiction of Zion in some of the Psalms and the actual Zion that Israel experienced. Perhaps this is why ideas associated with glorious Zion in the Psalms came to be used by the prophets to describe Zion in a future restoration rather than in the present.

#### *Summary of Jerusalem/Zion in the Psalms*

The Psalms, like the Pentateuch, hint that God prepared Zion in pre-Davidic times. He chose it to be his seat of rule, from which he dispenses justice. It is his dwelling place where people come to meet and worship him, and so value it as a place of joy. God also protects it from attack. However, the people's sin leaves it vulnerable, and, in some Psalms, enemies have even left it desolate. The psalmists pray and expect that as history unfolds God will restore Zion and fulfill the vision of Zion as God's secure dwelling place forever.

#### *Jerusalem/Zion in the Prophets*

The prophets insisted that the inviolability of Zion would not be maintained if the people were not living in obedience to YHWH. God was committed to defending his holy mountain, and he would defend it even *against* his own people if they defiled it by sinning. When they did, YHWH became the enemy of Zion (e.g. Isa 1:24; 66:6; Jer 12:7–10).<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Prophecy is often directed at “Judah and Jerusalem” (e.g. Isa 1:1; 2:1; Jer 4:3, 5 etc.). Schmitt, “The City as Woman,” 103, says that in the Bible, a people and its major cities are kept distinct, and 118 says, “Always the feminine city appears in roles and images different from those of the people Israel.” This is not quite true, however, for both the nation Israel (e.g. Hos 2) and the city Jerusalem (e.g. Ezek 16) are presented as God's wife. In n. 80 he adds that Zion, without the land, became the focus of Jewish hopes by medieval times. The focus seems to be narrowing already however in passages like Isa 40–66, Dan 9, and Ezra-Nehemiah.

There were three kinds of sin against which the prophets preached, although all of them ultimately related to loyalty to YHWH. They were idolatry (trusting other gods than YHWH for prosperity), foreign political alliances (trusting human forces instead of YHWH for political prosperity), and social injustice (trusting selfish grasping instead of YHWH for personal prosperity).<sup>159</sup> The Pentateuch predicted that the result of these sins of forsaking God would be foreign invasion, death of most of the people, scattering of the remaining population into other countries, scorn of other nations, and the virtual end of national life (Lev 26:33–39; Deut 4:27; 28:36, 64–68; 29:28). The prophets add burning of the cities including Jerusalem, and loss of the Temple.

It is a great temptation for blessing and prosperity to lead to pride and rebellion. This is one of the themes of Brueggemann's book *The Land*. At the border of Canaan, as God is about to give them land (and, one may say, Jerusalem as the final stage of that gift), "Israel's central temptation is to forget . . . Settled into an eternally guaranteed situation, one scarcely knows that one is indeed addressed by the voice in history who gives gifts and makes claims."<sup>160</sup>

Side by side with the prophets' denunciation of the sin of Israel and their predictions of the ruin this would bring to Jerusalem and the nation is the theme of a gloriously renewed Zion. Human sin will not ultimately be able to sabotage God's plan for Zion. In the renewed Zion humanity's holy character will be compatible with God's holy and inviolable dwelling. This will be a completely secure situation in which both God and humanity can enjoy absolute satisfaction. The positive Zion tradition of

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<sup>159</sup> Hoppé, *Holy City*, (e.g. p. 71), takes social injustice to be the main sin for which God punishes Zion, Ollenburger, *Zion*, (e.g. p. 149) thinks that the main problem is foreign alliances, but all three kinds of sins figure prominently in the prophets.

<sup>160</sup> Brueggemann, *The Land*, 51.

Jerusalem's early days and of the Psalms will operate unhindered. The prophets see that the present situation of insecurity because of the people's sin is not permanent. God himself will act to purge his people, and transform the remnant so that they can stay obedient to the Lord. This will be a unilateral action of God.

Passages on the theme of restoration often have affinities with Lev 26:33–39; Deut 4:27; 28:36, 64–68; 29:28; and 30:1–10. These passages threaten that when the people sin God will scatter them among the nations but when they repent in exile God will have mercy on them. Deut 30:1–10 gives details about how this mercy will work. God will re-gather them from wherever they are scattered (v. 3) even from the ends of the earth (v. 4); the Lord will bring them back into the Land that their fathers had, and will multiply and prosper them (v. 5); YHWH will circumcise their hearts and the hearts of their descendants to love him completely; this will result in them being able to “live” (v. 6); YHWH will put the curses for disobedience on their enemies (v. 7); The Israelites will again obey the Lord and keep his commandments (v. 8); and YHWH will delight in them and make them prosperous (v. 9). The passage returns in v. 10 to the theme of repentance. This forms an *inclusio* that emphasizes repentance as the key to all the restoration.

Many of these themes come up in the prophets as they discuss the future of Jerusalem/Zion. Although the passages from the Pentateuch are about the nation as a whole and only Lev 26 mentions cities, other passages in the Old Testament use clusters of the motifs found in these passages when speaking of the final destiny of Jerusalem/Zion.<sup>161</sup> This may imply that, for them, Jerusalem's fortunes are the fortunes of

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<sup>161</sup> Neh 1:5–10 has been discussed above. In addition, Isa 27:12–13 mentions God gathering from foreign nations those scattered and their coming to worship the Lord “in the holy mountain at Jerusalem”; Jer 31:8–12 mentions the Lord gathering Israel from remote places, as they weep and supplicate (indicating repentance), and the arrival in Zion; Jer 32:36–40 mentions God's anger in driving them into other lands,

the nation, or that in some way the city represents the nation. The theme of the changed heart (Deut 30:6 the Lord your God will circumcise your hearts . . . so that you may love him”) enabling the restoration is an important one in Jeremiah and Ezekiel.<sup>162</sup>

### *Jerusalem in Isaiah*

Dumbrell makes a good case for the view that the structure of the whole book of Isaiah is formed around the idea of Jerusalem.<sup>163</sup> He sees the book moving from apostate Jerusalem to the New Jerusalem. Webb’s contention is also that “the transformation of Zion is the key to both the formal and the thematic structure of the book as a whole.”<sup>164</sup> He focuses on the purified remnant that leads to the transformation of Zion, which leads in turn to cosmic transformation. Similarly, Motyer calls Isaiah the “book of the city.” Judah’s fate is Jerusalem’s fate, and Jerusalem’s restoration is “the restoration not merely of the people but of the world.”<sup>165</sup>

The first part of the book (Isa 1–39) majors on the reasons for Jerusalem’s coming destruction. Isaiah begins with Judah and Jerusalem in terrible condition (1:5–6). Shockingly, this is YHWH’s doing because of their sin. Nonetheless, God offers prosperity if they are willing and obedient (1:18–20). There is a prophecy of future glory in the first chapter too (vv. 26–27). The first chapter has been seen by some

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his plan to gather and bring them back “to this place” (as Jeremiah is preaching in Jerusalem, the city is likely what he means by “this place”) and make them dwell safely, giving them a new heart so they will always obey; Ezek 20:34–44 mentions God scattering them in wrath, now gathering them, purging them, bringing them into the land of the forefathers, and them worshipping on God’s holy mountain. Other passages that use concentrations of the concepts in Deut 30:1–10 but mention only restoration to the land include Jer 16:13–15; 24:5–7; 30:8–11; 50:17–20; Ezek 6:8–10; 11:16–20; 28:25–26; 34:12–16; 39:19–29; cf. 1 Kgs 8:46–51; Isa 11:12; Zech 7:12—8:4.

<sup>162</sup> Jer 24:7; 31:33; 32:39–40; Ezek 11:19; 36:26.

<sup>163</sup> Dumbrell, *End of the Beginning*, 5–20.

<sup>164</sup> Webb, “Zion in Transformation,” 67.

<sup>165</sup> Motyer, *Isaiah*, 16.

commentators as a summary of the message of the whole book, since Isaiah's important themes of sin, judgment, repentance and restoration are all there.<sup>166</sup>

Chapters 1–12 mention a plethora of sins of which Judah and Jerusalem are guilty. They include social (e.g. 1:17, 21, 23; 2:7; 3:14–15; 5:7, 8, 23; 10:1), religious (1:29; 2:6, 8, 18, 20; 8:19) and political (2:22; 8:12–13) sins. The punishment coming is an invasion by Assyria (5:26–30; 7:18–20; 8:7–8) that will destroy the land and food supplies (1:7; 3:1; 5:10, 13; 8:21), and kill the people or make them captive (5:14, 24–25; 6:11; 10:4) so that there will be no competent leaders and anarchy will reign (3:2–12). In the midst of this section, the prophet sees God high on his throne in the Jerusalem Temple (Isa 6:1). Isaiah recognizes the great incompatibility between God's holiness and the sinfulness of himself and the people, so that to be in the same place with God is dangerous for him (Isa 6:5), and, as he learns, ultimately for the nation (6:11–13a).

Interwoven with the message of condemnation and woe in Isa 1–12 is another picture of a glorious future Zion. The first major picture is in Isa 2:2–6. This oracle contains the “Zion Traditions” themes of Zion as the highest mountain and the pilgrimage of the nations to Zion/Jerusalem to receive God's Torah, with an ensuing end of war. This will happen in the last days (v. 2).<sup>167</sup> Isaiah 9:1–7 tells of a future ideal king. He will be on David's throne (9:7), which implies Jerusalem, and his kingdom will be a time of sovereignty, peace, and righteousness. Chapter 11 resumes the topic of a righteous ruler from David's line (Isa 11:1–5, 10). The Edenic picture of harmony in nature and with humanity in Isa 11:6–8 is tied to Zion in the following verse: “They will not hurt or

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<sup>166</sup> Childs, *Isaiah*, 16; Boda, “Walking in the Light of Yahweh,” 4.

<sup>167</sup> Oswalt, *Isa 1–39*, 116, says that the phrase “in the last/future days” in the OT can refer to various aspects of the future, normally within time, but potentially beyond this age. He thinks the prophecy may refer both to the church age and to the age beyond.

destroy on all my holy mountain.” Yet when the verse continues with the reason, “For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea,” it appears that God’s holy mountain will cease to be limited to one spot in the world. As Motyer says, “the coming Eden is Mount Zion—a Zion which fills the whole earth.”<sup>168</sup> All nations will come to this ruler and Israel’s remnant as well (Isa 11:10–11), at “his place of rest” (v. 10), i.e. Zion.<sup>169</sup> This prophecy too is designated for the future by the prefaced “In that day.” The same phrase begins chapter 12, which is a song of praise to God for his restoration (12:1). The writer exhorts the people of Zion to sing along (12:6).

Chapters 13–23 are the oracles against the nations. In many of them there is a message of hope for Judah (Isa 14:1–2, 32; 16:1–5; 17:14; 18:7; 19:19–24; 23:18). Zion does not need the help of, and should not fear the attack of other nations because “the Lord has established Zion, and in her his afflicted people will find refuge” (14:23).<sup>170</sup> Isaiah 16:1–5 resumes the theme of the just Davidic king in Zion who will give security even to refugees from Moab.<sup>171</sup> One need not seek help from Egypt and Cush since even from them “gifts will be brought to Mount Zion the place of the Name of the Lord Almighty” (Isa 18:7). But chap. 22 in this sequence is about Jerusalem. By putting her in this section, Isaiah seems to be saying that she is acting just like the other nations.<sup>172</sup> She is condemned for preferring self-reliance to faith (Isa 22:8–11). When she relies on self-effort, she is not a cosmic mountain, but a valley, and one of judgment bringing disaster

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<sup>168</sup> Motyer, *Isaiah*, 124. See further his comments on 125.

<sup>169</sup> Ps 132:13–14; cf. 2 Chron 6:41.

<sup>170</sup> Judah does not need to make an alliance with the Philistines against Assyria because they have security with God in Zion. Isa 36–38 illustrated that this security only operated when the people trusted in it. See Oswalt, *Isa 1–39*, 333.

<sup>171</sup> Oswalt, *Isa 1–39*, 341–43, sees in this passage and in Isa 18:7 a similar message to Isa 2:2–4, depicting the pilgrimage of the nations.

<sup>172</sup> Oswalt, *Isa 1–39*, 405–6.



(Isa 22:7).<sup>173</sup> When her people's own resources are not enough, they resign themselves to their fate (22:13). This is inexcusable for people who have a God (Isa 22:14). Both Shebna, and ultimately Eliakim, are examples of trust in self rather than the Lord.<sup>174</sup>

Parts of Isa 24–27 picture cosmic and universal judgment that erases the entire world of humanity.<sup>175</sup> Yet something remains constant: “The Lord will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before its elders gloriously” (Isa 24:23). God will still rule, and Zion will still be there.<sup>176</sup> In response, the prophet praises God for his ruin of the alternative city of the enemy (Isa 25:1–3). Though their cities are gone, all nations are invited to Mount Zion where God will prepare a feast for them (Isa 25:6), delivering them permanently from death, wiping away their tears (25:7–8) and winning their loyalty (25:9).<sup>177</sup> Isaiah 26 is a song of praise for the strong city in Judah where there will be peace (Isa 26:1–3). The song seems to move from the future back to present anticipation and longing (26:7–21).<sup>178</sup> Isaiah 27:12–13 pictures the culmination of God's purging of Jerusalem (27:10), the future re-gathering of the Israelites to “come and worship the Lord on the holy mountain in Jerusalem” (Isa 27:13).

Chapter 28 starts with a threat to Samaria (28:1–4) and likewise to sinful Jerusalem (28:7–29). The people think they have a covenant with death, but God will do his “strange work” (28:21) of destroying the land. Like Isa 1:5, this passage shows that

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<sup>173</sup> Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 333.

<sup>174</sup> Motyer, *Isaiah*, 180; Oswalt, *Isa 1–39*, 406–7, 416, 424.

<sup>175</sup> Brueggemann, *Isaiah 1–39*, 190.

<sup>176</sup> Oswalt, *Isa 1–39*, 456, comments, “The picture in Revelation complements this one nicely (Rev 4:4, 9–11). The elders worship God, casting down the crowns he had bestowed, giving him the glory.” Cf. the manifestation of God to the elders on Sinai (Exod 24:9, 11).

<sup>177</sup> Oswalt, *Isa 1–39*, 463, relates this passage to the common theme in Isaiah of the pilgrimage of the nations to Zion.

<sup>178</sup> Oswalt, *Isa 1–39*, 470.

God takes no delight in meting out punishment and purging his people. His nature is to be merciful (Isa 30:18; cf. Exod 34:6).

In response to the people's false confidence in their sin, Isa 28:16 speaks of God laying a cornerstone in Zion. This is language reminiscent of ancient Near East (ANE) temple construction rituals: "So this is what the Sovereign Lord says: 'See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed.'" In these ANE rituals, the site had to be prepared, a first brick or foundation stone prepared and laid as the foundation, and precious stones placed in the foundation.<sup>179</sup> Here God himself is pictured as building his own temple. In the ANE tradition, a god would not live in a temple not built to his own specifications, and here YHWH is using a plumb line of justice and righteousness.<sup>180</sup> The timing of this foundation laying is ambiguous.<sup>181</sup> However, God's purpose in laying this stone seems related to the following words: "the one who trusts will never be dismayed." Zion is founded by God as a safe place for those who trust in him.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> See Ollenburger, *Zion*, 118, and Boda, "Dystopia to Myopia," 215–30; Roberts, "Yahweh's Foundation," 305–6, gives the same background to this text. Interestingly, Isa 30:32 mentions God's "rod of foundation" used to destroy Zion's enemies. What exactly this foundation is has been the subject of much discussion among commentators. Motyer, *Isaiah*, 233, suggests that the rod is Zion itself, the Lord, or the Davidic monarch. Childs, *Isaiah*, 208, suggests in addition the remnant, or faith. Brueggemann, *Isaiah 1–39*, 226, comments, "The imagery appeals to the solid reliability of the Temple, but the precise reference of the image is uncertain." Ollenburger, *Zion*, 119, following Eichrodt, suggests that the end of the verse may be the inscription on the foundation.

<sup>180</sup> Roberts, "Yahweh's Foundation," 309.

<sup>181</sup> Ollenburger, *Zion*, 116–17 sees it as a past action. For the contrary opinion that here God is laying a corner stone for a renewed or eschatological Jerusalem see Lee, *New Jerusalem*, 26–27. The verb "lay" is perfect in Hebrew and may represent a completed action, though translated in some English versions as a present action (e.g. NIV, "I lay"; NASB and NRSV "I am laying"). According to the BHS footnote, one Qumran ms has a participle here, so the Greek translations may have had such a Hebrew text. Some versions of the Greek text use a present tense verb (ἐμβάλλω, in Vaticanus and L, according to Rahlfs' critical edition of the LXX, cf. 1 Pet 2:6, which has τίθημι) and in others a future (ἐμβάλω, in Alexandrinus and Siniaticus, according to Hatch and Redpath; Swete's LXX edition adds Q). Early interpreters seem to have envisioned a work in progress or in the future.

<sup>182</sup> Oswalt, *Isa 1–39*, 517, comments, "the message here is a double-edged one. God is establishing a structure in Zion which will be a source of comfort and encouragement to those who will trust him but a

Chapter 29 starts again with woe to Jerusalem, but finishes with a miraculous deliverance (Isa 29:5–8). Although this might be seen as a prophecy of the elimination of the threat posed by Sennacherib,<sup>183</sup> the “hordes of nations” attacking, and God’s “thunder, earthquake and great noise, windstorm and tempest and flames of devouring fire”<sup>184</sup> in response depict something more universal in the more distant future.

There follows a series of woes on God’s people who do not understand what this means, and keep trying to get help from Egypt (Isa 30:5, 7, 15–17; 31:1–9; 32:9–14). Yet here also are interspersed oracles about a glorious Zion of the future. Isaiah 30:19–33 depicts God’s guidance and provision poured out when the people of Jerusalem cry to him for help. They will get rid of their idols and God will get rid of their enemies. There is no need to go to Egypt for help because God himself will deliver Zion (31:4–9). God’s avenging fire is in Zion and his furnace in Jerusalem. There will be a righteous king to protect the people (Isa 32:1–5) and some day God’s poured out Spirit will go along with peace and justice (32:15–20). The Lord will destroy the enemies and fill Zion with justice when the people fear him (Isa 33:2–6, 17–24). God has a day of vengeance to uphold Zion’s cause (Isa 34:8). Oswalt says that Isa 32–33 is “an alternative to the situation described in chs. 30–31.”<sup>185</sup> That is, trust in God will be vindicated, trust in Egypt will not. The prophet presents the ideal situation in Zion when God is trusted.

Chapter 35 sums it all up: God’s plan for Zion is renewal, God coming, vengeance on enemies and salvation for God’s people, fruitfulness, holiness, security and

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bar of judgment for those who refuse to do so.” He contrasts the false foundation of the rulers of Jerusalem who trust in Egypt.

<sup>183</sup> The probable immediate context of the prophecy. See Oswalt, *Isa 1–39*, 528.

<sup>184</sup> The “classic language of theophany” (Oswalt, *Isa 1–39*, 529).

<sup>185</sup> Oswalt, *Isa 1–39*, 578.

joy. “And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads” (Isa 35:10).<sup>186</sup>

The middle section of Isaiah (chaps. 36–39) describes three faith opportunities for Hezekiah. He relies on God for aid against Sennacherib, and Jerusalem is delivered (Isa 36–37). He prays to God for help in his sickness and is restored (Isa 38).<sup>187</sup> He courts help from Babylon and receives a message of exile and loss (Isa 39:5–7).<sup>188</sup> The treasures and sons of his (Jerusalem) house will be carried off to Babylon. This section illustrates positively and negatively the message Isaiah has been giving,<sup>189</sup> and creates a link to further oracles in the second half of the book related to that time of Babylonian captivity and beyond.<sup>190</sup>

In Isa 40–66, Zion/Jerusalem is pictured as being in a current state of grief. She thinks YHWH has forsaken and forgotten her (Isa 40:27; 49:14). There is mourning in Zion (Isa 61:3; 66:10). The sanctuary is trampled down (Isa 63:18) and Zion is desolate (64:10). This is because the house of Jacob has been stubborn and rebellious (Isa 48:1–8; 66:1–6). Nevertheless, God’s reputation is at stake so instead of obliterating them, he is refining them (Isa 48:9–11). The prophet promises not to keep silent or give God rest until Zion is vindicated (Isa 62:1, 7).

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<sup>186</sup> Oswalt, *Isa 1–39*, 621, suggests that the return to Zion envisioned here can include the return from Babylon as well as an eschatological pilgrimage of all redeemed nations to Zion.

<sup>187</sup> Childs, *Isaiah*, 284, sees this story as being intended as typological of the judgment and restoration of Israel.

<sup>188</sup> Childs, *Isaiah*, 286–87, thinks that the text does not express it this way. Isaiah’s prophecy of doom in 39:5–7 is in response to Hezekiah’s report that he showed the envoys from Babylon everything in his house, but the text does not spell out the significance of Hezekiah’s act. Childs therefore concludes that the words “everything in my house” are just used to launch the prophecy of God’s plan. However, such openness by Hezekiah to the Babylonian envoys indicates that he had a positive attitude to them and wished to make the relationship closer.

<sup>189</sup> Schultz, “Isaiah, Book of,” 340, notes that chaps. 36–39, “offer a concrete historical example of [Zion’s] victory with Assyria as the foe.”

<sup>190</sup> So Childs, *Isaiah*, 265–66; Webb, “Zion in Transformation,” 69–70.

The theme of Jerusalem's sin and punishment, however, is not a major one in Isa 40–66. Its larger message is one of marvelous deliverance and a glorious future. Schultz sees this in three stages: (1) restoration to the land through Cyrus, chaps. 40–48; (2) spiritual restoration through the Servant, chaps. 49–57; and (3) Zion then glorified through the nations and by YHWH, chaps. 58–66.<sup>191</sup> All three of these sections contain convergence on Zion. YHWH comes there (Isa 40:3, 9; 52:8; 59:20; 62:11; cf. 60:2). The sons and daughters of Zion come in (Isa 49:17–18; 60:4, 9; 66:20; cf. 54:1–3), brought by foreigners (Isa 49:22; 56:7–8; 60:3, 14), who also bring in the wealth of the nations (60:5–9, 11, 13, 16; 66:10). The prediction of this marvelous return to Zion is one of the proofs that YHWH is God. Only he predicted this because only he was able to make it happen. Zion becomes the centre of everything.

Another aspect is that there will be many benefits to Zion in the future. This is good news (Isa 40:9; 41:27; 52:7; 61:1). The city and Temple will be rebuilt (Isa 44:26, 28; 45:13; 58:12; 61:4), the city will be inhabited (62:11) by large numbers of people (49:19; 54:1; 60:22), with praise, glory, splendor and adorning (46:13; 49:18; 52:1; 54:11; 60:9, 13, 18–19; 62:7), and victory, security, peace and salvation (46:13; 54:13, 15, 17; 60:17–18; 62:1; 65:25; 66:10) as she possesses the land (51:13; 60:21) and rules (52:2). She is redeemed (Isa 52:3, 9; 62:12). The city has comfort and joy (Isa 49:13; 51:3, 11; 52:9; 60:15; 66:13) as she receives compassion (60:10). The nations serve her (Isa 60:10, 12). God delights in her (Isa 65:18–19) and listens to her (65:24). She is holy (Isa 52:1; 62:12) and righteous (60:17, 21; cf. 59:21; 48:18). God calls her “my people” (Isa 51:16; 65:19), and takes Zion back as his wife (54:4–8). He will never be angry with her again (Isa 54:9–10). This requires such a transformation that God is making a new

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<sup>191</sup> Schultz, “Isaiah, Book of,” 340.

heaven and new earth, a whole new universe in which things work differently (Isa 65:17–25).<sup>192</sup>

### *Jerusalem in Jeremiah*

Jeremiah does not often speak of Jerusalem in isolation from the rest of the land. His message is to the people/towns of Judah as well as Jerusalem (Jer 1:15; 4:3, 5; 7:17, etc.). In his book, the whole land is God's inheritance (Jer 10:16; 16:18), and the future restoration after judgment will not be merely of the city but of the whole land (Jer 31:5–6).

The false prophets in Jeremiah seem to have been preaching “peace and security” (Jer 4:10; 14:13; 7:10, 14; 23:14, 17; 21:2, 4, 13).<sup>193</sup> This may reflect that they were holding on to the idea of Zion's inviolability.<sup>194</sup> In Jer 7:4–8 it seems that the people of Jerusalem believed that YHWH would defend Jerusalem because his Temple was there, regardless of their behaviour. The people in the outlying countryside fled into Jerusalem for refuge from the Babylonians (Jer 4:16; 35:11), seeing the city as a safe place. Even at the last hour, Zedekiah hoped that a miraculous reversal would deliver the city as in the time of Hezekiah (Jer 21:2).<sup>195</sup> So widespread was this belief, promulgated by the false prophets and political leaders,<sup>196</sup> that Jeremiah himself was shocked when God revealed that this hope of the people in the inviolability of Jerusalem was in vain. He charged God with deception (Jer 4:10). And when the disaster happened, he saw that many would take it as evidence that God was not in Zion (Jer 8:19).

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<sup>192</sup> Webb, “Zion in Transformation,” 67.

<sup>193</sup> The false prophets were not in YHWH's council (Jer 23:18–22). For more on this concept in this passage see McGinn, “Divine Council,” 155–58.

<sup>194</sup> Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 274.

<sup>195</sup> Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 467.

<sup>196</sup> Brueggeman, *Jeremiah*, 55.

What is very interesting in Jeremiah, however, is that inviolability language is used to describe not Zion but the prophet himself. Protection is attached to faithful people, not a geographic location.<sup>197</sup> And the defence is not against foreign nations but the unfaithful of Judah. God says,

Today I have made you a fortified city, an iron pillar and a bronze wall to stand against the whole land—against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests and the people of the land. They will fight against you but will not overcome you, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the Lord. (Jer 1:18–19; cf. 15:11, 20–21; 20:11).

Jeremiah soon understood that God had to remove sinners from his presence, both in the Temple and in the land as a whole (Jer 7:9–15; 23:39; 32:31; 52:3). They had defiled his Temple (Jer 7:30; 32:34) and land (2:7; 16:18). Their sins are catalogued with appalled indignation (e.g. Jer 4–6). Jeremiah called on people to flee from Jerusalem, rather than to it (Jer 6:1; 21:9; 27:11; 38:2, 17). The coming disaster would de-create the city and land (Jer 4:19–31).

In Jeremiah, God’s judgment had to fall because of their sins (e.g. Jer 7:30–34). Later, however, when God’s wrath is spent, people will go back to Zion to seek YHWH (Jer 31:6, 12; 50:4; 51:50b) including the nations who want to follow him (3:17; 12:14–17; 16:19). YHWH will avenge the destruction of Zion on the Babylonians (Jer 50:11, 17–18, 28; 51:10, 24, 35). Although the ark will be gone, Jerusalem itself will serve as God’s throne (Jer 3:17; cf. 17:12), making the whole city a temple.<sup>198</sup> Holiness will extend even into the valley on the most defiled edge of the city (Jer 31:40).

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<sup>197</sup> Brueggeman, *Jeremiah*, 30, notes that this passage and Jer 45:5 carry the idea that Jeremiah and Barak are the faithful remnant, and Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 109, says, “The imagery of v. 18 presents an obdurate figure who stands like a fortified city against the community (an ironic reflection of fortified Jerusalem of 588–7?).”

<sup>198</sup> Or perhaps the whole city functions as the ark, so Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 203.

Chapters 30–33 have been called Jeremiah’s “Book of Consolation.”<sup>199</sup> The major point of these chapters is that God will restore his people to their land and restore Jerusalem. In Jer 30:17 the community in exile is called “Zion.” The city will be rebuilt (30:18; 31:38–40). Even those who live in restored Samaria will come to Zion to worship (31:6, 12). God promises that when he brings his people back to their land he will change their hearts to love him. He will make an everlasting covenant with them and he says, “I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me” (Jer 32:40). Then they will be his people and YHWH will be their God (Jer 24:7; 31:33). He will make a new covenant with them and put his law in their minds and hearts (Jer 31:31–34). There will be permanent security (Jer 24:6; 30:10; 33:16), because the people will never again attract God’s wrath. Jerusalem will have a new name: “The Lord our righteousness” (Jer 33:16). The Davidic kings and Levitical priests will serve in perpetuity (33:17–18).

#### *Jerusalem in Lamentations*

The book of Lamentations starts with Zion personified as a woman,<sup>200</sup> a widow left destitute, weeping for her loss in the wake of the city’s destruction by the Babylonians.<sup>201</sup> Dobbs-Allsopp sees this lament as a bitter comment on the Zion

<sup>199</sup> E.g. Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 551, etc.

<sup>200</sup> Zengler, “Zion as Mother,” 75–76, notes the opinion of Odil Hannes Steck that at times Zion is depicted as an entity mediating between God and his people (cf. Ps 87). It may be that the combination of the two identities of Zion (God’s dwelling and human society) is given a personification indicating that the whole is more than the sum of its parts.

<sup>201</sup> Follis, “Zion, Daughter of,” *ABD* 6:1103, says the term “Daughter of Zion” may be a reflection that Hebrew uses feminine nouns for abstract or collective concepts, then launches into a speculative identification of daughters with culture, stability, civilization and home. Stinespring, “No Daughter of Zion,” 136, may be closer to the truth when he says, “The connotation of the phrase is usually tender pity.” I am not convinced, however, that even this is usually in the picture. The helplessness and vulnerability of women in time of war and defeat come to the fore in the depiction in Lamentations.



tradition, especially the belief in Zion's inviolability and God's blessing and protection resting there.

The Zion tradition and its central dogmas could not be maintained in the face of the catastrophic events surrounding the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem. The poem's opening movement (vv. 1–8) depicts Yahweh's assault on Jerusalem. The city, its temple, and supporting mythologies are razed. What survives this verbal carnage is the uneasy figuration of Yahweh as enemy and the literary image of personified Zion . . . the poem seeks to counterfeit the Zion tradition.<sup>202</sup>

But this is not really the case.<sup>203</sup> In this lament Zion agrees that what has happened is because of her sins (Lam 1:5, 8, 14, 18, 20, 22; cf. 2:14; 3:39, 42, 13). That does not make the situation less painful, but it does mean that what has happened is not without some meaning, and there is some way forward. In the middle of the book is a message of hope (Lam 3:21–42). Hoppe comments:

Lamentations succeeded where the prophets failed. The leadership and the people of Jerusalem rejected the message that Isaiah, Micah and Jeremiah announced to them. By joining in the laments over their devastated city, the remnant of the community finally accepted the judgment of the prophets. This made it possible for the people to plead for God's mercy upon their city.<sup>204</sup>

The book does not provide all the answers about what happened. It is a cry of agony. Systematic explanations and answers would come later.

The glimpses of hope and future glory in Lamentations are extremely thin, as one might expect from the genre. The hopeful words in Lam 3:21–42 advise patience and look to God's compassionate character. However, God reigns forever (Lam 5:19) and one day daughter Zion's exile will be over (Lam 4:22).

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<sup>202</sup> Dobbs-Allsopp, "R(az/ais)ing Zion," 21.

<sup>203</sup> Hoppe, *Holy City*, 92, says "The book of Lamentations did not arise to deal with the problem of suffering or to resolve tensions between the Zion tradition and the experience of 587. These laments are the immediate reaction of the people who have experienced the collapse of their world."

<sup>204</sup> Hoppe, *Holy City*, 90. Heim, "Personification of Jerusalem," 152, agrees that the popular Zion tradition is gone, and that it "constituted such a formidable obstacle to the oracles of judgment" of the prophets.

*Jerusalem in Ezekiel*

Ezekiel does not use the name Zion, but only “Jerusalem” for the city. The first part of his book (Ezek 1–24) is concerned with the terrible sins of the city which make its fall inevitable. This fall will come after a siege of the city and terrible suffering. Ezekiel depicts this in a number of symbolic actions and spoken oracles. The reasons for the catastrophe are also spelled out. The people have defiled the Temple (Ezek 5:11; 23:38) with blatant idolatry (chap. 8). There is bloodshed and oppression (Ezek 7:23; 9:9; 22:2, 3, 6, 12, 27, 29; 24:6, 9).<sup>205</sup> Chapter 22 especially gives a long catalogue of sins. They have also been involved in foreign political alliances, a major topic of Ezek 16 and 23. As a result, God’s jealous anger has been aroused (Ezek 16:42; 23:25). He will be avenged on his people (Ezek 5:13) by desecrating his own Temple in turn (24:21).

In Ezekiel, the main relationship metaphor for God with Israel, and especially Jerusalem, is that of husband and wife.<sup>206</sup> Ezekiel depicts both Jerusalem and Samaria as God’s wives (Ezek 23:4).<sup>207</sup> The marriage/adultery image is used to show how terrible the cities’ behaviour has been.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> For a treatment of the “shedding innocent blood” theme as related to Jerusalem’s destruction, see Hamilton, “Innocent Blood.”

<sup>206</sup> Other images or metaphors used in the OT to describe the relationship of God and his people include father and sons (Jer 3:19; 31:9), shepherd and flock (Isa 40:11; Ezek 34:6, 11–16), farmer and vineyard (Isa 5:7; Jer 2:21; 12:10), master and servants (Mal 1:6) and potter and clay (Isa 29:16; 45:9; 64:8; Jer 18:6).

<sup>207</sup> Like other ANE cities, Jerusalem is regularly personified as female. The term “daughter of Zion” means “lady Zion” or “daughter Zion.” Stinespring, “No Daughter of Zion,” is the definitive article that has convinced most scholars that this is the correct interpretation. See Dobbs-Allsopp, “The Syntagma of *bat*,” 469–70. This article comes to the same conclusion as does Fitzgerald, “Mythological Background,” 403–16, that the image originated in the idea of city as divine consort, but on different grounds. Fitzgerald’s evidence has been extensively critiqued by Day, “Personification of Cities,” 283–302. See also a critique of Dobbs-Allsopp in Schmitt, “The City as Woman,” 97–98 n. 9. Galambush, *Jerusalem in the Book of Ezekiel*, 59, who accepts Fitzgerald’s basic premises, concludes from her study of the OT that the ANE tradition of the city being a consort goddess to the city’s patron god has been changed in the Hebrew prophets to a tradition of a city who is mortal, corrupt, vulnerable, unfaithful to God and punished as an adulteress for idolatry and foreign alliances.

<sup>208</sup> Elsewhere in the OT, Israel at the Exodus (Jer 2:2), the southern kingdom of Judah (Jer 3:14) and the northern kingdom of Israel (Jer 3:6–11; Hos 1:2, 6; 3:1 etc.), as aspects of God’s people, are each depicted as God’s spouse. God is sometimes a monogamist, and sometimes a polygamist with two wives.

On the other hand, the oracles against the nations in Ezek 25–32 emphasize that God will punish those nations for their ill treatment of Judah, Jerusalem and the Temple (Ezek 25:3, 8, 12, 15; 26:2; 28:6). This again is YHWH's prerogative to punish his people. God did not defend sinful Jerusalem, but he will avenge it.

Beginning with Ezek 33 there is a change in the tone of Ezekiel's prophecy. Jerusalem has fallen. It is time to give prophecies of hope. God is going to restore his people to their land like a shepherd rescuing his flock (Ezek 34:10–16). The mountains of Israel will be resettled (Ezek 36). This is not for Israel's sake, but for God's sake, to defend his honour (Ezek 36:22, 32). The only mention of Zion in Ezek 33–39 is in 34:26, where God says he will make his hill blessed (or a blessing). However, in Ezek 20:39–44 God says that Israel will serve him on his holy mountain, the high mountain of Israel after they have been re-gathered from the nations.

An important feature of the period of restoration for Judah and Jerusalem is the promise of a new heart. This promise is made three times, so it is a significant theme (Ezek 11:17–20; 36:25–29; 37:23–26; cf. 16:59–63; cf. Deut 30:6–8, which speaks of a circumcised heart). In each Ezekiel passage, this promise is accompanied by God's pronouncement of the covenant formula that he will be their God and they will be his people. Transformation of the people is needed for the relationship to be stabilized.<sup>209</sup> Given that human sin has been responsible for the ruin of Jerusalem, the elimination of sin will be necessary for any future security of the city.

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<sup>209</sup> Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 356, quotes M. Greenberg, "Three Conceptions of the Torah in Hebrew Scriptures," in *Die Hebräische Bibel und ihre zweifache Nachgeschichte*, Fest. R. Rendtorff, ed. E. Blum *et al.* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1990), 375, "God will no longer gamble with Israel as he did in old times . . . God will put his spirit into them, he will alter their hearts (their minds) and make it impossible for them to be anything but obedient to his rules and his commandments."

In Ezek 38–39, Ezekiel prophesies against Gog. The hordes of Gog will attack Israel after Israel has recovered from the exile (Ezek 38:8, 16) but God will miraculously defend his land and destroy the invaders (Ezek 38:18–23). Jerusalem and the Temple are not mentioned in this episode. Chapters 40–48, however, describe a future Temple in the location of Jerusalem.<sup>210</sup> The mountain is now “very high” (Ezek 40:2; cf. Isa 2:2). Ezekiel sees God’s glory re-enter the future Temple (Ezek 43:2–5), as God proclaims “This is the place of my throne and the place of the soles of my feet. This is where I will live among the Israelites forever. The house of Israel will never again defile my holy name” (Ezek 43:6–7). Not only is God in the Temple, the new name of the city at that time will be “YHWH is there” (Ezek 48:35). The essential significance of the city will be the presence of the Lord. It has a new identity.<sup>211</sup>

#### *Jerusalem in Daniel*

The book of Daniel begins with a brief factual account of the beginning of Jerusalem’s subjugation to Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 1:1) but the story continues in Babylon. There is no notice of what is happening back in Judah, of the final siege, destruction and deportation. Jerusalem’s humiliation continues in Babylon with the desecration of the Temple vessels (Dan 5:2–3) in Belshazzar’s feast, but at this point, judgment begins to fall on the Babylonians. When the law is passed forbidding prayer, Daniel continues to

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<sup>210</sup> Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 514, acknowledges that the very high mountain in the land of Israel where there is a temple must be the site of Zion/Jerusalem, but comments “The prophet’s refusal to name either mountain or city reflects his continuing polemic against official Jerusalem theology.” He notes that not giving the name allows Sinai allusions to be entertained. Duguid, *Ezekiel*, 471, sees also allusions to Moses on Mount Nebo viewing the Promised Land he will not enter.

<sup>211</sup> Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 739, says, “the city’s past [sin] . . . had so polluted the name that Ezekiel (Yahweh) could not name this place after the old city. With its Canaanite origins, the name Jerusalem symbolized the city’s degenerate and faithless past.” Block notes that in Ezekiel’s scheme, the Temple is not inside the city but in its own territory. This makes the name of the *city* even more significant. The rest of the biblical tradition, however, continued to use the name Jerusalem.

pray at his windows facing Jerusalem (Dan 6:10).<sup>212</sup> Presumably the reader knows that by this time, Jerusalem is in ruins, though the text does not specify this. However, in some way, Jerusalem is still the location of contact with God (cf. 1 Kgs 8:46–51). That Jerusalem is desolate is not stated until Dan 9:2, dated in the reign of the Persians, over sixty years after the destruction.<sup>213</sup> From Jeremiah’s prophecy, Daniel understands that the time of Jerusalem’s restoration is near,<sup>214</sup> so he sets himself to intercede that the city and sanctuary may be restored. He confesses the sins of “the men of Judah and people of Jerusalem and all Israel” (Dan 9:7) as disobedience to the law, and says, “Under the whole heaven nothing has ever been done like what has been done to Jerusalem” (v. 12). This highlights the fulfillment of God’s threats in the Pentateuch (Dan 9:11) and is meant to evoke God’s pity and action. Daniel recounts God’s revealed character and former goodness, and asks for mercy (Dan 9:9, 15–19). His plea for restoration, however, is only for “Jerusalem, your city, your holy hill” (Dan 9:16–19). There is no mention of the whole land.<sup>215</sup>

Although Daniel receives a promise that there will be a decree to rebuild Jerusalem (Dan 9:25), like Zechariah (and perhaps Ezekiel), Daniel sees a lot of difficulties ahead for the rebuilt city (9:25–27; 11:16, 31–35, 41, 45) before the final resolution (9:24; 12:2–3). He is also told that the city will be destroyed once again (Dan

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<sup>212</sup> As envisioned in Solomon’s prayer of 1 Kgs 8:48, Goldingay, *Daniel*, 129, sees Daniel presented in this as a model to all exiles.

<sup>213</sup> The first year of Darius was 522/521 B.C.E. (Kuhrt, “Persia”, 776), which is 65/66 years after the destruction of the Temple in 587 B.C.E.

<sup>214</sup> Daniel understands the “to this place” of Jer 29:10 to refer to Jerusalem specifically.

<sup>215</sup> Boda, “Priceless Gain of Penitence,” 69–71, notes that post-exilic penitential prayer de-emphasizes Zion theology and instead emphasizes God’s grace to penitent sinners. Daniel 9 is unusual in this genre (cf. confessions in Ezra 9 and Neh 9) for its emphasis on Jerusalem. It shows that a central role for Jerusalem continued in exilic and post-exilic theology, but the triumphalistic aspects of Zion theology had to be modified. Goldingay, *Daniel*, 248, thinks that the emphasis on Jerusalem in this prayer is due to the influence of passages in the Psalms that glorify Jerusalem as especially related to God and his glory, so theologically, it has to be restored. Jerusalem is also taking on the role of all Judah.

9:26–27; cf. 8:11–12).<sup>216</sup> Only Zechariah (Zech 14:2) among the other Old Testament prophets envisions another destruction after the rebuilding of the city. Daniel sees a glorious future for God’s kingdom, but he does not express it in terms of the city of Jerusalem. God’s kingdom will prevail over all others (Dan 2:44–45; 7:18, 22, 27) although in a sense it is already ruling over everything (4:17, 34–35; 6:26–27).

### *Jerusalem in the Minor Prophets*<sup>217</sup>

Although Amos and Hosea preached in the northern kingdom of Israel during the reign of Jeroboam II (around 760 B.C.E.), they imply that YHWH in Zion still has a right to be God and Lord of the northern kingdom (Amos 1:2; 5:5–6; Hos 10:5; 12:11).<sup>218</sup>

Reunification of north and south under David and Zion was always envisioned (Amos

9:11; Hos 9:3).<sup>219</sup> As Motyer points out, “The prophets never came to terms with the divided nation.”<sup>220</sup> Schultz says, “Jerusalem, even to the Northern Kingdom, was a

symbol of Jehovah, who united the Northern and Southern Kingdoms in worship.”<sup>221</sup>

Both Jerusalem and Samaria were condemned (Amos 6:1; Hos 5:5–7), and would suffer judgment.

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<sup>216</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 261–62, 266–68, takes this as a form of the “final battle” idea found also in Ezek 38–39. He thinks the verses refer to devastation of Jerusalem during the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, but are also allusive enough to be available for further applications, such as to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. Archer, “Daniel,” 116, thinks v. 27 is a prophecy of the 70 C.E. destruction.

<sup>217</sup> As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, this dissertation does not treat Jonah or Nahum since their implications for Jerusalem are minimal.

<sup>218</sup> The Dan and Bethel shrines had been set up by Jeroboam I specifically to keep political loyalties linked to the north and prevent people from worshipping in Jerusalem (1 Kgs 12:26–30). In Kings, Elijah and Elisha please God without going to Zion to worship, and Elijah’s worship at a proper YHWH shrine of uncut stones on Mt. Carmel is accepted (1 Kgs 18:30–39), even commanded (1 Kgs 18:36). Nevertheless, Amos upholds the centrality of Zion for YHWH and calls the northerners to seek him.

<sup>219</sup> So this verse is interpreted by Motyer, “Amos,” 741.

<sup>220</sup> Motyer, *Isaiah*, 230.

<sup>221</sup> Schultz, “Amos,” 832. Cf. Jonah 2:4. Though there is no report that Jonah worshipped in Jerusalem, he speaks here of looking toward God’s holy Temple. Robinson, “Jonah,” 750, thinks that Jonah must be here thinking of God’s heavenly Temple, but perhaps this too is testimony of continued looking to Jerusalem as the legitimate place of worship by the faithful in the north. Cf. 2 Chron 15:9, which says that large numbers of northerners migrated to Judah in Asa’s time because they saw the Lord was with him.

Hosea sees a day when Judah and Israel will be reunited (Hos 1:11). Though Israel was rejected and called “Not My People” God will again acknowledge them as his own (1:10). He will attract Israel to himself as her husband, and pour out blessings (Hos 1:14–23). “Afterward the Israelites will return and seek the Lord their God and David their king. They will come trembling to the Lord and to his blessings in the last days” (Hos 3:5). Reference to David may imply return to Zion, since the two are so closely identified.<sup>222</sup> God is the one who will make them holy. “I will heal their waywardness and love them freely,” he says (Hos 14:4).

Despite Amos’s words of doom (such as Amos 5:2, “Fallen is Virgin Israel, never to rise again”), God says he will not totally destroy the house of Jacob (Amos 9:8). “In that day” the Lord will “restore David’s fallen tent” (Amos 9:11). Amos 9:12 seems to depict a universal Davidic kingdom for all nations, with all nations bearing the name of YHWH.<sup>223</sup> Here again reference to David may imply return to Zion. The northern kingdom had abandoned worship of YHWH in the Temple at Jerusalem because of rejecting the house of David. Now this will be reversed.<sup>224</sup>

Joel pictures a locust invasion as a preview of the Day of the Lord, a time when God himself will attack Zion (2:11).<sup>225</sup> The appropriate reaction is to “blow the trumpet in Zion” (2:1, 14) and declare fasting and mourning in repentance. This brings mercy and

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<sup>222</sup> Andersen and Freedman, *Hosea*, 308–309, link this prophecy to Isa 2:2 because both passages speak of the latter days, both are eighth century and they share “the theme of movement toward Yahweh.”

<sup>223</sup> So McComiskey, “Amos,” 330.

<sup>224</sup> Motyer, “Amos,” 741.

<sup>225</sup> The book of Joel is undated, and scholarly opinion about when it was written is varied. The three major options are before the time of Uzziah, the time of Jeremiah, or after the exile. See survey in Patterson, “Joel,” 227–33. We do not need to know the date to examine what it has to say about Jerusalem. Here I will assume a pre-exilic situation. For a treatment assuming a post-exilic situation see Hoppe, *Holy City*, 135–38.

restoration from the Lord (1:18; 2:23–27). The call for repentance presupposes sin, though the book seems to be silent about what the sin is.<sup>226</sup>

Obadiah's prophecy comes at a time when Jerusalem has been invaded by foreigners and divided as booty (Obad 11). The Edomites have rejoiced over these difficulties and taken part in the plundering. They also cut off fugitives and handed over survivors to their enemies (Obad 12–14). There is no hint here as to why Jerusalem had to suffer so. Obadiah shows that not only is there a divine prerogative to save Zion,<sup>227</sup> there is also a divine prerogative to punish. Only God has the right to send chastisement on his people and his holy city or mountain. Anyone else who presumes to do so has God to reckon with (cf. Isa 36:10). Even those sent by God to do so are under God's judgment if they go beyond God's intention (cf. Jer 50:7; Zech 1:15), or do it with arrogance (cf. Jer 50:11, 31–32). Obadiah shows the nations who are hostile to Zion made drunk into oblivion (v. 16).<sup>228</sup> There will be deliverance on Mount Zion. Zion will be holy, and will be possessed by the house of Jacob (v. 17). The exiles from Israel and Jerusalem will possess the whole land (v. 20). Deliverers on Zion will rule Esau (representing hostile nations) and the kingdom will belong to YHWH (v. 21). This account contains the themes of divine deliverance and renewed inviolability<sup>229</sup> as well as Zion as the site of God's rule.<sup>230</sup> Zion, which is YHWH's inheritance, is here also the inheritance of the house of Jacob (v. 17). The idealized Zion of the "Zion Tradition" will be reestablished.

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<sup>226</sup> Hubbard, *Joel and Amos*, 35, suggests, "the cult gone wrong." Perhaps there is a clue in 3:18. Regarding the word  $\square\Gamma$ , is it the Egyptians and Edom who have bloodguilt as e.g. Hubbard, *Joel and Amos*, 83 says, "Is it Judah's innocent blood that will be avenged?" So Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary*, 10:232. Or is the NIV translation, "Their bloodguilt which I have not pardoned I will pardon," correct? If it is, this could be evidence of social sin and bloodshed similar to what Ezekiel condemned.

<sup>227</sup> As in Ollenburger, *Zion*.

<sup>228</sup> An image of judgment, so Armerding, "Obadiah," 353.

<sup>229</sup> Robinson, "Obadiah," 744.

<sup>230</sup> Armerding, "Obadiah," 354.



Isaiah's contemporary Micah sees the disaster that has just overtaken Samaria coming to Jerusalem too (Mic 1:9) and coming from the Lord (1:12). The people's sin has defiled Zion and made her unfit to live in, so the people must leave the city (Mic 2:10; 3:10–12; 4:10). Micah 4:1–5, like Isa 2:2–4, contains the picture of latter day Zion as the highest mountain in the world to which all nations stream. The nations will learn God's ways, give up war and worship God in Zion.

Micah adds that God will gather the remnant of his people, make them a strong nation, and rule over them in Mount Zion (Mic 4:6–8, 10d). There will be peace and prosperity in Israel. Zion will crush her enemies and bring their wealth to the Lord (Mic 4:12–13). God will provide a ruler from Bethlehem (a reference to the house of David), “and they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth. And he will be their peace” (Mic 5:2–5a). Micah's prophecy ends with words of hope. Zion says, “Though I have fallen, I will rise” (Mic 7:8). Zion's enemies will come in submission to the Lord (Mic 7:17) and Zion will be forgiven (7:18–20).<sup>231</sup>

Habakkuk, ministering near the time of Jerusalem's destruction,<sup>232</sup> does not mention Judah or Jerusalem by name, and depicts both the Babylonian scourge and God's future reign as universal (2:14, cf. Isa 11:9).

Zephaniah prophesied universal destruction (Zeph 1:2–3) as well as destruction of Judah and Jerusalem for their idolatry (1:5) and lack of trust in God (1:12). There is hope, however, for the humble remnant (Zeph 2:3–9; 3:12). Chapter 3 lists Jerusalem's sins. They are living together in the same city with God, who in contrast is righteous (Zeph

<sup>231</sup> Marrs, “Back to the Future,” 92, sees Micah as an extended theological exposition of Isa 1:21–26. The way from the corrupt present to the future YHWH wants leads through destruction and exile, but will emerge on the other side as a return to Jerusalem's glorious past. Future Zion far exceeds the glories of the past, however, and equals the ideal of the Psalms.

<sup>232</sup> Armerding, “Habakkuk,” 493.

3:5), yet they refuse correction (3:7). This will result in a universal purging that includes removing the proud from Zion (Zeph 3:11).

Zephaniah believes that, after God's purging, the righteous remnant of Judah will inherit the lands of their enemies (2:7, 9) and Zion will be clean (3:11–13), consisting only of the righteous remnant. Jerusalem's punishment will be taken away (3:14–15) and communion with God will be restored: "The Lord your God is with you . . . he will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing" (3:17). As for the nations, "I will purify the lips of the peoples, that all of them may call on the name of the Lord and serve him shoulder to shoulder" (3:9). Nations all over the world will worship the Lord (2:11). In this picture, the nations do not converge on Zion, but they worship in their own lands.<sup>233</sup> Zion the righteous remnant, however, will be gathered and brought home (3:12–20).

Although Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi saw the initial fulfillment of God's promise to restore Jerusalem and the Temple, what they experienced was far from the glorious future that the pre-exilic prophets envisioned. Haggai attributed this to neglect of work on rebuilding the Temple. If they would attend to that, blessing would come (Hag 1:2–4). God had sent drought on them because they were more interested in their own projects than in God's (Hag 1:4, 9). Haggai does not mention Jerusalem or Zion by name. However, the context of his message is Jerusalem. He says that God will be with them, not when the Temple is complete, but when they obey by starting to build it. Obedience is the key to God's presence, not a physical temple (this is also one of Jeremiah's

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<sup>233</sup> Robertson, *Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah*, 308, connects this to Isaiah's vision of an altar in Egypt (Isa 19:19, 21) and Malachi's of incense offered in every place (Mal 1:11). He understands Zephaniah as seeing the worship of God spreading out so that "Every nation shall become sacred as a center for the worship of the Lord."

themes).<sup>234</sup> Haggai holds out hope that now that the people have started being obedient by building the Temple, prosperity will come (Hag 2:19). He says that in a little while, God will shake all nations, the wealth of all the nations will come into the Temple, and God will fill his house with glory (Hag 2:6–9).<sup>235</sup> He also envisions God overthrowing foreign kingdoms and making Zerubbabel a chosen ruler (Hag 2:20–23).

In Zechariah, although the people are living in Jerusalem, God does not seem to be there, because the Temple is not built and things are not going well. YHWH has been withholding his mercy and it seems that the chosen city has been “de-chosen.” Rather than the people of God, however, it is the angel of the Lord who asks the Lord how long Jerusalem and its towns will be without his mercy (Zech 1:12). The Lord responds that he is very jealous and is going to do two things about it. He will punish the nations who have devastated Zion, and he will come back to Jerusalem and his house will be rebuilt. Prosperity will return. YHWH will comfort Zion and choose Jerusalem again (Zech 1:14–18). Zechariah also foresees a glorious future for Zion. At the time of writing, Zion was addressed as living in Babylon (Zech 2:6–13), a reference that shows Zion as the name for a community, even without the place. The community is exhorted to leave Babylon and go to where God’s presence can be found. God will choose Jerusalem again (Zech 1:17; 2:12 cf. 3:2). Jerusalem will grow huge, protected by YHWH as a wall of fire (Zech 2:4–5). YHWH is coming to live among them (2:5, 10; 8:3; cf. 9:8). God will gather them from the nations to live in Jerusalem. They will be his people, and he will be their God (Zech 8:8). Many nations will join the Lord and become his people too (Zech

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<sup>234</sup> Hoppe, *Holy City*, 112–13, thinks blessing would come with Temple building because temples had such large economic functions that having one was necessary for economic recovery. He misses Haggai’s point.

<sup>235</sup> The “desired of all nations” probably means their precious things. See Boda, *Haggai, Zechariah*, 130–32.

2:11). Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, the Holy Mountain (Zech 8:3), and there will be peace and prosperity in the city (8:4–6). This peace will extend out to the nations as God’s chosen king rules (Zech 9:9–13). Zechariah feels it necessary, however, to exhort the Jews living in Jerusalem to improve their practice of social justice (Zech 7:9–14; 8:16–17). Oppression and dishonesty had contributed to the ruin of Jerusalem before the exile (7:12–14). The great promises of renewed prosperity presupposed a different attitude on the part of the people of Zechariah’s day.<sup>236</sup>

Zechariah does foresee a future attack by the nations on Jerusalem and Judah. Since it is God who will gather the nations, and half of the city will go into exile (Zech 14:1–2), it appears that this will happen because Jerusalem will again need chastening. The remnant of the city, however, will be saved by God’s miraculous intervention (Zech 12:1–9; 14:3, 12–15). God will pour out on Jerusalem a spirit of “grace and supplication,” which is a spirit of repentance (Zech 12:10–14), a moral and spiritual renewal granted by God.<sup>237</sup> It will result in cleansing and righteous behaviour (Zech 13:1–6). Although many of them have been swept away in judgment, the remnant will be secure as God’s people (cf. Zech 13:7–9). God will raise Zion up high (Zech 14:10), produce from there a flow of living water to the land (Zech 14:8), and YHWH will be king over the whole earth (Zech 14:9). All the surviving nations will come to Zion to worship him (Zech 14:16–19), and the holiness of the Temple will extend out into Jerusalem and the whole land (earth?) (Zech 14:20–21).<sup>238</sup> This picture resonates with “Zion Theology” and the idealized Zion of the Psalms.

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<sup>236</sup> See Boda, *Haggai, Zechariah*, 359–64, 379.

<sup>237</sup> Boda, *Haggai, Zechariah*, 485.

<sup>238</sup> See Meyers and Meyers, “Jerusalem and Zion after the Exile,” 121–35, for a detailed exposition of how the re-founding of the Temple is developed into a universal inclusive eschatology.

Malachi was probably writing in the Persian period, i.e. the fifth century B.C.E.<sup>239</sup> Although the Temple had been finished for perhaps over eighty years, the expected blessing and prosperity had still not materialized. In a vicious circle of cause and effect, the bad conditions made the people's zeal to worship the Lord wane, and he in turn did not bless because of their negligence. Malachi attributed the lack of blessing to blemished sacrifices (Mal 1:6–14), a priesthood that did not teach or observe the law (2:7–9), marriages with idolaters and divorce of original Jewish wives (2:10–16), cynicism rather than trust in God's intervention (2:17; 3:13–15), social oppression (3:5) and failing to bring tithes to God (3:6–10). God promised judgment against such actions (Mal 2:12; 3:2, 5), although he had been forbearing and had not destroyed them (3:6–7). Three times God pronounced curses (Mal 1:14; 2:2; 3:9). Malachi showed that merely rebuilding the Temple could not restore Jerusalem's prosperity and prominence. The offerings made in Jerusalem could not be accepted (Mal 3:4) until the Levites were purified. Human sin was still a barrier to Jerusalem functioning as God desired.

*Summary of Jerusalem/Zion in the Prophets: Two Messages*

One of the most noticeable features of prophecy about Jerusalem/Zion is the way the prophets switch back and forth between oracles of judgment and oracles of deliverance.<sup>240</sup> At times this can be almost dizzying. Jerusalem is going to be destroyed—but Jerusalem is going to be preserved and exalted (e.g. Isa 29:1–8 and Mic 3:9–4:4).<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> Malachi's prophecy is not dated. A fifth century date is often adduced due to the following evidence: his position as last in the prophets, and tradition that places him among the post-exilic prophets; the presence of the Temple, and abuses in the sacrificial system that had developed; the word for governor (Mal 1:8) is one of the Persian words used for Nehemiah (Neh 5:14; 12:26); and the abuses of which Malachi complains (mixed marriages, corrupt cult, financial abuses) are some of the same faced by Nehemiah. See Alden, "Malachi," 701–2.

<sup>240</sup> E.g. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 426, gives a chart of this alternation in Isa 28–31. Blenkinsopp thinks the passages of assurance are additions by a redactor who needed a more hopeful message for his own times.

Commentators have interpreted the fact of these two strands of material about Jerusalem in various ways. Some see them in tension with each other.<sup>242</sup> Yet the literary cohesion of each prophetic book would indicate that this tension is not just a juxtaposition of contradictory views. The two themes must have a logical connection.<sup>243</sup>

Some see these two strands as evidence of a universal and non-chronological focus.<sup>244</sup> Miscall says, “We cannot resolve Isaiah into a simple narrative nor can we resolve it into a moral tale of good versus evil with Israel good and the nations evil. The story of sin, judgment and restoration applies to all.”<sup>245</sup> It is a mistake, however, to divorce the message of Isaiah or any other prophet from the situation of his own day. Though the message broadens out into a universal focus, it is solidly grounded in historical reality, as the inclusion of Isa 36–39 in the book demonstrates.

Other commentators find the solution in chronological progression. The doom passages are for the immediate situation of disobedience, and the deliverance and glory passages are for the (sometimes even eschatological) future<sup>246</sup> (following the pattern of e.g. Lev 26:40–45; Deut 4:29–31; 30:1–10; cf. 1 Kgs 8:46–51). The prophets do depict judgment as present and glory as future.<sup>247</sup> But how does this view relate to passages that glorify Jerusalem in the past and present as well as the future? The pentateuchal hints

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This notion is found among other scholars as well. See references who feel this way about Micah in Marris, “Back to the Future,” 83 n. 14. For a contrary opinion, see Childs, quoted below.

<sup>241</sup> Boda, “Walking in the Light of Yahweh,” 4–5, documents this process in Isa 1–5.

<sup>242</sup> Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 155. Clifford comments, “The dogma of the inviolability of Zion recurs frequently in the preaching of Isaiah of Jerusalem though in tension with his word of judgment against Jerusalem.”

<sup>243</sup> Motyer, *Isaiah*, 13 notes the cohesion of Isa 1–39 for example, although it contains many examples of juxtaposition of oracles of judgment and glory.

<sup>244</sup> E.g. Miscall, *Isaiah*, 72, in his comments on Isa 24–27.

<sup>245</sup> Miscall, *Isaiah*, 15, 73.

<sup>246</sup> So Marris, “Back to the Future,” 82; Boda, “Walking in the Light of Yahweh,” 5.

<sup>247</sup> Hoppe, *Holy City*, 59.

about Zion idealize it, and Zion Psalms such as Pss 46, 48, and 69 see Zion as already glorious and holy by nature, not just in some future restoration.

Perhaps the solution is, as Josef Schriener puts it, that Jerusalem is both “capital city” and “holy city of God.”<sup>248</sup> Hoppe sees part of this when he says, “It is necessary to note that the Deuteronomistic history never calls Jerusalem ‘the city of God.’ It is merely ‘the city of David’ and, as such, is subject to divine judgment.”<sup>249</sup> But this does not mean that God is not thought to dwell there and care for his city, even in the Historical Books. Jerusalem/Zion is both city of God and city of David.<sup>250</sup>

Thus Jerusalem/Zion in Old Testament times seems to have two conflicting natures. On the one hand, it is God’s holy mountain, the place where God dwells, the place of God’s rule and presence.<sup>251</sup> This means that it is a place of rest, security and

<sup>248</sup> Schreiner, *Sion-Jerusalem*, 256.

<sup>249</sup> Hoppe, *Holy City*, 48. Barth, *God with Us*, 234–302, describes Jerusalem’s dual nature as being both God’s own city and a safe home for his people. Barth is interested in Jerusalem as model for a just society.

<sup>250</sup> In the Ugaritic documents that are our source for the “sacred mountain” concept in Canaanite religion El and Baal did not have this situation on their sacred mountains. Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, cites no reference in the Ugaritic literature to any nation making a city on their god’s sacred mountain. Dumbrell, *End of the Beginning*, 40, notes, “In the ancient world the dwelling place of the deity was thought to be on some inaccessible point where heaven and earth met. Such was Mt Olympus . . . or, nearer the point, the location of El, the head of the Canaanite pantheon on an inaccessible mountain.” Note Dumbrell’s repetition of the word “inaccessible.” Like the Canaanite sacred mountains, Sinai was a “mountain of God” where God was inaccessible except to the mediator Moses (Exod 19:12, 23). (Hoppe, *Holy City*, 29). Zion, however, has an entire city carrying on its daily life. In her are the King and a king, God and his people. The situation seems to have been somewhat different in Mesopotamia, where the ziggurat was a “holy mountain” type of divine dwelling in the midst of the city. See Weinfeld, “Zion and Jerusalem,” 93–112. Weinfeld attributes the appearance of the dual nature of Zion in the OT to the fact that these two themes about capital cities existed in Mesopotamia. The Assyrian material stresses the capital city as the seat of the human king while the Babylonian material stresses the city as the temple city of the god.

<sup>251</sup> God met with people in other places besides Jerusalem. These, unlike Jerusalem, were occasional or temporary. The first of these was the Garden of Eden, but humanity was banished from the Garden because of disobedience. God spoke to the patriarchs in Ur, Haran and various sites in Canaan when they were still nomads. God spoke to Moses to commission him at Horeb, and to instruct him in Egypt, and along the way as the Israelites moved through the wilderness. But the most important place of theophany (the revelation of God’s presence) before Jerusalem was Mount Sinai. At Sinai, Israel was instructed to build a *moveable* sanctuary, which means that Sinai was not a permanent place of communion either. God loved Zion more than any other place Israel has lived (Ps 87:2). Beale, *Temple*, 146, says, “the impermanent tabernacle pointed to the final Temple on Mount Zion.” In this Tabernacle, the ark, as symbol of God’s presence, moved into Canaan, and ultimately to Jerusalem. Psalm 68 reflects the transfer of place of theophany from Sinai to Zion. David received a theophany on the threshing floor of Araunah (2 Sam 24:16–25; 1 Chron

prosperity, where people are to come to meet God. On the other hand, Jerusalem/Zion is the human community that lives in that place, or is supposed to live there,<sup>252</sup> with God. Being human, this community is fallible, sinful, and liable to God's judgment. There is tension between the security of God's dwelling place and the vulnerability of the sinful human community.<sup>253</sup>

The prophets all acknowledge that the Jerusalem/Zion of their own day is sinful and susceptible to God's judgment.<sup>254</sup> Isaiah even includes an oracle against Jerusalem (Isa 22) among his oracles against sinful pagan nations. The prophets threaten destruction and exile for the city because of this sin (e.g. Jer 7:14–15). However, the coming troubles are sometimes styled as purifying (e.g. Isa 1:25; Ezek 20:38; Zeph 3:11), so that sinful elements will be eliminated and a righteous remnant (e.g. Isa 4:3–4) will remain. Jerusalem will be restored when this remnant returns from their exile (e.g. Mic 4:6–7; Zeph 3:11–17; Zech 8:6–8).

In the prophetic picture of the future Zion, the traditions of Zion as a high mountain (Isa 2:2; Mic 4:1–5; cf. Ezek 40:2), described sometimes in Edenic terms with life-giving water flowing from it (Ezek 47:1–12; Zech 13:1; 14:8), inviolable and secure, giving prosperous life and a place of contact with God, are all used. Jerusalem has not

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21:18–22:1), which resulted in establishing the Temple there. And though Solomon's first theophany was at Gibeon (1 Kgs 3:4–15; 2 Chron 1:7–15), where the old Tabernacle and altar of burnt offering were (before the Temple was built), the final one was in Jerusalem (1 Kgs 9:2–9; 2 Chron 7:11–22) and confirmed the Jerusalem Temple as the place where God would put his name forever (1 Kgs 9:3). Beale, *Temple*, 108, says David offered sacrifices at the threshing floor of Araunah because "a transition from the movable tabernacle to the permanent Temple has begun."

<sup>252</sup> For example, the community in exile in Babylon is called "Zion" in Zech 2:7.

<sup>253</sup> de Vaux, *Jérusalem et les prophètes*, 481, sees a somewhat different kind of dualism in Jerusalem, that is, the city is both the political and the religious capital of Israel. Jerusalem was first prominent as political capital, but when that waned, retained and increased its significance as religious capital. However, Scripture presents Jerusalem as having significance to God also. Brueggemann, *Theology of the OT*, works on this question as the tension in God between his honour and his faithfulness to his covenant. God must be loyal to himself as well as to his people.

<sup>254</sup> With perhaps the exception of Obadiah.



matched this ideal in the past and present because human sin has, instead, attracted judgment from God. But the future restored Jerusalem will be holy and righteous (e.g. Isa 1:25–26). The people who live in Zion, the community, will be transformed in character by a sovereign act of God. God will cure their backsliding (Jer 3:22; cf. Hos 14:4), give them a spirit of grace and supplication (Zech 12:10–14), give them a new heart, and write his laws on their hearts (Jer 24:7; 31:31–34; Ezek 11:19–20; 36:25–29; 37:23–26; cf. 16:60; Isa 54:13), making a new covenant with them. Often these promises are linked to the old covenant formula, which has its origin in God’s covenant with Abraham, “You will be my people and I will be your God.”<sup>255</sup>

This moral transformation will allow God’s blessing to operate, and make Zion a place of joy, peace and praise (e.g. Isa 12), and glory (e.g. Isa 60:1). God will be there (e.g. Jer 3:17; Ezek 48:35; Zech 1:17). The northern and southern kingdoms will be reunited under the Davidic monarchy (e.g. Hos 3:5; Isa 11:13; Ezek 37:19–24; Amos; Zech 9:9–10; 12), a leadership chosen by God and strongly connected to Jerusalem. Isaiah depicts renewed Jerusalem as God’s bride, cleansed of her former adultery and given a new start (Isa 49:18; 54:6–7; 62:5).<sup>256</sup> Isaiah goes so far as to call the renewal a new heaven and earth, with Jerusalem recreated as a joy and delight (Isa 65:17–18).

Some of the prophets envision that all nations will come there, bringing gifts, learning God’s ways, taking refuge (Isa 2:2–4; 18:7; 25:6–8; Mic 4:1–5), even becoming God’s people (Zech 2:11). Others ignore other nations or see them only as subjugated to Israel (e.g. Ezek 39:21; Obad 16–21).

<sup>255</sup> For more on the covenant formula, see Rendtorff, *Covenant Formula*.

<sup>256</sup> In contrast to Ezekiel, who uses the marriage metaphor only to describe Jerusalem’s unfaithfulness in Ezek 16 and 23. When he gets to the eschatological city, this metaphor is completely dropped. See Galambush, *Jerusalem in the Book of Ezekiel*, 147–58.

When, however, a remnant returns from Babylon<sup>257</sup> these prophecies are only partly fulfilled. This is evident from the way the post-exilic prophets still expect much of this glory in the future (e.g. Zech 10:6–12). Like Ezra-Nehemiah, they recognize that the returned remnant still has a problem with sin that threatens to deflect God’s protection from Jerusalem (Neh 13:18). Repentance and cleansing are still needed (e.g. Mal 3:1–3), and a time of judgment is still coming (Zech 12–14). Daniel also foresees another destruction of Jerusalem after its restoration (Dan 9:26). Daniel, like Habakkuk (and perhaps Hosea and Amos) does not express the final triumph of God in terms of Jerusalem but only in terms of the success of God’s kingdom and sovereignty.

### *Conclusions regarding Jerusalem/Zion in the Old Testament*

#### *Zion the Place to Meet God*

In all parts of the Old Testament considered in this chapter, Zion is pictured as the place of the concentrated presence of YHWH who lives in heaven (1 Kgs 8:30). The ark (1 Chron 28:2), the mountain (Ps 99:5) and God’s dwelling place in Jerusalem (Ps 132:7; Lam 2:1) are all called God’s footstool, the place of his feet (Isa 60:13).<sup>258</sup> That is, Zion is not the full extent of God’s dwelling place, but the place where his residence touches earth. The Historical Books express this by making the Temple the place where God’s Name dwells (e.g. Deut 12:5; 1 Kgs 5:5; 8:16–17; 9:3). It is in the Jerusalem Temple that Isaiah sees YHWH “high and lifted up” (Isa 6:1).<sup>259</sup>

<sup>257</sup> The post-exilic prophets Haggai and Zechariah call the returnees “the remnant,” as does Ezra-Nehemiah e.g. Ezra 9:8; Neh 1:3; Hag 1:12; Zech 8:6.

<sup>258</sup> Compare Ps 99:1 and 9, where the footstool and the holy mountain are parallel. Isaiah 66:1 has the earth as God’s footstool, in a passage that downplays the Temple.

<sup>259</sup> El in Canaanite myth had a divine council of gods around him on his mountain. McGinn, “Divine Council,” 44–75, gives an overview of the material on the divine council in the Ugaritic sources. Although YHWH is depicted in the OT as presiding over such a council, the location appears to be in heaven. Isaiah

### *Zion's Pre-Davidic History*

There is a strand of tradition in the Pentateuch and the Psalms that envisions Zion as being significant even before its conquest by David. In Gen 14 and 22, there are hints that Jerusalem in Abraham's time was a place to encounter God, a place to give tithes, receive blessing, offer sacrifice, and receive God's provision. In Exod 15, it appears that God has a holy mountain and sanctuary in Canaan to which he is leading the Israelites. In the Psalms, Zion is styled as a Canaanite-style holy mountain, a place created (Ps 89:12) and founded by God as his sanctuary (Ps 78:54, 69; 87:1).

### *Jerusalem/Zion as the Goal of God's People*

There are hints in the Old Testament that perhaps Zion was the final goal of the Exodus from Egypt (Exod 15:17). Certainly the Old Testament views Jerusalem/Zion as the goal toward which God's people were moving in the "second Exodus" from Babylon (e.g. Isa 35:10 / 51:11; Jer 50:4–5; Ezra 2:1 etc.). Zion is also the goal of the "pilgrimage of the nations" envisioned in Isa 2:2–4; Mic 4:1–4; Zech 8:22, etc.; cf. Isa 60. Zion is the goal because God is the goal and he is to be met in Zion (Ps 84:7; Isa 2:3).

### *Jerusalem/Zion's Link to the Davidic Kings*

In Samuel and Kings, and even more strongly, in Chronicles, David and his royal house are strongly linked to Jerusalem. They were chosen together. God sustains Zion for the sake of David and David's line for the sake of Zion. But after the exile, when no Davidic king is available to go along with restored Jerusalem, Zechariah foresees the

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is the only passage that links the divine council to the Temple in Jerusalem. McGinn concludes, "The most we can say with certainty is that the council appears to have met in the heavens in a palace or temple like setting. Our discussion on Isaiah 6 included a remark about the correspondence between the heavenly temple and the earthly one. If an earthly temple is in fact in view, it served as an access point to the heavenly realm. A distinction between the heavenly and the earthly is probably not possible in a vision setting" (p. 170).

restoration of the line (e.g. Zech 12:10; 13:1). Ezra and Nehemiah, however, get on with restoring Jerusalem without a king. David's prescriptions for worship are followed (Ezra 8:20; Neh 12:24, 36, 45–46) but he has no descendant on the throne.

*The Chronic Problem of Human Sin*

In the Old Testament Jerusalem's destruction is not depicted as inevitable. The Israelites had the option of obeying God or of repenting while God's forbearance lasted. The Old Testament gives examples of times when the people of Jerusalem were behaving in such a way that God could bless and save the city. One example was God's blessing on Jerusalem during the time of David and the early reign of Solomon (2 Sam 5:9–12; 1 Kgs 10). Others were God's help in Jehoshaphat's time against the Moabites and Ammonites (2 Chron 20) and during Hezekiah's time against Sennacherib (2 Kgs 18; Isa 36–37).<sup>260</sup>

Micah's threat of doom received some good response, and disaster was averted for a while (Jer 26:18–19). But overall, pre-exilic Jerusalem did not maintain faith with God despite the pleadings and threats of the prophets. This constituted a major threat to God's purpose for Jerusalem/Zion, as Zion was destroyed and the people sent away into exile. However, the prophets expected Zion to be renewed because of God's close association with it as his headquarters of operation in the world and with his covenant people.

But even when the remnant of the Jews returned from exile, Jerusalem's future was still threatened by their sin (e.g. Neh 13:18; Zech 12–14; cf. Mal 3:4). This suggests

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<sup>260</sup> Hoppe, *Holy City*, 37, thinks that trust in Zion's inviolability was very dangerous. Isaiah, however, insisted that Zion was safe if her people trusted exclusively in God (Isa 7:9b), and Jeremiah's rejection of inviolability theology was only of the parody of it which said that it had nothing to do with righteous behaviour on the part of Zion's people (Jer 7:4–20). Clements' theory in *Isaiah and the Deliverance of Jerusalem*, that there really was no miraculous deliverance historically, is not reflected in the canonical form of the story. See Childs, *Isaiah*, 276–77.

that human nature as it currently exists is incompatible with God's vision of Zion as a place of permanent communion between God and his people. If this vision should become a reality, human nature would need to be changed.

The prophets appear to have seen this problem with human nature and prophesied a solution. Jeremiah's promises of restoration *after* destruction became more frequent as his hope that his hearers would repent evaporated.<sup>261</sup> There is a similar shift in focus in Ezekiel after the fall of Jerusalem reported in Ezek 33:21, and in Isaiah (cf. Isa 1–35 and 44–60). In this message of restoration, God would eventually restore the remnant to Zion and exalt Zion to be the centre of the world. God would give them a new heart, changing human nature, so that they would no longer sin or break the covenant between them and God (Isa 29:24; Jer 24:7; 31:31–33; 32:39; Ezek 36:26; cf. Isa 63:17–19). God and the people would then be in full harmony, and Zion's security would be permanent.

*Diversity in the Old Testament Picture of Jerusalem/Zion*

The various sections of the Old Testament present a certain diversity in their views of Jerusalem/Zion. In the Pentateuch, Jerusalem is the place to meet God even in Abraham's time. God is there before the Exodus, leading his people to his holy mountain. God has a place in Canaan that he will choose, where he will put his Name, and where Israel will come to worship him. The pentateuchal material sets up the idea of a designated place in Canaan planned by God as a meeting place between himself and his people.<sup>262</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> McConville, "Jeremiah, Book of," 352, concurs: "Up to this point [ch. 25] the organization of the book shows how such hope as Jeremiah might have originally had for a renewal in Judah closed down as the stubbornness of the people became evident . . . The perspective of salvation beyond judgment occurs sporadically in the first half . . . but it is stronger in the second half."

<sup>262</sup> This appears to be the understanding of 2 Macc 5:19, "But the Lord did not choose the nation for the sake of the holy place, but the place for the sake of the nation," i.e. Zion was made for Israel, not Israel for

In the Historical Books, the chosen place is designated as Jerusalem and the Temple as a place of prayer and sacrifice is built there (2 Chron 7:12–15). Jerusalem is linked to David's dynasty, and Davidic kings continue to rule there even after the division of the nation. But the people's possession of Jerusalem is increasingly threatened by their sin, and finally they lose it. God sends them away, and he too abandons the city. After a time of exile, however, God stirs up Cyrus to make the decree to rebuild the Temple. Under Ezra and Nehemiah the Temple and city are rebuilt, yet the city's former glory is not attained, and the future is still threatened by the people's sin. This account gives an actual rather than an ideal picture of Jerusalem. Although mention is made of the ideal Jerusalem/Zion (e.g. 1 Kgs 9:2 Chron 7:16), these books imply that the actual Jerusalem/Zion cannot attain the ideal (2 Kgs 23:27; 2 Chron 7:19–22).

Psalms pictures the idealized Zion as God's holy mountain where God dwells among his people, reigns over them and the world, defends his mountain against all attacks and provides richly for his people. In the Psalms too, Jerusalem is linked to the Davidic line of kings. A few Psalms have a picture in tension with the ideal, as Jerusalem has experienced destruction. However, these psalms expect restoration because of Zion's special importance to God.

The Prophets incorporate both the actual and the ideal Zion into their account by picturing the present actual Zion depicted in the later part of the Historical Books as under judgment and bound for destruction, and Zion as the ideal place envisioned in the Psalms and Pentateuch something to be experienced in the future. To the prophets, the actual and ideal, the present and the future Zion are the same entity, but the present and

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Zion. The Pentateuch also, of course, foresees that the Israelites will sin and be exiled from their land and cities.

actual Zion will be transformed into the future ideal Zion. God desires to make joyful intimacy with his people a permanent reality. He will purify Zion and transform the people who pollute it so that they will no longer sin. Then the actual “Jerusalem” and “Zion” will also be the ideal holy place where permanent fellowship with God is enjoyed by the holy community of God’s people.

This is the picture of God and Jerusalem/Zion in the Old Testament. But how did Jewish writers interpret, use, and develop these traditions in the Second Temple period? Did their ideas shape how the Jerusalem/Zion material of the Old Testament was understood by New Testament writers? This is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER TWO  
THE TRADITION EXPANDED: JERUSALEM/ZION IN EXTRA-BIBLICAL JEWISH  
LITERATURE

*Introduction*

The purpose of this chapter is to see how Old Testament ideas about Jerusalem/Zion were used and developed in the non-canonical Second Temple literature dated roughly between the third century B.C.E. and the early second century C.E., and how these developments constitute some of the theological antecedents of the New Jerusalem in Revelation. This literature testifies to ideas about Jerusalem that were current among Jews during the New Testament era, and were presumably available to the author of Revelation.

The primary sources for this chapter are the Pseudepigrapha,<sup>1</sup> Apocrypha,<sup>2</sup> the Dead Sea Scrolls<sup>3</sup> and Josephus's two works the *Jewish Antiquities* and the *Jewish War*.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Using Charlesworth, *OTP*. For this study I have used works that are dated in *OTP* as being up to the second century C.E., though parts of a few works extend beyond that. The dates (in centuries) given in the *OTP* for the works considered are: *1 En.*, 2<sup>nd</sup> B.C.E. to 1<sup>st</sup> C.E.; *2 En.*, late 1<sup>st</sup> C.E.; *Sib. Or.* 3, 2<sup>nd</sup> B.C.E. to 1<sup>st</sup> C.E.; *Sib. Or.* 5, late 1<sup>st</sup> to early 2<sup>nd</sup> C.E.; *Apoc. Zeph.*, 1<sup>st</sup> B.C.E. to 1<sup>st</sup> C.E.; *4 Ezra*, late 1<sup>st</sup> C.E.; *2 Bar.*, early 2<sup>nd</sup> C.E.; *3 Bar.*, 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> C.E.; *Apoc. Ab.*, 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> C.E.; *T. 12 Patr.*, 2<sup>nd</sup> B.C.E.; *T. Mos.*, 1<sup>st</sup> C.E.; *Let. Aris.*, 3<sup>rd</sup> B.C.E. to 1<sup>st</sup> C.E.; *Jub.* 2<sup>nd</sup> B.C.E.; *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 2<sup>nd</sup> B.C.E. to 4<sup>th</sup> C.E.; *Jos. Asen.* 1<sup>st</sup> B.C.E. to 2<sup>nd</sup> C.E.; *L.A.E.*, 1<sup>st</sup> C.E.; *L.A.B.* 1<sup>st</sup> C.E.; *Liv. Pro.*, 1<sup>st</sup> C.E.; *Lad. Jac.*, 1<sup>st</sup> C.E.; *4 Bar.*, 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> C.E.; *Hist. Rech.*, 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> C.E.; *3 Macc.*, 1<sup>st</sup> B.C.E.; *4 Macc.*, 1<sup>st</sup> C.E.; *Pss. Dav.*, 3<sup>rd</sup> B.C.E. to 1<sup>st</sup> C.E.; *Pss. Sol.*, 1<sup>st</sup> B.C.E.; Philo the Epic Poet, 3<sup>rd</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> B.C.E.; Eupolemos, before 1<sup>st</sup> B.C.E.

<sup>2</sup> The Apocrypha text used is that of the NRSV.

<sup>3</sup> Quotations from the DSS are from Vermes, *Complete DSS*, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>4</sup> The edition of Josephus used here is from the LCL, translated by Thackeray.



*The Origins of Jerusalem*

Much Second Temple literature reflects the tradition that God had already chosen the Jerusalem site at or before the creation of the world as his dwelling place on earth and the place where he could be contacted by humankind. This tradition, as we have seen, is present in an undeveloped form in such passages as Exod 15:13, 17; 23:20 and Ps 87:1–2.

This tradition is prominent in Second Temple literature. For example, a non-canonical Psalm from Qumran speaks of “Jerusalem, that is the city chosen by the Lord from everlasting to everlasting” (4Q380 1 I). Some of the Pseudepigrapha make this original designation very explicit. In the *Testament of Moses*, Moses gives his books to Joshua and tells him:

Deposit them in earthenware jars in the place which (God) has chosen from the beginning of the creation of the world, (a place) where his name may be called upon until the day of recompense when the Lord will surely have regard for his people (*T. Mos.* 1:17–18).

The prayer of the Jews in *3 Macc.* 2:9 says, “You, king, when you created the boundless measureless earth, chose this city and sanctified this Temple for your name.”

In *4 Ezra*, the seer sees a weeping woman who tells him that she was barren for the first thirty years of her marriage until her son was born (9:43). The interpretation is that Jerusalem was barren for the first 3,000 years of her existence, “because there were three thousand years in the world before any offering was offered in it. And after three thousand years Solomon built the city, and offered offerings; then it was that the barren woman bore a son” (*4 Ezra* 10:45–46). This gives the impression that Zion was the designated place of worship right from the creation of the world, even before David and

Solomon established it as capital and Temple site.<sup>5</sup> These passages make explicit the idea that Jerusalem/Zion has been God's earthly dwelling place and contact point with humanity right from the creation of the world.

Another link that is made more explicit in the Pseudepigrapha is between Jerusalem/Zion and Eden. The Old Testament makes both Eden and Jerusalem the source of life-giving waters (Gen 2:10; Ps 36:8–9 etc.), and pictures Jerusalem as Eden-like in passages such as Isa 11:6–9 and 51:3, and Ezek 28 and 40–48.<sup>6</sup> This theme is expanded in the Pseudepigrapha, where Adam, Abel and Enoch all live and worship on Mount Zion.

Sometimes Eden is seen as being near Mount Zion, and sometimes actually including Mount Zion.<sup>7</sup> Since Gen 3:32 said Adam went out of the Garden “to till the ground from whence he was taken,” Wintermute observes, “Apparently that phrase led to speculation that Adam did not originate in Eden but was taken from another place to which the author of Jubilees would return him.”<sup>8</sup> It must have been quite near to Eden, and *Jubilees* calls it 'Elda (*Jub.* 3:32). According to the *Life of Adam and Eve*, God took the dust to make Adam from Mount Zion. The Rabbis said specifically that Adam went to live “on Mount Moriah, to cultivate the ground from which he had been created” (*Tg.*

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. *4 Ezra* 6:4, which says that God planned the times of the world “before the footstool of Zion was established,” i.e. before the creation. God's pre-creation choice of Zion is also reflected in *Odes of Solomon* 4:1–3, a possibly Jewish-Christian work dated around 100 C.E. See Charlesworth, “Odes of Solomon,” *OTP* 2:725–27.

<sup>6</sup> For a discussion of parallels between Eden and the Jerusalem Temple, see Beale, *Temple*, 66–80.

<sup>7</sup> Traditionally, scholars have believed that Zion and the Temple Mount (Moriah) were originally names of different hills in Jerusalem, and that the name Zion later came to be identified with the Temple Mount. Other scholars, however, believe that the Temple was actually built on the north end of the city of David (Zion), not on the other hill where the Dome of the Rock mosque now stands. See Buchanan, “Area of the Temple,” 184–86.

<sup>8</sup> Wintermute, “Jubilees,” *OTP* 2:60, n. h.

*Jon. 3*).<sup>9</sup> The Rabbis were agreeing with a tradition clearly found in the *Life of Adam and Eve*, which we have now in two versions, the *Apocalypse of Moses* and the *Vita*.<sup>10</sup> *Apocalypse of Moses* 40:6 says, “And both [Adam and Abel] were buried according to the command of God in the regions of Paradise in the place from which God had found the dust.” Adam had a house of prayer there (*Apoc. Mos.* 5:3; *Vita* 30:2) and an altar (*Apoc. Mos.* 33:4). He was buried there, in what he calls in *Vita* 45:2 “against the East in the great dwelling place of God.” Johnson comments, “There can be little doubt that the same site is intended in all such references and that the location is to be understood as the place of the Jerusalem Temple, where rabbinic sources fix the location of Adam’s oratory.”<sup>11</sup> A late appendix to the *Vita* further states that Seth wrote the life of his father and mother on tablets and put them in the midst of his father’s prayer house. Solomon found them and asked God to help him interpret them. An angel came in response, revealed to Solomon where Adam’s prayer house was, and told him to build the Temple of the Lord, the house of prayer, at that same place (*Vita* 51:3–7).

The prayer house tradition is also found in *2 Enoch*. Enoch tells his sons to pray three times a day in the Lord’s temple, which appears to be the same as Adam’s prayer house. The place where Adam was created, where he will be buried (the burial is still future from Enoch’s perspective), is the centre of the earth (*2 En.* 72:35), and from there Enoch is taken up to heaven (*2 En.* 68:5). Enoch prophesies that Melchizedek will be the first priest and king there, in the place Akhuzan, also called Salim (*2 En.* 72:6).

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<sup>9</sup> Quoted in Evans, *Paradise Lost and the Genesis Tradition*, 53.

<sup>10</sup> The *Life of Adam and Eve* is extant in two versions, one in Latin called the *Vita Adae et Evae*, and the other in Greek called the *Apocalypse of Moses*. About half of the text overlaps between the two versions. See Johnson, “Life of Adam and Eve,” *OTP* 2:249–251.

<sup>11</sup> Johnson, “Life of Adam and Eve,” *OTP* 2:254. On p. 270, n. 30a, Johnson gives the rabbinic sources as *Midrash* on Ps 92:6; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 43:2; *Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer* 23; 31 etc.

In *1 Enoch*, Enoch goes to the centre of the earth and sees a blessed place, full of trees, having a holy mountain with a stream (*1 En.* 26:1–2). There are two other mountains there and a deep valley. The site being described is the topography of Jerusalem, but with the trees, and a stream flowing out of it, it is also Eden. The intervening valley, however, is accursed, the place of judgment of the wicked. It will be visible to the righteous who, presumably, will be on the wooded Edenic mountain (*1 En.* 27:1–4). This is a picture of the Jerusalem site as the author wishes to depict it long before the time of David.

In Pseudo-Philo God says, “But I drove Cain out and cursed the earth and spoke to Zion saying, ‘You will swallow up blood no more’” (*L.A.B.* 16:2). In a footnote, Harrington says that the mention of Zion here is a misunderstanding of the Hebrew *sywn* “parched earth” (found in *Isa* 25:5 and 32:2).<sup>12</sup> If this is so, the misunderstanding may have been facilitated by the belief that the first family lived on Mount Zion. Perhaps, however, it is not a misunderstanding but reflects this belief directly and Harrington’s emendation is wrong.<sup>13</sup>

Moving on toward the time of Noah, *Jub.* 4:24 says that the flood did not come upon the whole land of Eden because Enoch was still there writing the deeds of men against the judgment day (this is the place to which God “took” Enoch). Similarly, Pseudo-Philo affirms that the land God was going to give to Abraham was not covered by the flood (*L.A.B.* 7:4).

After the flood, *Jub.* 8 records that the three sons of Noah drew lots for their lands. Shem’s portion was “in the midst of the navel of the earth.” It included the Garden

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<sup>12</sup> Harrington, “Pseudo-Philo,” *OTP* 2:324, n. d.

<sup>13</sup> Spiro, “Manners,” 193–94, interprets this mention of Zion as evidence that Adam’s children sacrificed there.

of Eden, Mount Sinai and Mount Zion. This is taken to coincide with Noah's blessing, "May the Lord God of Shem be blessed, and may the Lord dwell in the dwelling place of Shem" (*Jub.* 8:18–21).<sup>14</sup>

### *Abraham and Jerusalem*

Much of Second Temple literature avoids the ambiguities of the Old Testament and affirms that the place where Abraham met Melchizedek was Jerusalem. Josephus says that Melchizedek founded Jerusalem 1,486½ years before the Babylonians destroyed it. Not only was Melchizedek the first priest of God there (an honour fitting his righteous character), he also built the first temple there to God. He named the city "Jerusalem" though it was formerly called "Solyma" (*J.W.* 6:437–438). In the *Antiquities* (1:180), Josephus states specifically that Salem, where Abraham met the king of Sodom and encountered Melchizedek, was later called Jerusalem. The *Genesis Apocryphon* from Qumran also identifies Salem where Abraham met the king of Sodom (and Melchizedek) with Jerusalem (1QapGen XXII,13).<sup>15</sup>

Much Second Temple literature also affirms that the place where Abraham sacrificed Isaac was Mount Zion (cf. 2 Chr 3:1). This is specified in *Jub.* 18:13. In the

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<sup>14</sup> Supporting Kaiser's interpretation of Gen 9:26–27 in *Toward an OT Theology*, 82. Kaiser also cites Jewish sources (T. Onkelos, Philo, Maimonides, Rashi, Aben Ezra), Theodoret, Baumgarten and Delitzsch for this interpretation, i.e. that it is God not Japheth who will dwell in the tents of Shem.

<sup>15</sup> The text of both Ethiopic and Syriac *Jubilees* has a lacuna at this point. See Wintermute, "Jubilees," *OTP* 1:84, n. f. An alternate tradition, that Abraham met Melchizedek at Mount Gerizim, is found in Pseudo-Eupolemus before 100 B.C.E. See Doran, "Pseudo-Eupolemus," *OTP* 2:878. For more on the rival claims of Zion and Gerizim see Hjelm's two books, *Jerusalem's Rise to Sovereignty: Zion and Gerezim in Competition*, and *The Samaritans and Early Judaism*. Epiphanius in the fourth century still faced two opinions about it (*Pan.* 55.2.2), i.e. that Melchizedek's Salem was Jerusalem or that it was a town near Shechem.

*Antiquities* (7:333) Josephus points out that the threshing floor of Araunah, where the Temple was built, was the very spot where Abraham had sacrificed Isaac.<sup>16</sup>

There is also a reference in *L.A.B.* 23:7 that links Abraham and Jerusalem in another way. It refers to the time when God told Abraham to sacrifice a calf, goat, ram, turtledove and dove (Gen 15). God says, “And I will make you like the dove, because you have taken for me a city that your sons will begin to build before me.” Interpreters take this to be a reference to Jerusalem,<sup>17</sup> but in what way Abraham had taken the city is unknown. Since in Genesis the story of the three sacrifices comes immediately after Abraham’s reception at Salem, perhaps this is what the Pseudo-Philo text refers to. Perhaps, since Genesis does not mention any location change for Abraham after Genesis 14, Pseudo-Philo assumes he is still at Jerusalem, and that receiving blessing from Melchizedek and his appropriation of it as a cult site by paying tithes there is a method of “taking” it.<sup>18</sup>

Second Temple literature, then, bears witness to a body of tradition that gives Jerusalem a theologically significant primitive history. Eden was near or at Jerusalem. Adam was formed from the dust of the Temple mount. He established a house of prayer there, which was used also by Enoch. Adam and Abel were buried there. Tablets about

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<sup>16</sup> Thus Josephus affirms both that Jerusalem had a pre-Abrahamic history of being the site of a temple to God, and that Abraham had these two contacts with the site. Alternate traditions for the sacrifice of Isaac connection also exist. In the LXX there is a fair amount of confusion between “Moriah” (connected to Jerusalem) and “Moreh” (connected to Shechem). The LXX has ὑψηλήν for both terms (Gen 12:6, Deut 11:30 and Gen 22:2) but not in 2 Chr 3:1, which has ἐν ὄρει τοῦ Ἀμωριά. This could easily have been understood by readers as “mount of the Amorites.” Thus the LXX does not have the link between the sacrifice of Isaac and the Temple Mount found in the MT. For “Moriah” in Gen 22:2, Sam Pent. has מִרְיָה which appears to be closer to Moreh (מֹרֶה) than Moriah (מֹרְיָה).

<sup>17</sup> E.g. Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo: Rewriting the Bible*, 111.

<sup>18</sup> Spiro, “Manners,” 192, points out that Pseudo-Philo does not record any city where Abraham lived. There is a tradition (reflected in the LXX) that the place captured by Jacob’s sons in Gen 33–34 was called Salem rather than Shechem. However, since no ancient writer tries to claim that the Israelites conquered Jerusalem in the time of Jacob, this is probably not part of Jerusalem theology in the Second Temple Period. For St. Jerome’s musings on the Salem-Shechem problem, see Hayward, *Saint Jerome’s Hebrew Questions on Genesis*, 71–72, 212–13.

the life of Adam and Eve were buried there as well. Enoch was taken up to heaven from that spot. He saw a vision of that place as being both Eden and the final abode of the righteous. The site was not affected by the Flood. Shem received the area as part of his inheritance after the Flood, and Abraham went there to meet God's priest and, later, to sacrifice Isaac. These traditions firmly establish Mount Zion as the location of communication between God and primitive humanity, and link Eden, Jerusalem and (in *I Enoch*) the final abode of the righteous.

*The Establishment of Jerusalem and the Temple under David and Solomon*

The extant non-canonical Second Temple literature lays less stress than the Old Testament on the role of David in conquering Jerusalem and choosing the Temple site.<sup>19</sup>

In *T. Levi* 10:5, Levi predicts that "the house which the Lord shall choose shall be called Jerusalem." He says this is from the book of Enoch, but we have no extant Enoch text with this prediction. The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha contain surprisingly little about David and his role in establishing Jerusalem as both religious and political capital. His conquest of the city is not mentioned and his main function is planning. A section recounting David's exploits in *Sir* 47:2–11 does not include David's conquest of Zion or his establishment of it as his capital. In *Sir* 47:13, Solomon's building of the Temple is mentioned only in passing. The *Testament of Moses* says it is the *tribes* that will move the tent to the place God will choose, and *God* will build the place for his sanctuary (*T. Mos.* 2:4). The longest treatment of David is in Pseudo-Philo (*L.A.B.* 59–63), which contains the stories of his anointing by Samuel, singing for Saul, killing Goliath, covenant with

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<sup>19</sup> This in contrast to Chronicles, which, although it also comes from the Second Temple era, emphasizes the connection between the Davidic line and Jerusalem. Perhaps the non-canonical material reflects the reality that there is no reigning Davidic king after the exile.

Jonathan, and the death of the priests of Nob. Unfortunately the extant narrative breaks off abruptly in the middle of the story of Saul's death, so it does not reach the part where David conquers Zion. *Second Baruch* 61, in the vision of the dark and bright waters, says vaguely of the sixth bright waters, "this is the time in which David and Solomon were born. And at that time the building of Zion took place and the dedication of the sanctuary." In *4 Ezra* 3:23–24 Ezra says to God, "you raised up for yourself a servant named David. And you commanded him to build a city for your name and in it to offer you oblations from what is yours." However, in the vision of the weeping woman (*4 Ezra* 10:46) it says, "After three thousand years Solomon built the city and offered offerings." That is, David received the command, and Solomon fulfilled it.<sup>20</sup> As often happens in this literature, the city and the Temple are merged. It is building the city that results in making offerings. The Temple is not mentioned, but the concept must be included somehow in the city for offerings to be made. Perhaps here, as in Ezra-Nehemiah,<sup>21</sup> the whole city takes on the significance of the Temple.

We have already mentioned the late tradition in *Vita* 51 that Solomon found Seth's tablets and was instructed by the angel of the Lord to build the Temple on the spot where Adam prayed. Eupolemos, as quoted by Eusebius (*Praep. ev.* 9.30.5–11), says that David asked God to show him a place for the altar. God's angel came and stood over the place, but ordered David not to set up the Temple because he was defiled with human blood and warfare. Solomon (*Praep. ev.* 9.34.12) took the tent, altar of sacrifice, and

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. *Liv. Pro.* 1:10 David designed the tombs east of Zion and Solomon made them. Humphrey, *Ladies*, 75–76, wonders why the city is being built only in the time of Solomon, when in *4 Ezra* 6:5 the founding of the city is placed among primordial events. She notes Metzger's alternate reading "upbuilt" which seeks to solve this problem. *4 Ezra* 6:5, however, speaks of founding Zion as God's footstool, which perhaps is different from the city on the Zion hill. We have already seen in the Second Temple Literature the belief that God dwelt on Zion long before the building of the city or Temple.

<sup>21</sup> See Eskenazi, *In an Age of Prose*, 53–56, 71–73, 83–87, 104–109, 119–22, 176–89.



vessels made by Moses to Jerusalem and put them in the Temple, along with the ark (cf. *L.A.B.* 22:9).

In Pseudo-Philo (*L.A.B.* 26:12), God tells Kenaz that someone named Jahel will build a house for him.<sup>22</sup> Sometimes, however, the founding of Jerusalem as an Israelite city and the building of the Temple are referred to without naming the builders. This is sometimes because it is *ex eventu* prediction, which is purposely vague on certain details to give the impression of genuine prophecy (e.g. *I En.* 89:49–50; cf. *Jub.* 1:10, *L.A.B.* 19:7–10).

Perhaps David's conquest is not seen as important because of the strong tradition that Zion has been God's holy place right since the beginning. Human agency in making it God's sanctuary is downplayed. This accords with the Old Testament evidence that David was not to think that it was his initiative that was responsible for bringing the ark to Jerusalem and building the Temple there.<sup>23</sup>

In the Wisdom of Solomon, in his prayer asking for wisdom, Solomon says, "You have given me command to build a Temple on your holy mountain, and an altar in the city of your habitation, a copy of the holy tent that you prepared from the beginning" (*Wis* 9:8). This verse assumes that the mountain has been God's holy mountain, and the city has been the place of God's habitation, before the command to build the Temple was given. Notice also the assumption that the Temple is only a copy of a "holy tent" that has existed from the beginning in heaven.

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<sup>22</sup> Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo," *OTP* 2:338, n. e, suggests that this is a variant of Ithiel, one of Solomon's ten names in rabbinic literature, or the angel Jael mentioned in *Apoc. Ab.* 10:4, 9 (Iael in 10:3, 8 in Rubinkiewicz, "Apocalypse of Abraham," *OTP* 1:693–94). The *Testament of Solomon*, dated first to third centuries C.E., has Solomon controlling the demons with a magic ring and forcing them to help build the Temple.

<sup>23</sup> Perhaps too, the tradition of Zion being significant since the creation became more important as the city's connection to the Davidic kings was weakened by the loss of the monarchy.

A similar lack of material on David's conquest of Jerusalem can be observed in the DSS. Lawrence Schiffman notes that the city is viewed from three angles in the apocryphal and sectarian documents: the city contemporary with the sectarians, which they saw as polluted; the ideal Jerusalem which stood for "the camp" mentioned in Mosaic Law; and the eschatological Jerusalem.<sup>24</sup> David's Jerusalem fit into the second category, seen as the ideal of how the city ought to be.<sup>25</sup> 4Q522 appears to be a prophecy, supposedly set in the time of Joshua, about David: "[He is to take] the Rock of Zion and from there he is to possess the Amorites . . . to build a house for the Lord, the God of Israel."<sup>26</sup> The translation of Eisenman and Wise reads "(He shall capture) the mountain (literally, rock) of Zion, and he will dispossess from there <all> the Amorites . . . to build the House for the Lord, the God of Israel."<sup>27</sup> The inclusion of the term "all" (the Amorites, i.e. not just those resident in Jerusalem?) may indicate that the capture of Zion is seen as the final stage of the conquest of Canaan.<sup>28</sup> Puech suggests the reconstruction "[*Et c'est lui qui prendra*] la Pierre de Sion et il en expulsera tous les Amorites, depuis Jér[usalem jusqu' à la mer(?), et qui aura l'idée] de bâtir le temple de YHWH, le Dieu d'Israel."<sup>29</sup> This reconstruction has David driving Amorites from Zion and also from a larger area right down to the sea. The Israelites had trouble conquering the coastal plain (Judg 1:19, 34) so this may also indicate completion of the conquest of Canaan.

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<sup>24</sup> Schiffman, "Jerusalem in the DSS." Davies, "From Zion to Zion," speculates that three stages of thinking about Jerusalem are represented in the DSS: Jerusalem as ideal, as polluted, and as replaced, i.e. earthly Jerusalem/Temple was replaced by the heavenly one as the true place of worship. Davies does not fit eschatological Jerusalem into his scheme.

<sup>25</sup> This attitude is reflected also in Sir 24:8-11, where Wisdom is established in the Zion Temple, probably at its inception.

<sup>26</sup> Vermes, *Complete DSS*, 546.

<sup>27</sup> Eisenman and Wise, *DSS Uncovered*, 91. This book includes the original Hebrew text.

<sup>28</sup> Martínez, *DSS Translated*, 227, translates "the Rock of Zion, and he will drive out from there /all/ the Amorites from . . . to build the house for YHWH, God of Israel." The word "all" is a correction added above the line in the ms, and is omitted in Vermes' translation.

<sup>29</sup> Puech, "La pierre de Sion," 678.

Josephus has more to say about David's role in conquering Jerusalem as he recounts the biblical story. Jerusalem had been allocated to the tribe of Benjamin by Joshua (*Ant.* 5:82) but since the Israelites could not take the citadel of the city (5:124) Benjamin put its inhabitants under tribute (5:129). It still belonged to the Canaanites, however (5:129). David attacked Jerusalem 515 years after the time of Joshua (7:67). The Jebusites defended the walls with the blind and lame in derision of David (7:61). David took the lower city and Joab climbed up to take the citadel. David drove the Jebusites out of the citadel, and rebuilt and renamed the city (7:62–65). David chose Jerusalem to be his royal city, after which God prospered him (7:65), and later God sent a prophet to show him the spot that should be God's altar (7:334). Josephus also includes the detail that after the division of the kingdom in the time of Jeroboam, righteous people living in the north still came to worship in Jerusalem, refusing the worship the golden calves set up in Bethel and Dan. Although Josephus's account is somewhat secularized, he sees Jerusalem as the true and authorized place of worship. This is similar to the way 4Q372 (*Apocryphon of Joseph*) says that the northern nation of Israel, with their alternate shrines and threatening words, "blasphemed against the Tent of Zion." And it accords with the description in the book of Tobit of the righteousness of Tobit, who, though from the northern tribe of Naphtali, continued to go to Jerusalem to sacrifice (Tob 1:4–7; 5:13).

Sirach notes the way God delivered Zion through Isaiah at the time of Sennacherib (Sir 48:18). This was because they called on the Lord. Later, when they trusted in foreign alliances, there was no deliverance (Sir 49:6). This account ties Zion's inviolability to Israel's faithfulness to God, as in the Old Testament.

*The First Destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple*

All the Second Temple literature agrees that Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed because of the sins of God's people (e.g. Sir 49:6; Pr Azar 1:5; Bar 4:6–8; 2 Bar. 79:12; 4 Bar. 1:1; *Apoc. Ab.* 29:17, *Pss. Sol.* 2, passim; 4Q174 I, 6, cf. 4Q372).<sup>30</sup> Many characters give or receive prophecies of the event (*T. Ash.* 7:2; *T. Mos.* 3:2; *Lad. Jac.* 5:5–8; *Jub.* 1:10; *L.A.B.* 12:4; *Apoc. Ab.* 27 etc., cf. Josephus, *J.W.* 4:388; 6:109). The writers express grief at the destruction of the city and Temple (e.g. Sir 36:18; Bar 4:9–20; *1 En.* 89:67; 4 Bar. 4:6–7; 4Q179 2, etc.).<sup>31</sup>

Some of the material about the first destruction of the Temple was written as a way of talking about the second one in 70 C.E., or the material was revised to have that application. It is up to the reader, however, to make that second-destruction application, since the second destruction is not usually mentioned explicitly.

*4 Ezra* is an extreme example of expression of the theodicy issues this destruction raised. Various solutions are proposed, but the final answer seems to be that God's ways are inscrutable (*4 Ezra* 4) and there is hope for future vindication of some kind. In *3 Bar.* 1:3, 6, weeping is dismissed as inappropriate, even irritating to God. God's worship carries on in heaven, so one should instead concentrate on keeping the Law. *Second Baruch* looks for some good results of what has happened: the nations get the benefit of Israel's scattered presence among them (*2 Bar.* 1:4) and the End is hastened so that the

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<sup>30</sup> Evans, "Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls," 98, notes also that 4Q500, which contains a targum of Isa 5:1–7, probably identifies the vineyard that was destroyed because of its sins with Jerusalem. Josephus does not specifically link Jerusalem's destruction by the Babylonians to the sins of the inhabitants, but he hints at the link in his report of Ezra's prayer in *Ant.* 11:143 and in the links he gives between the destruction by the Romans and the destruction by the Babylonians (e.g. *J.W.* 6:250, 299–300). He states specifically that the Romans were being used by God to purge Jerusalem for its terrible sins (*J.W.* 6:98).

<sup>31</sup> Tan, *Zion Traditions*, 33, notes a new development in lament in Bar 4, where Jerusalem herself laments and prays for her children. The blame is on the Israelites, not the city. This is part of a general trend toward greater glorification of Jerusalem in the Second Temple period.

world can be judged faster (*2 Bar.* 20:2). The answers are probably conditioned to some extent by whether the Second Temple is still standing in the writer's time.

There are, however, a number of interesting traditions about the fall of Jerusalem and destruction of the Temple reflected in the Pseudepigrapha. These traditions, though they often go against the biblical account, assist theodicy by softening the fact that foreigners were able to breach inviolable Zion and defile the Temple.

The first tradition is that all the righteous people had to be removed from Jerusalem before it could be overcome. When God wants to destroy the city, he has to get Jeremiah and Baruch out of the city because their prayers are hindering the destruction. In *2 Bar.* 2:1, God says to Baruch, "You may say to Jeremiah and all those who are like you that you may retire from this city. For your works are for this city like a firm pillar and your prayers like a strong wall." Likewise, in *4 Bar.* 1:1–2, God says to Jeremiah, "Rise and get out of this city, you and Baruch, because I am going to destroy it for the multitude of the sins of those who inhabit it. For your prayers are like a firm pillar in the middle of it, and like an unbreachable wall encircling it."<sup>32</sup> Likewise, God tells Jeremiah how to get righteous Abimelech (the biblical Ebed-Melech) out of the city before the Chaldeans attack (*4 Bar.* 3:12–14). In a similar vein, when the Rechabites are persecuted for walking naked and fasting for the city at Jeremiah's behest, they are removed by an angel to the Blessed Isle (*Hist. Rech.* 9–10). This idea of removal of the righteous facilitating judgment may also be behind *2 Bar.* 20:2, where it says that the removal of Zion makes the world's judgment come faster.

Another tradition is that the ark and Temple vessels and garments were not, after all, defiled by the enemy. They were miraculously preserved, and will again be revealed

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<sup>32</sup> Klijn, "2 Baruch," *OTP* 1:621, n. 2a, notes that the same tradition is found in *Pesiqta Rabbati* 26:6.

some day. This tradition is first recorded in 2 Macc 2:4–8, where it says that Jeremiah took the tent, incense altar and ark to Mount Pizgah and sealed them up in a cave. When people tried to find them he said, “The place shall remain unknown until God gathers his people together again and shows his mercy. Then the Lord will disclose these things and the glory of the Lord and the cloud will appear.” Eupolemus, also writing in the first century B.C.E. (as quoted in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.39.2–5), said Nebuchadnezzar sent the Temple treasures to Babylon “except for the ark and the tablets in it. This Jeremiah preserved.” In the section on Jeremiah in the *Lives of the Prophets* (2:11–12), it says, “This prophet, before the capture of the Temple, seized the ark of the Law and the things in it, and made them to be swallowed up in a rock. And to those standing by he said, ‘The Lord has gone away from Zion into heaven and will come again in power.’” As we get to *4 Baruch* in the late first or early second century C.E., we have a more elaborate tale. In *Bar.* 3:10–11, 17–20 and 4:4, Jeremiah asks God what to do with the holy vessels. God tells him, “Take them and deliver them to the earth, saying, ‘Hear, earth, the voice of him who created you . . . Guard the vessels of the (Temple) service until the coming of the beloved one.’” Jeremiah and Baruch gather the vessels from the Temple and deliver them to the earth. The earth swallows them. Then Jeremiah throws the keys of the Temple up to the sun saying, “I say to you, sun, take the keys of the temple of God and keep them until the day in which the Lord will question you about them.” And finally, in *2 Bar.* 6, as Baruch watches, an angel descends into the Holy of Holies and takes the veil, the ephod, mercy seat, two tables, priests’ garments, incense altar, the 48 precious stones on the priests’ garments, and all the holy vessels. He calls upon the earth, “receive the things which I commit to you and guard them until the last times, so that you may restore them

when you are ordered, so that strangers may not get possession of them.” The earth opens its mouth and swallows them. *Second Baruch* 80:2 says the angels “hid the holy vessels lest they be polluted by the enemies.” This tradition is also reflected in Pseudo-Philo (*L.A.B.* 26:13) where the precious stones God supplies to Kenaz are put into the ark. God says “when the sins of my people have reached full measure and enemies begin to have power over my house, I will take those stones and the former stones along with the tablets, and I will store them in the place from which they were taken in the beginning. And they will be there until I remember the world and visit those inhabiting the earth.”<sup>33</sup>

Not all the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha have this tradition, however. For example, in *4 Ezra* 10:22, Ezra laments, “the ark of our covenant has been plundered, our holy things have been polluted,” and *T. Mos.* 3:2 says, “And he [the enemy king] will burn their city with the holy Temple of the Lord and he will carry off all the holy vessels.” First Esdras records that the holy vessels were taken to Babylon (1 Esd 1:54) but mitigates this by having them all brought back (1 Esd 2:10–15).

A further tradition says that the foreign enemies were not actually able to breach the walls of Jerusalem. They could only enter because God had sent angels to break the walls and allow them in. These traditions are found particularly in *2* and *4 Baruch*. In *4 Bar.* 1:9–10, God says, “For neither the king nor his host can come into it unless I first

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<sup>33</sup> Josephus mentions a similar tradition in *Ant.* 18:4.1, about a Samaritan who promised his followers that he would reveal the sacred vessels hidden on Mount Gerizim by Moses. This may be related to the tradition mentioned above in *T. Mos.* 1:17 that Moses told Joshua to deposit the books in jars in the place God had chosen. Another parallel may be the lists of hidden treasure recorded in the copper scroll from Qumran (3Q15). Some scholars think the copper scroll lists are fictional accounts of Temple treasures hidden before 70 C.E., on analogy with the pseudepigraphal accounts (and later Jewish materials) describing the preservation of Temple treasures before 587 B.C.E. Others think they describe actual treasure, perhaps hidden by Jews who saw themselves as re-enacting the way Jeremiah and others hid the Temple treasures before 587 B.C.E. For a full discussion of these and other positions about the copper scroll, see Wolters, “Apocalyptic and the Copper Scroll,” and “Copper Scroll,” and the references cited there. Wolters has also published *The Copper Scroll: Overview, Text and Translation* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996).

open its gates . . . unless I first destroy the city, they cannot come into it.” In *4 Bar.* 3:1–4, Jeremiah and Baruch are taken out onto the city walls to see the destroying angels, and in 4:2–3 we read, “And the great angel trumpeted, saying, ‘Come into the city, host of the Chaldeans; for behold, the gate has been opened for you.’” In *2 Bar.* 6:3–4, Baruch sees four angels with torches standing at the four corners of the city.

7:1 And after these things I heard this angel saying to the angels who held the torches: Now destroy the walls and overthrow them to their foundations so that the enemies do not boast and say, ‘We have overthrown the wall of Zion and we have burnt down the place of the mighty God.’

8:1 Now the angels did as he had commanded them . . . a voice was heard from the midst of the temple after the wall had fallen, saying, “Enter, enemies, and come, adversaries, because he who guarded the house has left it.”

The tradition that God left Jerusalem and the Temple (cf. Ezek 7–10) is also well attested in the Pseudepigrapha. The *Lives of the Prophets* (23:2) reports that, after the murder of Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, the priests could no longer hear from God, and in the same book (2:11–12) Jeremiah tells the people that the Lord has gone away from Zion into heaven. In *1 En.* 89:56, Enoch sees how “he [the Lord] left that house of theirs and that tower of theirs.” And when Ezra, in *4 Ezra* 10:23, speaks of “the seal of Zion—for she has now lost the seal of her glory,” he seems to be speaking of the same thing.<sup>34</sup>

Despite this, in *2 Baruch* the Temple site, and especially the location of the Holy of Holies, is still seen as a place where God can be encountered. After the city falls, Baruch goes there to pray (*2 Bar.* 10:4; 34:1; 35:1), and receives a revelation from God (*2 Bar.* 36–43).<sup>35</sup> And in the Apocryphal book of Baruch, although Jerusalem has been

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Josephus, *J.W.* 6:229–300, where a voice cries, “We are leaving this place” (i.e. the Temple) before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.

<sup>35</sup> In both *2* and *4 Baruch*, Jeremiah goes with the captives to Babylon to instruct them, while Baruch stays at the Jerusalem site. The site seems to be conceived of as being fairly intact, more abandoned than destroyed, since upon the return of Jeremiah and the people in *4 Bar.* there is no mention of rebuilding the



taken and burned by the Chaldeans, the book envisions the Jews and the high priest still there and the altar still available for making sacrifice (Bar 1:1–10; 2:20–24).<sup>36</sup>

Some of the Second Temple literature, then, takes pains to explain and mitigate the failure of the inviolability of Zion tradition. Zion was overthrown because of the sin of the people. Nevertheless, God kept safe a kind of hidden or divine Zion: the vessels were preserved in hiding, and God could still be contacted at the site. God's power and holiness were still associated with Zion, so it had a future. Like the material about the origins of Zion, this material emphasizes Zion as God's place above its significance as the city of humans.

#### *Views of Jerusalem in Second Temple Times*

The rebuilding of Jerusalem and Temple is “prophesied” in the *Testament of Levi*, a second century B.C.E. work. In *T. Levi* 17:10, Levi says, “and in the fifth week they shall return to the land of their desolation, and shall restore anew the house of the Lord.” (Levi has a seven week schema for the future of the priesthood he is founding.) In the *T. Mos.* 4:6–7 it says, “He [God] will inspire a king to have pity on them and send them home to their own land. Then some parts of the tribes will arise and come to their appointed place, and they will strongly build its walls.” *Second Baruch* 68:5 reads, “After

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Temple or city, though worship and life resume. A similar view may be found in *Judith*, where Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah*, 109, comments, “Although *Judith* is set shortly after the Return from Exile (4:3) the book speaks not of the rebuilding of the Temple but of the consecration of the vessels, the altar, and the Temple after their profanation. The similarity to Judas's consecration of the Temple is noteworthy” (i.e. because the story is really about Hasmonean and not Persian times).

<sup>36</sup> Böhler, *Heilige Stadt*, 143 and passim, notes the same phenomenon in 1 Esdras as contrasted with Ezra–Nehemiah. In 1 Esdras, Jerusalem is not in ruins until the time of Nehemiah, but even in Zerubbabel's time it is built and inhabited. Böhler thinks that Ezra–Nehemiah is a later recension of the story, made in the time of the Hasmoneans to make Nehemiah a precedent for a non-Zadokite (like themselves) building and purifying Jerusalem (pp. 392–93). But 1 Esdras is following a pattern seen in other Second Temple literature, such as the *Baruch* literature (cf. also *Judith*), of minimalizing the damage done to Jerusalem in order to maintain the sanctity of the location.

a short time, Zion will be rebuilt again, and the offerings will be restored, and the priests will again return to their ministry.” Other pseudepigrapha also “prophecy” a restoration, but in a more ambiguous fashion (e.g. *Jub.* 1:17–18). Some of them that are not written as prophecy, such as the *Lives of the Prophets* (14:1; 15), mention the restoration as a historical fact, though Zechariah prophesied about “the laziness of prophets and priests, and he set forth the twofold judgment,” indicating that he was not satisfied with the rebuilding he saw.

There are two contrasting views of Jerusalem during the late Second Temple period. On the one hand there is a tendency to portray Jerusalem as glorious and godly. This was perhaps the apologetic stance taken toward outsiders and for the encouragement of Jews in the Diaspora. The *Letter of Aristeas* (a Jewish Egyptian work) describes the city as in the middle of the land, on a very high mountain, topped by a very high Temple built with very costly materials and stones. It has an elaborate underground water supply.<sup>37</sup> The city is well fortified. Everything in the Temple is done in utmost reverence, purity and glory (*Let. Aris.* 83–120). The dimensions of the city seem quite exaggerated. Pseudo-Hecataeus (quoted in Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 1:183–205) gives a similar but more sober and factual account (lines 196–199). He calls Jerusalem a large and beautiful city, fortified, about 50 stades in circumference with a population about 120,000. The Temple is described. It has no images or any sacred plants or trees. The priests do not drink wine in the Temple. Another account is given by Philo the Epic Poet (quoted in Eusebius,

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<sup>37</sup> Buchanan, “Area of the Temple,” 184–86, gives archaeological support for the idea that the Temple was well supplied with water from underground channels. Buchanan believes this makes much more sense if the Temple was located on the north end of the city of David, just south of the site that is traditionally believed to be the Temple Mount.

*Praep. ev.* 9.24.1 and 9.37.1–3) who calls Jerusalem a “most blessed spot.” He also describes a fountain and pools watering the Temple and city.

*Third Maccabees* tells a story of how Ptolemy wanted to enter the Holy of Holies. The people cried out to God and he was miraculously prevented from doing so. This story also depicts a godly Jerusalem and a Temple maintaining purity.

Ben Sirach says of Zerubbabel and Jeshua, “in their days they built the house and raised a temple holy to the Lord destined for everlasting glory” (Sir 49:11–13) and the Hebrew additions to the book (in chap. 51) include praise to God for rebuilding his city and sanctuary, and for choosing Zion.

The book of Judith reports that, in her time, the people of Judea had returned from captivity “and the vessels, and the altar, and the house, were sanctified after the profanation” (Jdt 4:3). Notice here, as in the Baruch literature, that there is no talk of rebuilding (cf. Jdt 5:19). The site only needs cleansing.

First Esdras 4:47–59 speaks of materials donated by Darius and Cyrus for the Temple, perhaps evoking the theme of Gentile riches coming into Jerusalem. And 1 Esd 8:78–81 (Ezra’s prayer of confession) paints a more hopeful and glorious picture of Jerusalem than Ezra 9:8–9.

Some people still held to belief in the inviolability of Zion even at the end of the Second Temple period. Josephus records that the defenders of Jerusalem in the war with Rome refused to surrender because they believed that God would miraculously defend the city (*J.W.* 6:98) and various “prophets” preached that this would happen (*J.W.* 6:286).

On the other hand, there was profound dissatisfaction with the “new” Jerusalem and Temple in the hearts of many who returned from exile. *First Enoch* 89:73–74, after

recounting the rebuilding of the tower (i.e. Temple), says, “They started to place a table before the tower, with all the food which is upon it being polluted and impure . . . the eyes of the sheep became so dim-sighted that they could not see—and likewise in respect to their shepherd—and they were delivered to their shepherds for an excessive destruction.” This is an accusation that the Temple service/offerings were impure, and the leaders were making the people go astray. The *Testament of Levi* 17:11, continuing the seven “week” history of the priesthood, comes to this period and comments, “In the seventh week there will come priests: idolaters, adulterers, money lovers, arrogant, lawless, voluptuaries, pederasts, those who practice bestiality.” A more detailed version of this view in the *Testament of Moses* devotes chapters 5 and 6 (15 verses) to the impurity, apostasy and iniquity of both the Temple service and society in the restored Jerusalem.

*Fourth Maccabees* tells how Jason had built a Greek gymnasium in Jerusalem (4:20) and how the leaders were taking on Greek ways. Because of God’s anger at this, Antiochus Epiphanes was allowed to persecute the Jews (*4 Macc.* 4:22; 18:5). The book continues with stories of horrific persecution of those who wanted to stay true to the Law and Jewish way of life. The *Martyrdom of Isaiah*, though it is about apostasy in the time of Manasseh king of Judah, may also have been meant to comment on apostasy in Jerusalem of the late Second Temple period.<sup>38</sup>

The men of Qumran also saw the Jerusalem of their day as the abode of evil people. The *Isaiah Peshar* mentions “the scoffers in Jerusalem” who have “despised the law of the Lord” (4Q162), the “congregation of those who seek smooth things in Jerusalem” who “despise the Law and do not trust in God” (4Q163). The *Nahum Peshar*

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<sup>38</sup> So Knibb, “Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah,” *OTP* 2:150.

says that Jerusalem will be trampled by the Kittim, who will attack the seekers of smooth things, and that the priests of Jerusalem have amassed wealth, which the Kittim will seize (4Q169). In the *Habakkuk Peshet*, Jerusalem is the city “where the Wicked Priest committed abominable deeds and defiled the Temple of God” (1QpHab 12:7).

*Second* and *Fourth Baruch* seem to have a mediating position, viewing Jerusalem both negatively and positively. *Fourth Baruch* stresses the city’s purity, in that, upon the return, those with mixed marriages were not allowed into Jerusalem (*4 Bar.* 6:17, 24). When they tried to enter the city, they were rejected, and since Babylon would not take them back, they went off and built Samaria (*4 Bar.* 8:11). The end of the book, however, shows the Jews as still not completely godly, since they stone Jeremiah to death (this part contains Christian interpolation, but some aspect of the death of Jeremiah at their hands may be part of the original work).<sup>39</sup> Also *2 Bar.* 68:5, after predicting the rebuilding of Zion, says, “But not as fully as before.” Here too is a recognition that the restoration of the city leaves something to be desired.

It is tempting to think that the good picture of Second Temple Jerusalem is an earlier picture, painted before the conflicts of the Greek period became serious. This is hard to prove, since the dates of many of these writings are disputed. If the dates in Charlesworth’s edition of the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha are to be accepted, such a pattern is not always clear.<sup>40</sup> It makes sense to think that these views existed side by side. Some Jews were proud of the Jerusalem of their day, while others were ashamed. Many

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<sup>39</sup> Robinson, “4 Baruch,” 414, says that a Christian redactor “Christianized the ending,” which is obvious from the use of the name Jesus Christ in 9:14. Robinson stops short, however, of saying that the Christian redactor added a completely new ending containing the death of Jeremiah to *4 Baruch*.

<sup>40</sup> For example, in *OTP*, the *Letter of Aristeas* is dated third century B.C.E. to first century C.E. and *1 Enoch* at second century B.C.E. to first century C.E.

still held on to hope for a more glorious and unambiguous restoration for the city than what they could see so far. Sinful human nature still deflected God's full blessing.

These views of Jerusalem continue the Old Testament traditions of Zion as God's glorious place, and the people as a polluting problem, though some groups emphasized one side and some the other.

### *Jerusalem's Cosmic Importance*

Second Temple literature carries forward and expands the Old Testament tradition of Jerusalem's cosmic importance. Prevalent is the idea that the earthly Jerusalem and Temple are just copies of the originals in heaven (e.g. Wis 9:8). This idea is linked to the fact that, when Moses was on Mount Sinai, God showed him the pattern of how to make the Tabernacle (Exod 25:9, 40; Num 8:40). Rather than thinking of this as a blueprint, people thought that there must have been a tabernacle or temple already in heaven which Moses saw, and which he was to copy on earth. Another Old Testament concept was that God's true dwelling place was heaven (1 Kgs 8:30 etc.). Since his presence on earth "dwelt" in a Temple, he must dwell in a heavenly temple above. If there is a heavenly temple, there must also be a heavenly city in which it is located. *Fourth Ezra* 7:50 goes so far as to say God made two worlds. Heaven is called a "city" in *T. Ab.* 2:6 (Recension A) and *Apoc. Zeph.* 5:3. Other passages indicate that the heavenly city is called "Jerusalem." In *4 Bar.* 5:35, Abimelech thanks the old man who helps him and says, "May God guide you with (his) light to the city above, Jerusalem." And in *2 En.* 55:2

Enoch tells his children, “Tomorrow morning I shall go up to the highest heaven, into the highest Jerusalem.”<sup>41</sup>

The most striking exposition of these ideas is *2 Bar.* 4:2–7. God is comforting Baruch about the destruction of Jerusalem. It will be delivered up for a time, but, God says,

Do you think that this is the city of which I said: “On the palm of my hands I have carved you”? It is not this building that is in your midst now; it is that which will be revealed, with me, that was already prepared from the moment that I decided to create Paradise. And I showed it to Adam before he sinned. But when he transgressed the commandment, it was taken away from him—as also Paradise. After these things I showed it to my servant Abraham in the night between the portions of the victims. And again I showed it also to Moses on Mount Sinai when I showed him the likeness of the tabernacle and all its vessels. Behold, now it is preserved with me—also Paradise.

In this passage it is not just the Temple but the whole city that has existed since creation in heaven. Pseudo-Philo, in addition to recording Moses’ vision of the Tabernacle furnishings on Mount Sinai (*L.A.B.* 11:15), says that, as Moses was about to die and saw the land from the top of Mount Abarim, “The Lord showed him [Moses] the land and all that is in it and said, ‘This is the land that I will give to my people.’ . . . And he showed him the measurements of the sanctuary and the number of sacrifices and the signs by which they are to interpret heaven.” This means Moses saw a pattern for the Temple as well as the Tabernacle, and perhaps the city of Jerusalem as well. *Second Baruch* 59:4 includes the city in the vision, saying that God showed Moses “the likeness of Zion with its measurements which was to be made after the likeness of the present sanctuary [i.e. first Temple which stood in Baruch’s day].” Notice again how Zion and the Temple are merged in the description. The existence of a heavenly temple is likewise

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<sup>41</sup> Jerusalem is mentioned only in the P manuscript of *2 Enoch*. See Andersen, “2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch,” *OTP* 1:182, n. 55b.

assumed in *T. Levi* 18:6 which says, “The heavens will be opened, and from the temple of glory sanctification will come upon him [the new priest].”<sup>42</sup> This emphasis on the heavenly temple and city solves the problem of human pollution of the city by seeing the city as essentially in heaven, removed from contact with earthly humans.

Another way of highlighting the universal importance of Jerusalem was to emphasize its importance and uniqueness in this world. Jerusalem is located in “the middle of the earth” (*Sib. Or.* 5:250, cf. *1 En.* 26:1; *2 En.* 72:35; *Jub.* 8:12, 19), an idea that occurs rarely in the Old Testament (*Ezek* 38:12, cf. *Judg* 9:37). Jerusalem is God’s city (*4 Ezra* 10:7) in a unique way. In *4 Ezra* 5:25, Ezra says, “From all the cities that have been built you have consecrated Zion for yourself.” *1 En.* 25:3 pictures it as the earthly location of God’s throne. As in the Old Testament, it is the only place to celebrate Passover (*Jub.* 49:16–21). So central is it that the author of the *Lives of the Prophets* looks for links to Jerusalem even for the Northern prophets. For example, the birth narratives of both Elijah and Elisha are related to the city (*Liv. Pro.* 21:3; 22:2), and Jonah prophesies about it (10:11). In *2 Bar.* 3:2–3 and 10:16, Baruch calls this city his “mother” (cf. *Gal* 4:26). The strong emotional bond of many Jews to the city reinforced the theology of its unique importance in the world.

But above all, Jerusalem is the place of worship (*Pss. Dav.* 154:19–20) and especially of prayer, just as it started as a place of prayer for Adam and Enoch. In *Apoc.*

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<sup>42</sup> There are many references to God’s heavenly throne (e.g. *1 En.* 60:2; 62:3; 84:2; *Apoc. Ab.* 18:12 etc.) but not all of them include a temple or city. In *1 En.* 14:14–23, in a vision Enoch is swept up into heaven and sees a huge white house surrounded with fire. Inside, he sees a second house of fire, with a throne inside, surrounded by cherubim, with the Glorious One sitting on it. This is the heavenly temple. Enoch sees this again in *1 En.* 71:5–11. The heavenly throne need not always evoke a heavenly temple, but it might involve service, prayer and worship. For example in *3 Bar.* 11:4–9, Michael comes down to the fifth heaven to receive the prayers and good deeds of men and take them up and present them before God, which sounds like temple service. *Sib. Or.* 4:8–11, 24–27 is somewhat unique in rejecting the idea of any earthly temple, making the heavenly one enough.



*Ab.* 25:4, God says to Abraham, “This temple which you have seen [in a vision] . . . is my idea of the priesthood of the name of my glory, where every petition of man will enter and dwell.” In the *T. Mos.* 1:18, Moses tells Joshua to hide the jars with the books in “(a place) where his name may be called upon until the day of recompense.” In *3 Macc.* 2:10, 16, in Simon’s prayer to God, he says, “you promised that, if ever we should turn away or distress overtake us, and we came to this holy place to pray, you would hear our prayer.” He prays that Ptolemy will not violate the Temple because it is “the holy place which is dedicated on earth to the name of your glory. Your dwelling place, the heaven of heaven is beyond the reach of men. But since you sanctified this holy place because you took pleasure in your glory among your people Israel, do not punish us by the uncleanness of these men” (*3 Macc.* 2:15–16).

Jerusalem, especially the Temple site,<sup>43</sup> is the place where people can come into contact with God in a unique way. Naphtali sees a divine revelation there before the Temple is built (*T. Naph.* 5:1) and Baruch goes to the ruins of the Temple to pray after it is captured by the Chaldeans (*2 Bar.* 10:2–5).

So important is humanity’s contact with God through Israel’s worship at Jerusalem, that when Jerusalem is to be destroyed, Baruch asks, “For if you destroy your city . . . how shall we speak again about your glorious deeds? Or to whom again will that which is in your Law be explained? Or will the universe return to its nature and the world

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<sup>43</sup> The common understanding of the name of Jerusalem was that it meant the Temple. Eupolemus (in Eusebius, *Preap. ev.* 9.34.11) and Josephus (*Ant.* 7:67; cf. *War* 6:438; *Ag. Ap.* 1:174), say that it is a shortened form of ἱερόν Σολομῶνος, that is, “Solomon’s Temple.” This etymology is denied by modern scholars, not the least because the name predates Israelite occupation.

go back to its original silence?” (2 Bar. 3:5–7).<sup>44</sup> In this passage, Jerusalem, and God’s people there, are seen as God’s only channel of contact with the whole world.<sup>45</sup>

In the eyes of the Qumran sect, the fact that evil people controlled Jerusalem did not affect the basic nature of Jerusalem as a holy city. It was still God’s chosen place (e.g. 4Q504 IV) and must be kept holy by the observance of rules given in the *Temple Scroll* (11Q19, 11Q20, 4Q365a): lepers, persons with a flux, or those who had had an emission, were supposed to be kept outside the city; sexual relations were not allowed, nor were dogs, and the latrines were supposed to be far enough away to be beyond view. The hides and meat of animals not slaughtered in the Temple were also excluded. Presumably, if people of the Qumran sect went to Jerusalem, they observed these regulations to the best of their ability. The purity regulations of the Temple appear to be extended to the whole city, so that Jerusalem as a whole is treated as Temple, as it is in Ezra-Nehemiah.<sup>46</sup> The Qumran literature includes psalms in praise of Zion (4Q88; 11Q5; 4Q380), promising her future restoration. So much did the Qumran sect revere the city that in the *Apostrophe to Zion* (11QPs<sup>a</sup> XXII) there may be a new level of adoration of Zion. The author declares that he loves Zion with all his strength, which is the way one should love God (cf. Deut 6:5, You shall love the Lord your God with all your . . . might).<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> This may be similar to the idea in *Joseph and Aseneth* (15:7; 16:6; 22:9,13) where Aseneth is called a City of Refuge, a type of Zion as refuge for all humankind.

<sup>45</sup> God’s answer is basically that Jerusalem’s eclipse is only temporary no matter what happens to it on earth, since there is an eternal Jerusalem preserved in heaven. So the world will not be forgotten (2 Bar 4:1).

<sup>46</sup> See Schiffman, “Jerusalem in the DSS,” 82–83. “The authors of these documents certainly saw Jerusalem as the religious center of their universe” (p. 83). The Qumran sect also believed in a heavenly temple, in whose worship they participated, though barred from the earthly Temple. See J. J. Collins, *Apocalypticism in the DSS*, 130–50.

<sup>47</sup> See L’Heureux, “Biblical Sources of the Apostrophe to Zion,” 61–74. But love of Jerusalem is considered good in the OT also, e.g. Ps 122:6 and Isa 66:10.

In summary, Jerusalem's importance is enhanced in the Second Temple literature in several ways. First, some writings posit a pre-existent Jerusalem in heaven that is kept safe although its earthly copy suffers trials. In some writings, this Jerusalem is the goal of saints after death. Secondly, Jerusalem takes on the role of the Temple, so that it is all sacred. Third, Jerusalem has a unique position as the centre of the earth and the special link between God and the world. As in the Old Testament, Jerusalem is where God's throne and glory touch the world and where people can contact him in prayer and worship. This idea becomes so strong that a passage like *2 Bar.* 3:5–7 seems to say that without Zion, the world loses contact with God.

*Eschatological Scenarios of Jerusalem in the Second Temple Literature*

There is a final way in which Jerusalem is of central and cosmic significance, and that is its role in the eschatological scenarios in Second Temple literature. Some of the books of the Apocrypha pick up Old Testament themes about a glorious Jerusalem in the future. *Tobit* 13:9–18 predicts that some day the Gentiles will bring gifts for God to the blessed and peaceful city. Jerusalem will be built with gem stones and gold, and be filled with God's praise (cf. *Isa* 54:11–12). Although the rebuilt Temple of this age will not be as great as Solomon's Temple, in the age to come God's people will be gathered and they will rebuild eternal Jerusalem gloriously, as the prophets have foretold (*Tob* 14:5). The book of Baruch promises renewal and glory for Jerusalem in words reminiscent of the prophecies of Isaiah (*Bar* 4:30—5:5).

The Pseudepigrapha, as we might expect, exhibit more than one eschatological scenario. Some writings give Jerusalem no role in the future or final events of the world,

others give it a temporary role (often connected with the Messiah), which lasts only until the re-creation of heaven and earth, while still others give Jerusalem an eternal role as the final destination of God and his people.<sup>48</sup>

At one end of the scale we have books like *3 Baruch* for which the service, prayers and good deeds of righteous people, taken by the angels to God in his heavenly temple, are enough. One should not worry about Jerusalem, and there is no talk of a renewed one even in this world (*3 Bar.* 1:3, 6). After 70 C.E., Jerusalem ceases to matter. Some books just do not use the names “Jerusalem” or “Zion” when speaking of the future. Pseudo-Philo merely mentions a new heaven and earth and an immortal dwelling place (*L.A.B.* 3:10; 19:12–13). Similar expectations are found in *Sibylline Oracles 3* (663–701), *T. Mos.* (10:1–7) and the *Apocalypse of Abraham* (29:17–18).

*Fourth Ezra* has a future and eschatological role for Zion, but maybe not an eternal one. The end of the age will come “when the humiliation of Zion is complete” (6:19). In *4 Ezra* 7:26–44, God says to Ezra, “The city which now is not seen shall appear, and the land which now is hidden shall be disclosed” (cf. also *4 Ezra* 10:53–54). Chapter 13 adds to the material of chap. 7. The man Ezra saw coming from the heart of the sea, “is he whom the Most High has been keeping for many ages, who will himself deliver his creation” (*4 Ezra* 13:26). After many wars, says God, “my son will be revealed, whom you saw as a man coming from the sea” (*4 Ezra* 13:32). All nations will

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<sup>48</sup> Rissi, *Future of the World*, 47–51, dividing the material slightly differently, describes four approaches in the Second Temple period to eschatological Jerusalem: (1) Jerusalem will be rebuilt gloriously on earth (*Tobit*, *Sib. Or.* 5, *1 En.*, Qumran, rabbinic literature); (2) A heavenly Jerusalem will exist alongside the rebuilt earthly one (rabbinic texts); (3) Heavenly Jerusalem will descend to earth with Messiah appearing on Mount Zion (*4 Ezra*, *Rev*); (4) In the *Apocalypse of Baruch*, only the Jerusalem in heaven, which has existed before creation, exists at the end (*2 Bar.*). Rissi does not mention the scenario where Jerusalem fades from the picture entirely (*3 Bar.*). I think some works merge his categories (3) and (4) (e.g. *4 Ezra*). He also does not mention the uniqueness of Revelation in describing Jerusalem as the merging of heaven and earth.

gather to fight him, but he will stand on Mount Zion, and rebuke them. “And Zion will come and be made manifest to all people, prepared and built, as you saw the mountain carved out without hands” (*4 Ezra* 13:36). Then the son will destroy the enemy nations and gather the righteous lost ten tribes. He will rule for 400 years (*4 Ezra* 7:28). Finally, however, he and all people will die, and the world will return to primeval silence (*4 Ezra* 7:29–31). Then there will be the resurrection of all the dead and the last judgment. The text does not mention any Jerusalem after this.

*1 Enoch*'s main eschatological passage is *1 En.* 90–91, in the Animal Apocalypse. There a ram is raised up who, with God's help, defeats the “birds of prey” (Gentile foes) and the traitor sheep (apostate Jews). Then “I stood still, looking at that ancient house [Jerusalem] being transformed . . . the Lord of the sheep brought about a new house, greater and loftier than the first one, and set it up in the first location which had been covered up . . . the old house was gone” (*1 En.* 90:28). In the following verses, all the surviving sheep and animals and birds of heaven worship and obey the good sheep. All those sheep are clean and no longer blind, and all the other animals have become gentle and are assembled in that house. This seems to say that both Jews and Gentile will be morally transformed and live together in an earthly Jerusalem made by God.

In *1 En.* 91 there is also description of a last battle when God comes to judge the earth. (This may also be reflected in *1 En.* 56:7 where God's city becomes an “obstacle” to the attacking Parthians and Medes.) In the eighth week, the righteous rise and a house is “built for the Great King in glory evermore” (*1 En.* 91:13). In the ninth, and the first part of the tenth week, there is universal judgement, and at the end of the tenth week the first heaven departs and there is a new heaven, followed by eternity. This is elaborated in

*1 En.* 45:4–5. After sinners are judged by God’s Elect One, God says, “On that day, I shall cause my Elect One to dwell among them, I shall transform heaven and make it a blessing of light forever. I shall (also) transform the earth and make it a blessing, and cause my Elect One to dwell in her.” This person is called “son of man” in *1 En.* 46 and 48, and “Messiah” in 48:10. The new creation is also mentioned in *1 En.* 72:1, where Enoch is shown the itinerary of the luminaries of heaven “till the new creation which abides forever is created.” However, *1 Enoch* is not very specific about the relationship of Jerusalem to the new creation.

*Sibylline Oracles* 5 also has a saviour figure and an extraordinary Jerusalem in a temporary situation. Lines 243–73, say that when the Persian land desists from war, “the divine and heavenly race of the blessed Jews, who live around the city of God in the middle of the earth,” will be raised up. The city will have a great wall built around it as far as Joppa. There will be no more war. A man from the sky will rescue them. Judea, the fair city, will no longer see unclean Greeks revelling around her land, but the Greeks will keep the purity laws. The wicked will hide till the world is changed. This passage seems to assign the name “Judea” to God’s city (line 263), perhaps indicating that the entire holy land takes over the role of Jerusalem. The world will still end or be changed after the events described, and the state of the city in that time is not mentioned.

The saviour figure is reintroduced in line 414. Then “the city which God desired, this he made more brilliant than stars and sun and moon, and he provided ornament and made a holy temple,” a great and immense tower, so that all righteous people see the glory of God (lines 420-29). There will be no more sin (lines 430-31). “It is the last time

of holy people when God . . . founder of the greatest temple, accomplishes these things” (lines 432–33).

*Second Baruch* has a similar scheme. As the book opens Baruch is speaking shortly before the destruction of the first Temple. He is exhorting the people to remember Zion and keep the law because soon Zion will be taken away (*2 Bar.* 31:4–5; cf. 44:7–8). Then he says, “For after a short time, the building of Zion will be shaken in order that it will be rebuilt. That building will not remain; but it will again be uprooted after some time and will remain desolate for a time. And after that it is necessary that it will be renewed in glory and that it will be perfected into eternity” (*2 Bar.* 32:2–4). God tells Baruch in chap. 39 that the kingdom that destroyed Zion [i.e. Babylon] will be destroyed and other empires will rise after each other. The fourth kingdom will be harsher and more evil. When it falls, the dominion of God’s Anointed One will be revealed. The last ruler left alive will be bound and carried to Mount Zion; God’s Anointed One will convict him and kill him and protect the people (*2 Bar.* 40:2). “His dominion will last forever until the world of corruption has ended and until the times . . . have been fulfilled” (*2 Bar.* 40:3). What will happen after that? The “until” sounds as if the “forever” is temporary. In *2 Bar.* 48:6, Baruch says to God “you prepare a house for those who will be.” In *2 Bar.* 84:8, Baruch, writing to Jeremiah and the exiles, tells the story of the fall of Jerusalem (it is presumed that the exiles had gone before this happened). He tells them, “Remember Zion and the Law and the holy land and your brothers and the covenant and your fathers, and do not forget the festivals and Sabbaths” (*2 Bar.* 84:8), and “Zion has been taken away from us, and we have nothing now apart from the Mighty One and his Law. Therefore, if we direct and dispose our hearts, we shall receive everything which we lost again by

many times” (2 *Bar.* 85:3). This may mean that they will regain Zion. In the context of the first destruction, this would mean the return from exile under Cyrus, but in the first-century context, it has a more eschatological meaning. Baruch goes on to say that the world is growing old, and will change soon, but there is no specific mention of coming back or renewing Jerusalem in this life or the next (2 *Bar.* 85:10). Probably the reader is meant to infer from 2 *Bar.* 32:4 and 85:3 that Zion will be somehow recreated and continue into eternity.

In other works, eschatological Jerusalem features prominently and clearly extends into eternity. In *Jubilees*, the good times will come after restoration from the Babylonian captivity. In *Jub.* 1:17, God says that after the captivity and repentance, “I shall build my sanctuary in their midst, and I shall dwell with them. And I shall be their God and they will be my people truly and rightly.” This will be the end of the world, the new creation. In *Jub.* 1:26, Moses is told to write all world history “until I shall descend and dwell with them in all the ages of eternity.” In *Jub.* 1:27–28, the angel too is told, “Write for Moses from the first creation until my sanctuary is built in their midst forever and forever. And the Lord will appear in the sight of all. And everyone will know that I am the God of Israel.” This sanctuary is in Jerusalem, because it says that God will be “king upon Mount Zion forever and ever. And Zion and Jerusalem will be holy.” So the angel wrote the history “from [the day of creation until] the day of the new creation when the heaven and the earth and all of their creatures shall be renewed . . . until the sanctuary of the Lord is created in Jerusalem upon Mount Zion” (1:29). *Jubilees* 4:26 also mentions “Mount Zion, which will be sanctified in the new creation for the sanctification of the earth.”



The *Testament of Dan* is similar. Dan tells his sons in *T. Dan* 5:9, “When you turn back to the Lord, you will receive mercy, and he will lead you into his holy place.” In *T.*

*Dan* 5:12–13 it says:

And the saints shall refresh themselves in Eden; the righteous shall rejoice in the New Jerusalem, which shall be eternally for the glorification of God. And Jerusalem shall no longer undergo desolation . . . because the Lord will be in her midst . . . The Holy One of Israel will rule over them in humility and poverty and he who trusts in him shall reign in truth in the heavens.

This passage adds the identification of the New Jerusalem with Eden, something we have already seen in our discussion of Adam and Jerusalem. It also appears to identify the New Jerusalem with heaven.

This survey of the Pseudepigrapha shows that Jerusalem/Zion is not important in all these eschatological scenarios. Sometimes the city is so absorbed by the Temple, the new creation, heaven or eternity as to virtually disappear.

The Qumran community saw itself as exiled temporarily from Jerusalem (1QM 1:3), but its members expected to move back there and make the city their headquarters when the eschatological vindication of the Sons of Light (themselves) commenced in the final great war.<sup>49</sup> The New Jerusalem document (4Q554–5; 5Q15; 1Q32; 2Q232; 11Q18) gives the account, which seems to be modelled on Ezek 40–48, of an eschatological city that must be Jerusalem. A guide, presumably an angel, measures off various features. The city seems to be in this world rather than in heaven.<sup>50</sup> The streets are paved with white stone, marble and jasper, and the houses are built of sapphire, ruby and gold. The city has twelve gates named for the twelve tribes of Israel, and the walls, which measure thirteen

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<sup>49</sup> Vermes, *Complete DSS*, 84. The war is described in the *War Scroll* (1QM; 1Q33; 4Q491–7; 4Q471), in which the army returns to Jerusalem after each encounter. See references in Schiffman, “Jerusalem in the DSS,” 84.

<sup>50</sup> So Wise, “NJ Texts,” 744.

by eighteen miles, include 1,432 huge towers.<sup>51</sup> It contains a temple in the midst of the city (5Q15), with worship regulations for it (11Q18). Licht notes that the streets are extremely wide, and speculates that this would be to accommodate the booths of pilgrims coming for the feast of Tabernacles.<sup>52</sup>

4Q174 (Florilegium), a midrash on 2 Sam 7, tells of an eschatological Temple built by God himself (Exod 15:17–18 is quoted). This “House” is linked to the “house” of David and David’s seed who will rule in Zion at the end of time. This final Temple will last for eternity. This is also mentioned in the *Temple Scroll* (11QT): “I will cause my glory to rest on it [the Temple] until the day of creation on which I shall create my sanctuary, establishing it for myself for all time.”<sup>53</sup> Since the previous Temple is in the holy city, this may imply an eternal new Jerusalem, perhaps the one described in the New Jerusalem scroll.<sup>54</sup>

Josephus purposely refrains from commenting on the future predicted for Israel or Jerusalem. In his discussion of Daniel’s interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the great statue, he says, “Daniel did also declare the meaning of the stone to the king, but I do not think proper to relate it, since I have only undertaken to describe things past or things present, but not things that are future” (*Ant.* 10:210). Josephus seems to have believed in a Messianic kingdom or Messiah, who would put an end to the Roman Empire.<sup>55</sup> Whatever he believed about an eschatological role for Jerusalem, he refrained from expressing it out of deference to his intended audience, the Romans. Tan points out,

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<sup>51</sup> Eisenman and Wise, *DSS Uncovered*, 39.

<sup>52</sup> Licht, “Ideal Town Plan from Qumran,” 59.

<sup>53</sup> 11QT XXIX.

<sup>54</sup> J. J. Collins, *Jerusalem and the Temple*, 24, suggests that the temple in the New Jerusalem document is the miraculously provided eschatological temple.

<sup>55</sup> Maier (trans. and ed.), *Josephus: The Essential Works*, 194, n. 1.

however, that Josephus and other historians are witnesses to the central position that Jerusalem held in the thoughts and aspirations of many Jews of that time. The various revolts and freedom movements focused on the liberation of Jerusalem as their goal and expected the Messiah to rule from there.<sup>56</sup>

### *Conclusion*

It is interesting to see ways that some Old Testament theological themes about Jerusalem and Zion are developed by various Second Temple writers. Old Testament hints about Jerusalem's status as God's holy mountain even before the Israelites get possession of it (e.g. Exod 15:13, 17) are seized upon and developed to a high degree (e.g. *T. Mos.* 1:17–18; *Apoc. Mos.* 40:6; 33:4; *1 En.* 26:1–2). Old Testament belief in the inviolability of Zion as God's holy place (e.g. Pss 46, 48) is defended in the stories about the fall of Zion, and still grasped by the Zealot fighters in first-century Jerusalem (e.g. *2 Macc* 2:4–8; *Liv. Pro.* 2:11–12; *4 Bar.* 3:10–11, 17–20; 4:4). Zion's eternal significance is defended and developed by some writers (*2 Bar.* 4:2–7; *Sib. Or.* 5:250; *2 Bar.* 3:5–7), and discounted by others (*3 Bar.* 1:3, 6). The idea of a heavenly city and Temple becomes clearer and gives hope when the earthly ones run into trouble. In some scenarios, God will build a new city and temple on earth where God will defend and protect his people (*4 Ezra* 7:26–44; *1 En.* 90:28) or maybe this heavenly city and temple will come down from heaven.<sup>57</sup> In *1 Enoch*, *Jubilees* and the *Testament of Dan* especially, and likely in *2 Baruch*, Jerusalem/Zion will exist in the new creation as the

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<sup>56</sup> Tan, *Zion Traditions*, 42–48.

<sup>57</sup> Safrai, "Heavenly Jerusalem," 15–16, reports that some Jewish sources expect the heavenly Jerusalem to descend to earth, while others expect it to stay in heaven as a counterpart to earthly Jerusalem. The idea of a descending Jerusalem is not very clear in the literature surveyed here.

home of God and his people, but there is no developed doctrine of the total merging of heaven and earth as is found in Revelation.

On the other hand, the doctrine of the Land as covenant inheritance recedes into the background in much of the Second Temple literature. Halpern-Amaru thinks this is because many of the writers have taken their eyes away from the restoration of the whole land; they feel that an emphasis on land just leads to counterproductive strategies, and restoration will come with repentance.<sup>58</sup> This literature focuses on the renewal and glorification of Jerusalem and Temple, often by divine gift breaking into history, and ushering in a new and perfect age. Thus in some Jewish circles, Jerusalem came to represent the hopes that the Land had represented in an earlier era. This is reflected in the book of Judith, where all Judith does to defeat Holofernes is so that “Jerusalem may be exalted” (10:8; 13:4–6; cf. 15:9). In these passages, Jerusalem practically stands for “Israel.”<sup>59</sup>

*Second Temple Views of Jerusalem and New Testament Reading of the Old Testament*

The Second Temple non-canonical literature emphasizes the aspect of Jerusalem as designated from the time of creation as God’s dwelling place on earth, the place where he interacts with humanity. In many of the writings, Zion and Eden are specifically identified with each other, or at least are considered to be in almost the same location. This tradition is barely hinted at in the Old Testament (Isa 51:3; Ezek 28:13; cf. Ezek 36:35) but it is strongly attested in the non-canonical literature. First-century readers

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<sup>58</sup> Halpern-Amaru, *Rewriting the Bible*, 122–23. She examines especially *L.A.B.*, *Jubilees*, the *Testament of Moses* and Josephus, and concludes that it was not the rabbis who refocused Judaism away from the Land. This had already been done in the pre-70 C.E. era by the composers of the “Rewritten Bible.”

<sup>59</sup> Cf. *4 Ezra* 14:31 where the land of Israel is called “the land of Zion.”

acquainted with this literature would be more likely to pick up on any links that might be made in the Old Testament between Eden and Zion (cf. Rev 2:7).

This literature continues to work with concepts like the inviolability of Zion and its eternal significance. The idea of a heavenly city and Temple becomes clearer, giving hope when earthly Jerusalem is in trouble.<sup>60</sup> These concepts are reflected in the fact that, in Revelation, as this world comes to an end, a Jerusalem that comes down from heaven continues as the eternal reality. The pseudepigraphical story of the preservation of the ark turns out to be true, but not in the way that that literature envisions. The ark is in the heavenly temple (Rev 11:19). It will not be retrieved from any place on earth. Like the book of Hebrews, the Second Temple tradition envisions a current heavenly temple in a heavenly city of Jerusalem.

Finally, in much of this literature the doctrine of the Land as covenant inheritance recedes into the background. Jerusalem comes to represent the hopes that the Land represented in an earlier era. This forms part of the background to the fact that in Revelation the New Jerusalem is what constitutes the new heaven *and* the new earth (or new land, γῆ).

There are also discontinuities between some ideas in this literature and the picture of the New Jerusalem in Revelation. Most, if not all, of the Second Temple literature envisions the future glorification of Jerusalem coming about through rebuilding of the city on this earth and in this world. Revelation puts the new city firmly into the world to come.

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<sup>60</sup> Safrai, "Heavenly Jerusalem," 14, sees the first unambiguous expression of the idea of a heavenly Jerusalem in *1 Enoch*. He thinks this idea was not originally a response to the imperfections of earthly Jerusalem, but was due to an eschatological hope resulting from "the deepening of religious feeling awakened by the Temple and holy city."

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE TRADITION SHIFTED:

#### JERUSALEM/ZION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT APART FROM REVELATION

##### *Introduction*

The book of Revelation stands historically within the context of the first-century Christian movement<sup>1</sup> and canonically within the Christian Scriptures. The New Testament documents are our major sources for ideas current in early Christianity. Has Revelation's picture of the New Jerusalem been significantly affected by the same ideas about Jerusalem/Zion current in the Christian movement and reflected in the other New Testament documents? In preparation to answer that question, this chapter contributes an analysis of the views of Jerusalem in the rest of the New Testament apart from Revelation. This chapter examines the New Testament documents in their canonical order<sup>2</sup> for the views of Jerusalem/Zion expressed in them.

This chapter will show that Zion theology remains an intact body of ideas, but these ideas become detached from physical, earthly Jerusalem and adhere to something else instead. Zion is always a positive term in the New Testament, but not so Jerusalem.

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<sup>1</sup> For discussions of the date of Revelation, see Beale, *Revelation*, 4–27, and Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, lxix–lxx, both of whom conclude that the later date (90s C.E. rather than 60s) is slightly more likely. This dissertation assumes a date in the 90s, but assuming the earlier date would not significantly affect the argument.

<sup>2</sup> Except that Luke and Acts are considered together. However, the fact that all four Gospels precede Acts in the canonical order makes the reader tend to interpret Acts with John's material in mind.

The New Testament materials demonstrate this shift of the Zion tradition. As Richard Bauckham says, “the literal geography of mount Zion, already laden with vast theological meaning in the Hebrew Bible, becomes an exclusively theological kind of geography in the New Testament.”<sup>3</sup>

The New Testament writers do not see themselves as contradicting the older form of the tradition. To them, the earthly Land, Temple and city were valued but temporary pictures foreshadowing the reality that had now arrived in Jesus Christ.<sup>4</sup> Now, however, their theological significance belongs to the permanent entities they have stood for, such as the church community, the heavenly/new Jerusalem, and Jesus himself. In this scheme, the renewed community of Zion takes on great significance. Earthly Jerusalem ceases to be the “place” of their communion with God. This communion is experienced “already,” albeit imperfectly, wherever the saints are gathered and the Spirit of Jesus is present. But this does not mean elimination of the Jerusalem idea, because their citizenship is in the heavenly Jerusalem. Their full intimacy with God and Jesus awaits consummation and perfection there after death or at the parousia of Jesus. It is left for the book of Revelation to show the development of this intimacy from the situation of the church age into the New Jerusalem of the new creation.

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<sup>3</sup> Bauckham, *Bible and Mission*, 45.

<sup>4</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, sees these three entities as so intertwined that in several sections he treats the Land and Temple as well as Jerusalem to get at the NT writer’s view of the city.

### *Jerusalem in Matthew*

At first glance, Matthew has some very positive things to say about Jerusalem. It is “the holy city” (Matt 4:5; 27:53), the “city of the Great King” (5:35), and the Jerusalem Temple is “the holy place” (24:15)<sup>5</sup> where God dwells (23:21).

#### *Jerusalem Viewed Negatively*

There are, however, many more indications of a less positive view of the city. The book begins with the magi seeking the king of the Jews. They come, naturally, to Jerusalem, but he is *not* there. Herod and all Jerusalem are *disturbed* at the possibility that the Messiah has been born (Matt 2:3). How then can Jerusalem really be the “city of the Great King”? The devil has access to the Jerusalem Temple. He takes Jesus there to tempt him (Matt 4:5). Once Jesus begins his ministry, many Jerusalemites come to hear him, but they have to *leave* Jerusalem to do so (Matt 4:25, cf. 3:5). Others come from Jerusalem, Pharisees and teachers of the law, to accuse and question him (Matt 15:1). Jesus repeatedly warns his disciples that when they reach Jerusalem, he will be killed by the Jewish leaders (Matt 16:21; 20:18–19). He always locates God’s throne in heaven, not Jerusalem (Matt 5:34; 23:22).<sup>6</sup> When Jesus is transfigured, speaks with heavenly figures, and hears God’s voice, it is not in Jerusalem but on a lonely mountain that appears to be in or near Galilee (Matt 17:1–5).<sup>7</sup> He clears the Jerusalem Temple, claiming

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<sup>5</sup> Most commentators identify “the holy place” here with the Temple; see for example, Carson, “Matthew,” 500, and Hill, *Matthew*, 321.

<sup>6</sup> Jesus uses the Isa 66:1 location of God’s footstool as earth rather than Zion/Temple/ark (as in 1 Chr 28:2; Pss 99:5; 132:7; Lam 2:1), thus perhaps reducing the importance of Jerusalem. Cf. Stephen’s use of Isa 66:1 in Acts 7:49.

<sup>7</sup> Donaldson, *Jesus on the Mountain*, 142, who identifies the mountain motif in Matthew with Zion, since both are “eschatological sites” (pp. 190, 197–202), disputed by Allison, *The New Moses*, 324–25, who sees the mountain motif controlled by Sinai allusions, although in the OT Zion takes on many Sinai functions, such as the place of giving the law (e.g. Isa 2:1–4). The point here is that the Gospels make use of a place other than Jerusalem as the mountain where there is optimum communication with God. It is the presence of Jesus that makes that communication possible.



that the traders have made it a “den of robbers” (Matt 21:3) and predicts its destruction (24:1–2), and the destruction of the city, as divine judgment for the city’s rejection of himself (22:7; 23:35–39). Jesus is crucified at Jerusalem, but dies and is buried outside the city (Matt 27:32; 28:11) while, back inside Jerusalem, there is a plot to conceal the truth of his resurrection (28:11–15). Thus, there is no special glory attached to Jerusalem for being the site of the resurrection. The Great Commission is given from Galilee, and the sphere mentioned for making disciples is “all nations” (Matt 28:16–20).

Matthew takes special pains to show Jesus’ attitude and relationship to earthly Jerusalem in Matt 21–24. The first important incident is the “triumphal entry” (Matt 21:1–11). Here, Jesus arranges the detail of the colt so that he can enter Jerusalem as her king (fulfilling Zech 9:9) and perhaps imitating the crowning of Solomon (1 Kgs 1:33).<sup>8</sup> The crowds do acclaim him as “Son of David,” a kingly and messianic title. But when others ask them who he is, they reply, “Jesus the prophet from Nazareth” (Matt 21:9, 11), rather than, “Jesus, Israel’s king.”<sup>9</sup> By entering on the donkey and receiving the royal title from the crowd, Jesus makes a claim to be king of Zion. This means that he identifies with the Davidic and perhaps even the divine kingship. In the post-exilic era, the restoration of Jerusalem was incomplete, partly because there was no restoration of the Davidic monarchy. Jesus here offers to make up that lack. Ensuing events, however, will show the city, or at least its leaders, rejecting his offer (e.g. Matt 21:15).<sup>10</sup>

The next major incident concerning Jerusalem is the cleansing of the Temple (Matt 21:12–17). As Jesus offered to restore Jerusalem by being her king, here he offers

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<sup>8</sup> So Tan, *Zion Traditions*, 149.

<sup>9</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 14–28*, 596.

<sup>10</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 33 says, “When therefore a few chapters later Jesus is rejected by the city’s authorities, the reader realizes the great tragedy that has occurred. The ‘city of the Great King’ has rejected that King.”

to cleanse her Temple. He wants the Temple (which, quoting Isa 56:7, he calls God's house) to be a house of prayer. The Temple as intended by God was a good thing, but now people have corrupted it.<sup>11</sup> The Jews expected Messiah to purify the Temple,<sup>12</sup> and here Jesus shows his intention to do so. He acts in the Temple as one who has authority there.<sup>13</sup> Jesus' cleansing action too is rejected by the Jewish leaders (Matt 21:23). The result will be that the Temple has gone so far wrong that, to be cleansed, it must be totally destroyed (Matt 24:1–2).

The "cursing of the fig tree" (Matt 21:18–22) has been interpreted by many as an action symbolic of the destruction of the Jews, Jerusalem and/or the Temple.<sup>14</sup> Even if, with Carson, it is seen as an indictment of hypocrites, who look fruitful but are not,<sup>15</sup> it is directed against the leaders who reject him and the result is still the destruction of Jerusalem. Davies and Allison point out that the position of this pericope between two others that signal judgment on Jerusalem is significant, signalling that the old "house of prayer" is to be replaced by the new one, the church.<sup>16</sup>

Jesus' attitude to Jerusalem also comes out in the parable of the tenants (Matt 21:33–45). The parable does not mention any city. The vineyard is arguably all Israel, but the tenants are the Jewish leaders, and they were, in fact, centred in Jerusalem. Also, if

<sup>11</sup> Carson, "Matthew," 442, suggests, citing C. K. Barrett ("The House of Prayer and the Den of Thieves," in Earle E. Ellis and E. Grässer, eds., *Jesus und Paulus* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975], 16) that "thieves" (λησται) are nationalist rebels. See also Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 11.

<sup>12</sup> See Stuhlmacher, "Stellung Jesu," 143–44, and Carson, "Matthew," 442, for evidence, e.g. *Pss. Sol.* 17:30. Cf. Mal 3:1–4.

<sup>13</sup> Morris, *Matthew*, 526. The two actions are parallel: Jesus enters Jerusalem as king and the Temple as one in charge.

<sup>14</sup> See e.g. de Young, *Jerusalem in the NT*, 83–85; Telford, *Barren Temple*, 238. The mountain to be cast into the sea could then be the Temple mount (so Beale, *Temple*, 183, and N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 422)—but it seems unlikely that Jesus would ask his disciples to take on the destruction of the Temple. Note evaluation of Telford's position in Carson, "Matthew," 444. Morris, *Matthew*, 532, takes it to be the Mount of Olives; but a mountain generally, representing any problem, may be all Jesus intends. Still, the literary context of the pericope suggests the destruction of Jerusalem.

<sup>15</sup> Carson, "Matthew," 445–46.

<sup>16</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:153–54.

the owner's son represents Jesus in this parable, his death did take place just outside Jerusalem. That Jesus died outside the walls of the city can be related to Matt 21:39, which says they "threw him out . . . and killed him."<sup>17</sup> Thus it is legitimate to discern some of Jesus' attitude to Jerusalem from this parable.<sup>18</sup>

The kingdom will be taken from these leaders and given to a nation (ἔθνος) who will give the owner his fruit (Matt 21:43). That another nation will receive the kingdom is a prediction that is bound to affect the future of Jerusalem, the city that has been the capital of the Jewish nation.

The parable of the wedding banquet (Matt 22:1–14) contains an ominous line that likely applies to Jerusalem. When the invited guests refused the banquet invitation and killed the messengers, the king "sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burnt their city" (Matt 22:7). Carson denies that this refers to 70 C.E.,<sup>19</sup> but the reference seems so obvious that others think it indicates a post-70 C.E. addition.<sup>20</sup> Walker notes, "Whether or not this is a *post-eventum* allusion to the events of A.D. 70, Matthew is highlighting what it means for a city to respond negatively to God's message."<sup>21</sup> What other city was receiving that message in the context of Matthew's Gospel but Jerusalem?<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Nolland, *Matthew*, 875, suggests a link to this passion detail. Tasker, *Matthew*, 204, says, "He is the Messiah . . . destined . . . to be slain outside the vineyard of Israel." Morris, *Matthew*, 542, suggests that killing the son inside the vineyard would make the place and its fruit unclean, therefore unmarketable.

<sup>18</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 35, ably defends the use of this parable to discern Jesus' attitude to Jerusalem.

<sup>19</sup> Carson, "Matthew," 457. But see a contrary view, that this is a veiled prediction of 70 C.E., in de Young, *Jerusalem in the NT*, 82.

<sup>20</sup> E.g. Hill, *Matthew*, 302; Tasker, *Matthew*, 207–8.

<sup>21</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 35.

<sup>22</sup> Morris, *Matthew*, 550, n.15, denies that the city in question could be Jerusalem since all Jerusalem was not actually burned, just the Temple. But this objection only holds if in fact this verse was added after the actual events. Nolland, *Matthew*, 887, writes, "That the perpetrators should all inhabit a single city is not, however, provided with any narrative justification. Matthew almost certainly has Jesus addressing the Jerusalem leaders."

A revealing passage is Jesus' lament over Jerusalem in Matt 23:37–39. Though Jesus condemns Jerusalem for killing prophets and stoning messengers, he speaks with obvious anguish at the city's refusal to let him gather and protect her children. The result (“your house is left to you desolate”)<sup>23</sup> comes across as an inevitable natural consequence rather than a divinely inflicted judgment. The unwilling city rejects Jesus—and only his presence comforts. As God abandoned the city in Ezekiel's day, leaving her open to destruction by enemies, so God/Jesus now abandons Jerusalem. Jerusalem is only secure because God dwells there; even if the word “desolate” is not original,<sup>24</sup> God's exit assures this outcome. Some day, indeed, Jerusalem will acknowledge him (v. 39). “Until you say” most likely refers to the parousia. Jesus leaves it open as to whether this acknowledgment will be willing or compelled, and interpreters are divided on how to interpret this saying.<sup>25</sup>

Finally, Jesus predicts the destruction of the Temple in Matt 24:1–2. In Matt 23:38, he says, “your house is left to you.” Then in Matt 24:1, he leaves the Temple, probably as a symbol of this abandonment.<sup>26</sup> This sets the stage for the prediction of doom that follows. So great will the destruction be that “not one stone here will be left on another.” The destruction will involve more than just the Temple, as Matt 24:15–20

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<sup>23</sup> Morris, *Matthew*, 591, affirms that this expression means that the city has become desolate both physically and spiritually. “Your house” may be the Temple, but many interpreters see it as encompassing the city and even the nation. See Carson, “Matthew,” 487; Hill, *Matthew*, 316. Hartman, “Ἱεροσόλυμα, Ἱερουσαλήμ,” 177, holds that Jerusalem stands for Israel. For a survey of opinions, see Tan, *Zion Traditions*, 113–15.

<sup>24</sup> The word ἔρημος is not found in B, L, *et al.* but appears in **N**, C *et al.* The word is more likely to have been missing from the original of the parallel passage in Luke 13:35.

<sup>25</sup> E.g. Lohse, *TDNT* 7:329, and Nolland, *Matthew*, 952–53, think Jerusalem will then joyfully accept Jesus. Hagner, *Matthew 14–28*, 681, thinks this is a remote possibility. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3: 323, nn. 73, 74, list commentators on both sides, and conclude that Jesus is saying he will not come until Israel decides to welcome him.

<sup>26</sup> This detail is noted as perhaps symbolic by various interpreters, e.g. de Young, *Jerusalem in the NT*, 88–89; Carson, “Matthew,” 488, 496; and Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 30–31, 52.

demonstrates. Those outside the city will be affected (v. 18) and Judea as a whole (v. 16). People will not flee *into* Jerusalem for safety, but away from it to the hills.<sup>27</sup> Unlike the Old Testament prophets, Jesus does not follow up his disaster prediction with a vision of restoration for Jerusalem. True, the elect will be gathered from everywhere (Matt 24:31); their master will put them in charge of his goods (Matt 24:27; 25:21, 23); they will go into the wedding banquet (Matt 25:10), and inherit the kingdom prepared for them since the foundation of the world (Matt 25:34). But there is no mention of rebuilding the city. As well, by his instruction to flee Jerusalem when it is attacked (Matt 24:16), his advice to give to Caesar what is Caesar's (Matt 22:21), his denial that he is leading a rebellion (Matt 26:55; cf. 4:8–10) and his expectation of death at Jerusalem, Jesus shows that he does not aim at or expect the restoration of an earthly Jewish kingdom or its capital city.<sup>28</sup>

#### *Jesus Replaces Zion as the Dwelling Place of God*

Matthew clearly presents a Jerusalem that has been God's city in the past, but by rejecting Jesus is now on its way out. But this does not mean the death of all the Zion traditions. The essence of Zion is that God dwells there. If he will no longer dwell in Jerusalem, he does still dwell with his people in Jesus, who is "God with us" (Matt 1:22). He is also "with" two or three who gather in his name (Matt 18:20), and "with" his people to the end of the age (Matt 28:20; contrast 23:38–39).<sup>29</sup> Jesus is thus portrayed as the true location of the *shekinah* glory. Jesus may well be the "something greater than the temple" that Jesus claims has now come (Matt 12:6).<sup>30</sup> He is the location of God among

<sup>27</sup> Noted e.g. by de Young, *Jerusalem in the NT*, 96; Tasker, *Matthew*, 224.

<sup>28</sup> See discussion in Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 42 and Waltke, *OT Theology*, 561–67. Waltke states, "No New Testament passage predicts or cites an Old Testament prophecy that it [Jerusalem] will be rebuilt" (p. 567).

<sup>29</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 30.

<sup>30</sup> For alternative interpretations see discussion in Carson, "Matthew," 281–82. He supports the view that μετίζου refers to Jesus.

people, so he is the fulfillment of God's promises to dwell among his people that the Tabernacle/Temple once represented. He dwells among his people anywhere they are, not just in Jerusalem.

*Jesus Replaces Zion as the True People of God and as Destination of the Pilgrimage of the Nations*

Jesus is the true embodiment of Israel (e.g. he comes out of Egypt, passes the test in the wilderness, is the true vine, is God's son),<sup>31</sup> and the promises of Zion's renewal begin with his resurrection, which is the rebuilding of the Temple (Matt 26:61; cf. John 2:19–21).<sup>32</sup> Jesus commands the eleven disciples to make disciples (i.e. of Jesus) of all nations (Matt 28:19). The envisioned loyalty of the nations to Jesus, and coming to him as disciples (μαθηταί, learners), who are to be taught everything Jesus had commanded (28:20) has some features in common with the gathering of the nations to Zion, where they go to receive God's instruction (Isa 2:3; cf. 51:4). Jesus finishes by stating, "Behold I am with you all the days until the end of the age." This reiteration of the promise to "be with" can be compared to the significance of Zion as the place where God is "with" his people. Jesus gives this command on a mountain, which hints at links to Zion or Sinai, but the mountain is not at Jerusalem but in Galilee.<sup>33</sup> However, the location of Christ's presence is not on that mountain only, but wherever he accompanies disciples among the nations.

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<sup>31</sup> Carson, "Matthew," 91.

<sup>32</sup> Jesus' choice of 12 apostles arguably represents reconstitution of the 12 tribes, the reuniting of all the tribes in the age of renewal. See Carson, "Matthew," 236, who says the Twelve "point to the eschatological renewal of the people of God."

<sup>33</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 46, quotes Donaldson, *Jesus on the Mountain*, 200, who says, "The mountain-motif is a device used by the evangelist to make the Christological statement that Christ has replaced Zion as the centre of God's dealings with his people; in him, all the hopes associated with Zion have come to fruition and fulfilment."

### *Conclusion*

Thus it is possible to see Matthew as presenting Jesus as the true Israel and the true Zion, the one of whom Zion of old was a foreshadowing. Matthew also sees Jesus as the true king of Zion, making Zion equivalent to the followers of Jesus. They are the “city set on a hill” (Matt 5:14). Jesus does expect to be king over a future kingdom which he will share with his followers (Matt 25:31–34) but this kingdom is associated with heaven not earth (19:8; 20:21–28; 26:29, 31, 64). Earthly Jerusalem is losing its place in God’s program.

### *Jerusalem in Mark*

Whether Mark or Matthew was written first,<sup>34</sup> Mark lacks the positive statements about Jerusalem found in Matthew.<sup>35</sup> He and Matthew share negative notice of the city: people come away from Jerusalem to hear Jesus (Mark 3:8; cf. 1:4); leaders come from Jerusalem and question and accuse him (Mark 3:22; 7:1–5); Jesus operates on mountains that are not at Jerusalem (calling apostles Mark 3:13; transfiguration 9:2);<sup>36</sup> Jesus predicts his death at the hands of the elders, chief priests, and teachers of the law, who, of course, are at Jerusalem (Mark 8:31; 9:31), and, finally, mentions Jerusalem specifically as where he will be killed (Mark 10:33). At Jericho, on the way to Jerusalem, Bartimaeus calls

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<sup>34</sup> I am here following the canonical order, but there is much evidence to suggest that Mark was written first. See the discussion in Evans, “Sorting.” This may be why Mark’s account of this topic is less developed than Matthew’s. However, because Matthew comes first, we interpret Mark from a background of Matthew’s fuller exposition.

<sup>35</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 22–23, 55, suggests this is because Matthew has a strong emotional attachment to the city, while Mark, writing in far away Rome, has no need to be as diplomatic toward pro-Jerusalem sentiments.

<sup>36</sup> Many commentators have seen allusions in the transfiguration story to the theophanies experienced by Moses on Sinai (Exod 31:18) and Elijah on Mount Horeb (1 Kgs 19:8). See Carson, “Matthew,” 383–85. The point here is that Matthew chooses Sinai rather than Jerusalem as the model for these actions of Jesus, but he also demonstrates that Jesus connects to Israel’s history at many points.

Jesus “Son of David” (a royal title) and, indeed, Jesus enters Jerusalem as Zion’s king, where he is heralded by the crowd with the words, “blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David.” As king he clears the traders and carriers from the Temple,<sup>37</sup> saying they have made it a den of robbers rather than a house of prayer (Mark 11:17).<sup>38</sup> But he does not sleep in Jerusalem: at night he goes out to the Mount of Olives (Mark 11:11, 19; cf. 14:13). He curses the fig tree and speaks of casting a mountain into the sea (see discussion above).<sup>39</sup> His authority is questioned in the Temple courts (Mark 11:27). And finally, the Jerusalem authorities condemn him to death.

Jesus appears to be very intentional about going to Jerusalem for his death (Mark 10:32–33, 45), but that does not excuse the city for its treatment of him. He predicts the destruction of the Temple (Mark 13:2) and urges flight at that time from Judea into the mountains (Mark 13:14), which implies destruction of the entire city.

Jesus goes into the city to eat the Passover (Mark 14:16), but again leaves for the night (14:26). He is brought back into the city for trial and punishment (Mark 14:53—15:20) and finally taken outside it again to be crucified (15:20). His final rendezvous with his disciples is to be in Galilee (Mark 14:28; 16:7) not Jerusalem.

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<sup>37</sup> Only in Mark is it noted that Jesus waits until the following day to clear the Temple. Several explanations for this have been suggested. See Yang, “Reading Mark 11,” 92–95, who notes Mark’s use of the “sandwich” structure of imbedding one story in another. Here the cursing of the fig tree is imbedded in the story of cleansing the Temple to show that the two actions interpret each other. Jerusalem is the fruitless fig tree that will be destroyed. With an additional option, Stanley E. Porter (personal conversation, August 2007) suggests that Jesus waits until the next day to show that he gives the Jerusalem leaders time to consider his kingly claims before he takes action. He appears to really be offering the option of the true renewal of Jerusalem under his Davidic kingship at that time (cf. comments above on the triumphal entry and cleansing of the Temple in Matthew, and a further offer suggested in Acts 3:19–20).

<sup>38</sup> So Lightfoot, *Mark*, 60–62.

<sup>39</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 5–6, believes that the cursing of the fig tree incident as sandwiched with the cleansing of the Temple indicates that the latter was an act foreshadowing judgment on the Temple and city. See also de Young, *Jerusalem in the NT*, 85.



Like Matthew, though not as clearly, Mark presents Jesus as the new fulfillment of what the Temple and Jerusalem were supposed to be for God's people.<sup>40</sup> Walker, agreeing with J. Marcus, discusses Jesus as the fulfiller and fulfilment of the prophecies of Zion's restoration.<sup>41</sup> The account is full of pathos as Zion's king arrives at last but is rejected. There is irony and paradox too as, instead of a powerful Messiah arriving on the Mount of Olives to defeat attacking Gentiles and purify the Temple, Jesus is arrested on the Mount of Olives, is killed by the Gentiles and predicts the destruction of the Temple. But by this and his resurrection, Jesus *does* fulfil the Old Testament hope of the gathering of a transformed people into God's kingdom.<sup>42</sup> The action of Mark's Gospel moves toward Jerusalem as its critical point, but renewal on God's terms of receiving Jesus as being from God is unacceptable to the leaders (Mark 12:6–12). Mark 16:7 (cf. 12:9; 13:10) shows that from the resurrection of Jesus onward, the movement will be away from Jerusalem. Matthew and Mark thus share the view that with the rejection of Jesus, earthly Jerusalem has passed up its chance to be renewed and has been eclipsed in the program of God.

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<sup>40</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 8–12, sees evidence that Jesus replaces the Temple in: the offering of the woman who anointed him (14:1–9) contrasted with the woman who offers to the Temple that will be destroyed (12:41–44); the gathering of all the elect, presumably to the Son of Man (13:26–27); and the partial truth in the accusation that Jesus said “I will destroy this man-made temple and in three days will build another, not made by man” (14:58), which hints that the resurrection of Jesus equals the building of the new Temple. He also includes the tearing of the Temple's veil at the death of Jesus symbolizing the destruction of the old Temple as the new one is about to rise. In my opinion, these passages do betray Mark's attitude but are not very explicit as “teaching” about the changed status of the city. Mark's focus is on the identity of Jesus not of Jerusalem.

<sup>41</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 18, quotes Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 36, 160–61. Marcus comes to this conclusion by examining how Mark has used Zech 9–14 in the passion narrative.

<sup>42</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 17–20. Cf. Isaiah's vision that a purified remnant is the key to a renewed Zion.

*Jerusalem in Luke-Acts*

*The Gospel*

Luke has more to say about Jerusalem than the other Synoptic writers.<sup>43</sup> The Gospel begins in Jerusalem with Zechariah in the Temple, has an extended travel narrative moving Jesus toward Jerusalem, and ends in Jerusalem with the ascension. Acts begins in Jerusalem but moves out toward the ends of the earth. Jerusalem thus becomes a kind of pivot or hinge for the whole story.<sup>44</sup> Walker, however, notes that the hinge is actually on the Mount of Olives, just *outside* Jerusalem. Already, the city ceases to be the centre.<sup>45</sup>

At the beginning of the Gospel, the Temple in Jerusalem is a place where God communicates. Zechariah sees an angel who tells him of the birth of the forerunner of Christ (Luke 1:8–22). Joseph and Mary take the baby to present him to the Lord at Jerusalem,<sup>46</sup> and Simeon receives a revelation that the infant Jesus is the Messiah (Luke 2:25–32). The prophetess Anna speaks about him to “all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem” (Luke 2:38). There is thus set up an expectation that Jesus will redeem Jerusalem.<sup>47</sup>

At the age of twelve Jesus accompanies his parents to Jerusalem for the Passover (Luke 2:41). He stays there, and is found in the Temple, which he calls “my father’s

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<sup>43</sup> Since H. Conzelmann’s influential study, *Die Mitte der Zeit: Studien zur Theologie des Lukas*, Jerusalem has been seen as a significant aspect of Luke’s theology. Part One of Conzelmann’s work is entitled “Geographical Elements in the Composition of Luke’s Gospel.”

<sup>44</sup> So various interpreters agree: see Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 58, n. 5, for some references.

<sup>45</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 81.

<sup>46</sup> Stuhlmacher, “Stellung Jesu,” 142, notes that, according to the Law of Moses, dedication of a firstborn son could be done by any priest in any town; the fact that Jesus was dedicated in Jerusalem heightens the significance of the city in Luke’s Gospel.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. 1:68; 2:25. Jerusalem here may stand for all Israel. So Green, *Luke*, 152.

[house].”<sup>48</sup> Thus far, Luke’s presentation of Jerusalem and the Temple accords with the Old Testament. This is the place to find God, and where God meets and acts for his people. Luke thus stresses the continuity of his story with God’s action in earlier times.

When Jesus grows up and begins his ministry, however, the picture changes. The devil tempts Jesus at Jerusalem (Luke 4:9), Pharisees and teachers of the law from Jerusalem are critical of Jesus (Luke 5:17, 21). People come away from Jerusalem to hear Jesus (Luke 6:17–18).<sup>49</sup> Jesus predicts that he will be killed at Jerusalem (Luke 9:22, 44; 18:31–33). All in Jerusalem are as guilty as the eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell, and must repent or perish (Luke 13:4–5). He operates on mountains that are not in Jerusalem (Luke 6:12–13 choosing the twelve; 9:28 transfiguration). In the transfiguration scene, Moses and Elijah speak with Jesus about his “exodus,” which he is about to accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke 9:31).<sup>50</sup> This styles Jerusalem as a kind of Egypt<sup>51</sup> and heaven as the “promised land,” since Jesus is going to reach heaven via Jerusalem (Luke 9:51). Jesus is determined to go to Jerusalem despite opposition from Samaritans (Luke 9:53). It is the correct place for his death and resurrection to happen. It is the place where all prophets perish (Luke 13:33).

The Lucan “travel narrative” begins with Luke 9:51: “As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.” Craig Evans points out that the expression “set his face” likely takes its colour from Jeremiah and Ezekiel (LXX) where it is used in contexts of threatening judgment, giving a hint of Jerusalem’s

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<sup>48</sup> The phrase τοῖς τοῦ πατρός μου could be interpreted as “my father’s house” or “my father’s business.” See defence of the first meaning in Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 129.

<sup>49</sup> Note also that the “neighbour” who should be helped is coming *away* from Jerusalem (10:30) and the tax collector who prays “from afar” is justified (18:9–14).

<sup>50</sup> As God spoke with Moses on Horeb (Exod 3:1–10) about the exodus he was to accomplish from Egypt.

<sup>51</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 79. See a list of interpreters who see Jerusalem styled as Egypt in Luke, in Bovon, *Luke the Theologian*, 102.

coming doom.<sup>52</sup> The travel narrative continues with notices of progress toward Jerusalem in Luke 13:22, 32–33; 17:11; 18:31; 19:11, 28, and 41, until Jesus finally arrives in the Temple in 19:45. Jesus uses the Temple as the place to contact the people of Jerusalem and give them his teaching (Luke 19:47; 20:1; 21:37–38; cf. 22:53) but he does not sleep in Jerusalem (21:37; 22:39).<sup>53</sup> Luke’s account comes third in the canonical Gospels. Matthew and Mark seem to leave open the possibility that Jerusalem could receive Jesus, repent and be renewed. The Gospel of Luke starts out on a hopeful note (Luke 1:68–79; 2:38), but by this stage of the narrative, the possibility of Jerusalem’s repentance and renewal is almost precluded.

Luke places four important oracles about Jerusalem in the mouth of Jesus during this journey and after he arrives. The first, as the journey commences, is in Luke 13:32–35. Some Pharisees warn Jesus to go away because Herod wants to kill him. Jesus will indeed leave Herod’s jurisdiction as he goes toward Jerusalem, but he takes the occasion to say that he is not going to be rushed off by this threat. Jesus has a program of casting out demons and healing people, which he will surely accomplish before he dies.<sup>54</sup> And prophets cannot die outside of Jerusalem.<sup>55</sup> Jerusalem kills prophets and stones those sent to her. The implication is that Jesus is a prophet and a messenger sent to Jerusalem (i.e. Jesus has a specific mission to the city, cf. Anna’s message in Luke 2:38), and that Jerusalem will not welcome him. Not only is Jesus a messenger and prophet, he expresses

<sup>52</sup> Evans, “He Set his Face,” 100–101.

<sup>53</sup> Green, *Luke*, 743, thinks this is just because Jesus could not find lodging in Jerusalem, crowded as it was at festival time. But theologically, there may be more to it than that (cf. Ps 132:4–5).

<sup>54</sup> τελειοῦμαι in v. 36 may mean to “complete” his work, or, following Derrett, “The Lucan Christ and Jerusalem,” 36, to “die.” Bovon, *L’évangile selon Saint Luc 9,51–14,35*, 400, sees also the possibility of a passive meaning, “to be brought to completion,” signalling the work of the Father in directing Jesus’ career. The three meanings are complementary as Jesus’ death is his goal and the completing of God’s program for him.

<sup>55</sup> Liefeld, “Luke,” 974, points out the use of deterministic language in this speech. E.g. δεῖ, τελειοῦμαι, οὐκ ἐνδέχεται.

*divine* sentiments toward the city: “How often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing” (Luke 13:34; cf. Deut 32:11–12; Isa 31:5). This brings into the picture the whole history of God’s troubled relationship with Jerusalem. God is visiting his city again in the person of Jesus, but again, Jerusalem is rejecting him. As in Jeremiah’s day (Jer 12:7), the result is clear—God will abandon the city and leave it defenceless.<sup>56</sup> The city will not see Jesus again until it says, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.” Although Luke (contra Matthew) puts this saying before the triumphal entry, it is clear that Jesus is not talking about that occasion. “Again” is subsequent to his entire earthly life, that is, at the parousia.<sup>57</sup> Jesus knew that he would not be setting up his kingdom in Jerusalem any time soon (Luke 19:11).

The second major oracle about Jerusalem is in Luke 19:41–44. Jesus speaks these words on the Mount of Olives, moments before he reaches his goal and enters Jerusalem. His first oracle (Luke 13:32–35), beginning with the name of Jerusalem repeated, and the mothering figure, had an atmosphere of tragic tenderness. A similar mood is evoked here by the tears of Jesus and his words “if only.” What would bring Jerusalem peace is hidden from her eyes. She has not recognized the time of God’s visitation. The tragic result will be siege by enemies; she and the children Jesus would have gathered will be dashed to the ground; no stone will be left on another. This oracle implies that the coming

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<sup>56</sup> Weinert, “Luke, the Temple,” 71–72, contends that while in Matthew’s version of this saying, the “house” is the Temple, in Luke’s, it is the Jerusalem leadership because elsewhere Luke has only a positive view of the Temple. This would be disputed by many. Weinert (p. 76) then suggests that in Luke, since the word “desolate” found in the Matthean parallel is probably missing, Jesus is promising to leave the Jerusalem leaders undisturbed for a while but that this will change when Jesus gets to Jerusalem. But this time lapse is so small as to be insignificant.

<sup>57</sup> See support for this interpretation in Bock, *Luke*, 1251, and Liefeld, “Luke,” 975, who notes that Luke specifies in his account of the triumphal entry (Luke 19:37–38) that the words are spoken only by Jesus’ supporters, not the Jerusalemites.

of Jesus is God's visitation (cf. Luke 1:68, 78),<sup>58</sup> and Jerusalem's disaster will be the direct result of her rejection of Jesus.<sup>59</sup>

The third oracle is Luke 21:20–24. This is part of the Olivet discourse. Jesus has already said in Luke 21:6 that no stone of the Temple will be left on another. Now he speaks more specifically about Jerusalem than Matthew or Mark do. The sign to look for is not the abomination of desolation in the Temple, but armies surrounding the city. There is specific instruction to *flee* Jerusalem rather than seeking safety there (Luke 21:21). What will happen will be punishment or retribution (ἐκδικήσις) against “this people” (λαός), in fulfilment of what has been written (probably Old Testament oracles against sinful Jerusalem).<sup>60</sup> The disciples of Jesus are therefore asked to distance themselves from Jerusalem and the people of Israel who have rejected him (and them, vv. 12–17), so as not to share in the punishment (cf. Jer 21:9, about coming out of Jerusalem, and even Jer 51:45, 50 about coming out of Babylon).<sup>61</sup> Jerusalem and Israel will be dispersed, but the followers of Jesus see their own redemption drawing near (Luke 21:28, cf. 21:18). “Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (v. 24). This last verse may indicate a future for the city,<sup>62</sup> but what that might be is not indicated, nor is whether or not it comes before the end of the age. Luke here

<sup>58</sup> So Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian*, 155.

<sup>59</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 74–75, says that, at a political level, Luke thinks that Jerusalem must be destroyed because of her exclusivist attitude to Rome (not knowing the peace terms). However, Walker recognizes that, to Luke, the chief cause is the attitude of Jerusalem to Jesus and his followers. See Green, *Luke*, 689–90.

<sup>60</sup> Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 773, suggests 1 Kgs 9:6–9; Dan 9:26; Mic 3:12. In rejecting Jesus, Jerusalem has set in motion the same process that happened in the sixth century B.C.E.

<sup>61</sup> See Giblin, *Destruction of Jerusalem*, 56, 87. Jerusalem takes the character of a “worldly city liable to judgment.” Its ruin is described in Luke 19:28–44 and the Olivet discourse in the kinds of words used in OT prophecies of sinful Jerusalem (Ezek 4:1–2; Isa 3:26) and Babylon (Ps 137:9) etc. The comparison with Babylon is even clearer in Rev 18:4. de Young, *Jerusalem in the NT*, 99–102, relates this passage to Rev 11:8 where the city where the Lord was crucified is called Babylon, Sodom and Egypt, all of them places from which the righteous were told to flee.

<sup>62</sup> Marshall, *Luke: Historian*, 158, n. 1, and p. 187, thinks this possibility is open, but see next footnote.

separates the fall of Jerusalem from the end of the world—there will be an interval between them.<sup>63</sup>

The fourth oracle is Luke 23:27–31. As Jesus is being led away to be crucified, he says to the women wailing for him, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children.”<sup>64</sup> He predicts a time when being a mother in Jerusalem will be more painful than having no children, implying a time of terrible suffering, in which people will prefer death to life (quoting Hos 10:8). Finally, the cryptic “If they do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?” implies that the cruel injustice being done to him, for which they are weeping, is nothing compared to the cruelties that will be perpetrated on the people of Jerusalem in the coming time of distress. Jesus minimizes even his own suffering in the light of what is about to happen to Jerusalem within the lifetime of those standing by.<sup>65</sup> Thus the high hopes for the redemption of Jerusalem found at the beginning of Luke’s Gospel (Luke 1:68–79; 2:38) cannot be fulfilled in the way the Jews had hoped. Jesus will rise, but Jerusalem will not. If the Zion tradition is to be carried forward, it will not be by the earthly city of Jerusalem.

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<sup>63</sup> De Young, *Jerusalem in the NT*, 98, takes the point at which the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled to be the end of the age, and so comments, “This judgment marks the end of Jerusalem’s validity in the history of redemption.” Giblin, *Destruction of Jerusalem*, 89–91, takes “the times of the Gentiles” to mean the time of the demise of the Gentiles and of the whole world, including Jerusalem, not a time when the Jews will be restored to the city.

<sup>64</sup> Neyrey, “Address to the Women,” 75, concludes that the Daughters of Jerusalem are “the element of Israel who continually rejected God’s messengers,” and that this oracle has been created by Luke to pronounce doom on the city as a kind of *vaticinium ex eventu* prophecy, highlighting God’s judgment on unrepentant non-Christian Jews. He concludes that all four Jerusalem oracles of Luke are prophetic denunciations like those of the OT prophets rather than appeals to repent.

<sup>65</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 77–78, sees Jesus here identifying his suffering at the hands of Rome as a foretaste of what the Romans will do to the city as a whole, implying that his death is prophetic of the city’s fate, and identifies with it. This does not seem to match with Jesus’ statement “your house is left to you desolate” which implies Jesus distancing himself from the city and its fate. Perhaps only in the sense that in his death Jesus identifies with all sinners can his identification with Jerusalem here be considered valid.

The last chapter of Luke's Gospel continues in the Jerusalem area with the resurrection appearances of Jesus (Luke 24:13–42), commissioning of the disciples (24:43–48) and Jesus' ascension (24:50–51). Walker sees the exit from Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives for the ascension as symbolic of a final "exodus" from Jerusalem.<sup>66</sup> This may be stretching the evidence somewhat, since in Luke's sequel (Acts) the Holy Spirit is poured out within the city. However, Jesus does perform the priestly act of blessing here outside the city,<sup>67</sup> and rises to heaven, not from the Temple Mount, but from the Mount of Olives. Luke closes with the continued worship of the disciples in the Jerusalem Temple (24:52–53). This, however, is a temporary location. They are to stay in Jerusalem only until what the Father has promised comes (Luke 24:49); then they are to preach to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem (24:47). This implies a widening movement away from Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the starting point of the gospel message, but not the gathering point or goal.<sup>68</sup>

Luke starts his story with a Jerusalem that is important for God's contact with the world, where the Temple is God's house, the place where God speaks and where God is worshipped. But as the leaders and people of Jerusalem reject Jesus, the city's opportunity to be the centre of God's plan is withdrawn. Though the disciples still worship God there, this is a temporary situation.

Charles H. Giblin suggests that Luke presents the judgment on Jerusalem for rejecting Jesus as a sign to be heeded by other cities and societies. The lesson is presented to Theophilus, for whom the Gospel is written, to take to heart if he cares about Greek and Roman civilization. On hearing of Jerusalem's fate, Theophilus is expected to think,

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<sup>66</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 79–80.

<sup>67</sup> So Liefeld, "Luke," 1058.

<sup>68</sup> So also Davies, *Gospel and Land*, 260.



“What am I, as a respected man with some influence, expected to do?”<sup>69</sup> He should, of course, do his best to make sure that his own civilization does not reject Jesus too. In this view, Jerusalem is a representative of the world, and this may be part of Luke’s intention.

Kim Huat Tan maintains that Jesus was inspired by the old Zion traditions and was trying to fulfil them in his bid to be accepted as Jerusalem’s king.<sup>70</sup> His royal entry and initial program of Temple cleansing were rejected by Jerusalem. Like the Old Testament prophets, he “sought to bridge the gap between the historical Jerusalem and the ideal one.”<sup>71</sup> He failed in this, but was still able to see Jerusalem in an ideal rather than historical sense as the symbol of God’s reign.

It is interesting to speculate what might have happened if Jerusalem had received Jesus as her king during his lifetime. But Jesus apparently had no illusions in that regard. He knew the long history of Israel’s and humanity’s rejection of God and God’s program. The words and actions of Jesus about Jerusalem served to validate Zion theology while detaching it from physical Jerusalem<sup>72</sup> and focusing instead on Jesus and the church.

### *Acts*

The story continues in the book of Acts. The important events of Acts 1–7 all take place in Jerusalem. These include commissioning the disciples for the mission that begins in Jerusalem and goes to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8) and the ascension with the promise of Christ’s return (1:6–11).

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<sup>69</sup> Giblin, *Destruction of Jerusalem*, viii, 104, etc. Giblin develops his argument through careful examination of the warnings and prophecies against unrepentant persons and cities throughout Luke’s Gospel. This focus, says Giblin, explains why the same emphasis on the fate of Jerusalem is absent from Acts (pp. 108–112).

<sup>70</sup> Tan, *Zion Traditions*, 235.

<sup>71</sup> Tan, *Zion Traditions*, 238.

<sup>72</sup> Contra Chance, *Jerusalem*, 35, who maintains that Luke, unlike most early Christians, did not transfer the prerogatives of Jerusalem and the Temple to Jesus and the church.

The two men dressed in white say that Jesus will return “as you have seen him go” (Acts 1:11), which probably refers to the fact that Jesus was enveloped in a cloud.<sup>73</sup> Richard Longenecker sees this as the “cloud of divine presence and glory” cf. Luke 21:27.<sup>74</sup> That this cloud receives Jesus over the Mount of Olives and not over the Temple Mount may suggest a situation like what happens in Ezek 11:23 where, as Jerusalem is about to be destroyed, the glory of God moves away from the Temple and is last seen stopped above the mountain east of Jerusalem, i.e. the Mount of Olives.<sup>75</sup>

Nevertheless, Jerusalem is the scene of the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost (2:1–4), the initial preaching and ingathering of converts in Jerusalem and the early development of church life. This includes using the Temple as a place of prayer, teaching and preaching, even sacrifice and purification.

Although in the Gospels Jerusalem rejected her Messiah, several interpreters see her being given a second chance in the early preaching of the apostles.<sup>76</sup> In Peter’s Pentecost sermon (Acts 2:14–21) he quotes Joel 2:28–32. From this passage he infers first that the outpouring of the Spirit indicates that the last days have arrived and secondly, that in these days “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” He cites the resurrection of Jesus and his outpouring of the Spirit (Acts 2:32–35) as proof

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<sup>73</sup> So Longenecker, “Acts,” 259.

<sup>74</sup> Longenecker, “Acts,” 259. Luke 21:27 reads, “Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.”

<sup>75</sup> The two other Old Testament references to the “Mount of Olives” may be related to this incident if Jesus’ return “in the way he went” means that he will return to the Mount of Olives. In 2 Sam 15:30 David ascended the Mount of Olives when forced to flee Jerusalem but later returned to Jerusalem in honour, and in Zech 14:3–4 the Mount of Olives is the site to which the Lord will come to vindicate Zion on the eschatological day. The implication then might be that Jesus is the Davidic king who leaves the city that rejects him but will return in glory, or that his return will be the coming of YHWH to vindicate his people. In the Olivet Discourse and teaching about his second coming, Jesus refrains from mentioning any place to which he will gather his elect, although he will “sit on his throne in heavenly glory” with angels present (Matt 25:31). This seems to suggest a heavenly scene. In view of the large number of OT passages specifying regathering to Zion or Jerusalem, Jesus’ silence on the name of the place appears significant.

<sup>76</sup> E.g. Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 89, 91.

that Jesus is “both Lord and Christ” (2:36), so it is Jesus upon whom one must call (2:38). The listeners are urged to repent so that they can save themselves “from this corrupt generation” (Acts 2:40). Interestingly, Peter omits the line immediately following his quotation from Joel. This line reads, “For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who escape, as the Lord has said, even among the survivors whom the Lord calls” (Joel 2:32). Instead he seems to paraphrase it in Acts 2:39, “For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to himself.” He may also be making use of the phrase “far off” from that word to the exiled remnant in Isa 57:19, “Peace, peace to him who is far and to him who is near.”<sup>77</sup> This seems to indicate that Peter is saying that the remnant of Jerusalem who will escape judgment as prophesied in Joel and Isaiah are those who believe in Jesus. And indeed, that remnant comes into existence, as about 3,000 people call on the name of the Lord by being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38–41). As in the Olivet discourse, the names Zion and Jerusalem are avoided in Peter’s sermon. This is likely to keep from giving the impression that the physical city itself is the locus of deliverance.

Again in Acts 3:19–20, Peter preaches that, if his hearers repent, times of refreshing will come from the Lord and God will send the Messiah back. All things will be restored, as promised in the prophets.<sup>78</sup> The “times of refreshing” are parallel to the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38 as the result of repentance and baptism. This time the

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<sup>77</sup> So Longenecker, “Acts,” 285–86. Longenecker discusses whether Peter intends by “those who are far off” only those in the Jewish diaspora or also Gentiles who will believe, and concludes that Luke probably means both even if Peter might not have understood the full import of his words at the time.

<sup>78</sup> Longenecker, “Acts,” 297, notes that ἀποκαθίστημι, the cognate of ἀποκαταστάσις used in Acts 3:21, “is often used in the LXX of the eschatological restoration of Israel.”

Christian community grows to 5,000 (Acts 4:4). Though the kingdom is not restored fully, the gift of the Spirit is the beginning of restoration.<sup>79</sup>

But it is not to be. The Jerusalem leaders are unmoved. Jerusalem is shown throughout the book of Acts to be not only the centre of the early church but also the centre of persecution and of opposition to the gospel. The Jewish unbelievers try to remove the church's influence from Jerusalem (Acts 4:18; 5:28), and see the new movement as a threat to the Temple (6:13–14).

Stephen is the one accused of “speaking against this holy place and against the law” and “saying that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us” (Acts 6:13–14). His speech in Acts 7 has been called “the most negative passage in the New Testament on the religious practices associated with the Jerusalem Temple” which “marked the emergence of Christianity as a distinctive sect.”<sup>80</sup> Stephen emphasizes that God spoke to Abraham in Ur and Haran, God was with Joseph and Moses in Egypt and spoke with Moses at Sinai. God is not limited to Jerusalem or the Temple.<sup>81</sup> Also, every time God has done something good for Israel, they have done something evil in response, starting with Joseph's brothers. This pattern is being repeated in Stephen's day. God has made his revelation through the Righteous One, and they have betrayed and murdered him (Acts 7:52). Perhaps Stephen knew what John tells us (John 11:45–50), that the Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus in order to protect the Temple and Jerusalem. Luke hints at this, in that the Pharisees ask Jesus to rebuke his disciples for proclaiming him king (Luke 19:38–39, a proclamation that could attract Roman wrath) and by noting that the Jewish leaders want to kill Jesus immediately

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<sup>79</sup> Beale, *Use of OT*, 138.

<sup>80</sup> King, “Jerusalem,” 765.

<sup>81</sup> Giblin, *Destruction of Jerusalem*, 109–10.

following his cleansing of the Temple (Luke 19:47). When the choice is Jesus or Jerusalem/Temple, the leaders have chosen Jerusalem and its Temple. This makes the Temple a kind of idol, something “made by hands” (Acts 7:48, a phrase used in the LXX of idols)<sup>82</sup> and though Stephen does not here say so, his hearers know that such objects, according to the Law, must be destroyed (Deut 12:2–4).

Stephen was not opposed to the original idea of Zion as such. In quoting Gen 15:13–14 in Acts 7:6–7 he adds the words “worship me in this place” from Exod 3:12. In Exodus, that meant Moses and his people would worship at Sinai, but here in Acts, it means Canaan. Stephen has shifted the promise of worship after the Exodus back to Abraham from Moses, and to Canaan rather than Sinai. In Gen 15, there is no new notice of location, and Abraham had been in Salem (believed in New Testament times to be Jerusalem) with Melchizedek in Gen 14. Genesis 15 ends with the promise of the land of the Jebusites, the original inhabitants of Jerusalem, so Stephen may see Gen 15 as a prophecy that the Israelites would worship God at Jerusalem. This may not have been an interpretation unique to Stephen. *Second Baruch* 4:2 says that God revealed Jerusalem to Abraham at the time he made the three sacrifices (Gen 15), and Second Temple literature in general gives Jerusalem primordial prominence. Stephen appears to be opposed rather to making the Temple into a *substitute* for God and his revelation.<sup>83</sup>

The martyrdom of Stephen is one of the important turning points in Acts, as the believers are scattered away from Jerusalem and begin preaching farther afield (Acts 8:1,

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<sup>82</sup> Beale, *Temple*, 224–26. Beale notes that the NT says the new end-time temple to be made by Jesus is “not made with hands” (Mark 14:58; 2 Cor 5:1; Heb 9:11, 24; cf. Acts 17:24; and the stone that becomes God’s kingdom in Dan 2:32, 45).

<sup>83</sup> See helpful discussion on this issue in Kilgallen, *The Stephen Speech*, 37–41, and esp. 86–95. Davies, *Gospel and Land*, 268 comments that, according to Stephen, “the goal of the Exodus is not the worship of God at Sinai nor the possession of the land of Canaan, nor the erection of the Temple by Solomon” but the worship of *God in Jerusalem*, the very thing that the Jews have rejected by rejecting Jesus.

4; 11:19–21). This is a transition time, because the apostles are still in Jerusalem, and later we read of apostles, elders and other believers in the city. The presence of these leaders continues to make Jerusalem the place for consultations (Acts 15) and the place to which Paul repeatedly returns (Acts 9:26; 11:30; 15:2; 18:22; 21:17).<sup>84</sup> Paul insists on going to Jerusalem in Acts 21 even when danger of persecution threatens.<sup>85</sup> But his home base appears to be Antioch (Acts 11:26; 13:1–4; 14:26; 15:30, 35; 18:22–23; cf. Gal 2:11).<sup>86</sup>

A second important turning point is the way “all Jerusalem” (Acts 21:30, 31) and “all the Jews” (25:24) reject Paul and his message at the time of Paul’s expulsion from the Temple and ensuing events.<sup>87</sup> Paul has to be spirited out of the city (Acts 23:23–24). Although he emphasizes his personal ties to the city (Acts 22:3–5, 17–20; 24:17–18; 26:4, 9, 20–21), he refuses to return to Jerusalem (25:9–10). Instead, he moves even farther away from Jerusalem to Rome. Historically, of course, we know that the church in

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<sup>84</sup> It may be argued that Paul goes to Jerusalem because the apostles are there, so the question then becomes, why did the apostles, who were Galileans, headquarter the church in Jerusalem? Likely it was due to Jesus’ initial commands to stay and start in Jerusalem (Luke 24:48; Acts 1:4, 8).

<sup>85</sup> Various proposals have been made for why Paul insisted. Munck, “Paul and Jerusalem,” 282–308, proposed that Paul wanted to bring the offering of the Gentiles and some Gentiles themselves to Jerusalem as the beginning of fulfilment of prophecy of Gentile homage and wealth flowing in to Zion in the last days (in order to make Israel jealous and ready to believe), and this suggestion has been taken up by a number of interpreters, e.g. Bauckham, *Bible and Mission*, 75, and Bruce, “Paul and Jerusalem,” 23–24. Stuhlmacher, “Stellung Jesu,” 150, however argues that Paul’s only motivation was to increase solidarity between the Jewish and Gentile sections of the church. Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 155–57, discusses Paul’s motivation in more detail, but basically agrees.

<sup>86</sup> Waltke, *OT Theology*, 572, sees Acts 13 as the point where the reader is notified that Antioch, not Jerusalem, has become the centre for gospel proclamation.

<sup>87</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 92, suggests that the detail that the Temple doors were shut (Acts 21:30) and more frequent use of the ἱεροσόλυμα spelling of the city’s name towards the end of Acts, may indicate the receding influence of Temple and city in Luke’s narrative. Elliott, “Jerusalem,” 464, however, holds that Luke’s choice of spelling for the name of the city is rather conditioned by the context of that section of the story, with this more Greek form being used more in the later part of Acts in a Hellenistic environment regardless of speaker. The other Gospel writers use this form almost exclusively (except Matt 23:37). Less plausible is Sylva, “Jerusalem and Hierosolyma,” 207–21, who claims that the use of the alternate spellings is not due to context, but to keep jogging the reader to remember the “holy Salem” etymology of the name. Rius-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger, *Message of Acts*, 51, 67, however, are convinced that Luke uses the Hebrew spelling only when the city has theological significance to the speaker or actors. The Greek spelling in the latter part of Acts, then, may signal an abandonment of earthly Jerusalem as theologically important.

Jerusalem had to relocate or was obliterated by the events of 66–70 C.E. Thus, the church soon had to come to terms with the impossibility of continuing to be based in Jerusalem. Even before this, Acts documents the gospel’s ongoing distancing from the city.

In both the Gospel and the Acts, Luke mentions that Jerusalem is the starting point for the spread of the gospel (Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8; cf. Rom 15:19). To Luke, the city is important because it ties the gospel of Jesus Christ to the plan of salvation begun in the Old Testament, the good news promised through the prophets. The gospel originated in Jerusalem. As Walker puts it:

This fact substantiated the claim that the Christian message was an authentic version of Judaism . . . The Christian message had to be proclaimed in Jerusalem, before it spread elsewhere . . . The ministry of Jesus and the apostolic mission had not taken place “in a corner” (Acts 26:26), but publicly within the very heart of Judaism’s mother-city. Christians did not see themselves as inherently “marginal”; on the contrary, throughout Acts they claimed that Jesus was the true fulfilment of the Old Testament.<sup>88</sup>

Although many in Jerusalem began to follow Jesus as Messiah, persecution soon scattered most of them away from the city (Acts 8:1–4). As the Jerusalem leadership continued to oppose the gospel, the true Zion became a dispersed remnant. Paul continued his efforts to preach to the Jews, going first to the synagogue when he arrived in a town (Acts 13:14; 14:1; 17:1–2 etc.; cf. Rom 10:1). He did not see the opening of Zion to Gentiles as necessarily preventing or replacing Jewish participation (Rom 11:11–31).

Although Luke sees that the physical Jerusalem will be destroyed, he does not have any indication that the city will be restored in this age. Whereas, in the Old Testament, the prophets seemed to describe a transformation of earthly Jerusalem with

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<sup>88</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 84. Walker (p. 85, nn. 113, 114, 115), goes on to mention other scholars with this view, such as J. Knox, H. Chadwick, H. Conzelmann and W. W. Gasque.

the return of a righteous remnant, the New Testament witnesses to a division between the fate of the Zion remnant and the fate of the earthly city.<sup>89</sup> Other parts of the New Testament speak of a heavenly Jerusalem to which believers belong (Gal 4: Heb 12). Redemption, hoped for in Luke 2:38 and 24:21, has been inaugurated as “repentance and forgiveness of sins” for all nations (Luke 24:47).<sup>90</sup> In Jesus and his gospel, David’s fallen tent is being restored and the Gentiles are coming to seek the Lord (says James, quoting Amos 9:11–12 in Acts 15:16–17).<sup>91</sup> In Amos, the expected meaning would be that Gentiles were coming to Jerusalem, since that was the seat of David. But in New Testament Gentiles were not allowed in the Jerusalem Temple. The Jerusalem Council where James quoted these words as fulfilled was considering instructions for Gentiles who were seeking God through faith in Jesus in places evangelized by Paul outside the Jewish homeland. James means that the Gentiles were coming to worship God in the fellowship of believers in Jesus, the church. The church is the place where Gentiles come to seek the Lord, not Jerusalem or its Temple. The church, as the place to seek God, is the new spiritual temple.<sup>92</sup>

This makes sense considering the way the Old Testament depicts God’s relationship to Jerusalem/Zion. Earthly Jerusalem cannot be established in security

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<sup>89</sup> This seems to have started already in Judaism if Paul’s report is true that the hope for which the Jews were striving was the resurrection from the dead (Acts 26:7).

<sup>90</sup> Schmidt, “Jerusalem als Urbild und Abbild,” 231, expresses it that those looking for the redemption of Jerusalem must look for a different Jerusalem: “Die Frommen, die ‘auf Jerusalems Erlösung warten’ (Luk. 2,38), müssen ihr Gesicht einem anderen Jerusalem zuwenden.” As Walker, “The Land and Jesus,” 106, says, “the longed-for restoration of Israel has indeed taken place, but in a most unexpected way—through the coming of Messiah Jesus and in particular through his being raised from the dead.”

<sup>91</sup> See discussion of Luke’s view of the restoration of Jerusalem/Israel in Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 94–102.

<sup>92</sup> Bauckham, *Bible and Mission*, 76, says, “If the community were defined by the Temple on mount Zion, this would not be possible, since Gentiles were excluded. But the prophecies of the nations seeking God’s presence in the Temple could be fulfilled in the community of Jews and Gentiles that God himself was building as his new Temple. This is part of James’s decisive argument at the Jerusalem conference in Acts 15.” The centre is no longer geographically defined.



because God's people who live there are always turning away from him in sin. The promise of restoration requires a transformed people. Forgiveness of sins and a new heart are the only things that can make Zion a place of fellowship with God and restore Zion's security. The gospel of Jesus is the path to this result, and just as Zion in the Old Testament symbolizes the communion of God and his people, now Jesus and his followers have communion because these followers have been spiritually transformed.

### *Jerusalem in John*

John is probably one of the last New Testament books to be written, and the author's understanding of the Jerusalem issue has a stronger emphasis on Jesus replacing the Temple and Jerusalem, and only secondarily on the church as the new temple.

The prologue to John's Gospel depicts Jesus as the Word of God, the light that gives life, who "tabernacled" among us (as God's presence did in the Tabernacle and Temple: Exod 25:8; 1 Kgs 6:12–13), the one having divine glory who brings grace and truth (John 1:4, 14, 17). Mention of glory associates Jesus with God's *shekinah* glory that dwelt in the Holy of Holies of the Temple (cf. John 2:11). One may infer that wherever Jesus is there is the Holy of Holies. The angels of God ascend and descend upon him (1:51), an allusion to Jacob's dream at Bethel, the "house of God." These details set the scene for Jesus' subsequent claim to be the temple (John 2:21).

The Jerusalem religious watchdogs<sup>93</sup> hear about John the Baptist and send priests and Levites to ask him who he is (John 1:19). The theological elite of Jerusalem is

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<sup>93</sup> See Motyer, *Your Father the Devil?*, 56–57, for a defence of the position that "Jews" in many passages of John refers not to all Jews but to "adherents of the particularly strict, Torah- and Temple-centred religion found especially (but not exclusively) in Judea and Jerusalem," and who in some contexts represent "the world" that rejects Jesus.

pictured as having no idea of what God is doing. This also introduces the relationship between Jesus and Jerusalem. John pictures Jesus in Jerusalem more than the Synoptic writers do.<sup>94</sup> Jesus comes and goes for several Jewish festivals (John 2:13; 4:45; 5:1; 7:10, 14; 10:22; 12:1).

The first time Jesus appears in Jerusalem, he cleanses the Temple. He rebukes the sellers and money changers for making his Father's house into a market. The disciples remember Ps 69:9, "Zeal for your house will consume me" (John 2:17). Jesus' action is depicted as zeal or holy jealousy for God's house, that is, Jesus was showing his loyalty to his Father by wanting to keep his house free from activities that distract people from worshipping and concentrating on God. This legitimates the Jerusalem Temple as having been the correct place to worship God in the past, but casts doubt on its present status.

The Jewish leaders ask Jesus for a miraculous sign to prove his authority to do what he has just done (John 2:18). Presumably, they are challenging Jesus to show that he has divine backing by demonstrating divine power. Jesus does go on to perform miraculous signs (John 2:23) but he does not use these to answer the leaders. To them he says, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days" (John 2:19). This seems to be a purely hypothetical sign, because the leaders would never destroy the Temple. To the Jews, it is not a sign but a *claim* that he can rebuild the Temple in three days, a claim which they reject as ridiculous (John 2:20). It may also have been seen as a threat that Jesus would destroy the Temple in order to demonstrate his sign.<sup>95</sup> The Jews have

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<sup>94</sup>According to Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 162, 80% of the narrative in John takes place in Jerusalem, versus 30% in Matthew.

<sup>95</sup> Accusations at Jesus' trial indicate that this was the case (Matt 27:61; Mark 14:58; cf. Acts 6:14).

misunderstood Jesus<sup>96</sup> and John lets the reader in on the secret. When Jesus said, “this temple,” he meant his own body, and his words were a prediction of his death at their hands, and his resurrection (ἐγερῶ) from the dead (John 2:21–22).<sup>97</sup> By putting this exchange near the beginning of his Gospel, John has quickly established that Jesus himself is a temple. As Walker puts it, “[Jesus] embodied in himself the meaning of the Temple and all that it had previously signified.”<sup>98</sup> Interestingly, the text shifts from speaking of Jesus cleansing the Temple area (ἱερόν) to speaking of raising its central building (ναός), where the Holy of Holies was and where God’s *shekinah* dwelt.<sup>99</sup> Jesus’ body is a ναός.<sup>100</sup> Since Jerusalem receives its special status by being the location of the Temple, redefinition of the temple as a mobile person removes Jerusalem’s special significance as unique temple location.<sup>101</sup>

This story is followed by both a notice of many believing in Jesus in Jerusalem (John 2:23) and of Jesus’ justified scepticism about the permanence of their faith (2:24–25). These verses introduce the interview with Nicodemus, a leader who confesses that Jesus is a teacher who has come from God (John 3:2), yet does not really believe (3:10–12). He represents his colleagues too, for Jesus switches from second person singular to plural at the end of v. 11. The healing in John 5 says a similar thing about someone from

<sup>96</sup> Showing misunderstanding is a common compositional technique in John and has been noted by many interpreters. See e.g. Carson, “Understanding Misunderstandings.”

<sup>97</sup> Comblin, “Liturgie,” 22, n. 43, comments, “Ceci n’est pas une invitation à le détruire, mais bien une prophétie.”

<sup>98</sup> Carson, “Understanding Misunderstandings,” 80, says regarding John 2:19–22, “I believe a good case can be made for an authentic saying of Jesus that was *purposely* ambiguous . . . to be understood by his disciples, *after his resurrection*, as a reference to his own body and the atoning death he would suffer, fulfilling by this means the deepest purposes of the Temple, and thus replacing it” (emphasis his).

<sup>99</sup> Bruce, *John*, 76.

<sup>100</sup> See Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 167–70, for a discussion of Jesus replacing the Temple and its rituals in the Feast of Tabernacles (7:37–38; 8:12, 58), the “I am” sayings, Passover, Hannukah, etc. Walker here has made good use of Davies, *Gospel and Land*, 290–98.

<sup>101</sup> As Sheriffs, “Hermeneutical Spectacles,” 77, comments, “With the replacement of the Temple as a physical meeting-point go Zion, Jerusalem and the land as well. They are concentric circles. Remove the centre-point, the Holy of Holies, and the surrounding circles come away with it.”

a lower level of society. Although Jesus has healed this man, it is even in the *Temple* that Jesus has to admonish him to stop sinning (John 5:14). The man demonstrates his lack of loyalty to Jesus by immediately reporting Jesus to the Pharisees (John 5:15). In contrast, but making a similar point, a healed beggar becomes loyal to Jesus but is rejected by the authorities and even his parents (John 9:20–23, 28, 34). The dialogues that Jesus holds with the people of Jerusalem in the Temple in chaps. 7, 8, and 10 also demonstrate the ambivalence of the people and their divided opinion (see esp. John 7:12, 25–27, 30–31, 40–44; 8:31, 37; 10:19–21, 39–42; cf. 11:45–46; 12:42–43).<sup>102</sup> Jerusalem is a microcosm of reactions to Jesus. As Walker puts it, Jerusalem is “the place which embodies the ‘world’ in its opposition to God, and where God in Jesus has acted to redeem the world.”<sup>103</sup>

Another major passage to note in a study of Jerusalem in John comes in Jesus’ conversation with the Samaritan woman in John 4. When his knowledge of her life proves to her that he is a prophet (John 4:18–19), she puts to him one of the important theological questions of her day: “Our fathers [Jacob etc., v. 12] worshiped on this mountain [Gerizim], but you [Jews] claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem” (John 4:20).<sup>104</sup> Although Jesus maintains that the Jews have been right (John 4:22), he proclaims a new order in which true worship of the Father is not in (ἐν) this mountain or in (ἐν) Jerusalem but in (ἐν) spirit and truth. Here Jesus removes the

<sup>102</sup> Though John 7:53–8:11 does not belong to the earliest manuscript tradition of John’s Gospel, a similar pattern appears there: though the authorities demonstrate their zeal for purity by bringing the woman caught in adultery to Jesus, it is in the *Temple* that he, instead, brings them to condemn themselves (8:7–9).

<sup>103</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 161, cf. 179–82.

<sup>104</sup> This is no superficial question. In the Pentateuch, Shechem was a major cult site, used by the Patriarchs (Gen 12:7; 33:20; cf. Deut 11:29; 27:12; Josh 8:30–35), and by Jesus’ day influential literature and theology claimed Gerizim as the “place the Lord will choose” rather than Jerusalem. (See Hjelm, *Jerusalem’s Rise to Sovereignty*, 189–222). Many must have wondered which site truly pleased God and where he could be contacted most effectively.

geographical element of contacting God. Attachment to a physical place no longer signals loyalty to God. The place to worship is everywhere, or anywhere that worshippers are united in spirit with God and believe the truth.<sup>105</sup> This becomes important in John 9:38, when the former blind man worships Jesus after being thrown out of the synagogue, and, presumably, the Temple. The new focus of worship is Jesus wherever he is, not the Temple, or rather, Jesus as in some way being the new/real Temple.<sup>106</sup>

As the end of Jesus' ministry draws near, Jerusalem becomes a dangerous place for him. Twice he has to withdraw because of threats to his life (John 10:40; 11:7–8, 53–54). The event that provides the final impetus for the leaders to seek the life of Jesus is the raising of Lazarus (John 11:46–53). Though this is done in Bethany, the text links Bethany to Jerusalem (John 11:18–19). It is this miracle that prompts the acclaim of the crowds at the triumphal entry into Jerusalem (John 12:17–18). Jesus is seen as a threat (John 11:48).<sup>107</sup> The high priest Caiaphas believes that the Jewish leaders must choose between Jesus and the security of the Temple, city and nation. To him the choice is clear: kill Jesus and save the Temple, city and nation (John 11:49–50). It is part of the irony so common in John that the leaders set the stage for Jerusalem's fall by their efforts to save it.

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<sup>105</sup> Cf. Mal 1:11, after a condemnation of profanation of the Jerusalem Temple by deformed sacrifices due to a lack of respect for God, “My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations,” says the Lord Almighty.”

<sup>106</sup> Bauckham, *Bible and Mission*, 78, comments “Jesus here [John 4:22] metaphorizes all the prophecies of the centrality of Zion in the messianic age . . . It is the crucified and exalted Jesus who draws all people to himself, like the exalted mount Zion to which, in the prophecies, all the nations stream” (see John 12:32 cf. 4:30). For Bauckham to say that *all* the prophecies are metaphorized in Jesus may, however, be overstating the case. More cautious is Kidner, “Isaiah,” 529, commenting on the elevation of Zion in Isa 2:2–4, as a prelude to all nations streaming to it, who says, “Perhaps our Lord had this passage in mind when the first token of the Gentile inflow elicited His prophecy, in Jn. 12:32, of being lifted up (the same verb, in a richer sense, as in the LXX of Is. 2:2b) to draw all men to Himself.”

<sup>107</sup> Like Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 166, I take “our place” (ἡμῶν τὸν τόπον) to be the Temple.

The triumphal entry depicts Jesus as Zion's king (John 12:15). This too is an ironic title, with the irony continuing on to the charges at the trial (John 18:33; 19:14) and the title on the cross (19:19). The reader knows, however, that the cross and resurrection really are an enthronement (John 12:23, 28, 31–33) and that Jesus really is a king (cf. 18:36–37).

John styles the death of Jesus as the death of a Passover lamb (John 19:36). Passover had to be celebrated at Jerusalem, and the lambs were slaughtered there. Jesus' death at Jerusalem at this festival is depicted as both inevitable and the deliberate choice of Jesus (e.g. John 13:1), presumably in order to make clear that his death fulfilled what the festival prefigured (cf. Luke 22:16). The fact that the altar (the cross) is outside the city (John 19:20) also makes the death of Jesus to be a kind of sin offering (cf. Lev 4:12, 21). Jesus is the sacrificial lamb taking away sin (John 1:29, 36). Yet even sin offerings were slaughtered at the Tabernacle/Temple before being burnt outside the camp. The sacrifice of Jesus on an alternative altar signals a distancing from the Temple. The Temple cult is being fulfilled and superseded. This death takes away not only the sin of Israel, but the sin of the world.

Only John's Gospel contains both Jerusalem and Galilee appearances of the risen Christ. Jerusalem is not mentioned in this Gospel by name, however, after the triumphal entry (John 12). The reader knows that the action takes place in the Jerusalem area by location notices like "the city," "the Kidron valley" and so on. Thus, there is no special emphasis on the fact that Jesus appeared in Jerusalem, and with the final appearance in Galilee, the action is moving away from the city.

John's Gospel, then, follows an observable pattern of placing the importance of earthly Jerusalem and the Temple in the pre-Jesus past. Now that Jesus has come and fulfilled their function, the focus is on him, his other-worldly kingdom and the heavenly home he is going to prepare. Earthly Jerusalem merges into "the world," and unless she believes, her fate will be like that of all who do not believe in Jesus.<sup>108</sup>

As Stuhlmacher summarizes it, the sanctuary in John is the crucified and risen Christ. He is the place where God dwells on earth (John 1:14), the mediator of the saving relationship to God (1:18; 3:16–17), and the one who guides believers to worship in Spirit and truth (4:24).<sup>109</sup> Therefore, earthly Jerusalem has lost its place as the sacred location for meeting with God (John 4:22). Zion theology has largely been attached to the person of Jesus.<sup>110</sup>

### *Jerusalem in Paul*

Paul reinterprets a number of elements of Old Testament theology related to the land, Temple and Zion in light of the coming of Christ. In the prophets, the good news was of the restoration of Zion and her king. The Gentiles were to be gathered to Zion. The promise to the patriarchs and their seed was that they would possess the land of Canaan as well as be a blessing to all nations.<sup>111</sup> So when Paul begins the letter to the

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<sup>108</sup> Davies, *Gospel and Land*, 296–318, makes a case that Jesus is depicted in the Fourth Gospel as replacing other sacred places as well: Bethel, Gerizim, Bethzatha, and the Pool of Siloam.

<sup>109</sup> Stuhlmacher, "Stellung Jesu," 156.

<sup>110</sup> In the canonical order, Acts comes after these insights of John. Since John so clearly shows that Jerusalem as a physical location in this world is no longer the locus of contact with God (John 4:21–24) Jerusalem in Acts can more easily be interpreted as important for logistical or historical reasons, rather than theological ones.

<sup>111</sup> For example, the Genesis promises to "your seed," referred to in Gal 3, included promises of the land. Paul could not have been unaware of this. Yet he never mentions land, and sees what is promised to be justification. For Paul's attitude to the land, see Davies, *Gospel and Land*, 177–79, who says, "Paul ignores completely the territorial aspect of the promise . . . his silence points not merely to the absence of a

Romans by heralding “the good news of God which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures” we must realize that a great shift has occurred. For he means the gathering of those who believe in Jesus into the church and ultimately into heaven or the world of the age to come. Paul believes Abraham was told that he would inherit the κόσμος (world; Rom 4:13).<sup>112</sup> To Paul, inheriting Canaan was just a foreshadowing of inheriting all creation (cf. Rom 8:32; 1 Cor 3:22), and the Temple was primarily a place to experience the presence and fellowship of God. Now that that presence can be experienced “in Christ,” the earthly Land, city and Temple are redundant or “fulfilled,” and undue emphasis on them can retard spiritual growth. True priesthood is about worship and bringing others to God, and is exercised anywhere by the apostles, and ultimately all believers, rather than by an Aaronic elite.<sup>113</sup>

Paul “locates” Christ in two places. He is in heaven and will return to earth (Eph 1:20; cf. 1 Thess 1:10; 2 Thess 1:7), and he is already in and among his people (Rom 8:10; 2 Cor 13:5; Eph 3:17; Col 1:27; 1 Cor 14:25). Also, God dwells in believers by his Spirit. Hence, Christians individually and corporately (the church) are God’s temple now (1 Cor 3:9, 16; 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:20–22; 1 Tim 3:15).<sup>114</sup> Christians are in God’s presence in any place (e.g. 1 Thess 3:9) and their citizenship is in heaven (Phil 3:20).

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conscious concern with it, but to his deliberate rejection of it.” Davies mentions Paul’s attitude in several other parts of his book as well.

<sup>112</sup> This idea is already seen in Qumran: 4Q171 III, 9–10, a commentary on Ps 37:22: “Interpreted, this concerns the congregation of the Poor, who [shall possess] the whole world as an inheritance. They shall possess the High Mountain of Israel [for ever], and shall enjoy [everlasting] delights in His Sanctuary.” (Translation from Vermes, *Complete DSS*, 489).

<sup>113</sup> For example, believers are urged to present their bodies as living sacrifices which is their λογικὴν λατρεία (Rom 12:1). λατρεία is the term usually used of priestly temple service. See Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 122–23.

<sup>114</sup> In 1 Tim 3:15, ἐν οἴκῳ θεοῦ may be “God’s family,” but the phrase could hardly have failed to evoke thoughts of “God’s house,” i.e. the Temple. See Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 92.



This removes from earthly Jerusalem any special status due to being the place where God dwells or to which his people belong.<sup>115</sup>

To Paul, however, this is not a new and radical idea, but something he finds in the Law. He quotes Lev 26:12 in 2 Cor 6:16, part of the old covenant formula, where God says “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God and they will be my people.” In Lev 26:12, God makes this promise of dwelling among his people not in the context of commanding them to build a tabernacle or temple, but at the end of a long list of promises to those who obey God’s commands.<sup>116</sup> God’s presence is specifically promised to those who separate themselves from idols, the very action Paul is urging in 1 Cor 6. Though it is easy to imagine that “idols” in Corinth would mean images of the Greek and Roman gods, perhaps Paul also realizes, like Stephen, that the Temple or Jewish institutions have become a kind of idol to many Jews. The same attitude may be reflected in Gal 4:1–11, where Paul seems to equate Jewish ritual with the “elemental principles of the world” (Gal 4:3, 9).<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Various explanations have been given of “God’s temple,” in which the man of sin sets himself up in 2 Thess 2:4 and where Jesus will return to destroy him. Davies, *Gospel and Land*, 194, thinks Paul meant the Jerusalem Temple, but that since this is the only negative passage in Paul about the Temple, Davies suggests Paul may have outgrown the idea. It is better, however, to find a meaning that does not necessitate Paul contradicting himself. Thomas, “2 Thessalonians,” 322, insists that the temple must be a Jewish temple to be rebuilt in Jerusalem in the future. If Paul believed that the Temple would be rebuilt, it is amazing that his teaching does not reflect such a major event elsewhere. In this event, the sign he is giving to the Thessalonians is irrelevant to them. Green, *Thessalonians*, 312, defends the view that Paul means a pagan temple of the imperial cult, but emperors claiming to be gods were so common as to prevent this from being a special sign. Beale, *Temple*, 269–92, argues that this reference to the Temple, like others in Paul, is to the church, yet this person appears to be of significance also to pagans (“everything that is called God or is worshipped”). Waltke, *OT Theology*, 574–75, thinks the temple is likely heavenly Zion, but if so, how would people on earth know and take warning? The expression may be a metaphor for some kind of extreme blasphemy, using Daniel’s abomination of desolation (Dan 9:27 and 11:31; cf. Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14) as a type.

<sup>116</sup> Beale, *Temple*, 111, thinks that this passage in Leviticus could be interpreted as a prophecy of “a time when the Temple will be, not a physical handmade house, but God’s manifest presence alone.”

<sup>117</sup> See discussion in Delling, “στοιχέω κτλ.” *TDNT* 7:683–86.

As in the Old Testament, where God is depicted as a husband, and Jerusalem as his wife (e.g. Ezek 16, 23), Paul depicts Christ as the husband of the church (Eph 5:22–27; 2 Cor 11:2), putting the church into the slot that Jerusalem formerly held.

In the Old Testament, Passover must always be kept in Jerusalem. Paul says, “Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed for us,” and his followers keep the feast by removing sin from their lives (1 Cor 5:7–8) not by journeying to Jerusalem. The apostles perform priestly functions, not by offering at Jerusalem, but by preaching and presenting converts to God in every place (Rom 15:15–16; 1 Cor 9:13–14).

There are two issues in which Paul seems to give Jerusalem an important role. The first is where he acknowledges that the gospel started spreading from Jerusalem (Rom 15:19).<sup>118</sup> Nevertheless, Paul stresses that he does not depend on the Jerusalem apostles for his message. He got it directly from Jesus, and not even in Jerusalem, but in Damascus, and maybe also in Arabia (Gal 1:11–12, 15–17). He values the fellowship and approval of the Jerusalem church (Gal 1:18; 2:1–10), but can challenge even Peter when he feels Peter is going astray from the truth (Gal 2:11–14).

The second issue is Paul’s collection from the Gentile churches for the poor in the Jerusalem church (1 Cor 16:1–4). Paul explains that it is only fair that since the Jewish believers have shared their spiritual heritage with the Gentile believers the Gentiles should share their material resources with the Jewish believers (Rom 15:27). But this is only necessary because the Jewish believers have a real need (2 Cor 8:13–15; cf. Gal 2:10). Paul would not have asked for such a collection had the Jerusalem church been

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<sup>118</sup> Cf. 1 Cor 14:36, “Did the word of God originate with you?” Bruce, “Paul and Jerusalem,” 4, n. 4, relates this to Isa 2:3 and Mic 4:2 that the word of the Lord goes out from Jerusalem.

financially self-sufficient, as if Jerusalem had this right because of its special status.<sup>119</sup>

Paul appears to hope that this offering will help the Jewish believers to welcome Gentile believers into the church more wholeheartedly (Rom 15:31), forming a bond of love and fellowship (2 Cor 9:12–14).<sup>120</sup> His goal is church unity, not glory to Jerusalem.

The place where Paul most clearly articulates his attitude to earthly Jerusalem is in Gal 4:21–31. Using an illustration from the Law (Pentateuch), a part of Scripture that the Judaizers claim to be promoting, Paul shows that even there, a child born miraculously in fulfilment of a promise inherits God's promises in preference to a natural-born child (Ishmael, though older, is rejected in favour of Isaac). Paul's point is that, likewise, Christians, who are born miraculously (spiritually) by the power of the Spirit, inherit the legitimate son's portion as the true children of God and Abraham, rather than Jewish law-keepers who are merely natural children of Abraham.<sup>121</sup> He goes further to equate Hagar, the slave woman, and mother of rejected Ishmael, with both Mount Sinai and the present earthly Jerusalem.<sup>122</sup> Sinai and Jerusalem are in the same category because earthly Jerusalem is still following the Sinai covenant that puts those who follow

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<sup>119</sup> Schultz, "Jerusalem," *NIDNTT* 2:329, thinks Paul did not see the gift as a tax. Bruce, "Paul and Jerusalem," 10, suspects that even if Paul saw the gift as voluntary charity, the Jerusalem church may have seen it as "tribute due," like the temple tax. Bruce does, however (p. 4), think Paul saw Jerusalem as a sort of mother-church of all believers, to which Gentile believers were appended (Eph 2:19). Lohse, "Σιῶν, Ἰερουσαλήμ," *TDNT* 7:333–36, also thinks Paul saw the new people of God centred in "God's chosen city, Jerusalem." However, it was Jesus who sent Paul away to Rome (Acts 23:11).

<sup>120</sup> Stuhlmacher, "Stellung Jesu," 150. Stuhlmacher, however, thinks that Paul valued Jerusalem for its role in salvation history (p. 151).

<sup>121</sup> Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, claims that Jews of Paul's day did not see law-keeping as merit that earned salvation and that Paul was not criticising law-keeping-for-salvation but aspects of the law that excluded Gentiles. For an answer upholding the view that Paul did see Jews relying on works for salvation, see Carson, O'Brien and Siefid, *Justification and Variegated Nomism* and Moo, *Romans*, 155–57. For a survey of the whole issue, see Westerholm, "The 'New Perspective' at Twenty-Five"; and Gathercole, "What Did Paul Really Mean?"

<sup>122</sup> Bruce, *Galatians*, 220–21, notes that Jerusalem here includes Judaism as a religious system opposed to faith in Jesus Christ.

it into slavery.<sup>123</sup> He has already explained the concept that the old covenant brings slavery in Gal 3:1—4:11. All who rely on observing the law are under a curse (Gal 3:10), no one is justified before God by the law (3:11), because it requires an obedience impossible to human nature (cf. Rom 8:3). No law can give life (Gal 3:21) instead it imprisons in sin (3:22–23) and leaves people in slavery (4:3, 8–11). It may well be that Paul expected earthly Jerusalem to be destroyed because of its rejection of Jesus and his followers (1 Thess 2:16; cf. Matt 23:37 and Luke 13:34).<sup>124</sup>

On the other hand, free Sarah, the mother of Isaac, is equal to the Jerusalem that is above. This city is the mother of Christians (Gal 4:26, 31), that is, they have their citizenship there. Paul quotes Isa 54:1, a prophecy that multitudes of children (citizens) would be added to Jerusalem in a miraculous way (without a husband or labour pains). This is one of the Zion restoration texts of Isaiah. Paul interprets it as a prediction that many Gentiles would become citizens of Jerusalem. Clearly, Gentile believers in Christ have not become citizens of earthly Jerusalem<sup>125</sup> (though perhaps the Judaizers want them to try to be, by being circumcised),<sup>126</sup> but they truly belong to Zion. This must be the heavenly prototype of the earthly city, which remains the true Zion even if the earthly copy has betrayed it and thus has become severed from it. To Paul, Jewish adherence to the Law as something opposed to the message of Jesus has reduced the Jewish earthly city to secular status. It is “in Arabia” (Gal 4:25). The promises about Zion in the Old

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<sup>123</sup> In terms of the Sinai-Zion dichotomy of the Psalms, Paul draws the line between heavenly Jerusalem as Zion and earthly Jerusalem cum Sinai as Sinai. Thus the place of permanent fellowship with God is not in the earthly Jerusalem.

<sup>124</sup> See discussion in Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 132–33.

<sup>125</sup> Bauckham, *Bible and Mission*, 75–76, comments that the idea of a new temple as the Christian community “made it possible for the Jerusalem leaders to accept that Gentile converts could be fully members of the messianic people of God without having to become Jews. If the community were defined by the Temple on mount Zion, this would not be possible, since Gentiles were excluded.”

<sup>126</sup> According to Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 129.

Testament are properly applied to heavenly Jerusalem, of which now it is the church on earth that is the corresponding reality. Thus Zion theology adheres to “Jerusalem above” and to its citizens, the church, not to earthly Jerusalem (both place and people). This Jerusalem above is opposed to the “present” Jerusalem, which implies that it is the Jerusalem of the future as well as being the present mother of believers.<sup>127</sup>

Much has been written about Paul’s attitude to the future of the Jews and their institutions, including Jerusalem, especially his words in Rom 9–11. Paul says that, presently, the Jewish nation as a whole has stumbled (Rom 9:32). They have not submitted to God’s righteousness (Rom 10:3), and have been broken off (11:17) from God’s people. But did he see a future role for Jerusalem in God’s salvation plan?

Paul says, “Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And so, all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins’” (Rom 11:25b–27). Paul goes on to mention God’s permanent love and gifts for Israel. Israel will be saved as a result of the salvation of the Gentiles.

Paul says he is writing about these matters so that the Gentile Christians will not feel superior and ungrateful to the Jewish roots of their faith. Jews and Gentiles are all in the same boat when it comes to needing salvation (Rom 11:32) and deserving God’s wrath. But his use of Isa 59:20–21 in Rom 11:26–27 is very revealing. In the MT the Isaiah text can be translated:

“The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins,” declares the Lord. “As for me, this is my covenant with them,” says

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<sup>127</sup> de Young, *Jerusalem in the NT*, 118.

the Lord, “My Spirit, who is on you, and my words . . . will not depart from your mouth . . . forever.”

The LXX has:

And the deliverer will come for the sake of Zion, and will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. And this shall be my covenant with them, said the Lord . . . My Spirit which is upon you, and the words I have put into your mouth, will not fail from your mouth . . . forever.

The words in Rom 11:27, “when I take away their sins,” seem to be from Jer

31:33–34 (cf. Isa 27:9):

This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbour, or a man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.

The Isa 59 and Jer 31 passages are connected by the phrase “this is my covenant with them/the house of Israel,” by the idea of God placing his words/law in the mouths/minds/hearts of his people, and by mention of removing or forgiving Israel’s sin. Therefore, Paul seems to see the two passages as talking about the same thing.<sup>128</sup>

However the MT and LXX have the redeemer coming to (ל) or for (ἐνεκεν) Zion rather than, as in Paul, *from* (ἐκ) Zion.

Walker sees this as related to Rom 9:33. God has laid a stumbling stone in Zion, which is the atonement provided by the death of Jesus in Jerusalem. Salvation now comes

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<sup>128</sup> The MT of Isaiah 59 has the redeemer coming to Zion “to those in Jacob who repent of their sins.” Paul follows the LXX in this regard, which has “and will turn away ungodliness from Jacob” (the variants are not as different as they look in English; the underlying Hebrew vocabulary could be the same, with repent = turn away [נָשַׁו], and sins = ungodliness [עֲשֵׂוֹת]). The link to Jer 31:33–34, which speaks of forgiveness of sin, makes the LXX interpretation of Isa 59:20 match the meaning of Jeremiah and so suits Paul’s linking of the two passages.

out of Jerusalem as the effects of that sacrifice in that city are applied to believers.<sup>129</sup> Paul telescopes the coming of the Deliverer to Zion (Jesus goes there to die) and the coming of the Deliverer from Zion (the results and message flow out from that death in Jerusalem) in turning away godlessness from Jacob, and ultimately salvation for all nations.<sup>130</sup> Thus, Rom 11:26 depicts Isa 59:20–21 as already being fulfilled, not predicting a future role for Zion. It accords with Rom 15:19 as seeing Jerusalem’s role as mainly the place from which the gospel started to spread.

Other interpreters see this as a prophecy that at the parousia Jesus will set up his kingdom headquarters in earthly Jerusalem and from there bring about the conversion of the Jews.<sup>131</sup> Elsewhere, however, Paul avoids putting the parousia at Jerusalem (e.g. in 1 Cor 15:50–58; 1 Thess 4:13—5:11), so this seems unlikely.

According to Stuhlmacher, at the parousia Jesus comes out of heaven (cf. Phil 3:20) and by his appearing convinces the Jews to believe in him at the very end, just as he convinced Paul by appearing on the road to Damascus.<sup>132</sup> In this scenario, Zion is heaven. A number of interpreters think Paul has deliberately changed the wording to reflect the new situation following the coming of Christ. Like Stuhlmacher, they see Zion in Rom 11:26 as the heavenly Jerusalem or perhaps the church.<sup>133</sup> If the Deliverer comes to Jacob from Zion, this may imply that Jacob is not in Zion. But Jesus comes either from the heavenly Jerusalem, or from his presence empowering the church for proclamation, to reach Jews and draw them to believe in Jesus. This is more likely to be Paul’s meaning.

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<sup>129</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 140–42.

<sup>130</sup> For OT incidences of salvation *from* Zion, see e.g. Pss 14:7; 53:6; cf. Isa 2:3.

<sup>131</sup> Dunn, *Romans 9–16*, 682, suggests that the Deliverer may come from Zion after the parousia, since he will arrive first at Jerusalem (if one takes 2 Thess 2:4, 8 as a reference to God’s Temple in Jerusalem; but see argument above against this view, n. 115 above); or the reference may be to coming from the heavenly Zion.

<sup>132</sup> Stuhlmacher, “Stellung Jesu,” 154–55. This opinion also from Harrison, “Romans,” 124.

<sup>133</sup> Davies, *Gospel and Land*, 196.

In conclusion, the testimony of Paul, the Jew formerly ardent for Jewish tradition (Acts 22:2–3; 26:4; Phil 3:4–6) and still full of love and compassion for his compatriots (Rom 9:1–4; 10:1), is that the heavenly Jerusalem and the church of Jesus Christ have become heirs to the Zion traditions originally attached to the earthly city of Jerusalem. God’s promises are not void. But they are being fulfilled in a different way than most of the Jews expected.

### *Jerusalem in Hebrews*

The book of Hebrews is built around the theme “Jesus is better.” Jesus is shown to be the superior fulfilment of many Old Testament institutions and persons. He brings a better revelation (Heb 1:1–3) and a better salvation (2:1–4); he is better than angels (1:4–14), better than Moses (3:6), better than Joshua (3:7—4:13), better than Aaron (4:14–10; 7:1—8:13) and better than animal sacrifices (9:1—10:18). Old Testament verses about both the Davidic king (Heb 1:5, 8, 13) and YHWH (1:6, 10–12) are applied to him, for in him, these two essences merge.<sup>134</sup> He is also, like Melchizedek, both king and high priest (Heb 6:20—7:1). The author mentions that Melchizedek was king of Salem, and the interpretation he gives is “king of peace” (a messianic title: Isa 9:6–7) rather than king of Jerusalem. The fact that the author does not exploit the link between Melchizedek and Jerusalem, a link well attested in Second Temple literature, may be a signal that earthly Jerusalem has lost importance for him.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> At last the damage done in 1 Sam 8:7, where God is rejected in favour of a human king, is repaired, as the divine and human kingly strands merge.

<sup>135</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 202, notes this, and in n. 4 cites Josephus, *Ant.* 1.180 and 1QapGen 22.13 as evidence of the link between Salem and Jerusalem being made by the first century.



It is not surprising, then, to find that Hebrews has Jesus bringing his people to a better Jerusalem than the one available to Judaism. The first hint of this is the notice that Jesus sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in the highest places (Heb 1:3, cf. 1:13). God has subjected the world to come to Jesus as the representative man, and Jesus is crowned with glory and honour (Heb 2:5–9). As the Davidic king, his throne is in Zion, as Ps 2:6 proclaims (evoked by the quotation of Ps 2:7 in Heb 1:5). Yet Jesus has gone through the heavens and is seated there (Heb 1:3; 4:14; 7:26; 8:1, 4; 10:12–13). Zion, then, is in heaven.

Secondly, as high priest, Jesus has offered the ultimate sacrifice of atonement. Atoning blood sacrifices had to be offered in Jerusalem at the Temple there, but the author of Hebrews tells us that this location was just a shadow of the real Temple (Heb 8:5). Jesus has gone into the real Tabernacle and Holy of Holies, which are not a part of this creation (Heb 9:11), that is, into heaven itself (9:24). His sprinkled blood is also said to be in the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb 12:22–24). This is another indication that if there is any Jerusalem for the glorified Jesus it is a heavenly one. The statement that the old covenant is obsolete and will soon disappear (Heb 8:13) may have implications for the non-future of earthly Jerusalem as sacred city, the primary locus of old covenant rituals.<sup>136</sup>

Interestingly, as Jesus goes into the Holy of Holies, he is called the forerunner for us (πρόδρομος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, Heb 6:19). This suggests that the readers also will follow him to enter the Holy of Holies, an idea which is partly realized in the book of Hebrews

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<sup>136</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 207–10, argues that the author of Hebrews uses σκηνή for the Temple to develop his argument on a purely theology level. Unlike the people of Qumran, he is not opposed to the Temple because it has been corrupted, but because theologically it is obsolete and has been replaced by the work of Christ. Qumran looked forward to a rebuilt and purified Temple, but Hebrews does not.

when believers come to the throne for help (4:16; 10:19; and fully in the book of Revelation where the New Jerusalem is the Holy of Holies).

Thirdly, Heb 3:7—4:13 indicates that Moses, Joshua, and even David, were not the ones who were able to bring people into God's rest.<sup>137</sup> Though Joshua brought them in to settle in the land, which was a kind of rest (Josh 1:13–15; cf. Deut 12:9–10) and David finished the conquest by taking Jerusalem so that God gave the people rest there (1 Kgs 8:56; 1 Chr 22:9–10, 18), the author of Hebrews points out that David still exhorted people to enter God's rest. If Jerusalem, where David and his people were safely settled, was not God's rest, even though the Old Testament named it so, it must be the type of another (heavenly) Jerusalem where the true rest is found.

Fourthly, the author of Hebrews has Abraham and the patriarchs looking for a city (11:10). This city is their homeland (πατρίς).<sup>138</sup> Unlike the tents the patriarchs lived in, it has foundations. Psalm 87:1–2 designates Zion as the city with foundations (cf. Isa 28:16). But the city that the author of Hebrews is talking about is not located on this earth, for the patriarchs were aliens and strangers on earth (Heb 11:13). Rather, it is a heavenly one and its architect and builder is God. This text may evoke Isa 54:11 where God says of (eschatological) Zion, "I will build you with stones of turquoise, your foundations with sapphires." Hebrews says that God has actually prepared this city for the patriarchs (Heb 11:16).

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<sup>137</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 212–13, makes a case for the presence in Hebrews of the Exodus theme, with Jesus as a new Moses leading to a new "promised land," i.e. the heavenly city.

<sup>138</sup> Here the concept of city and land overlap, a situation with precedent in the way the city of Jerusalem sometimes acts as quintessence of the land in the OT. See Davies, *Gospel and Land*, 194, 331, etc. Since the terms city and homeland are made equivalent here, it is not so surprising to see the city in the book of Revelation being the same as the whole new earth (see below).

Nevertheless, the patriarchs and all the heroes of faith mentioned in Hebrews 11 did not get what was promised (Heb 11:39), which must include the prepared city. Many of the heroes, such as David and the prophets (Heb 11:32), lived in Jerusalem, but they too did not obtain what was promised. Rather, “God had planned something better for us, so that only together with us would they be made perfect” (Heb 11:40). *τελειωθῶσιν* can mean “be made perfect” but it could also mean “reach their goal,” which would fit well with the “looking for a city” motif. The text is thus clear that the earthly city of Jerusalem was not what was ultimately promised and was not the final goal of the patriarchs and heroes. Verse 40 implies that Christians have now obtained the promised city, and the author explains this more fully in the following chapter.<sup>139</sup>

The clearest passage about Zion/Jerusalem in Hebrews is Heb 12:18–29. After exhorting his readers to persevere in holiness, the author further motivates them by explaining that although disobedience to the old Sinai covenant had horrendous consequences, disobedience to the new covenant is even more dangerous (Heb 12:29), and obedience even more rewarding (12:28). The Israelites and Moses came to Sinai’s fire, darkness, storm, trumpet blast, frightening voice and unbearable commands (Heb 12:18–21). But believers have come to “Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem” (Heb 12:22). By saying that this mountain cannot be touched (Heb 12:18) and by using the adjective “heavenly” (*ἐπουρανίος*), the author conveys that this Jerusalem is not the earthly one. The believers are already there and hear the voice that

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<sup>139</sup> Guthrie, *NT Theology*, 883, comments, “The linking of the idea of a city to the conception of heaven, which is not found in the teaching of Jesus and finds only passing reference in Paul (Gal 4:24 ff) is a special feature of Hebrews . . . It is not surprising that in a Jewish setting Jerusalem should become a symbol of the heavenly state, since Jewish hopes were centred on that city.” Guthrie sees the city is a suitable image because of the idea of community it encompasses.

warns in heaven (Heb 12:25).<sup>140</sup> They are in company there with celebrating angels, the assembly of the firstborn whose names are written in heaven (i.e. all other believers),<sup>141</sup> God the judge of all, the spirits of righteous people who are perfected (believers who have finished life on earth?),<sup>142</sup> Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and the sprinkled blood that speaks better things than Abel (12:22–24).<sup>143</sup> By mentioning the sprinkled blood of Christ, the writer here identifies this heavenly Jerusalem on heavenly Mount Zion as the location of the sanctuary that Jesus entered, described in Heb 9:11–14, 24–28.<sup>144</sup> These descriptions emphasize the other-worldly nature of this Zion/Jerusalem.<sup>145</sup> The writer of Hebrews has also redefined the proper goal of pilgrimage from earthly to heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>146</sup>

Sinai and heavenly Jerusalem are contrasted in the way that God and his people relate. Park notes, “The most obvious contrast between the two is the relationship

<sup>140</sup> Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 267, maintains that, in view of the anticipations in Heb 11, believers are now located in the heavenly Jerusalem, and this is the basis for the exhortations directed to them in 12:25–28.

<sup>141</sup> So Stibbs, “Hebrews,” 1215, and Morris, “Hebrews,” 142. Jelinek, “City Metaphor,” 170, notes that nowhere in Scripture do angels have their names written in heaven, but people do, cf. Luke 10:20.

<sup>142</sup> Lindars, *Theology of Hebrews*, 116, and Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 680, take them to be the OT heroes.

<sup>143</sup> I.e. than Abel’s blood (some MSS even have τὸ Ἰαβελ), which cried out for vengeance. Christ’s blood brings forgiveness and reconciliation. So Morris, “Hebrews,” 143. Since Pseudo-Philo places the shed blood of Abel on earthly Mount Zion (*L.A.B.* 16:2), this is another possible contrast between the shed blood of Abel and Christ.

<sup>144</sup> Sharkey, “Heavenly Jerusalem,” 250, thinks that Hebrews does *not* link the heavenly temple (ch. 8–9) and heavenly city (ch. 11–13), although she sees them as interchangeable symbols, and mentions in n. 68 (pp. 313–14) that there are temple terms related to the heavenly city, such as προσέρχομαι and the sprinkled blood of Jesus. It is precisely these things, however, that let the reader know that the heavenly Jerusalem is the location of, or the same thing as, the heavenly temple mentioned in the previous chapters of Hebrews. The casual way in which the link is made shows that the author assumes that readers know that Jerusalem and Temple are inseparable concepts.

<sup>145</sup> Lee, *New Jerusalem*, 238, writes, “it is noteworthy that the heavenly Jerusalem is described not as a building but as the community with God, Jesus, God’s people (church) and angels. The community has been perfectly established because the human group (the spirits of the righteous) has been made perfect . . . through Jesus.” Lee notices that the problem with the God-people community in the OT (human sin) has been remedied, so that the community can be permanently established.

<sup>146</sup> See Johnsson, “Pilgrimage Motif,” for insight into the pilgrimage theme in Hebrews.

between God and his people, i.e., the new covenant is characterized by “joyful assembly” (πανηγυρις) (v. 22) rather than by “trembling with fear” (v. 21).”<sup>147</sup>

The Psalmist said that Mount Zion cannot be shaken (Ps 125:1). Sinai shook, however (Heb 12:26; Exod 19:18). God said that he was going to shake the earth and heavens one more time (Hag 2:6). The author of Hebrews sees in the words “once more” an implication that anything that can shake will be destroyed (thus bringing an end to all shaking). Only what cannot shake will remain. Since Sinai can shake, it and the covenant made there will come to an end at this final shaking. Earthly Jerusalem is still attached to the Sinai covenant, as the author has illustrated by the arrangements in Tabernacle and Temple that follow the Sinai regulations. So the author implies that earthly Jerusalem too can be shaken and will be destroyed. It is not the true unshakeable Zion. Only heavenly Zion, which cannot be shaken, will endure. Here, Zion theology is clearly attached to a heavenly Jerusalem in contrast to earthly Jerusalem.

The last passage to consider in Hebrews is 13:12–14, which notes that Jesus suffered outside the (city) gate. This must be the gate of earthly Jerusalem (cf. John 19:17, 20). Jesus’ followers are exhorted to “go to him outside the camp” (Heb 13:13), which means they are to leave earthly Jerusalem<sup>148</sup> and the Jewish community.<sup>149</sup> The following comment, “For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for

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<sup>147</sup> Park, “Regained Eden,” 133.

<sup>148</sup> At Qumran, Levitical regulations mentioning “the camp” were interpreted as if Jerusalem were the camp, e.g. 4QMMT 32–36 (Martinez, *DSS Translated*, 77–78). This applied, for example, to parts of sacrificial rites to be performed outside the camp (e.g. Lev 4:12, 21). Rabbinic literature did the same (see references in Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 216, n. 47). This appears to have been the usual use of “camp” in such contexts.

<sup>149</sup> So de Young, *Jerusalem in the NT*, 109, and Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 217. On p. 219, Walker notes the parallel with the tent of meeting set up by Moses “outside the camp” when the camp was defiled by Israel’s sin (Exod 33:7–11), implying that the author of Hebrews saw present earthly Jerusalem as polluted.

the city that is to come” (Heb 13:14),<sup>150</sup> makes it clear that Christians do not consider earthly Jerusalem to be their spiritual home or to have spiritual significance.<sup>151</sup> Though Heb 12:25 says they are already in the heavenly Jerusalem, in another more literal way, the city is still future. This is the familiar “already but not yet” theme of the New Testament. Christians have experienced realities that the Old Testament saints only looked forward to, they inhabit heavenly Jerusalem, and offer priestly sacrifices of praise and good deeds (Heb 13:16); yet in this life, Christians also look *forward* to reaching the heavenly city.<sup>152</sup>

The overall result of the picture painted by the book of Hebrews is that earthly Jerusalem, with its Temple, and including its status as representative of the Land, had only temporary theological significance. With the coming of Christ, that is over. Instead, the Zion realities of fellowship with God and the saints (Heb 12:23–24), worship (13:16), security and inviolability (12:27–28), provision (4:14–16; 13:5), rest (4:9), and identity (11:16) are all to be found in the heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>153</sup> The saints share in these

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<sup>150</sup> The author says it beautifully in Greek, inverting the order so that the two similar sounding but opposite meaning participles come together between the main verbs of the two clauses: οὐ γὰρ ἔχομεν ὧδε μένουσαν πόλιν, ἀλλὰ τὴν μέλλουσαν ἐπιζητοῦμεν. This arrangement emphasizes the contrast between the two cities.

<sup>151</sup> de Young, *Jerusalem in the NT*, 109, comments, “Jerusalem has lost all redemptive significance for the Christian because Christ has made the final sacrifice for sin outside the gates of Jerusalem, and redemption can only be found where he is—without the camp.”

<sup>152</sup> Brueggemann, *The Land*, 164, notes, “The New Testament has discerned how problematic land is; when people are landless the promise comes; but when the land is secured, it seduces and the people are turned toward loss.” This may illustrate the value of the “already-not yet” view of the NT. The gospel is a promise of an inheritance, a promise which is so sure that it is as good as a possession, yet not so present as to be able to seduce. Brueggemann goes on to comment (p. 168), “it is sobering for New Testament exegesis to recognize that the single central symbol for the promise of the gospel is land (Heb 11:13–16).” To Brueggemann (pp. 2–3), land means a place to belong, to be safe and free from pressure, a symbol of wholeness and joy, well-being resulting from social coherence, personal ease in prosperity, security and freedom, and a sense of destiny and purpose. However, he does not carry his discussion of land with this meaning into any discussion of the New Jerusalem of Revelation.

<sup>153</sup> Son, *Zion Symbolism*, 74, claims that most major themes of the book of Hebrews can be understood in relation to Zion symbolism. He is more interested, however, in the contrast between Zion and Sinai, with Zion representing a transcending of the nationalistic and ritualistic world-view of Judaism. So “Zion

experiences in this life to some extent, so that they can be said to have already come to Mount Zion. In another way, however, the city is yet to come.

### *Jerusalem in the General Epistles*

Except for the quotation of Isa 28:16 in 1 Pet 2:6, Jerusalem/Zion is not mentioned by name in the epistles of James, Peter, John and Jude. However, there are a few passages that bear on the theme.

First, believers are considered to be in exile (Jas 1:1; 1 Pet 1:1), a stance they are encouraged to maintain (1 Pet 1:17; 2:11), so they are not striving to come back to any earthly Jerusalem.<sup>154</sup> Rather, their inheritance is kept in heaven (1 Pet 1:3) where, if they are faithful, they will receive a rich welcome (2 Pet 1:11).

Secondly, Peter, like Paul, sees the fellowship of believers as the true Temple, made of “living stones,” “a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Christ” (1 Pet 2:5). This Temple is built on the stone laid in Zion, that is, Jesus (1 Pet 2:6). They are the true people of God (1 Pet 2:10) and the house of God (1 Pet 4:17)<sup>155</sup> located on the true Zion stone. Thus the church has taken the Temple’s role as location of true worship. It is a spiritual house that needs no geographic location.

Thirdly, the mount of Transfiguration is called “the sacred mountain” (2 Pet 1:18). This reinforces the observation made above in the discussion of the Synoptic

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symbolism” to him means the transcendent and universal aspects of the Jewish tradition (82), rather than the OT Zion theology.

<sup>154</sup> So also Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 311.

<sup>155</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 311, comments, “The Christian community thus inherits not just the privileges but also the demanding responsibilities of the Jerusalem Temple (the first place to witness God’s judgement).”

Gospels that Jesus operates on mountains other than Jerusalem at spiritually significant times. Other places can be places where one meets God and earthly Jerusalem is eclipsed in this regard. The presence of Jesus is the determining factor.

Finally, 1 John speaks of close fellowship with God that believers have in Christ (e.g. 1 John 1:3, 6–7; 2:13–14, 24, 28; 3:24; 4:16). Although this is a common New Testament theme, perhaps it can be related to the portrayal in John's Gospel of Jesus as the true Temple, the place where fellowship with God is experienced.

### *Conclusion*

Without exception, the New Testament documents depict a shift in the application of Zion theology from earthly Jerusalem to Jesus, the church and the heavenly Jerusalem. The promise of the restoration of Zion has been fulfilled, at least in principle, in the resurrection of Jesus. The important functions of Zion (dwelling place of God, place where one meets God and worships God, place of provision, safety and victory, place defining identity and producing a feeling of belonging) are all experienced, but attached to realities other than physical Jerusalem. In fact, physical Jerusalem is expressly rejected as the locus of these blessings, and its destruction is expected.

Here we have the double identity of Zion as both God's place (Jerusalem above) and God's people (the church on earth). This has to be an interim situation, because full communion between God and his people is yet to come about. In the Old Testament, ideally, God's place and God's people meet in earthly Jerusalem, though the "ideal" was never fully realized. In Revelation, they meet in the New Jerusalem. But in the church age, the situation is "already" and "not yet." The church on earth has communion with



God but “as in a mirror dimly,” not yet “face to face” (1 Cor 13:12). Its members belong to the heavenly Jerusalem and are there in some sense (Heb 12:22), while still awaiting it (Heb 13:14).

The tendency to detach communion with God from earthly Jerusalem has its seeds in the Old Testament. As Stephen pointed out (Acts 7), God met with the patriarchs in many places outside the land and away from Jerusalem. Paul notes (in 1 Cor 6:16 from Lev 26:12) that the promise of God’s presence is made to those who obey his commands. The Old Testament has characters like Elijah and Elisha, who are clearly close to God but do not go to Jerusalem. Inviolability language is attached to righteous Jeremiah, rather than to evil Jerusalem, the city where he lives (Jer 1:18–19). And Ps 125:1 says that those who trust in the Lord are “like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever.” The benefits of God’s presence are promised to those who trust and obey God, not just to those who live in the physical city of Jerusalem.

Some of the Second Temple writers, believing that Jerusalem had not been restored to the glory promised in the prophets, began to reject the idea of an eternal role for earthly Jerusalem, and to place more hope in its heavenly prototype. They recognized that Jerusalem was only inviolable if her people were faithful, and that she had been destroyed because of Israel’s sin. But for the most part, the New Testament writers take the Old Testament material in a different direction than those Second Temple Jewish writers did.<sup>156</sup> The glorification of Jerusalem as God’s choice from creation, and stories that Adam and Enoch lived there, are missing from the New Testament, as well as tales of supernatural preservation of the Temple vessels and God’s control of the gates at the

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<sup>156</sup> See, for example, de Young, *Jerusalem in the NT*, 109–16, for a description of the expectations that Jesus’ Jewish contemporaries had for Jerusalem.

fall of the city. Hope for restoration of the earthly city and purification of the earthly Temple appear to have been abandoned in the New Testament in favour of a spiritual and heavenly Jerusalem/Zion, no longer geographically located in this earth. Instead of still hoping for the restoration of Zion, the New Testament writers believed that Zion had in some way been restored in the resurrection of Jesus and the gathering of his followers into the church. Yet they still looked forward to reaching a future heavenly Jerusalem.

In its extended treatment of the New Jerusalem, the book of Revelation draws more heavily than the rest of the New Testament on some of the Second Temple traditions, especially the link between Eden and Jerusalem. Again, however, the writer of Revelation conditions these traditions by what he believes about the importance of the coming of Jesus as Messiah. Revelation's treatment of Jerusalem/Zion is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR  
THE TRADITION FULFILLED: JERUSALEM/ZION IN THE BOOK OF  
REVELATION

*Introduction*

The New Testament documents examined so far depict a new age in which Zion has in some sense been restored. But there are indications in the New Testament that Christians in the present age experience “not yet” as well as “already” in the fulfilment of the glorious future promised for Zion (e.g. Heb 12:22 cf. 13:13). The book of Revelation resolves this tension by showing the church moving to the end of this age and into the new creation where all promises are fully experienced and God and his people will live together in eternal fellowship in the New Jerusalem. Thus the New Jerusalem completes the realization of the Old Testament promises of the restoration of Israel, the city, and the Temple.<sup>1</sup>

But Revelation does not start with that final realization. It begins with the church age, when there is persecution, and the present heaven and earth still exist (chaps. 1–20). Interpreters are divided over whether the heavenly Jerusalem “above” of Gal 4 and Heb

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<sup>1</sup> Fekkes, *Isaiah*, 93, sees in the last two chapters of Revelation the general theme of renewal under which he groups sub-motifs of creation and paradise, covenant theology, tabernacle and temple, and Jerusalem/Zion. Under covenant theology he mentions the Davidic monarchy and the covenant formula. The study of Jerusalem in the OT in Chapter 1 above has demonstrated that that all the other sub-motifs are already linked to Jerusalem/Zion in the OT. The length of treatment of Jerusalem in Rev 21 and 22 might indicate that Jerusalem is the dominating motif under which the others there could be subsumed.

12, and the “new” Jerusalem of Revelation, are the same.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter I argue that there is some difference. Throughout the church age (depicted in Rev 1–20) there is a heavenly Jerusalem which is the unseen home of the church on earth.<sup>3</sup> The church on earth is “Jerusalem” in the church age as a sort of outpost of that heavenly city.<sup>4</sup> The final form of Jerusalem is the *New Jerusalem*, part of the new creation, not part of the former heavens as such. It is newly created, yet is also in continuity with previous Jerusalem(s).<sup>5</sup> The relationship of the New Jerusalem to older Jerusalem(s) may be analogous to that of the resurrection body to the earthly body (1 Cor 15:42–44). After all, it is inhabited by and consists of people in their resurrected state.<sup>6</sup>

We cannot be sure whether the author of Revelation had read any of the other New Testament documents. However, since those writings share a consensus in their view of Jerusalem in the church age, it is reasonable to assume that this was the settled Christian view in the late first century, a view of which John must certainly have been aware, and, as will be demonstrated here, apparently shared.

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<sup>2</sup> Those who argue they are not the same include King, “Jerusalem,” 765; J. Comblin, “Liturgie,” 10–11; and Rissi, *Future of the World*, 39–40, 56, 63. The opposite view is held by Schmidt, “Jerusalem als Urbild und Abbild,” 207; Ladd, *Revelation*, 276. Charles, *Revelation*, 2:144–54, thinks that there are two Jerusalems that come down out of heaven in Revelation (one for Christ’s millennial reign on earth, and the New Jerusalem in the new creation), but that the descriptions are mixed together in Rev 20–22. His rearrangement of the text is considered untenable by most interpreters today, but Preston and Hanson, *Revelation*, 129, follow it. They interpret the millennial city as the ideal church militant, i.e. currently on earth (taking the church age to be the millennium), and the eternal city as the church both now in heaven, and after the creation of the new heaven and earth (taking heaven to be outside time, in eternity).

<sup>3</sup> The final form of Jerusalem is anticipated in Rev 3:12, however, and probably Rev 7:9–17.

<sup>4</sup> Perhaps as the exiles could be addressed as “Zion” before they had returned from Babylon, e.g. Zech 2:7. I will argue below that the holy city of chap. 20 is not literal Jerusalem, but still an image of the church everywhere in the world. The rest of the NT does not envision a restoration of physical Jerusalem as God’s city.

<sup>5</sup> Park, “Regained Eden,” e.g. 327, argues that a major difference between these two forms of Jerusalem is that, in the second, God is much more accessible than in the first. The similarities between the first and second forms are shown to give encouragement to persecuted Christians. Heb 11:1, 3, 7, etc. emphasizes faith in the “unseen.”

<sup>6</sup> E.g. Williams, *Renewal Theology*, 484–85, suggests that the new heaven and earth will be needed for the new humanity of resurrected persons. People with earthly physical bodies function well on the present earth, the present heaven is a place of spirits, but the resurrection body will need a realm that is neither.

Besides demonstrating that in Revelation “Jerusalem” on earth in the church age is the church, this chapter shows that the distinctive characteristics of the New Jerusalem at the end of the book (the church’s final state) can be best and most fully understood by showing how they relate to the theology of Jerusalem in the Old Testament as interpreted through the Christ event.<sup>7</sup> The chapter will begin with an examination of the relevant texts in Revelation<sup>8</sup> and end with a summary, including the links to antecedent theology of Jerusalem/Zion.

### *Revelation 1–3*

As John writes the Revelation, he is on the island of Patmos (1:9). He is writing to seven churches in Asia (1:11). All these places are far from the earthly Jerusalem. Like Ezekiel, John sees a vision of God in a land far from the Jewish capital. Patmos may also have been a place of exile (1:9) as Babylonia was for Ezekiel.<sup>9</sup> Unlike Ezekiel, however, John has no vision of a new temple building connected to the eschatological holy city (cf. Rev 21: 22 and Ezek 40:2, 5), and his holy city contains many nations. The first three chapters of Revelation picture a different kind of temple already functioning, and mention a new Jerusalem to come. They introduce the two stages of Jerusalem featured in the book.

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<sup>7</sup> Comblin, “Liturgie,” 9, comments that John synthesizes all the motifs attributed to the future Jerusalem by the prophets in this picture of the church. He even goes so far as to suppose (p. 19) that John had an anthology before him of Isa 40–66, Ezek 40–48 and Zech 14 from which he worked.

<sup>8</sup> See Lambrecht, “Structuration,” 78–84, for discussion of various proposals for the structure of Revelation, and his own proposal pp. 85–104. No consensus has emerged on this topic, however most agree that Rev 1–3 and 21:1–22:5 are distinct sections.

<sup>9</sup> It is the church fathers who explain that John was exiled to Patmos: e.g. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.18 and 23.

Jesus has made believers into a kingdom and priests to serve God (1:6; cf. 5:10). As the believers in focus in Revelation live in Asia not in Palestine, their priestly service cannot be in the earthly Temple or Jerusalem.<sup>10</sup>

John sees the risen Christ in Rev 1:12–20 standing among the seven lampstands which represent the seven churches. Mention of seven lampstands immediately makes the reader think of the Temple, with its seven-branched lampstand. Jesus also appears to be clothed as a priest, with his long robe and sash.<sup>11</sup> These details indicate that this is a temple scene. The churches, then, are presently in the temple even though they are located in Asia. Interpreters are not agreed as to whether this is a scene in the heavenly temple, or a more purely metaphorical temple.<sup>12</sup> Clearly, however, since this temple cannot be located in earthly Jerusalem, that city's claim to importance from being the site of the Temple is absent from these temple references.

Jesus promises to the overcomers in Philadelphia, “Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the New Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name” (Rev 3:12).

Most commentators are agreed that the image of a pillar is one of stability and security.<sup>13</sup> Mention of the New Jerusalem, however, links this saying to the end of the book where there is *no* temple in that city, or rather, God and the Lamb are the temple

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<sup>10</sup> Their work combines priestly service and reigning (Rev 5:10). They are already a kingdom (1:6, 9) but their reign on earth is future (5:10; cf. 20:4).

<sup>11</sup> So, for example, Briggs, *Temple Imagery*, 53.

<sup>12</sup> Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 71, sees Rev 1:9–20 set in the heavenly throne room, while Briggs, *Temple Imagery*, 54, says “This temple, therefore, is almost certainly an altogether visionary one with no connection to any ‘real’ sanctuary on earth or to the one in heaven.” He says this is because John does not go up to heaven until 4:1.

<sup>13</sup> E.g. Osborne, *Revelation*, 196.

(Rev 21:22). In a way, the city itself, being a cube (Rev 21:16),<sup>14</sup> is the inner sanctuary or “Holy of Holies” of the temple, the place of God’s immediate presence.<sup>15</sup> The pillar promise means a secure place in the New Jerusalem and in God’s presence. Likewise, having the city’s name written on them means that overcomers are citizens of that place<sup>16</sup> and so have a right to its benefits. But it means more than that.

The meaning cannot be made out of the etymology of the name “Jerusalem.” None of the biblical materials try to make theology out of the etymology of the name even though this was not an unheard of idea. Eupolemus (in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.34.11) and Josephus, say that it is a shortened form of ἱερόν Σολομῶνος, that is, “Solomon’s Temple.”<sup>17</sup> And Origen picks up Philo’s etymology ὄρασις of σαλημ (face of peace).<sup>18</sup> But even the book of Hebrews, which does some name translating in calling Melchizedek “King of Salem, that is, king of peace” (Heb 7:2), does not connect this to Jerusalem. The name is not chosen in Revelation for its etymology (which is actually unknown).<sup>19</sup> Here, writing the name of the New Jerusalem it is connected with writing the name of God.

In the Old Testament, the city was the place where God placed his Name to dwell (1 Kgs 11:36; 14:21; 2 Kgs 1:4, 7 etc.; Ezra 6:12; Neh 1:9; Isa 18:7), and the city was

<sup>14</sup> For an argument that the city is a cube rather than a pyramid, see Park, “Regained Eden,” 204–6.

<sup>15</sup> As discussed in Chapter 1, Eskenazi, *In an Age of Prose*, 189, shows that already in Ezra-Nehemiah, the whole city is seen as a temple. More on this in Revelation below.

<sup>16</sup> So e.g. Osborne, *Revelation*, 198, and Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 243. Contrast Isa 48:1–2 where sinners try to call themselves by the name of the holy city and are rebuked. Yet even there, God acts to restore them to vindicate his name. Note Prov 18:10, “the name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous run to it and are safe,” a verse which metaphorically equates the strong tower (like Jerusalem?) and the name of the Lord. The people of God were also called by the name of YHWH in the OT (2 Chr 7:14; Isa 43:7; Dan 9:19) which indicates that they belong to God. Isa 44:5 has Israelites writing YHWH’s name on their hands at the renewal.

<sup>17</sup> Josephus, *Ant.* 7:67; cf. *J.W.* 6:438; *Ag. Ap.* 1:174.

<sup>18</sup> Schmidt, “Jerusalem als Urbild und Abbild,” 216.

<sup>19</sup> Barth, *God with Us*, 234, notes that the etymology of the names Jerusalem, Zion and Jebus are all unknown. And as de Young, *Jerusalem in the NT*, 5, says, the Semitic etymology of the name Jerusalem may be “unsolvable.” Perhaps the author of Hebrews does not connect Melchizedek to earthly Jerusalem because he is trying to de-emphasize the city for his readers.

called by the name of YHWH (Jer 25:29; Dan 9:18–19). Ezekiel prophesied as the eschatological name for the city “YHWH is there” (Ezek 48:35), and Jeremiah said it would be “throne of YHWH” (Jer 3:17) and “YHWH our righteousness” (Jer 33:16). Thus, there is not really much difference between the name of God and the name of the eschatological city being placed on the overcomer. Both emphasize the presence of God (cf. Rev 21:3).

On the other hand, Isaiah has eschatological names for Jerusalem that emphasize the human side of the city. They are “my delight is in her” (Isa 62:2–4) and “sought out, a city not forsaken” (62:12; cf. 65:15). Thus the idea of the eschatological name of the New Jerusalem in the Old Testament reflects the dual nature of Jerusalem, including both the presence of God and the human community in intimacy with him. Zechariah says the renewed Jerusalem will be called “the City of Truth” and the mountain of the Lord will be called “the Holy Mountain” (Zech 8:3). These names emphasize the result when the holy God and the holy people come together. These names all have translatable meanings, unlike the names “Jerusalem” and “Zion.”

In Rev 21:2, the adjective “new” for Jerusalem, and the fact that the city descends from heaven from God, indicate that the text is not talking about earthly Jerusalem, yet it does take meaning from the name “Jerusalem.” (Rev 21:10 calls the city “Jerusalem” without adding “new.”) It is “the city of my God” as old Jerusalem was (Ps 48:1, 8; cf. Jer 25:29; Dan 9:18). The reader is thus expected to bring to the New Jerusalem the ideas associated with Jerusalem as the city of God. The name Jerusalem also links the goal of



God's cosmic program with his process of getting there through historical Israel and Jerusalem.<sup>20</sup>

The overcomers at Ephesus are promised, "To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God" (Rev 2:7). This verse does not mention Jerusalem, but considering the extensive link in Second Temple literature between paradise and Jerusalem, it is fair to propose that John alludes to Jerusalem here.<sup>21</sup> The link becomes more specific in Rev 22:2, where the tree of life is found in the New Jerusalem. This brings in the theme of life, which develops in connection with the New Jerusalem in chaps. 21–22. In fact, almost all the promises made to overcomers in Rev 2–3 turn out to be features of the New Jerusalem at the end of the book.<sup>22</sup> This shows that the readers are being motivated and directed toward entering that city.

The first three chapters of Revelation bring up a number of themes that will be developed later in the book, and the examples above point especially to the Jerusalem theme which returns in Rev 21–22. None of these references can be to the earthly city. The Asian believers serve as priests and their churches function as lampstands in a temple not located in Jerusalem. This would be more necessary, of course, if the Jerusalem Temple were no longer standing when Revelation was written, but as the previous chapter of this dissertation has demonstrated, the Christian movement had already concluded that Zion was being restored in the establishing of the church of Jesus, and that

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<sup>20</sup> Schmidt, "Jerusalem als Urbild und Abbild," 248, notes that Marcion found this historical Jewish link so offensive that he replaced "Jerusalem" in Gal 4:26 with "holy church."

<sup>21</sup> Eden is called παράδεισος in the LXX; see also Isa 51:3, linking restored Zion and Eden.

<sup>22</sup> Tree of life (2:7; 22:2), no second death (2:10–11; 21:4; cf. 21:8), new name (2:17; 3:12; 22:4), authority over the nations (2:27; 22:5), name in book of life (3:5; 21:27), share in the New Jerusalem (3:12; 21:2, 27), reign with Christ (3:21; 22:5). See Park, "Regained Eden," 256–58, and Deutsch, "Transformation," 126, for discussion of the parallels.

the church was the temple currently functioning in God's new economy. This new temple is not in just one geographical locale. It exists wherever believers in Jesus are, and it also exists spiritually in the heavenly Zion. Besides the fact that the church is, and/or is in, the true temple now, these texts also speak of a new and future Jerusalem, of a permanent temple in which overcomers will remain forever, and of the tree of life, which in Eden gave eternal life.<sup>23</sup>

These references make use of the association of Jerusalem with enjoying the presence of God, worship, service, security, and prospering, to describe the blessings of God's people now and in the eschaton.

#### *Revelation 4–20*

The introductory vision of chaps. 1–3 concentrates on messages to the seven churches of Asia and introduces the forms of true Jerusalem in the church age and in the eschaton. In chaps. 4–20 we find a series of visions concerning the whole world from John's day up until the last judgment (Rev 20:11–15). The concluding chapters (Rev 21:1—22:5) deal with events after the end of the present world. The material on Jerusalem in chaps. 4–20 can therefore be taken as a unit but, like chapters 1–3, describe the concept of Jerusalem during the church age and promise an even better one to come. As in the rest of the New Testament, presently there is a heavenly Jerusalem, and the church on earth also has Jerusalem functions. But the Jewish city in Palestine has joined the Babylon side.

#### *Earthly Jerusalem Belongs to the Unbelieving World*

Much of the action of Rev 4–16 takes place in the heavenly temple. John ascends through an open door in heaven (4:1) and finds himself before the heavenly throne (4:2).

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<sup>23</sup> In Gen 3:24, to eat of the tree of life is to live forever.

The temple John sees is specifically called heavenly (Rev 11:19; 14:17; 15:5) and the temple is the location of the heavenly throne in Rev 16:17. The heavenly temple would have been understood by first-century Jews, and likely John's readers, as the proto-type of the earthly one. Thus, in the book of Revelation, the Temple on earth *in Jerusalem* is not the temple in view.

Rather than being characterized as the Temple site, earthly Jerusalem in Revelation has become a paradigm of the world that rejects Christ.<sup>24</sup> In Rev 7:1–8, the servants of God are marked for protection from coming judgment. This scene is modelled on the marking of the righteous for protection in doomed Jerusalem in Ezek 9.<sup>25</sup> In Rev 7, however, it is not Jerusalem that is threatened but the earth (7:1, 3),<sup>26</sup> and although the sealed persons are listed from the tribes of Israel, they are likely identical to the great multitude from every nation (7:9).<sup>27</sup> Revelation transforms Ezekiel's vision concerning Jerusalem into a vision concerning the whole world.

A similar and more explicit use of Jerusalem to foreshadow and share in the fate of the entire unbelieving world is found in Rev 11:8–13 and chaps. 17 and 18. The two

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<sup>24</sup> See the extensive treatment of this theme in Revelation in Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 252–59.

<sup>25</sup> Moyise, *OT in Revelation*, 71, says, “The sealing of the saints in Rev. 7.2–3 is almost certainly modelled on Ezek. 9.4–6.”

<sup>26</sup> Contra preterists like Gentry, “Preterist View of Revelation,” 48, who maintains that  $\gamma\eta$  in Revelation is the land of Israel. As McDonald and Porter, *Early Christianity*, 560, explain, preterists understand Revelation “solely in terms of recent events contemporary with the author.” W. M. Ramsay, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia*, viii, is an influential example. Preterists tend to see the fall of Babylon in Revelation as a reference to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., and hence the apocalyptic woes as distresses to the land of Israel that surrounded Jerusalem's fall. See Beale, *Revelation*, 45, for arguments that  $\gamma\eta$  in Revelation means the whole earth. See Fuller, “Image of Babylon,” 56–76, for arguments against the identification of Babylon in the book of Revelation primarily with first-century Jerusalem.

<sup>27</sup> So e.g. Beale, *Revelation*, 424–26; Osborne, *Revelation*, 317–18. The fact that the twelve precious stones, which in Exodus represented the twelve tribes of Israel, in Revelation are labelled with the names of the apostles (Rev 21:14–20), indicates that, for John, the true twelve tribes are the Christian community. See Beale, *Revelation*, 426–28, 1080. The strange list of the twelve tribes of Israel in Rev 7:5–8, which omits Dan and Ephraim, also points to the fact that these are Christian believers. I propose that Dan and Ephraim are omitted because they were the sites of calf worship in the OT, the point being that the twelve listed tribes are the non-idolaters. Joseph is used to make the number up to 12.

witnesses lie dead in “the great city, which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified” (11:8).<sup>28</sup> This identification of Jerusalem, where Jesus was crucified, with Sodom and Egypt, two Old Testament rebellious and sinful communities, puts earthly Jerusalem on the “Babylon” side of the equation.<sup>29</sup> At the end of the scene, a tenth of this city collapses in an earthquake. In Rev 16:19, the “great city” is split into three parts as the cities of the nations collapse, implying a link, perhaps even identity, between the great city and the cities of the “nations.”<sup>30</sup> In chaps. 17–18 the “great city,” now named Babylon, but described with allusions to Old Testament oracles about Babylon, Tyre, Nineveh, Edom and sinful Jerusalem, is judged with complete destruction (18:21–24).<sup>31</sup>

Revelation 11:1–2 is best interpreted bearing all this in mind. Since the temple elsewhere in Revelation is the heavenly one, with allusions also to the church being the temple or in this temple, the temple John is told to measure is most likely the heavenly one and the worshippers are the saints (cf. Rev 7:15).<sup>32</sup> Many interpreters believe that the outer court and the holy city which the Gentiles trample is the outward aspect of the

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<sup>28</sup> Bauckham, *Theology*, 86, says that this city cannot be Jerusalem, or only Rome. It must be all cities where the church witnesses. But since the church also witnesses in Jerusalem, it seems that Bauckham means that the city cannot be limited to Jerusalem. He agrees that Rev 11:8 refers to Jesus’ crucifixion in Jerusalem. Rissi, *Future of the World*, 16, comments, “through the crucifixion of Christ and through continuous unrepentance, Jerusalem is secularized like Sodom and Egypt. Thus it serves as a mirror of man’s situation in general.”

<sup>29</sup> Ellul, *Meaning of the City*, 50, comments, “Jerusalem becomes Babylon precisely because that is where Jesus was crucified.”

<sup>30</sup> Osborne, *Revelation*, 598, says that Babylon’s fall is “as the description of the fall of ‘the great city’ in 18:21–24 here applied to all the cities that had followed her.” Beale, *Revelation*, 843, comments, “‘Cities of the nations’ might define ‘Babylon the Great.’”

<sup>31</sup> Ellul, *Meaning of the City*, 104–11, sees in Jerusalem a paradigm of God’s relation to all cities and the City of Man. Moyise, *OT in Revelation*, 72, mentions “the description of the great harlot in Rev 17, which draws mainly on the description of Jerusalem in Ezek 16 and 23.” Fuller, “Image of Babylon,” 44–53, and 95–105, documents the use of oracles about Tyre, Edom, Nineveh, Jerusalem, and other nations in Rev 16:17—19:10. Cf. also Fekkes, *Isaiah*, 87–88.

<sup>32</sup> This view is maintained by Beale, *Revelation*, 562–64; Osborne, *Revelation*, 410; Giblin, “Revelation 11,” 438; Briggs, *Temple Imagery*, 39, among others.

church in the world, which suffers persecution while its inner spiritual essence is preserved.<sup>33</sup> On this reading, the holy city is not earthly Jerusalem but the church. Traditionally, God's dwelling place on earth was Jerusalem. Revelation 13:6 introduces a different dwelling (σκηνή) for God, that is, "those who dwell (τοὺς σκηνοῦντας) in heaven." The two expressions are in apposition. The dwellers in heaven are God's dwelling place. If these dwellers are the saints,<sup>34</sup> the company of believers have replaced Jerusalem and its Temple as God's dwelling place in the midst of humanity.

#### *A Preview of the New Jerusalem*

Revelation 7:9–17 pictures a great multitude before the throne of God. This is a heavenly scene, as reference to the throne, angels, elders and living creatures shows (7:11), but the reference to serving God in his temple, and the use of words that allude to passages about an eschatological future on Mount Zion (shelter from heat, Isa 4:6; 25:4–5; 49:10; wipe away tears, Isa 25:8; no hunger or thirst, led to living water, Isa 49:10) link this scene to Jerusalem. The multitude also hold palm branches, saying "Salvation to our God," a translation of "Hosanna." This is the true triumphal entry where Jesus is truly recognized. False Jerusalem said this, then crucified him. The great multitude is the true Jerusalem. Because they hold palm branches, they may also be celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles, which always took place at Jerusalem.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> E.g. Bauckham, *Climax*, 272; Bauckham, *Theology*, 127; and Osborne, *Revelation*, 412–13. Others think that the outer court and holy city are the whole world, which is supposed to be holy by belonging to the Lord but is usurped by sinful humanity until Christ returns. So Giblin, "Revelation 11," 439–40. This position would see 11:15, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ," as the reclaiming of the world, as holy city, for God. It is also parallel to the description of the New Jerusalem, which appears to encompass the whole new earth. See below.

<sup>34</sup> So Osborne, *Revelation*, 500; Beale, *Revelation*, 697; Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, 744–45; Bauckham, *Climax*, 240; Caird, *Revelation*, 167.

<sup>35</sup> So Beale, *Revelation*, 431, 439. Comblin, "Liturgie," 27–39, thinks that Rev 21–22 takes its form from the New Jerusalem as a celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, though Mathewson, *New Heaven*, 216, concludes that Comblin has exaggerated his case.

The details of the situation of the vast multitude are similar to those of the New Jerusalem in chaps. 21–22. The saints stand before the throne and serve (cf. Rev 22:3), they are in the temple, God tabernacles over them (cf. Rev 21:3), they do not hunger or thirst (in the New Jerusalem food and drink are supplied by the tree of life and the water of life), and every tear is wiped away (cf. Rev 21:4). The vision is placed here in John’s account because believers have just been sealed to protect them from the winds that harm land and sea and trees (Rev 7:1–3). It shows that the sealing is successful; though the saints have come out of the midst of (ἐκ) the great tribulation (Rev 7:14) they are safe.

Caird points out that in the phrase “These are those who are coming out of the great tribulation,” the participle “are coming” is present tense. He thinks this indicates that the saints are still arriving and that this scene is happening during the church age.<sup>36</sup> But the Greek present tense does not mean present time,<sup>37</sup> rather in-progress aspect and foregrounding emphasis.<sup>38</sup> There is no doubt that, in some respects, the New Jerusalem blessings are available now (e.g. Rev 22:17 suggests that the water of life is available in this age). But Rev 7:9–17 is more likely a proleptic picture of the New Jerusalem, where all the redeemed have finished their course.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Caird, *Revelation*, 102–3.

<sup>37</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 444, suggests that the present participle functions as a present finite verb, and being followed by two past tense verbs functions in a Semitic verbal pattern. He seems to imply that all three verbs should thus be translated as past tenses. But Porter, “Language of the Apocalypse,” shows that Semitic influence on the language of Revelation cannot be demonstrated. Porter notes (p. 589), “The participle in Greek is aspectually based, with syntax and not tense form the significant factor in determining relative temporal reference.”

<sup>38</sup> Porter, *Idioms*, 23, 29, notes that the present tense is often used to foreground something in a narrative, since it conveys that the speaker wishes to depict the action as in progress, i.e., the speaker is zooming in on that particular action. Cf. pp. 187–88 on time in participles.

<sup>39</sup> Park, “Regained Eden,” 272, n. 39, has a list of interpreters who accept this view. Park himself (p. 277) thinks this is a scene from the last stage of the church age just after the Tribulation. He takes the same view of Rev 14:1. Thomas, *Revelation 8–22*, 443, sees Rev 7 as a description of a temporary state that becomes better and permanent in the New Jerusalem. But Fekkes, *Isaiah*, 92, takes this passage as one of John’s previews of the ultimate eschatological future strategically placed throughout the first part of the book to direct expectation to that end, because it draws on OT oracles of eschatological Jerusalem; Beale,

*Mount Zion of the Church Age*

The Lamb stands on Mount Zion with the 144,000 in Rev 14:1.<sup>40</sup> Some interpreters distinguish Mount Zion from heaven here because John reports that while looking at them he heard a sound from heaven. However, an antecedent has to be found for “they” in v. 3, those who are singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. Interpreters who think Mount Zion here is on earth suggest that angels sing the new song and the 144,000 learn it from them.<sup>41</sup> The problem with this interpretation is that angels are not mentioned. If the antecedent is the harpists, the only other mention of those with harps is in Rev 5:8, where they are the elders. The elders cannot be the singers since the song is sung before them. A more likely meaning is that “heaven” here refers to the sky of the vision scene and that a roar which is “like” harping accompanies the song. The “they” who sing are the 144,000 (the only ones who could learn, and presumably know, the song), and they are singing before the throne, which means that they are singing and standing in heaven.<sup>42</sup> The Lamb on Mount Zion is a military scene, with the 144,000 as an army.<sup>43</sup> Thus it is unlikely that Mount Zion in this scene is the New Jerusalem, since the New Jerusalem comes down after all victories have been won. This is rather a picture of the church on earth, spiritually present on the heavenly Mount Zion (cf. Heb 12:22–24), location of the heavenly temple and God’s

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*Revelation*, 444, also sees this passage as previewing the New Jerusalem; see discussion there. This would appear to be the more likely interpretation.

<sup>40</sup> It is appropriate that the “Lamb” and Mount Zion are associated, both because the Lamb is the Davidic Messiah (Rev 5:5), who was expected to set up his kingdom on Mount Zion, and because of the link to the animal supplied by God (cf. “the Lamb of God,” John 1:29, 36) on the mountain of the Lord in Gen 22:8, 13–14. The Lamb in Revelation is described as “slain” (Rev 5:6, 12; 13:8), a state he maintains (the participle is perfect) even though he is alive forever (Rev 1:18; 2:8). His status as sacrifice continues to link him to Zion. See also Robertson, “New-covenant Perspective,” 126.

<sup>41</sup> E.g. Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 803–6; Osborne, *Revelation*, 527.

<sup>42</sup> So Beale, *Revelation*, 737.

<sup>43</sup> Caird, *Revelation*, 178.

heavenly throne. This matches the image in Rev 11:1–2 and 13:6 of the church being spiritually present in the heavenly temple.<sup>44</sup> Alternatively, it could be a picture of the church triumphant in the church age, the martyrs and saints who have reached the heavenly Mount Zion after their death, and who will accompany Christ in his final battle (Rev 17:14; 19:14; cf. 1 Thess 4:14).<sup>45</sup>

*The Winepress outside the City*

In Rev 14:20, the grapes harvested by an angel are “trampled in the winepress outside the city.” The two harvests of Rev 14:14–20 appear to be the harvest of the righteous (14:14–16) and the harvest of sinners (14:17–20).<sup>46</sup> Trampling a winepress is a biblical image for God’s wrath (Isa 63:3; Lam 1:15; Joel 3:13). Although who tramples is not specified in Rev 14:20, the Lamb appears in 19:15 as one who treads the winepress of God’s wrath. The city near this winepress is not Rome or Babylon because this is not a scene of persecution of the saints but of judgment on God’s enemies.<sup>47</sup> The city is “Jerusalem” (cf. Joel 3:12–16) representing the congregation of the saints.<sup>48</sup> The city is not named in Revelation, probably to prevent direct identification with earthly Jerusalem, but the situation is analogous to Rev 21:27 and 22:15 where sinners are not allowed in the New Jerusalem, but suffer punishment outside the city (21:8, 27; 22:15). The city here represents the church, and unbelievers are judged “outside the city” showing both that the

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<sup>44</sup> Rissi, *Future of the World*, 56, sees the Mount Zion of 14:1 and the holy city of 20:9 as both representing the spiritual status of the church in the present age.

<sup>45</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 960–61, argues that the troops of Rev 17:14 and 19:14 are the saints. He gives three alternatives for the location of Mount Zion in Rev 14:1 on pp. 732–33. It may be the location of the heavenly temple in the church age, the earthly Zion of the millennium, or the New Jerusalem of Rev 21. Beale thinks it has elements of all three, but the first is most likely. The military scene rules out the New Jerusalem, and the heavenly location rules out the millennium.

<sup>46</sup> Bauckham, *Climax*, 290–96.

<sup>47</sup> Contra Caird, *Revelation*, 192–93.

<sup>48</sup> See Beale, *Revelation*, 780, for a defence of this view.



church is protected from this judgment and that sinners are excluded from the blessings given to God's people.

### *The Millennial City*

Revelation 20:7–9 says,

When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—to gather them for battle . . . They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

The interpretation of this verse is affected by one's interpretation of the millennium generally. If the millennium is conceived of as being the church age, the beloved city is something like Augustine's City of God, the communion of believers who form a spiritual society in the world that is not to be identified with any one geographical place. If, however, the millennium is regarded as a more literal thousand-year reign of Christ on earth before the creation of the new heaven and new earth, the "camp of God's people, the city he loves" could be, and has been, interpreted as Jerusalem being the earthly capital of Christ's reign during the millennium.<sup>49</sup> But this is unlikely for the following reasons.

Although the phrase "the city he loves" immediately brings Jerusalem to mind, the wording in Ps 78:68 is "Mount Zion, which he loved," and in Ps 87:2 it is "The Lord loves the gates of Zion." Malachi 2:11 says God loves his sanctuary. Only Zeph 3:15, "he will quiet you with his love," is addressed to a city named both Jerusalem and Zion.<sup>50</sup> As

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<sup>49</sup> Mealy, *After the Thousand Years*, thinks the millennium is the first thousand years of the existence of the New Jerusalem. Despite his extensive arguments, even he sees that most readers will find it hard to think of an attack on the New Jerusalem by the resurrected unbelieving dead (p. 227). The descent of the New Jerusalem appears to be the last event in the book of Revelation, not a prelude to the last battle.

<sup>50</sup> Most inviolability passages (Ps 2; 46:4–6; 48:1–8; 76:1–3; Isa 14:32; 29:5–8) do not use the name "Jerusalem," but "city of God" or "Zion." However, inviolability is mentioned in connection with both the names Zion and Jerusalem in Ps 125:1–2 and Isa 31:5, 9. The writer of Lamentations finds it incredible that

mentioned above, Zion in Revelation is the name of the heavenly location of the church, not an earthly city. Here, the reference to the city God loves is not likely to an earthly Jerusalem, but to heavenly/spiritual Zion.

A further consideration is that the names Gog and Magog come from Ezek 38–39. This passage describes an end-time attack on God’s people, which takes place after the restoration of Israel and at the end of the reign of Messiah.<sup>51</sup> Jerusalem is completely absent from the scene in Ezekiel. The people of Israel all live in unwallled villages (Ezek 38:11). It is thus the entire nation that God defends by defeating Gog and Magog. The Ezekiel passage to which John is alluding in Rev 20 does not have a central city for God’s people. Beale points out that in contrast to Ezekiel John universalizes the scene, making Gog and Magog equivalent to all hostile nations. He continues, “This universalization of the Ezekiel prophecy suggests that oppressed Israel in Ezek 38–39 is also universalized, and in fact it becomes equivalent in Rev. 20:9 to ‘the camp of the saints and the beloved city,’ which is to be understood as the church throughout the earth.”<sup>52</sup>

If a literal millennium is envisioned, seeing Jerusalem as a localized city is also problematic. Either the saints are only a small fraction of all believers (those beheaded for Christ), in which case they could all fit into one earthly city, or those who enjoy the first resurrection are all saints of all ages (those who refuse the mark of the Beast), in which case they would not fit into one city and the reference would be to the entire

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“Jerusalem” was violated in Lam 4:12, but according to Zech 14:12, it will be inviolable in future. The fact that Revelation uses the name “Jerusalem” for the new city shows that though Zion may be a NT name for the heavenly city, Jerusalem cannot be relegated to purely earthly reference (cf. Gal 4:26; Heb 12:22).

<sup>51</sup> Moyise, *OT in Revelation*, 67. Moyise suggests that it may be dependence on Ezekiel that makes John posit two last battles (Rev 19:17–21 and 20:7–10) divided by the period of Christ’s peaceful reign.

<sup>52</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 1022.

community of believers throughout the earth. The idea that only a small fraction of the saints are resurrected and reign with Christ is problematic, in that those who are not resurrected at this time appear vulnerable to the second death (Rev 20:6). It is therefore most likely that this camp and city are a metaphor for the entire church.<sup>53</sup>

Some suggest that this passage contains allusions to Zech 12–14, which clearly has Jerusalem as the city attacked by hostile nations and delivered by God’s intervention. Marko Jauhiainen, who has done a major study on the use of Zechariah in Revelation, doubts that Zechariah is even in view in Rev 20.<sup>54</sup> Revelation 20 does not name the city of the camp of the saints the way Zechariah does and, as in 14:20, this is to signal that the “city” is not literal earthly Jerusalem.<sup>55</sup> Walker comments on the use of Jerusalem/Zion imagery here,

Once again Jerusalem-based imagery is being used to convey important truths—not about the physical Jerusalem, but about the “saints,” the followers of Jesus. The Christians of Asia Minor, if they remain faithful, will be viewed by God as his “saints” and as his “beloved city.” They can be assured that, just as Jerusalem had been central in God’s purposes in the past, so now they occupied that central stage.<sup>56</sup>

These passages indicate how the problem caused by the double identity of Jerusalem/Zion in the Old Testament is being solved. Jerusalem as sinful human

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<sup>53</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 260, thinks that the designations “camp” and “city” are incompatible, and that this proves that the reference to a city is only metaphorical. But Jerusalem was considered to be the “camp” for purposes of applying the Mosaic law by the Qumran sect and latter rabbis. See also Isa 29:1; Heb 13:11–13. Thomas, *Revelation 8–22*, 425, uses this insight to buttress his view that earthly Jerusalem will be the headquarters of Christ’s kingdom during the Millennium. He thinks that “David’s throne” has to be on this earth, but the fact that overcomers in the New Jerusalem are addressed as Davidic heirs (Rev 21:7; cf. 2 Sam 7:13–14) and share Christ’s throne (Rev 3:21; cf. 22:5) makes the earthly location unnecessary.

<sup>54</sup> Jauhiainen, *The Use of Zechariah in Revelation*, 112, concludes that neither Rev 19:19 nor 20:8 refer to Zech 12–14.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. the lack of mention of the city’s name in Rev 14:20, Jesus failure in the Olivet discourse to name the place to which the elect are gathered (Matt 24:31; Mark 13:27; cf. Luke 21:36), and Peter’s avoidance of the name in his use of Joel in the Pentecost sermon (Acts 2:21, 39).

<sup>56</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 261.

community has joined the world or Babylon, while Zion, the transformed human community in the dwelling place of God, has joined the heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>57</sup>

The conclusion is that Revelation shares the same view as the rest of the New Testament as to what constitutes true Jerusalem in the church age, and what is the fate of the earthly Jerusalem that has rejected Jesus.

*The New Jerusalem: Revelation 21–22*

Up to this point, Zion and the temple are seen as heavenly realities in which the church on earth participates spiritually, and the saints in heaven more directly.<sup>58</sup> With the beginning of Rev 21, the situation changes. All the church's enemies have been dispatched, and the end of the old order has arrived.

Fekkes points out that “When [John] comes to describe the New Jerusalem, he builds on a biblical substructure of OT prophecies relating to the future glorified Jerusalem.”<sup>59</sup> John's approach to the Old Testament is thematic, and he makes use of any material he sees in the Old Testament that he deems relevant to his topic.<sup>60</sup> The major oracles Fekkes sees John using are from Isa 60–66, Ezek 40–48 and Zech 14, though there are also references to 2 Sam 7:14; Isa 25:8; 43:18–19; 52:1; 54:11–12; 55:1; and Ezek 37:27.<sup>61</sup> Thus, Rev 21–22 accesses the Old Testament Zion tradition mainly as it is used in the prophets. What Fekkes emphasizes, however, is that “in the majority of cases the correspondence between an OT text and its application in Revelation goes beyond

<sup>57</sup> This is the same solution used by Paul in Gal 4:21–31.

<sup>58</sup> I.e. the 24 elders, who likely represent the redeemed. See Beale, *Revelation*, 326.

<sup>59</sup> Fekkes *Isaiah*, 102.

<sup>60</sup> Fekkes, *Isaiah*, 103.

<sup>61</sup> Fekkes, *Isaiah*, 92–98. He also lists in the proleptic views of the New Jerusalem in Rev 1–3; 7; 19; reference to OT passages Exod 19:6, 10, 14; Ps 2:8–9; Isa 49:10 (pp. 91–92).

similarities in language and imagery, and extends also to the setting and purpose of the original biblical passage.”<sup>62</sup> As Chapter One of this dissertation shows, that setting and purpose is the vision the Old Testament prophets had of Zion becoming in human experience what she was in theological ideal (as expressed, for example in the Psalms) by her eschatological glorification.

The New Jerusalem is not introduced until the first heaven and earth have passed away. It appears to replace them both and, as such, is both the new heaven and the new earth; in it, heaven and earth merge.<sup>63</sup> It is something quite new, yet it has a certain amount of continuity with the old, since the words “heaven,” “earth,” and “Jerusalem” are used to describe it.<sup>64</sup> The lake of fire, of course, is part of neither heaven nor earth, so the New Jerusalem does not include all that is described.

#### *The New Jerusalem Replaces Heaven and Earth*

The new heaven and earth are first mentioned in Isa 65:17–25. There, after God declares “I will create new heavens and a new earth” (Isa 65:17), the only place actually mentioned as created is “Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy” (Isa 65:18). The idyllic conditions described apply to “all my holy mountain” (Isa 65:25; cf 11:9). Thus one could argue that right from Isaiah, the new creation consists of Jerusalem, or rather, Jerusalem has expanded to envelop it all.<sup>65</sup> This could also be argued for the scene in Rev

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<sup>62</sup> Fekkes, *Isaiah*, 102.

<sup>63</sup> Park, “Regained Eden,” 165, like some other interpreters, thinks that the fact that the New Jerusalem comes down from heaven shows that it has pre-existed in heaven, and is therefore the same as the heavenly Jerusalem of the other NT books. I would prefer to say that the descent of the New Jerusalem depicts the merger of heaven and earth, and Jerusalem is new in that it has been recreated, resurrected as it were, in a new form.

<sup>64</sup> Mathewson, *New Heaven*, 38, 44, 218, sees in John’s wording a “qualitatively new creative act of God.”

<sup>65</sup> Motyer, *Isaiah*, 530, commenting on Isa 65:25 says, “the whole new creation is *my holy mountain*,” and (p. 531), “For the whole is *my holy mountain*, the place where the Lord in holiness dwells in the midst of his people, and now, they with him.” Motyer seems to stop short, however, of saying that the whole new creation is the same as the New Jerusalem. He does note that in relationship to the first creation, the former

21.<sup>66</sup> Outside the city are all the evil people (Rev 22:14–15). This suggests that only inside the New Jerusalem are the joys of the new creation found.<sup>67</sup> The city is unimaginably large (12,000 stadia = 2,200 km cubed: Rev 21:16), which suggests that its dimensions are more like that of a cosmos than of the kind of cities people are familiar with in this age.

Heaven is included in the New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem descends “out of heaven from God” (Rev 21:2), but the picture is not one of God sending down the city while maintaining his heavenly dwelling separately. In the Old Testament God dwelt in a limited way in the earthly Jerusalem but his primary residence was in heaven (e.g. 1 Kgs 8:27, 30; 2 Chron 6:21 etc.).<sup>68</sup> But in Rev 21:3 a voice from the throne announces, as if it is a new development (ἰδοὺ) that God now dwells with human beings. This seems to imply that God has come to dwell in the New Jerusalem in the same way that he formerly dwelt in heaven (cf. Rev 4). Since one of the main defining characteristics of heaven is that it is where God dwells, there is now no heaven as something distinct from the New Jerusalem. Further description of the city includes the details that God and the Lamb are the temple of the city, that their glory gives it light (Rev 21:22–23), that God’s throne is

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things will not even be remembered (Isa 65:18). Commenting (p. 125) on Isa 11:9, he says, “When the true order of creation is restored the whole earth is the Lord’s hill, indwelt by his holiness . . . Everywhere God is present in holiness, and in every place the knowledge of him is enjoyed to its fullest extent.” This, in my opinion, makes Mount Zion encompass the entire new creation. In any case Jerusalem is somehow the key to the new creation.

<sup>66</sup> Dumbrell, *End of the Beginning*, 4, comments, “Jerusalem becomes virtually co-extensive with creation itself.” This is also the opinion of Comblin, “Liturgie,” 7, 25. Beale, *Revelation*, 1109–11, has an extended defence of the view that “the paradisaic city-temple encompasses the entirety of the newly created earth.” See also Beale, *Temple*, 23–26 (and passim).

<sup>67</sup> Gundry, “People as Place,” 263, notes, “to be outside the city, then is not to be outside it on earth. It means to be on earth not at all.”

<sup>68</sup> The cosmological conceptions of the OT writers are usually described as involving three levels: heaven, earth and Sheol. Aune, Geddert and Evans, “Apocalypticism,” 54, mention that during the Second Temple period, an increased emphasis on God’s transcendence involved “a sharper distinction between the heavenly world and the earthly world.” The NT writers also assume a three-layered universe of heaven, earth, and things under the earth and in the sea (e.g. Phil 2:10; Rev 5:3, 13; 10:6; 12:12).

there (Rev 22:1, 3) and that God's face is visible to the people there (22:4). The heavenly temple, which has figured so prominently in John's vision so far, disappears (Rev 21:22), or has been transformed into the new city in which the entirety of redeemed humanity dwells.<sup>69</sup> God and the Lamb are called the temple, reminiscent of the concept of John 17:21 and 1 John 3:24, 4:13 and 15, of believers abiding in the Father and the Son.<sup>70</sup> Life in the New Jerusalem is life in God and vice versa.<sup>71</sup>

### *The Dual Nature of the New Jerusalem*

The dual nature of Jerusalem appears in the description of Rev 21:2. The New Jerusalem "comes down out of heaven from God," as God's city and dwelling place, and its arrival signals that God too has come down to dwell with people (v. 3). On the other hand, as the city composed of God's people, the New Jerusalem is "prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband" (Rev 21:2, cf. vv. 9–10). Revelation 19:8 indicates that the fine linen worn by the bride of the Lamb is the righteous acts of the saints, and the gates and foundations of the city bear the names of the patriarchs of Israel and the apostles (Rev 21:12–14), so the city represents the human community as well.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Cf. 4Q171 III, 9–10, a commentary on Ps 37:22: "Interpreted, this concerns the congregation of the Poor, who [shall possess] the whole world as an inheritance. They shall possess the High Mountain of Israel [for ever], and shall enjoy [everlasting] delights in His Sanctuary" (translation in Vermes, *Complete DSS*, 489). Note the interesting identification of the whole world with Zion, and the temple, similar to the book of Revelation's identification of the new creation with the New Jerusalem and the Holy of Holies.

<sup>70</sup> See Osborne, *Revelation*, 4–6, for a defence of the view that the Gospel of John and Revelation share a common theology and possibly authorship.

<sup>71</sup> In Aune, Geddert and Evans, "Apocalypticism," 54, Aune says that in the Second Temple era, "the kingdom of God, or the age to come, was a heavenly reality which would eventually displace the earthly reality of the present evil age." The New Jerusalem thus represents a new development in the traditional cosmology of biblical writers. In Revelation, however, heavenly Jerusalem does not merely displace the earthly one. Both heaven and earth are made new. The picture of the New Jerusalem, including God's visible presence and throne, descending "from heaven" (Rev 21:2) is probably meant to convey a merger of the new heaven and new earth which had been revealed in the previous verse. Perhaps the order is significant: First, the new heaven and earth appear, replacing the cosmos consisting of the first heaven, earth and sea; then the new heaven and earth merge at the descent of the New Jerusalem to the high mountain.

<sup>72</sup> Jelinek, "City Metaphor," 231, 235, notes that since cities in the Bible first arose as products of human effort, and paradise was God's creation, perhaps the New Jerusalem, which is both city and paradise,

Interpreters have sometimes differed over whether the New Jerusalem should be considered a place or a people.<sup>73</sup> Like the old Jerusalem, it is both.<sup>74</sup> As “place” it is the context of the meeting of God and people.

Another way of stating the dual nature of the New Jerusalem is to say that it is both a temple (God’s dwelling place) and a city (people’s community). Park expresses it thus: “Just as the temple is more than a place through denoting the presence of God and the Lamb (21:22), the NJ [New Jerusalem] is more than a place through denoting the community of God’s people.”<sup>75</sup> Two of the images that go into making the New Jerusalem (Jerusalem and the Garden of Eden) are locations of human society, and all three (including the Temple) speak of the presence of God.<sup>76</sup>

#### *New Jerusalem Images of Intimacy with God*

The description of the New Jerusalem has a number of images of intimacy between God and his people. This is the most important theme in the material about the New Jerusalem, as reflected in the number of images expressing it.<sup>77</sup>

The first is the image of the bride, introduced in Rev 19:7–8. Marriage, with God’s people as the bride or wife (Rev 21:9) is a familiar Old Testament image for the

represents God’s engagement with humanity. The fact, however, that this city comes down from heaven limits the human contribution to its creation.

<sup>73</sup> For example Gundry, “People as Place,” 254–64, argues that it is just people and not place. See my response below.

<sup>74</sup> Dumbrell, *End of the Beginning*, 3, notes that the use of the concepts of light and glory in the description of the New Jerusalem “serve to remind us that the description alternates between people and place.” Park, “Regained Eden,” 202, concludes that Rev 21 depicts the New Jerusalem mainly as a community, but 22:1–5 depicts it as a place (Eden). But this distinction is hard to maintain.

<sup>75</sup> Park, “Regained Eden,” 249.

<sup>76</sup> Bauckham, *Theology*, 132–36, analyzes in three aspects the picture of the New Jerusalem as *place*: it is depicted as paradise (Eden restored), holy city, and temple. The thesis of Beale, *Temple*, is also that the New Jerusalem is the Eden temple restored.

<sup>77</sup> Fekkes, *Isaiah*, 93, comments, “John blends all these traditions together into a theology of ‘presence,’ in which the restoration of communion between God and humanity . . . reaches the final stage . . . The importance of this climactic event is shown by the fact that God himself makes the announcement and is reinforced by the constant repetition of the presence motif in the final vision.” Osborne, *Revelation*, 735, sees God living with his people as the main theme of Rev 21:1—22:5.



relationship of God to his people, and especially of God to Jerusalem, but there it often depicts frustration of any hope for intimacy. The relationship started well (Jer 2:32) but it became stormy because of Jerusalem's ingratitude and unfaithfulness (Ezek 16:1–14), and ended in rejection by God (Isa 54:5; cf. Jer 3:1, 6, 20; 31:32) and destruction (Ezek 16:32–43; 23:24–49).

But Isaiah envisioned a day when Jerusalem would again be God's pure bride and wife. She would be called back (Isa 54:5) and built up with beautiful jewels (Isa 54:11–14). She would be a bride with her children as ornaments (Isa 49:18), ornamented also by God with salvation and righteousness (Isa 61:10) and God would rejoice over her as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride (Isa 62:5). She would receive a new name given by the Lord (Isa 62:4).<sup>78</sup> It is important to notice that although a recalled wife would hardly be called a "bride," God promises to treat her as if all the sordid past has never happened.

This imagery appears in the New Jerusalem. The city is called the bride and wife of the Lamb (Rev 21:9), she is given the clean bright garments of the righteous deeds of the saints (19:8); she is built with gold, crystal and precious stones (21:11, 18–21); and there is rejoicing at her union with the Lamb (19:7). These details depict the delight of God with her. The New Jerusalem as bride presupposes her willingness for the union and so depicts the moral and ethical healing of God's people.<sup>79</sup> This is needed, as the list of sins of the seven churches in Rev 2–3 shows. The image of a bride gives the idea of a new beginning.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Mathewson, *New Heaven*, 46, notes that Isaiah uses the image of God's people as his bride only for the eschatological relationship of God and his people after he restores them from exile. See also discussion in Deutsch, "Transformation," 112.

<sup>79</sup> A bride is expected to be fruitful. Paul uses this imagery and makes the fruit to be holiness (Rom 7:4).

<sup>80</sup> Deutsch, "Transformation," 112, sees in the bride image the ideas of love, intimacy, newness, ardour, fidelity and fruitfulness.

The second indication of intimacy between God and his people is the use here of the “covenant formula.”<sup>81</sup> Immediately after the bride is introduced, there is notice of their closeness, although the metaphor of a woman gives way to its referent, the people. God dwells with them, he is with them, they belong to each other (they are his people, he is their God, Rev 21:3; cf. 22:3 where God’s throne is in the city).<sup>82</sup> In the Old Testament, the covenant formula is used on many occasions and is usually expressed in the future tense.<sup>83</sup> It sounds like an ancient marriage contract with its promises of care and requirement of exclusive devotion.<sup>84</sup> After a wedding, the husband and wife live together and belong to each other. Revelation 21:1–22:5 depicts this state of intimacy. Instead of the church age arrangement where God’s people live on earth while he is in heaven (present with them by his Spirit but normally invisible), God and his people are now united in one place.

As was noted in Chapter One, one of the important Old Testament contexts for use of the formula is in promises of giving Israel the land (e.g. Gen 17:4–14; Exod 6:6–8; 29:14; Lev 11:45; 22:32–33; 26:11–12; Deut 7:6; 26:17–19; 29:12–13; 2 Sam 7:23–24;

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<sup>81</sup> Rendtorff, *Covenant Formula*, 11, explains that the term “covenant formula” was coined by Rudolf Smend in 1963, to signify the words “I will be your God” and “you will be my people.” Rendtorff counts the formula to be present if either or both of these elements occur, and sees the presence motif as one of a number of linked concepts. Others feel that God’s promise to live among his people is a third element which properly belongs to this formula (as in Exod 29:45–46; Lev 26:11–12; Ezek 37:27; Zech 2:10 and LXX of Zech 8:8, cf. *Jub.* 1:17). See Kaiser, *Toward an OT Theology*, 33–34, and Kaiser, “Exodus,” 341. The formula is phrased in many ways in the OT (in first, second or third person, inclusion of one, two or three of the elements and in various orders) but it is generally recognizable by double use of the preposition ל with the verb “to be” (i.e. “I will be for them for God” ויהיה להם לאלהים). This is the criterion used by Rendtorff, p. 13.

<sup>82</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 1046, calls Rev 21:3 “the declaration of perfected communion between God and redeemed humanity.” Brueggemann, *Theology of the OT*, 171, in discussing the covenant formula, calls it the “promise of presence.” Notice the emphasis indicated by the threefold use of the preposition μετά.

<sup>83</sup> Rendtorff, *Covenant Formula*, 79–92, thinks it is because this is the same covenant but under ever changing preconditions.

<sup>84</sup> Fekkes, *Isaiah*, 248 n. 56, cites an Elephantine marriage contract that runs, “She is my wife and I her husband from this day forever.” He notes that in Rev 21 the entrance of the bride is followed by the covenant formula as a sort of marriage covenant.

cf. Deut 14:2; Josh 24:18), or restoring her to it, sometimes with hints that Jerusalem is in view (Jer 24:7; 30–32; Ezek 11:20; 34:24–28; 37:23–28; Zech 2:1–12; 8:8). The use of the covenant formula in Rev 21:3 helps to establish the New Jerusalem as the eschatological fulfilment of promises of return to the Land and the restoration of Zion. Its use in connection with the bride elaborates on the kind of intimacy that image is meant to convey.

The nature of this intimacy is indicated in the Old Testament elaborations of the covenant formula. The phrase “I will be your God” includes God’s provision of all good things and the meeting of all needs. When God said “I will be their God” concerning his people in the Old Testament, it involved delivering them from Egyptian bondage (Exod 6:7 *passim*), giving them the land of Canaan, dwelling among them (Exod 29:45–46)<sup>85</sup> and going with them (Exod 33:14), setting them in honour above all nations (Deut 26:19; 28:10), taking special care of them as his inheritance (Exod 19:5; Deut 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Ps 95:7) which resulted in protection and prosperity (Deut 28:11; Jer 7:23b), and ultimately, cleansing them from sin (Ezek 37:23). The close relationship<sup>86</sup> was the main thing from which all benefits flowed, such as food, peace and safety, victory, and increase in numbers (Lev 26:3–13).<sup>87</sup> It is not surprising, then, that Rev 21:4 follows the covenant formula with God’s tender care in wiping away tears and eliminating death, pain and mourning (cf. Rev 7:14–15; 22:1–5). God also provides a land for his people,

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<sup>85</sup> Of this verse, Brueggemann, *Theology of the OT*, 663, says, “The statement suggests that being ‘their God’ is equivalent to being available and accessible and this is the only important evidence given here of being ‘their God.’ Presence is everything.”

<sup>86</sup> At least seven times in the Pentateuch God gives his purpose in bringing Israel out of Egypt. This is “so that I might dwell among them” (Exod 29:46), “so as to give you the land of Canaan” (Lev 25:38), and *six* times, “so as to be your God” (Lev 11:45; 22:33; 25:38; 26:45; Num 15:41; Deut 4:20). This shows that what God was specifically aiming at was to be the God of Israel. This relationship was the goal of his deliverance. So also Hartley, *Leviticus*, 463, and Rendtorff, *Covenant Formula*, 40–42.

<sup>87</sup> Some would add disciplining to the covenant benefits (Deut 8:1–5; cf. Prov 3:11,12).

the New Jerusalem (22:14), and high status, in that they will reign forever (7:15; 22:5), as a people inheriting with Christ the promise to David's line of eternal reign from Zion (2 Sam 7:13; Ps 2:6; Rev 3:21; 22:5).<sup>88</sup>

Under the old covenant, God's people had their part to play in obedience and honour to God as expressed in the phrase "you will be my people." In the Old Testament, this meant that they would obey him, be holy (Deut 26:17; 28:9; Lev 11:45), and exist to promote God's honour (Jer 13:11, cf. Isa 43:21). This still appears in the New Jerusalem, where the nations bring in their glory (Rev 21:24, 26) and God's people serve him (22:3).

God dwells "with" his people. Although God is everywhere, when Scripture says specifically that God is "with" someone, it indicates that God gives to such person(s) power to succeed in achieving God's good plan.<sup>89</sup> It also expresses a level of intimacy between God and humanity in the New Jerusalem that is higher than in the Garden of Eden, where God seems only to have paid visits (Gen 3:8). Even Moses who spoke to God "mouth to mouth" was not allowed to see God's face (Exod 33:20). God dwelt within Israel in the Tabernacle and Temple (but Isa 66:1–2), and among Christians by Jesus (John 1:14) and by the Spirit (Eph 1:13; Rom 8:23), yet God himself could not be seen (John 1:18; 6:46; 1 Tim 6:16; 1 John 4:12). In the New Jerusalem however, God's servants will see his face (Rev 22:4; cf. 1 Cor 13:12). The joys of Eden and the high priest's privilege to enter the Holy of Holies are restored and surpassed in the New Jerusalem.

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<sup>88</sup> Some have wondered over whom the saints will reign. Bauckham, *Theology*, 142, thinks that reigning here does not entail subjects, but indicates participation in God's rule in such a way that God's rule and human freedom fully coincide. This may be true, but there may be more to it than this.

<sup>89</sup> E.g. Gen 26:28; Num 14:42–43; 2 Chron 15:1, 9; Jer 42:11; Zech 8:23, etc. See discussion in Kaiser, *Toward an OT Theology*, 94–95.

That this is a permanent state of affairs is reflected in the last verse of the section on the New Jerusalem, “And they will reign for ever and ever” (Rev 22:5; cf. Rev 3:12). Revelation 21:3 depicts the fulfilment of the promises of eschatological renewal of the covenant in Ezekiel and Jeremiah.<sup>90</sup> It is significant that the promise of a new heart is combined with both the promise of restoration of Jerusalem and with the covenant formula in Jer 31:33–40 (cf. Ezek 11:17–20; 36:24–29; 37:23–28).<sup>91</sup> The link to the Old Testament passages emphasizes the final enduring nature of the holiness of God’s people, which guarantees their permanent intimacy with God. They need never fear falling away again, and the bride is secure in her relationship and home.<sup>92</sup> Jerusalem can only be restored, and God can only be her covenant God, when the hearts of her people have been changed. The New Jerusalem enjoys God’s dwelling among her people because they have been washed and transformed.

The covenant formula continued to be a Jewish expression of the covenant<sup>93</sup> and became part of the new covenant language of the New Testament. The formula words are used in Rom 9:24–26 (quoting Hosea), 2 Cor 6:16–18 (quoting Lev 26:12 and Ezek 37:27), Heb 8:10 (quoting Jer 31:31–34) and Rev 21:3 (which combines features of Lev 26:12, Ezek 37:27 and Zech 2:11). What is clear from all these passages is that the New Testament sees the church as the continuation and fulfilment of Israel as the beneficiary

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<sup>90</sup> In those passages, God cleanses his people from their sins (Ezek 37:23), gives them a new heart (Ezek 11:19; 36:28; Jer 24:7) with his law in their minds and hearts (Jer 31:33) and singleness of heart to fear God (Jer 32:39). The people will be confirmed in holiness, never again to stray from God (Jer 32:39–40; Ezek 14:11).

<sup>91</sup> The prophets hold out the promise of a renewal of the covenant that will be successful at last because God will give his people the ability to obey him (Jer 31:33; Ezek 11:20; Hos 1:10; 2:23; Zech 8:8; 13:9 among others). In all these references the substance of the covenant is expressed by the covenant formula.

<sup>92</sup> The use of σκηνη (originally “tent”) and σκηνοόω in this passage in no way implies impermanence, since these words had taken on the meaning of Hebrew יָדוּשׁ. See Michaelis, “σκηνη κτλ.,” 368–78. Comblin, “Liturgie,” 21, n. 41, says that John does not seem to distinguish between σκηνη and ναός.

<sup>93</sup> E.g. *Jub.* 1:17; 11QT 29:7–8; 59:13; cf. *T. Jud.* 25:3, *T. Mos.* 4:2.

of the covenant formula. The church has its Exodus, fulfilling the one of Moses,<sup>94</sup> in deliverance from sin and the kingdom of Satan, with the goal of becoming God's own people. The church also has the real Promised Land and restored Zion, that is, the New Jerusalem. Mathewson points out that there is a strong link between use of the covenant formula and the Exodus, including the second Exodus from Babylon. Revelation envisions a further Exodus from "Babylon" (Rev 18:4).<sup>95</sup> Just as the goal of both the first Exodus (Exod 15:13, 17), and the second one (e.g. Isa 35:10), was Jerusalem, so is this one.

An important point about the use of the formula in Rev 21:3 is that the word for "people" is plural (λαοί), which is not found in any other covenant formula text, and instead of saying that God will dwell among his people, it says "in the midst of humanity" μετὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων (cf. 2 Chron 6:18, a state of affairs thought too much to hope for by the Chronicler). This is an example of Revelation's universalising of Old Testament themes. It follows, however, in the tradition of Zech 2:11 (cf. Zech 14:16). This intimacy with God is intended for all humanity. The coming of Jesus has opened citizenship in Jerusalem to people of all nations.

Another image of intimacy in the New Jerusalem is that of parent and child. God says, "He who overcomes will inherit all this [i.e. the all things made new] and I will be his God and he will be my son" (Rev 21:7). This individualizes the covenant formula of v. 3. Parental care has already been hinted at in v. 4, with God wiping tears from the eyes of his people (cf. Rev 7:17). This was one of the features of eschatological Mount Zion in

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<sup>94</sup> For discussion of Exodus imagery in Revelation, see Mazzaferri's summary of J. S. Casey's work in *Genre of Revelation*, 367–73. Mazzaferri discusses John's interest in the OT covenant as part of his argument that the Revelation is classical prophecy.

<sup>95</sup> Mathewson, *New Heaven*, 54–56. On p. 218 he says, "Thus by re-employing the new exodus model in his articulation of eschatological salvation the author links his hopes to God's past redemptive activity."

Isa 25:8. Inheriting is also usual from parent to child. The parent-child image is used frequently in the Old Testament for God's relationship with his people (Isa 63:16; 64:8; Jer 3:4; 31:9, 20; Mal 2:10 etc.), but this relationship is to Judah, Israel or Ephraim, not specifically Jerusalem. Jerusalem is called "Daughter Zion" (Ps 9:14; Isa 1:8 etc.) but not in connection with calling God Father. The person whom God takes as son in Zion (2 Sam 7:14; Ps 2:6–7; 89:26–27) is the Davidic king. In Rev 21:7 all overcomers receive the intimacy with God that was promised to that king.

Another image of intimacy is the way that the saints (represented by the patriarchs of Israel and the apostles of Jesus) are integral to the architecture of the New Jerusalem. Their names are on the twelve gates (Rev 21:12) and the twelve foundations (21:14).<sup>96</sup> This agrees with Rev 13:6, to say that the saints in some sense are the dwelling place of God; they are the temple city.

This city is a cube and *contains* no temple. This suggests that the city *is* the Holy of Holies, the place of God's immediate presence.<sup>97</sup> Whereas the life-giving water flowed in Ezekiel from the Temple (Ezek 47:1), in Revelation it flows from the throne of God in the city (Rev 22:1–2).<sup>98</sup> John also uses several other features of Ezekiel's description of

<sup>96</sup> So also Mathewson, *New Heaven*, 218.

<sup>97</sup> Bauckham, *Theology*, 136, traces the development in the OT of the idea that Jerusalem is all holy (Ezek 48:35; Zech 14:20–21; Isa 52:1; Ps 24:3–4) and thus is a kind of temple. See also Jer 3:16–17. Bauckham comments, "The radical assimilation of the city to a temple, taken further in Revelation than in its prophetic sources, shows how central to the whole concept of the New Jerusalem in Revelation is the theme of God's immediate presence." Ellul, *Meaning of the City*, 186, notes how what was the temple in Ezekiel's vision (Ezek 40–48) becomes the city in John's vision, and comments, "What is important is the statement of God's total and exclusive presence." It could be argued, however, that John's city combines features of the city and temple seen by Ezekiel. A. Y. Collins, *Combat Myth*, 228–29, argues that the New Jerusalem is a temple in that (1) the description of the New Jerusalem has affinities with ANE temple motifs; (2) the name Jerusalem carries within it the idea of the temple; (3) the description of the New Jerusalem is modelled on Ezekiel's vision of the temple.

<sup>98</sup> For a summary of the ways Ezekiel's temple becomes the city of John, see Mathewson, *New Heaven*, 112–14. Deutsch, "Transformation," 114, compares the visions of Ezekiel and John. Both have the seer on a high mountain looking at a city. In Ezekiel the temple is measured, but in Revelation it is the city. God's

the eschatological *temple* to describe the *city* (walls, gates, measuring, etc.).<sup>99</sup> He merges descriptions of the building materials of eschatological Zion in Isa 54:11–12 and of the Temple in 1 Chron 28:2–9 and 2 Chron 3:6–7.<sup>100</sup>

In the Old Testament, God's throne was seen as being above the ark in the Holy of Holies. In the new creation, however, there is no need to look for the other parts of the Temple, the outer court and the Holy Place. There has been an evolution in the shape of the Temple since Old Testament times. Then, the outer court contained the altar of burnt offering for the expiation of sin. Only priests could enter the outer room of the Temple, the Holy Place, and only the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies. Once Jesus had died as the final sacrifice, the altar of burnt offering was no longer needed. There is no such altar in the heavenly temple of Rev 1–19.<sup>101</sup> However, the lamps and incense altar of the Holy Place feature there in the church age, representing the life and prayers of the church still on earth (Rev 1:20; 8:3–4).<sup>102</sup> In the new creation and New Jerusalem, because heaven and earth merge and the saints have no existence outside of the temple, only the cube-shaped city, a vast Holy of Holies, is needed, the place of God's immediate

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glory fills the temple in Ezekiel but the city in Revelation. Both give warnings and use the image of paradise. However, John's city admits Gentiles and has no temple separate from the city, unlike Ezekiel's.  
<sup>99</sup> See Fekkes, *Isaiah*, 96–97. Fekkes says, "Because John presents the entire city as the dwelling of God, he is not concerned to distinguish between city and temple descriptions and he deliberately transfers Ezekiel's temple imagery to the Holy City itself."

<sup>100</sup> Fekkes, *Isaiah*, 97–98. See pp. 96–101 for Fekkes's whole discussion of OT city and temple features being combined in John's picture of the New Jerusalem

<sup>101</sup> Beale, *Temple*, 319, is an example of those who think the altar under which the martyrs wait in Rev 6:9–10 and the altar in 11:1 are the altar of burnt offering, representing the martyrdom of the saints as sacrifices. However, in Rev 6:9–10 the saints are praying (in Rev 5:8 the prayers of the saints have already been identified as incense). And in Rev 11:1 the altar to be measured is more likely the incense altar since John is told not to measure the outer court. Bauckham, *Climax*, 268–69, points out that in Revelation the temple has no outer court and is always called ναός, which would be only the building composed of the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, and all references to the altar in Revelation must be to the altar of incense, which was inside the Temple.

<sup>102</sup> Beale, *Temple*, 389, envisions in the church age that the Holy of Holies is heaven, the Holy Place "is the spiritual dimension that extends to earth, where God's people function as a 'kingdom of priests' . . . and as 'lampstands.'" Based on Rev 11:1–2, he thinks there is still an outer court in the church age, the physical existence of the church on this earth, which involves suffering. But this is not an outer court where sin is expiated through sacrifice.



presence, and it has expanded to fill the whole world.<sup>103</sup> Thus, admission to the Holy of Holies is another image of intimacy with God for *all* God's people, who are thus all high priests. Unlike the Jewish high priests, however, they not only enter the Holy of Holies, but live there permanently.<sup>104</sup>

Elimination of the curse (Rev 22:3) also means readmission to God's presence in paradise and the tree of life.<sup>105</sup> Thus, the gates of the city stand open day and night for the entry of the nations (Rev 21:25), that is, the redeemed (22:14),<sup>106</sup> in contrast to paradise, which was guarded by cherubim after the fall (Gen 3:24). The many parallels between the New Jerusalem and paradise (Eden) suggest that just as God walked in Eden and spoke with people there, his unmediated presence will be enjoyed in the New Jerusalem. Many features of eschatological Jerusalem are reminiscent of Eden: a high mountain (Ezek 28:13–14),<sup>107</sup> a life-giving river (Gen 2:10–14), fruit bearing trees (Gen 2:9, 16) and precious stones (Gen 2:11–12; Ezek 28:13–14). But the New Jerusalem surpasses Eden in

<sup>103</sup> Beale, *Temple*, 372, has a similar idea, but thinks the two other parts of the temple disappear because they represent the old earth and sky.

<sup>104</sup> Rissi, *Future of the World*, 63. Like high priests, they have the name of God on their foreheads (Rev 22:4). Dougherty, *Fivesquare City*, 3, notes that in the ancient sacred city concept of e.g. Mesopotamian civilization, it was the priest-king who could enter the holiest place. The saints are styled as both priests and kings in Revelation.

<sup>105</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 1112, comments, "The curse of physical and spiritual death set on the human race by Adam in the first garden is permanently removed . . . In primeval time humanity was expelled from the garden sanctuary . . . At the end time the redeemed will be ushered into that sanctuary again." Beale also refers to the curse mentioned in Zech 14:11, where there was to be no more curse (כַּרְסָא or ban) on Jerusalem. This may be the curse of Deut 29:24–28 (cf. Jer 22:8–9) due to sin. See also Mathewson, *New Heaven*, 202.

<sup>106</sup> There has been much debate about this entry of the nations. Bauckham, *Climax*, 238–337, argues that it promises universal salvation for the nations, even those outside the church, though not for all individuals (Rev 21:8, 27 and 22:15), yet in view of other canonical material this is a strange conclusion (e.g. Matt 25:31–46). Mouw, *When the Kings Come Marching In*, 56–63, suggests that the unconverted kings/national representatives will only visit the city for judgment and after putting wrongs right with their victims, leave for their place of judgment. The difficulty with this interpretation is that there is no hint in Revelation that some people will get into the city and yet have to leave, or that any unredeemed people will be able to enter. Rissi, *Future of the World*, 73–78, suggests that the nations will gradually be converted and leave the lake of fire to join the New Jerusalem. Given the overall theology of Revelation and Scripture, however, it seems to me most likely that these kings and nations are converted Gentiles.

<sup>107</sup> The fact that rivers flowed *out* of it into the whole world means that Eden must have been higher than other places.

that God lives there permanently with people, and there is no longer any forbidden tree, and therefore no more chance for people to fail and be cast out.<sup>108</sup>

Revelation 22:3 notes that “the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city.” By having this in a list of things that describe the intimacy between God and his people, John gives a new connotation to God’s throne. Park notes that the throne of God in the earlier parts of Revelation denotes his transcendence, power, and inaccessibility.<sup>109</sup> Now, however, God’s people have complete access to that throne. In fact, Jesus has said, “To him who overcomes I will give the right to sit with me on my throne” (Rev 3:21).

The intimacy between God and people is also expressed by the fact that they serve God, see his face, and have his name on their foreheads (Rev 22:3–4). Those who work together have great opportunity to get to know each other well, so to serve God is to be in privileged association. Having the name of God/the Lamb on their foreheads means that God’s servants are marked as God’s special property (see above on 3:12). As mentioned above, seeing God’s face indicates hitherto unheard-of intimacy. Bauckham interprets it to mean knowing “who God is in his personal being.”<sup>110</sup> It must also speak of having a close relationship with God, which involves feeling as well as knowing.

### *The New Jerusalem as Community*

Intimacy with God in the New Jerusalem is a community experience (God dwells with his *people in a city*).<sup>111</sup> This is more than a collection of individuals, since the whole can be characterized as a unity, the bride. The people who are excluded are those, such as

<sup>108</sup> Park, “Regained Eden,” 245.

<sup>109</sup> Park, “Regained Eden,” 233, 265–66.

<sup>110</sup> Bauckham, *Theology*, 142.

<sup>111</sup> Ortland, *Whoredom*, 166, n. 73, comments, “The dwelling of God with man *in the form of a city* may also suggest the perfect social union of the redeemed with one another as God’s final and eternal answer to the successive societal failures littering the course of human history” (emphasis his).

murderers, sorcerers, liars and the sexually immoral (Rev 21:8, 27; 22:15), who practise antisocial vices, as well as people who display anti-God attitudes (idolaters, the unbelieving). The architectural image, where gates and foundations with human names (Rev 21:12, 14) support each other, is also an image of community with positive and close relations between the members.<sup>112</sup> Whole communities, the “nations,” enter the city (Rev 21:24, 26), make their contribution, and are healed (22:3). The elimination of the “curse” (Rev 22:3) also speaks of positive community, for the curse with which humanity was expelled from Eden included the imposition of difficult relationships between persons, especially between men and women (Gen 3:16; cf. Gen 4:8–9). At the end of the vision of the New Jerusalem, John tries to worship the revealing angel, but is rebuked with the words, “Do not do it! I am a *fellow servant* with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book” (Rev 22:9). This hints at community in the New Jerusalem not only among humans but also of humans with angels as their fellow-servants of God (cf. Rev 7:10–11; Heb 12:22).

The community theme is emphasized by Martin Kiddle, who calls the New Jerusalem “a divine polity, the antithesis of the old civilization represented by Babylon.”<sup>113</sup> He continues, “It is a city which is a family. The ideal of perfect community, unrealizable on earth because of the curse of sin which vitiated the first creation, is now embodied in the redeemed from all nations.” Mounce quotes A. M. Hunter, who comments, “The consummation of the Christian hope is supremely social. It

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<sup>112</sup> Dumbrell, *End of the Beginning*, 3, 32, reports that J. M. Ford, “The Heavenly Jerusalem and Orthodox Judaism,” in *Donum Gentilicum: Essays in Honour of David Daube*, ed. C. K. Barrett, E. Bammel and W. D. Davies (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), 222, suggests that the “walls” are an image of God’s protection of the bride, and the “gates” of the city are a community image, since it was at the gates that ancient cities did their communal business.

<sup>113</sup> Kiddle, *Revelation*, 417.

is no 'flight of the alone to the Alone' but life in the redeemed community of heaven."<sup>114</sup>

Stanley Grenz, who builds his entire systematic theology around the concept of community,<sup>115</sup> naturally notices the communal nature of the New Jerusalem, and calls the final state of believers a "social reality."<sup>116</sup>

Jerusalem in the Old Testament was a community under the Sinai covenant. The terms of that covenant contained so many provisions for love and care of the neighbour that Paul is able to say that all the commandments are summed up in "love your neighbour as yourself" (Rom 13:9; cf. Jesus' statement in Matt 22:40). Lack of neighbour care was one of the reasons why old Jerusalem was destroyed (e.g. Jer 7:5–7). It is correct then to assume that, in the New Jerusalem, interpersonal relations will be warm and loving.

Dumbrell sees in the city image a community that is small enough to be intimate yet complex enough for the citizens to have various roles and a social organization.<sup>117</sup> We usually think of a city as a place where there is a division or specialization of labour. Revelation's picture hints at this with some names on foundations and others on gates.<sup>118</sup> Swete thinks that the various colours of the foundations indicate various gifts and

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<sup>114</sup> Mounce, *Revelation*, 370, quotes A. M. Hunter, *Probing the New Testament* (Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1971), 156.

<sup>115</sup> Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 24.

<sup>116</sup> Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 115, 647.

<sup>117</sup> Dumbrell, *End of the Beginning*, 3.

<sup>118</sup> The Qumran community (4Q164) interpreted Isa 54:11 as a picture of the community, with the priests and community founders as foundations, and the gates as the chiefs of the tribes (using the translation from Vermes, *Complete DSS*, 469).

characters of the saints,<sup>119</sup> as Jewish tradition saw in the ephod gemstones the qualities of the various tribes.<sup>120</sup>

The community theme (strong horizontal relationships) in the New Jerusalem has sometimes been neglected in the past, and writers like Kiddle and Hunter are right to emphasize this aspect. However, this theme is not as strong in Rev 21–22 as the theme of intimacy of individuals and of the community with God. These chapters show a community with all eyes turned in the same direction—toward the face of God and the Lamb.<sup>121</sup> After all, Babylon is also a city. Just being a community is not enough. Only the community's focus on God validates it.<sup>122</sup>

#### *New Jerusalem Images of Life*

The description of the New Jerusalem includes a number of images of life.<sup>123</sup> The three most obvious are the book of life (Rev 21:27; cf. 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15), the water of life (21:6; 22:1,17; cf. 7:17) and the tree of life (22:2, 14, 19; cf. 2:7). In addition, the text specifies that there is no more death (Rev 21:4) in the New Jerusalem. Evil people, however, experience the second death in the lake of fire (Rev 21:8).

All three of these images for life have antecedents in the Old Testament linked to Jerusalem. The tree of life first stood in Eden (cf. Rev 2:7) and the link between Eden and

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<sup>119</sup> Swete, *Apocalypse*, 293, builds on the way Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 2.12.19 sees the various stones to represent the varied voices of the apostles. Beale, *Revelation*, 1084, thinks rather that the stones are just about glory and light.

<sup>120</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 1085.

<sup>121</sup> The commands to the covenant community starting in Deut 6:1 give the command to love God with all the heart, soul and might (Deut 6:5) first, cf. Jesus on love of God first, love of neighbour second in Matt 22:37–39 par.

<sup>122</sup> Ellul, *Meaning of the City*, e.g. 5–6, thinks the “city” per se is a symbol of human rebellion against God.

<sup>123</sup> The abstract of the dissertation by Rudolph, “There Will Be No Death,” gives the following comment: “Life is a relational concept. Only in a relationship with God can one find real life.” He sees life as “cognitive existence” in “a specified framework of time and space with the possibility of participation in the action of that realm.”

God's holy mountain (Isa 51:3; Ezek 28:13–14) makes it fitting for it to be in the New Jerusalem.<sup>124</sup>

The life-giving stream flowing from Zion is a feature of Old Testament eschatological descriptions of the city and Temple (Ezek 47:1–12; Joel 3:18; Zech 13:1; cf. Pss 36:8–9; 46:4). The live-giving river was also a feature of Eden (Gen 2:10). The river in Rev 21–22 may replace the “sea” of the old heavenly and earthly temples. In the New Jerusalem there is the spring of the water of life (Rev 21:6) which presumably gives rise to the river of the water of life that flows from the throne of God and the Lamb (22:1). The water is given without cost to the one who is thirsty and to anyone who desires it (Rev 21:6; 22:17; cf. Isa 55:1). The water originates at the throne, showing that life comes from God. In Rev 22:2 the tree of life stands by the river, and presumably is watered by it (cf. Ezek 47:12). In Genesis, the fruit of this tree made one live forever (Gen 3:22). Similar trees in Ezek 47:12 were for food (a constant monthly supply) and healing. Here, the leaves of the tree of life are for the healing of the nations. In Rev 22:14 access to the tree gives life to those who are cleansed from sin.

The book of life is linked to Jerusalem in Isa 4:2–6, a passage that stands behind Rev 7:15. The remnant in future glorious Zion are called “all who are recorded among the living in Jerusalem” or “everyone recorded for life in Jerusalem.” Motyer comments on this passage:

*Recorded among the living* / “written for/unto life” reflects the concept of a Book of Destiny . . . likewise the Lord's book is referred to throughout scripture (e.g. Ex. 32:32–33). To have survived the calamity is no accident

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<sup>124</sup> *I Enoch* says the tree of life is to be planted “upon the holy place—in the direction of the house of the Lord” where its fruit will be given to the elect, *I En.* 25:5.

but arises from an elective decision of the Lord, a divine purpose expressed in the inscribing of the name in the book of life.<sup>125</sup>

One could also compare Ps 87:5–6, where foreigners are recorded as born in Zion, and Ezek 13:9, where false prophets are *not* written in the register of those who will enter the land of Israel (hence they will not be able to enter Jerusalem).<sup>126</sup>

These three items are linked: one's name in the book of life gives access to the city (Rev 21:7) where one has access to the water of life as drink (21:6; 22:17) and a share in the tree of life as food (22:14, 19).<sup>127</sup>

Another image for life in Rev 21–22 is light. Although the phrase “light of life,” parallel to book, tree and water of life, is not used in these chapters, the concept is clear.<sup>128</sup> The chapter overflows with terms from the semantic domain of light: The bride wears shining clothes (λαμπρός, 19:7). The city has God's glory (δόξα), the brilliance (φωσπήρ) of gems (21:11); the glory (δόξα) of God gives it light (φωτίζω) and its lamp (λύχνος) is the Lamb (21:23; 22:5). The nations walk in its light (φῶς) and bring their splendour (δόξα) into it (21:24, 26); there is no night there (21:25; 22:5), or even light of sun or moon (21:23).<sup>129</sup> Jesus who gives the message is the bright (λαμπρός) and

<sup>125</sup> Motyer, *Isaiah*, 65. This book is also referred to in Ps 56:8; 69:28; 139:16; Dan 12:1; Mal 3:16; Luke 10:20; Phil 4:3; Heb 12:23. Cf. *Jos. Azen.* 15:4; *Jub.* 30:22; 1QM 12:1–5; *1 En.* 47:3; 98:7–8; 104:7; 108:7; *2 Bar.* 24:1.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. Rev 13:8; 17:8; 20:15, where those who do not have their names in the Lamb's book of life worship the beast, marvel at his demise, and go into the lake of fire.

<sup>127</sup> Similar language is used of Jesus in the Gospel of John, who is life (John 1:4; 11:25; 14:6), the bread of life (John 6:33), and the light of life (John 8:12), who offers living water (John 4:14; 7:37–39) and eternal life (John 3:16; 10:28 etc.). His body and blood, like the tree and water of life, are true food and drink giving eternal life (John 6:54). Such passages provide a conceptual link between the Gospel of John and the book of Revelation.

<sup>128</sup> Jesus gives the light of life in John 1:4; 8:12.

<sup>129</sup> Much of this scene is taken from Isa 60, a passage about the eschatological glory of Zion (Isa 60:14). The light imagery of this passage is used for the joy, confidence and renown caused by the posterity, wealth, and beauty made possible by God. Although Isa 60 and Rev 21–22 are so similar, there are subtle differences. Revelation lacks the nationalistic triumphalism expressed as despoiling and enslaving other nations that is found in Isaiah (Isa 60:5–14). The righteousness of the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem is

morning star (Rev 22:16). The gold and gems of which the city is made are “clear as crystal” (κρυσταλλίζω) and like “transparent (διαυγή) glass,” and the river of life is shining (λαμπρός) like crystal (22:1). The expressions about crystal and glass are about the way light passes from and through the structures. God and the Lamb shine, the city shines, the nations bring in their own shining to merge with or contribute to that of the city.

Light is evoked in the costly materials with which the New Jerusalem is adorned.<sup>130</sup> Bauckham points out that these are the precious stones and metals of paradise (Gen 2:11–12; Ezek 28:13, 17–20).<sup>131</sup> They are also the jewels of the high priest’s breastplate and clothing (Exod 39:6–13). Bauckham shows that some Jewish tradition claimed that these priestly jewels came from paradise (2 Chr 3:6 where Paravaim is identified with paradise),<sup>132</sup> and that the jewels that Isaiah predicted would adorn the rebuilt Jerusalem in Isa 54:11–12 are the same.<sup>133</sup> From this, Bauckham concludes that (a) the New Jerusalem is a temple, (b) that since it has the same jewel-like glory as God and his throne (see Rev 4:3, 6) the whole city “shines with the reflected glory of God himself” and (c) since the gold and jewels come from paradise, they are not the same adornment as the white linen (which is contributed by the saints) but are contributed only by God.

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emphasized more in Revelation (Rev 19:8; 21:7–8, 27; 22:14–15, 19; cf. Isa 60:21), and the issue of renown is much different because in Revelation there are no other nations to impress.

<sup>130</sup> For a longer discussion of traditions surrounding the gems of the breastplate/paradise/eschatological Jerusalem, see Beale, *Revelation*, 1080–90.

<sup>131</sup> Bauckham, *Theology*, 133–35. Gold, however, was also a feature of both the tabernacle/temple (e.g. Exod 25) and Solomon’s Jerusalem (2 Chr 1:15), which arguably was Jerusalem at its earthly height.

<sup>132</sup> Cf. 1QapGen 2:23 where Enoch, in paradise, is said to be in Parwain.

<sup>133</sup> A. Y. Collins, *Combat Myth*, 230, supports the view that John is using Isa 54 here. In *L.A.B.* 26:9–15, twelve more stones besides the ones in the breastplate are supplied to Kenaz, to be kept for use in Solomon’s temple, and all 24, plus others, will beautify the final state. Cf. 4Q164 where the jewels of Isa 54:11–12 are interpreted as the priests and people of the community who make up the New Jerusalem.



Light is a symbol here for life, provided by God himself. In this, Revelation accords with both the Old Testament and the rest of the New Testament. Light and life are associated with each other in the Old Testament (e.g. Job 3:20; 33:20; Ps 36:9; Isa 9:2). God is also associated with light (e.g. Num 6:25; Ps 94:1; Ps 18:28; 27:1, etc.). His light leads one to Zion (Ps 43:3) where there is deliverance.<sup>134</sup>

In the New Testament, life is the light given by Jesus (John 1:4; 8:12; cf. 12:46). It results in holy living, and ends in salvation (John 3:19–21; 1 John 1:5–7; Acts 26:18, 23; Eph 5:8–14; Col 1:12; 1 Thess 5:5, 9; 1 Pet 2:1). Life in the New Jerusalem features this holiness. Jerusalem is called the Holy City, and she is beautifully dressed in clean linen (Rev 19:8; βύσσινον καθάρων). The idea of a new creation (Rev 21:1, 5) may also convey the idea that it is clean; the idea is of a fresh start with a clean slate.

In contrast, Babylon is unholy. She is a harlot, and holds a cup full of impurities (Rev 17:4 ἀκάθαρτα). Light is extinguished in Babylon as indicated in Rev 18:23, φῶς λύχνου οὐ μὴ φάνη and 18:14, πάντα τὰ λαμπρά ἀπώλετω ἀπὸ σοῦ. Both λύχνος and λαμπρός are descriptions of Jesus, the true lamp and shining star (Rev 21:23; 22:16; cf. John 8:12). Babylon has only the fires of destruction, which are described as smoke (Rev 17:16; 18:8–9, 18; 19:3). Babylon is characterized as dark because she does not have Jesus, and thus has no life.

The huge amount of light in the New Jerusalem shows the extreme holiness and abundance of the life there,<sup>135</sup> an unimaginably enjoyable existence that includes ultimate

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<sup>134</sup> The Psalmist is praying to be rescued (Ps 43:1–2) so his prayer in v. 3 that God would send forth his light and guide him to God’s holy mountain implies that this light will lead him to a place of salvation. The Psalmist further states that he will go to God’s altar, to enjoy God and praise him. The altar speaks of cleansing from sin, and praise shows subsequent living dedicated to God. Thus this Psalm shows a parallel to the NT material. In characteristic fashion, the NT puts Jesus in the divine capacity.

<sup>135</sup> Cf. John 10:10, Jesus brings life “more abundant.”

meaning and satisfaction in perpetuity. The Scriptures present a view of life whose meaning, satisfaction and sustenance come from intimacy with God, who is the light. In the Old Testament, this life is experienced *par excellence* in Zion (Pss 84:1–7, 10; 122:1–2; 133:3; Isa 4:3; Jer 31:12), and so it is in the New Jerusalem.

### *The New Jerusalem's Security*

The prophecies of the new heart that accompany the covenant formula (Ezek 11:17–20; 36:24–29; 37:23–28; cf. Isa 54:11–14; Jer 31:33–34), a formula that features in the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:3), speak of eschatological confirmation in righteousness, with no further sinful tendency for God's people. Perhaps this is why in the New Jerusalem there is no more sea. Since the new creation replaces heaven, this may refer to the sea of glass before the heavenly throne (Rev 4:6; 15:2), which was represented in the earthly Temple as the large water basin for cleansing (Exod 30:17–21; 40:31–32).<sup>136</sup> Cleansing is no longer needed in the New Jerusalem, since all its inhabitants are confirmed in holiness (Rev 21:27 cf. 3:12) and have been washed in the blood of the Lamb (7:14; cf 1:5).<sup>137</sup> The inhabitants of the New Jerusalem are secure from sin, and therefore from judgment.

The sea may also represent the firmament separating God's dwelling place and the earth (cf. Ezek 1:22–26, where the רַקִּיעַ created in Gen 1:6, is made of ice or crystal

<sup>136</sup> Beale, *Temple*, 33–34, 53–54, thinks that the temple “sea” existed to symbolize the oceans in the overall cosmic symbolism of the temple. The text of Exodus, however, specifies that it was for washing, so that the priests would not die when approaching the altar, presumably for being unclean (cf. Exod 28:43; 2 Chr 4:6; Heb 10:22). Garber, “Laver,” 76, says, “the laver . . . was intended to make holy the priests and, presumably, the sacrifices.” Mealy, *After the Thousand Years*, 144–45, comments, “The glassy sea appears to be the heavenly counterpart of the water in the bronze ‘sea’ of the laver.” However, Mealy does not develop this idea.

<sup>137</sup> Dillard, “Zion,” 2203, thinks that one of the reasons that there is no temple in the New Jerusalem is that there is no longer a need to expiate sin. The temple had additional significances, however, and what are specifically no longer needed are the laver and the altar of burnt offering.

and extends under the throne).<sup>138</sup> This is now removed, as heaven and earth merge.<sup>139</sup> A Jerusalem with God's immediate presence is as secure as heaven is from all the vicissitudes of earthly life (Rev 21:4).

The sea to be eliminated may also represent the origin of cosmic evil, the rebellious nations (Rev 13:1), the place of the dead (20:13) or the "primary location of the world's idolatrous trade activity (18:10–19)."<sup>140</sup> Beale notes the similarity of Rev 21:1 to 21:4 mentioning the elimination of death, mourning, crying and pain, and refers to Isa 51:10–11, where elimination of the Red Sea allowed the redeemed to enter Zion<sup>141</sup> (also Isa 27:1, 13; Ps 78:53–54; cf. Ps 66:6; 74:13; Jer 6:23). This interpretation stresses the elimination of all threats to God's people.<sup>142</sup> It accords with Ps 46, about Zion's inviolability, where the sea represents a threat overcome by God (Ps 46:2; cf. Lam 2:13). Multiple meanings, with all meanings intended, are a feature of the Johannine corpus,<sup>143</sup> and all these meanings may be intended or at least allowed for.<sup>144</sup> The ideas of the

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<sup>138</sup> Osborne, *Revelation*, 231, says of the sea of glass in 4:6, "The most likely allusion here is the 'expanse' or firmament that separated the waters in Gen. 1:7 . . . and perhaps also the bronze sea in Solomon's temple . . . We must add Ezek. 1:22 . . . The emphasis is on God's awesome vastness, his transcendence and his holiness that separate him from his creation."

<sup>139</sup> See, for example, Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 647, who says, "the sea represents the distance between God and his creation." Mealy, *After the Thousand Years*, 193–200, supports this interpretation of the sea at length.

<sup>140</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 1042. Commentators who emphasize the economic critique of Rome, such as Jeske, *Revelation for Today*, 118, and Rossing, *Choice between Two Cities*, 145–47, think the New Jerusalem's lack of Rome's unjust commercial and/or military shipping is the primary meaning of "no more sea."

<sup>141</sup> Mathewson, *New Heaven*, 218, links the disappearance of the sea to the new exodus theme in Revelation.

<sup>142</sup> For a fuller survey of interpretations of the sea, see Briggs, *Temple Imagery*, 51–52, nn. 12, 13.

<sup>143</sup> For example, the two meanings of παρέλαβον in John 1:11, of ἄνωθεν in John 3:3, and of Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in Rev 1:1. For examples of double meanings in John see Duke, *Irony*, 144–45, who comments "double meanings . . . convey a deliberate ambiguity allowing two meanings at once and thereby encouraging the reader to explore dual possibilities."

<sup>144</sup> Mealy, *After the Thousand Years*, 193–212, takes this approach. He examines the meaning of the "sea" as the heavenly sea, the earthly sea, and the underworldly sea, concluding that all of these concepts can be included in the expression. He says, (p. 246), "virtually every image John relates has more than one possible sphere of reference."

elimination of sin, separation from God and opposition to God's rule are not that different from each other, and all emphasize the security of the people in the New Jerusalem.

Other details from the Old Testament picture of Zion indicating security (inviolability) come into Revelation's picture of the New Jerusalem. John sees it descending while he stands on a great and high mountain (Rev 21:10). The text does not say that the city lands on this mountain, but this seems to be a reasonable assumption, given the Old Testament texts that place eschatological Jerusalem on a very high mountain (Isa 2:2 = Mic 4:1; Ezek 20:40; 40:2).<sup>145</sup> The wall is high and solid (Rev 21:12, 17–18); the gates are guarded by angels (Rev 21:12); the foundations are massive (Rev 21:14, 19–20), and they are all measured by the angel (measuring is a symbol of divine protection, cf. above on Rev 11:1–2). One is reminded of the latter-days song in Isa 26:1, “We have a strong city; God makes salvation its walls and ramparts,”<sup>146</sup> and of Isa 54:11–12, 14–15 where the walls, gates and foundations of Zion will be built by God and enemies cannot prevail (cf. Zech 2:5 where although there is no wall because the city is so populous, God will be a wall of fire around Jerusalem). As Ps 48:8 says, “God makes her [Zion] secure forever.” Since all enemies have been eliminated, some commentators think this wall is purely decorative, and certainly it is part of the city's beauty.<sup>147</sup> Yet it also has symbolic value indicating safety and security.

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<sup>145</sup> So Mathewson, *New Heaven*, 99, who lists interpreters who agree.

<sup>146</sup> Although Babylon is a “strong city,” it is destroyed (Rev 18:10). Isa 26:5 continues, “He humbles those who dwell on high, he lays the lofty city low,” the city that oppresses the poor. In Isaiah, this is sinful Jerusalem, which is part of Babylon in Revelation.

<sup>147</sup> Cf. Ps 48:2. Dumbrell, *End of the Beginning*, 3, suggests that the walls are “an image of steadfastness and stability and thereby confirm the OT notion that God himself would wall off the new city (Zech 2:5).” Rissi, *Future of the World*, 67, says the walls cannot be for defence since the gates are open. They are rather a boundary separating those inside and those outside. He thinks the walls are a shining invitation to those in the lake of fire, especially Israel, to repent and come inside (pp. 73–78), but this is an unlikely meaning. Georgi, “Visionen,” 363–64, says the walls, like the walls of hellenistic cities, are for beauty and integration.

*Old Jerusalem as Model of the New Jerusalem*

Jerusalem is the historic name of the city where God revealed himself to Israel down through the years. Walker points out that use of the name “affirms the uniqueness of God’s revelation in Jerusalem.”<sup>148</sup> It provides continuity and shows that the New Jerusalem is the fulfilment of all the Old Testament Jerusalem stood for and pointed to. God’s contact with the world through Israel and Jerusalem is affirmed as the major part of God’s program with humanity. This means that theological material about Jerusalem in the Old Testament is intended to be carried over in some sense to ideas of the New Jerusalem.<sup>149</sup> The picture of the New Jerusalem in the book of Revelation can stand on its own. Yet if the use of the name “Jerusalem” indicates that the New Jerusalem fulfils what Old Testament Jerusalem stood for, it is illuminating to see the fulfilment and surpassing of the Old Testament traditions and theology of Jerusalem/Zion in the New Jerusalem of Revelation.

The New Jerusalem, like the old one, is both God’s place and a community of people. This implies that the New Jerusalem is more than a symbol for the people without involving a place. In every aspect, these two factors come into play. Under the old covenant, Jerusalem’s dual nature resulted in frustration and heartache. Even in the church age, God’s people on earth cannot experience all the benefits of being in Jerusalem (Heb 13:14). But in the new creation, God’s ideal for this arrangement is fulfilled. At last, as promised by the Old Testament prophets, the human community (city) is able to live on God’s glorious mountain with him in permanent joy and peace.

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<sup>148</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 249.

<sup>149</sup> Ortlund, *Whoredom*, 168, comments, “The lines of expectation created by the fullness of Old Testament theology crowd into John’s brief description of their final resolution.”

*The Presence of God*

The first and most important aspect of Jerusalem is that it is the place of God's presence. From the human viewpoint, it is where intimacy with God is experienced. Jerusalem, the juncture between heaven and earth, is the place where God dwells and where he meets with humankind. God chose this place as his dwelling place forever (Ps 68:16; 132:13–14; cf. 1 Kgs 8:13; 2 Chr 6:2; Ezek 43:7). In the Old Testament, it contains the Temple, and finally, in Revelation, it becomes the temple. In the Old Testament, God dwells in heaven without humanity, as well as in Jerusalem with his people. In the church age, God dwells in heaven as well as in his people in every place by his Spirit. In the New Jerusalem, he dwells exclusively and immediately with his people (Rev 21:3) in a merged heaven and earth. Then all believers will be "high priests," staying in the Holy of Holies and having God's name on their foreheads. More than that, they will see God's face (Rev 22:4). There will be complete intimacy, yet distinction of persons.<sup>150</sup>

In the Psalms, longing for intimacy with God is often linked to Zion. The author of Pss 42 and 43 asks God to lead him to his holy mountain to find God, his joy and delight, for whom he longs (Ps 42:1–2; 43:3–4). In the wilderness, David longs for God, whom he had seen in the sanctuary in Jerusalem (Ps 63:1–2).<sup>151</sup> The writer of Ps 84 longs for the courts of the Lord in parallel with longing for the living God (Ps 84:2). The aim of his pilgrimage is to appear before God in Zion (Ps 84:7). The writer of Ps 73 does not understand the sufficiency of his intimate relationship with God until he enters the

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<sup>150</sup> See Mealand, "Language of Mystical Union," 28–31, for discussion of Rev 21:3 and the conclusion that communion rather than absorption is meant by God living "in" or among his people.

<sup>151</sup> The Psalm likely comes from the period of David's flight from Absalom, since he is called the king in v. 11.

sanctuary (Ps 73:16–17, 23–25). These references have set the scene for Jerusalem/Zion to be the real place of intimacy with God.

It is interesting that Revelation does not just have the redeemed community move up to heaven.<sup>152</sup> Instead, the New Jerusalem, with all that heaven is, comes down to them. This condescension of God is a demonstration of his love (cf. 2 Cor 8:9). It affirms the value he places on humanity. It also indicates a kind of continuity with the first Jerusalem, which was on earth.<sup>153</sup> This continuity has been likened to the continuity between our earthly bodies and our resurrection bodies (e.g. 1 Cor 15:35–44), the paradox of something that is the same thing but at the same time vastly different.<sup>154</sup>

Because the holy God (Rev 3:7; 4:8; 6:10; 15:4; 16:5) dwells there, it is a holy place. It is called the “holy city” (Rev 21:1, 10; 22:19), and only those with clean hands and pure hearts are allowed inside (Rev 21:8, 27; 22:15; cf. Pss 15; 24:3–4).<sup>155</sup> They are holy people (Rev 19:8; 20:6; 22:11). Their wills and God’s will are in complete conformity.<sup>156</sup> This is a big difference from old earthly Jerusalem. Jerusalem as human community has been transformed by the transformation of the individuals in it who have

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<sup>152</sup> Some Jewish expectations of eschatological Jerusalem had a renewal of Jerusalem on earth or perhaps even appearance of a city from heaven, but with heaven still separate from earth. This seems true even of *Jub.* 1:29. Others had a perfect Jerusalem in heaven to which the saints ascend. Revelation alone depicts a merging of heaven and earth. See King, “Jerusalem,” 765.

<sup>153</sup> Ellul, *Meaning of the City*, 101–2, says, “God’s loving humility is manifest long before the incarnation . . . in his choice of Jerusalem . . . He took one city among others, a city of heathen, with all the faults of a city . . . meeting man on his own territory.” Ellul sees God’s choice of the city of Jerusalem as a concession to David, but his comments here are apt.

<sup>154</sup> E.g. Ellul, *Meaning of the City*, 110, 187, cf. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 646, who says, “The interplay between continuity and discontinuity means that the cosmos will undergo a transformation somewhat similar to our resurrection.”

<sup>155</sup> Note that in Rev 21:27 one of the designations of what may not enter the city is πᾶν κοινόν, i.e. anything defiled or defiling, any threat to holiness.

<sup>156</sup> See Bauckham, *Theology*, 142–43.

been cleansed from sin (Rev 22:14), changed in nature and confirmed in holiness (cf. Jer 31:33; 32:39, 40 etc.).<sup>157</sup>

Because the resident God is a glorious being (Rev 15:8; 19:1; 21:11, 23) the New Jerusalem is a place of glory and beauty (Rev 21:2, 10–26; 22:5; cf. Ps 48:2). She glows with the light of God’s glory (Rev 21:23–24; 22:5; cf. Isa 60:1, 19–20), the same glory that appears around his throne in Rev 4:3 (cf. Rev 21:11). She is the new creation (cf. Isa 65:17–18), and descends from heaven (Rev 21:2, 10). The human community also contributes glory to the city as the nations bring in their glory and honour (Rev 21:24, 26). This is in contrast to Babylon, whose glory, which was all for herself, perished at her fall (Rev 18:14). The New Jerusalem is pictured as a place of joy,<sup>158</sup> in contrast to Babylon where all celebration has ceased (Rev 18:22–23).

God (and the Lamb) who dwells in the New Jerusalem is also the Living One (Rev 1:18; 4:9, 10; 7:2; 10:6; 15:17). The city is full of Life, and this permeates the existence of the people there. Their names are in the book of life; they drink the water of life, and have access to the tree of life (Rev 21:6, 27; 22:1, 2, 17, 19). They are surrounded by the light of life. The picture is one of absolutely abundant and satisfying Life.

In response to the presence of God, the human community serves (λατρεύουσιν) him and reigns (βασιλεύουσιν) forever (Rev 22:3, 5). This conveys the idea of worship and responsibility fulfilled for God. Reigning implies victory and joy.

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<sup>157</sup> McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 556, comments, “The Christian conception of heaven is essentially that of the eschatological realization of the presence and power of God, and the final elimination of sin. The most helpful way of considering it is to regard it as a consummation of the Christian doctrine of salvation, in which the presence, penalty, and power of sin have all been finally eliminated and the total presence of God in individuals and the community of faith has been achieved.”

<sup>158</sup> Comblin, “Liturgie,” 27–39, develops the idea that the picture of the New Jerusalem is partly built on the water and light rituals of the feast of Tabernacles. This feast was a very joyous occasion (pp. 29, 36).



The pilgrimage of the nations to Jerusalem to worship and serve YHWH (e.g. Isa 2:3) is represented in the New Jerusalem by the fact that the nations walk by its light, and the kings of the earth bring in their glory (Rev 21:24, 26).

But the New Jerusalem will not please everybody. Thirst in Scripture is a metaphor for desire for God (Ps 36:8–9; 42:1–2; 63:1; Isa 55:1; John 7:37; cf. Matt 5:6), and the water of life is offered only to those who thirst (Rev 21:6; 22:17). The saints long to be in Jerusalem and in God’s house (e.g. Ps 84; 122:1–2). Those who do not desire God will not find the New Jerusalem attractive, since God and the Lamb are the main attraction there. Doubtless this is part of the reason that some people are outside the city (Rev 22:15).

### *The Reign of God*

Ancient cities were normally *capital* cities, and Jerusalem certainly was. It has political overtones as the seat of government of the Kingdom of God, location of God’s throne (Jer 3:17; Ezek 43:7; Rev 21:5; 22:1, 3). William Dumbrell emphasizes the fact that the “city” is a symbol of divine government, commenting, “The notion of the city indicates at once the forms of government by which the people of God will be regulated . . . The exaltation of Jerusalem as both a symbol of divine government, and the world centre for the governed, is an idea to which the eschatology of the OT was particularly directed.”<sup>159</sup> Dumbrell thinks that Jerusalem has been chosen to “convey the major theme of biblical eschatology” primarily because a city is a symbol of world government.<sup>160</sup> This is a benign monarchical government that gives all blessings to the citizens while still

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<sup>159</sup> Dumbrell, *End of the Beginning*, 1. The idea the God’s reign is the main meaning of Zion is also important to Ollenburger, *Zion*, 81, etc.

<sup>160</sup> Dumbrell, *End of the Beginning*, 31. However, I think the theme of intimacy with God is the major theme of the New Jerusalem in Rev 21–22. So also Kiddle, *Revelation*, 413.

retaining supreme glory for God, the head of state. Bauckham notes the difference between God's kind of rule and that of the Beast. In the New Jerusalem, there is no distance between ruler and ruled, and in fact, God's subjects rule with him (Rev 22: 3, 5). To Bauckham, this indicates that God's sovereignty and human freedom now fully coincide.<sup>161</sup>

A monarch must have a realm. As well as being the place of God's reign, Jerusalem is a human community who are the governed. People living in a city have a common identity and a sense of belonging.<sup>162</sup> In the Old Testament, Jerusalem was often a symbol of Jewish nationalism and identity.<sup>163</sup> For example, in Lamentations Jerusalem, destroyed by the Babylonians, is a weeping woman (Lam 1) representing the sorrow of the nation. The end of Zion's captivity is the occasion of extreme joy for her people (Ps 126:1–3). Violation of the Jerusalem Temple means disgrace for the Jews (Jer 51:51). This is even more evident in Second Temple Jewish literature<sup>164</sup>

This function of Jerusalem would have been particularly important to the readers of Revelation who were likely being accused of lack of loyalty to the cities in which they lived because of their refusal to participate in the civic cults (Rev 13).<sup>165</sup> Christians were also rejected by earthly Jerusalem (e.g. Acts 22:22; Rev 2:9; 3:9). The longing for a city to belong to was very real, and the apostles held out hope of heavenly or eschatological Jerusalem as a home city. Paul writes, "Our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil 3:20), and "the

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<sup>161</sup> Bauckham, *Theology*, 142–43.

<sup>162</sup> Jelinek, "City Metaphor," 19, defines a city as "a dwelling place which is self-contained and is an independent (but interdependent) unit of human society."

<sup>163</sup> Comblin, "Liturgie," 23, comments, "Jérusalem représente de plus en plus l'ensemble du judaïsme, tant aux yeux des palestiniens que des Juifs de la Diaspora. Les fêtes . . . leur donnaient le sentiment de leur unité."

<sup>164</sup> Lee, *New Jerusalem*, 142–43, notes this in Bar 4:5—5:9, where Jerusalem as mother is distinguished from Israelites as children.

<sup>165</sup> Slater, "Social Setting," 254.

Jerusalem that is above is . . . our mother” (Gal 4:26), while the author of Hebrews says “You have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem” (Heb 12:22), and “Here we do not have an enduring city, but we look for the one that is to come” (Heb 13:14). The holy city as the final state of the church depicts it as a community in which to find an identity, a home and place to belong.

Human community involves human culture, and the New Jerusalem is a cultural centre. The nations, which many argue function as cultural entities among other things,<sup>166</sup> are healed (Rev 22:2), not abolished. Jerusalem as a community is an alternative to Babylon, the city of the world.<sup>167</sup> As such, it represents human culture as God meant it to be, a vice-regency under God’s kingship. God’s command to the first people was to rule over the world and subdue it (often called the “cultural mandate,” Gen 1:28). God started the process of humans organizing and understanding creation by having Adam name the animals (Gen 2:19). But after the Fall, human culture-creating energy was mostly exercised as an alternative to trust in God. The paradigm example of this was the tower of Babel, where human ingenuity was aimed at making a name for themselves and reaching heaven by their own efforts (Gen 11:1–9). Babel (i.e. Babylon) then became the symbol of human culture gone astray. In contrast, Jerusalem is a community chosen by God. She is supposed to lean exclusively on him for protection, guidance and success. Earthly Jerusalem did not always live up to this (contrast 2 Chr 20 and Jer 37), but the ideal

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<sup>166</sup> Swete, *Apocalypse*, 297, comments, “all that is best in human life will flow into the City of God.” Swete is a post-millennialist, and thinks that this will happen as converts from the nations bring their arts, literature, science, and national, social and civil achievements in to the kingdom of God represented by the church. Ladd, *Revelation*, 284, sees Rev 21:26 as proof that the nations will not lose their national identity in the New Jerusalem, and Hough, “Revelation: Exposition,” 539, sees the entry of the glory of the nations as the opposite of the loss of cultural life in Babylon (Rev 18:22–24). He takes it that no good thing in human culture will ultimately be lost.

<sup>167</sup> Babylon in Revelation is a centre of human culture, but in rebellion against God. See Rev 18:12–14, 22–24.

continued to exist, promoted by the prophets (e.g. Isa 28:15–16; 30:1–7; Jer 2:18).<sup>168</sup> They depicted eschatological Jerusalem as a city (a culturally organized community) depending on God (e.g. Isa 26:1; Zech 14:20).

Thus, Jerusalem and Babylon are consciously presented in Revelation as opposite communities between which the readers must choose.<sup>169</sup> Bauckham comments, “[The New Jerusalem] consummates human history and culture insofar as these have been dedicated to God (cf. 21:12, 13, 24, 26), while excluding the distortions of history and culture into opposition to God that Babylon represents (cf. 21:8, 27; 22:15).”<sup>170</sup> Ellul, who sees the whole idea of city as a human attempt to establish security to replace the lost security in God that humanity had in Eden, sees it as particularly important that the New Jerusalem is not built by human effort. Nevertheless, the human goal of putting all human greatness, strength and riches into cities is finally achieved as the nations bring their glory into the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:24, 26).<sup>171</sup>

Jerusalem is a place of convergence, of all Israel and of all nations who worship God. Instead of the Old Testament situation where only Israelites ascended for pilgrimage, and a brief period under Solomon when other nations came to inquire after the wisdom God gave him (1 Kgs 4:34; 2 Chr 9:23–24), in the New Jerusalem, kings and whole nations come to bring their glory (Rev 21:24–26; cf. Isa 2:2–4; 60:11; Zech 14:16).

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<sup>168</sup> Ollenburger, *Zion*, 81, says Zion is a symbol of security. YHWH must be Zion’s only source of security. He calls this YHWH’s exclusive prerogative to save, and discusses it on pp. 81–143. Dougherty, *Fivesquare City*, 8, notes that the city as symbol of security in God led to an ethnocentric religious righteousness, and the prophets had to preach trust in God rather than the city.

<sup>169</sup> Rossing, *Choice between Two Cities* (e.g. 160–61), shows how the rhetorical force of Revelation is directed toward having readers make this choice. Bauckham, *Theology*, 131–32, outlines the many contrasting parallels.

<sup>170</sup> Bauckham, *Theology*, 135. Contra Ellul, *Meaning of the City*, 191, who thinks nature is excluded from the New Jerusalem, though it is part of the new creation.

<sup>171</sup> Ellul, *Meaning of the City*, 188–94. Jelinek, “City Metaphor,” 281, says, “In the end the works of mankind and human creativity are not all destroyed or abolished.”

The whole world finds unity in a shared reality. The community has been transformed by its inclusion of people not just from Israel, but from all nations (“my peoples,” Rev 21:3; cf. 5:9; 7:9; Zech 2:11).

The function of good government is to provide welfare and security for the governed. An ancient city was normally a stronghold. People saw it as a place of security (e.g. Jer 35:11). Although this trust in the protection of Jerusalem’s defences was often disappointed in the Old Testament, the ideal city is secure, and this makes a city an apt picture for the final security of God’s people. The New Jerusalem is the place where God’s people experience deliverance: they are protected from sorrow, pain and death (Rev 21:4). Like the ideal old Zion, the New Jerusalem is inviolable, not the least because all enemies have been permanently defeated and removed.

The New Jerusalem’s security is emphasized by descriptions of its amenities. Mention was made above of the transformation of the human community that makes the New Jerusalem possible. But Jerusalem as God’s city has been transformed as well to be a place of complete security. She has become in reality what she formerly only represented:<sup>172</sup> instead of being on a low hill in Palestine, she sits on a very high mountain (Rev 21:10; cf. Ps 48:2; Isa 2:2–3; Ezek 17:22; 40:2; Zech 14:10). Instead of depending on the Gihon, a vulnerable spring of water on her slopes outside the wall which had to be laboriously channelled into the city (1 Kgs 1:33–38; 2 Kgs 20:20; 2 Chr 32:30), she has a large river flowing from her centre (Rev 22:1–2; cf. Ps 36:8–9; 46:4; Ezek 47:1–12; Joel 3:18; Zech 13:1; 14:8).<sup>173</sup> Instead of being vulnerable to famine in

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<sup>172</sup> Bauckham, *Theology*, 133, says, “All that the earthly Jerusalem could do no more than symbolize will be reality.”

<sup>173</sup> According to Buchanan, “Area of the Temple,” 184–85, the Jebusites had already brought the Gihon water inside the walls before the time of David, and water shafts from there provided ample water for the

siege (e.g. Jer 38:9; 52:5–6), she has fruit always growing by the main street (Rev 22:2; cf. Ps 36:8; Ezek 47:12).

The New Jerusalem as a place fulfills the Old Testament promise of the Land, with all the security this entails.<sup>174</sup> Jerusalem at times functions as the epitome of the Land in the Old Testament, and it is only when Jerusalem is conquered that inheriting the Land is complete. Thus, the New Jerusalem includes the concept of “rest” which the Land represented (Josh 1:13–15; 1 Kgs 8:56; 1 Chron 23:25; cf. Heb 3–4). The New Jerusalem is the new earth, or new Land (γῆ καινή, Rev 21:1),<sup>175</sup> the place of rest in God’s presence, since Jerusalem is also God’s resting place (2 Chr 6:41; Ps 132:8, 14; cf. Isa 11:10; the resting place is ultimately the new creation, that is, the New Jerusalem, cf. Isa 66:1–2, following directly on Isa 65:17–25).

An important aspect of this provision and security enjoyed in the New Jerusalem is that it is permanent. In Isaiah, after the prophecy of a new heaven, a new earth, and a newly created Jerusalem, God says that the new heavens and earth will endure before him (Isa 66:22). Jesus in Revelation says the overcomer will never leave God’s temple (Rev 3:12). John says that the saints will reign in the New Jerusalem for ever and ever (Rev 22:5). There is nothing after this. This is the permanent and final state of God’s people.

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temple and the city. Nevertheless, the Gihon of Jerusalem is not the kind of world river envisioned in Gen 2:13.

<sup>174</sup> As noted in discussion above of Brueggemann, *The Land*.

<sup>175</sup> Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, 1151, notes that John views the New Jerusalem from a high mountain (Rev 21:10), which is a motif in revelations in ancient sources, including Moses viewing the Land from Mount Nebo (Deut 34:1–4). Considering other Exodus motifs in Revelation, there may be an intertextual link here between John’s vision and Moses’ view, which tends to identify the New Jerusalem with the Promised Land. Bedard, “Finding a New Land,” 140, suggests “it is difficult to know if γῆ (v.1) is meant as the Promised Land or the entire planet. The presence of Jerusalem could suggest the land of Israel and yet, with the cosmic transformation, it could just as likely mean that the whole world has now become the Promised Land.”

*New Jerusalem the Original Plan of God*

Walker sees John using Jerusalem as a symbol of God's ultimate purposes for his people, just as Isaiah does.<sup>176</sup> A brief overview of the New Testament shows that throughout its pages reunion and communion with God are the chief aims of human salvation. For example, believers have peace with God and access to God and his grace (Rom 1:1–2; Eph 2:18; Heb 4:16; 7:19; 10:22), they are reconciled to God (Rom 5:10–11; 11:15; 2 Cor 5:18–20; Col 1:20–22), they are God's children (John 1:12; Gal 3:26–29) brought near to him (Eph 2:12–13) and abiding in him and in his love (John 6:56; 15:4–10; 1 John 2:24; 3:24; 4:15). They are acknowledged before God (Matt 10:32) and enter into their master's joy (Matt 25:21, 23; 25:34 cf. 41).

The book of Revelation hints that the New Jerusalem has been God's aim since the creation of the world.<sup>177</sup> The names of its inhabitants have been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world (ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου, Rev 13:8; 17:8; cf. 21:27; Isa 4:3). The choice of the elect before the foundation of the world is an idea Paul teaches (Eph 1:4) and Matthew reports that Jesus spoke of a kingdom prepared for his people from the foundation of the world (Matt 24:34).

God chose a people and he chose an earthly city as a preview and foretaste of his ultimate aim.<sup>178</sup> The final state is not called "Jerusalem" for its etymological meaning. It

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<sup>176</sup> Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 249.

<sup>177</sup> Ortlund, *Whoredom*, 166, calls the New Jerusalem "the end toward which salvation history has been pressing for so long." He cites the long use of the covenant formula, culminating in its use in Rev 21:3, as evidence that this has been God's long-term plan. Similarly, Park, "Regained Eden," 339, concludes that the whole book of Revelation is constructed to lead to the New Jerusalem, and make it the climax of revelation.

<sup>178</sup> Comblin, "Liturgie," 11–12, takes the fact that God has created a "new" Jerusalem to mean that with a new covenant he is electing a new people to replace the old Jerusalem and the old people, Israel. But the new covenant in the prophets is not with a new people but a renewed people. Jesus reconstituted Israel within ethnic Israel (symbolized in Revelation in the fact that the 12 foundations are made of the 12 gems

refers only to the city where God met with his people in Old Testament times, and takes its meaning from what the joining of God's presence and the human community meant in that specific place. This makes historical Jerusalem indispensable to the concept of the church's final state in the Bible.

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representing the 12 tribes in the OT, yet bearing the names of the apostles in Revelation), and others who believe are invited into the covenant blessings. The New Jerusalem is Jerusalem as it was intended to be.



CHAPTER FIVE  
THE TRADITION EXPERIENCED: THE NEW JERUSALEM AND THE HOPE OF  
THE SAINTS

*Introduction*

One contribution that this study hopes to make is to produce a theology of the New Jerusalem that relates it to expectations of Christians today about their final destination, and suggests how Christians can live their lives in this world in light of their expected future. This chapter makes some attempts in this direction.

The author of Revelation is at great pains to emphasize the importance of what he describes. The words must be written down, at the command of the one who is “the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end” (Rev 21:5–6). The words are the testimony of Jesus, who is “the Root and offspring of David, the bright Morning Star” (22:16, 20, cf. 1:1–2). The penalty for changing the words of the prophecy is more plagues and loss of a share of the tree of life and the holy city “which are described in this book” (Rev 22:18–19). So this is very important material. Yet how will this reality translate into experience? If the reader of Revelation is meant to expect the New Jerusalem as the final state for believers, a place previewed in the theology of Old Testament Jerusalem, what does this mean for believers today as they contemplate their future beyond this life and this age?

Eschatological teaching in the New Testament is generally used as motivational material in exhortations to faithful witness and holy living.<sup>1</sup> Thus any study of eschatology is incomplete, from the point of view of the biblical context, unless it looks at how it affects the lives of believers. Many interpreters have examined the intended rhetorical effects of the book of Revelation, and many conclude that John wanted his first readers to avoid idolatry, especially as it related to the imperial cult, even if it cost them their livelihoods and their lives.<sup>2</sup> But the book of Revelation is a part of the Christian canon and still guides followers of Jesus today. Although their situation is different from that of the first readers, they are still in need of perseverance through the difficulties of life in this world. They too need assurance of the reality and desirability of the promised reward. The promise of life in the New Jerusalem assures the saints of ultimate safety and security in eternity, which should provide them with all kinds of courage and generosity to obey God and persevere in their faith in this life.<sup>3</sup>

The motivational value of the vision of the New Jerusalem depends largely on two things: belief that the city is real and belief that it is desirable. In Revelation, the temple is presented as a current reality in heaven,<sup>4</sup> and some aspects of it are experienced by the church even in this age and this life. But the author probably means his readers to believe that even the heavenly temple will someday be transformed, resulting in the New Jerusalem, and that faithful believers will experience it to a greater degree than they can in this world. The anticipation of a better experience in the future is strong motivation to

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<sup>1</sup> E.g. Matt 24:45–51; 1 Thess 5:4–6; 2 Pet 3:14; Rev 1:3; 22:12.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Beale, *Revelation*, 897–99; Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, 991.

<sup>3</sup> See Vischer, “I will be your God,” 75–76, for this truth in the context of social action in the world.

<sup>4</sup> In Hebrews the current heavenly temple is in the heavenly Jerusalem. Paul speaks of the Jerusalem above, while Revelation speaks only of a heavenly temple. Temple and city probably always go together in the thought of NT writers. As A. Y. Collins, *Combat Myth*, 228, comments, “the association of Jerusalem with Mt. Zion and the temple, geographically, historically and traditionally means that each automatically carries connotations of the others in a symbolic context.”

keep people persevering on a difficult course. If the first readers of Revelation could expect no more than secret knowledge of their true status to assuage their suffering, they might say with Paul, “If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied” (1 Cor 15:19). The author of Revelation emphasizes that his account is true and reliable, saying twice “These words are faithful and true” (Rev 21:5; 22:6).

The New Jerusalem has to be seen as attractive and desirable by the reader. As noted in the last chapter, some aspects of the New Jerusalem might not be attractive to everyone. Some think that if the final state is just singing God’s praises forever, it will be boring, like a never-ending church service. Some might feel uncomfortable with being identified with the Jewish capital and story. On the other hand, others might not like being in a city with people from every tribe and nation. And some people might find the idea of an urban (versus rural) heaven repugnant. So it is important to think about what John wants believers to expect to experience when they get to the new creation. Do believers need to adjust their attitudes to deal with some of these reservations, or are their expectations faulty?

This chapter looks at the experience that the book of Revelation leads believers to expect as regards the New Jerusalem. The conclusion is that, given the ideas associated with Jerusalem/Zion from antecedent Scripture, the idea of this city as the destiny of the saints provides excellent balance, holding together various themes about the final state of believers.

*Revelation's New Jerusalem*

*How Literal?*

Interpreters and theologians are divided about how literally the picture of the New Jerusalem in Revelation should be taken. Is everything there just a symbol of some spiritual reality whose non-symbolic form we cannot imagine?<sup>5</sup> Or should readers expect a real city that can be seen and handled?

Some think the report of the vision is merely paraenetic (giving exhortation), not meant to be visualized.<sup>6</sup> The paraenesis is not in doubt, but visuality is clearly employed here, for John describes the vision as something he saw (Rev 21:1, 2; 22:8 cf. 21: 22) or was shown (21:10; 22:1), and the description is rich in visual details of colours and light.<sup>7</sup> John appears to be trying to share the visual impact with his readers,<sup>8</sup> and to motivate them to desire to both see and experience being in the city.

Some interpreters think the vision does not refer to the future.<sup>9</sup> For example, J. Comblin thinks that Rev 21:9–22:5 is not about a future Jerusalem, but describes in mythical terms the situation of the church in John's own day,<sup>10</sup> that is, the church is actually saved, and glorious, while the world is condemned.<sup>11</sup> He thinks Rev 22:15 is a threat of expulsion, so this cannot be the final state, since those in the New Jerusalem of

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<sup>5</sup> Some thinkers indeed believe that all ideas of heaven or life after death are mere psychological projection or wishful thinking. See discussion in McGrath, *Heaven*, 146–150. For a defence of the idea that projection is not necessarily false, and is indeed a philosophical good, see de la Peña, "Projection."

<sup>6</sup> E.g. Rissi, *Future of the World*, 52.

<sup>7</sup> Studies in the past 30 years have taken more seriously John's claim to visual experience as a basis for what he has written. See e.g. Beale, *Use of OT*, 65. Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 214–47, discusses whether real visions lie behind apocalyptic reports of them and gives examples of scholars who think so. Rowland appears to leave the question open. Fekkes, *Isaiah*, 46, and Bauckham, *Theology*, 3, assume actual visionary experience.

<sup>8</sup> The same could be said of the aural impact. John often reports hearing, and much of the noise is very loud. See Fuller, "Noisiest Book."

<sup>9</sup> Jelinek, "City Metaphor," 69–72, discusses examples of several interpreters who have this view.

<sup>10</sup> This view is often shared by interpreters who emphasize the sociological and rhetorical aspects of Rev 21–22, such as A. Y. Collins, *Combat Myth*, and Malina, *New Jerusalem*.

<sup>11</sup> Comblin, "Liturgie," 8.

the eschatological age cannot be expelled. But this verse says nothing about expulsion. There is no indication that those outside were ever inside. Everyone starts outside, but some are allowed to enter (Rev 22:14). Even Rev 22:19, which mentions taking away one's share in the city, can be interpreted as a threat to deny an entry that was once promised, rather than a threat to expel. The book of Revelation does show the church of John's day (and the church age generally) as in the heavenly sanctuary (Rev 11:1–3), and although that temple (and perhaps heavenly Jerusalem) is indeed glorious, the book is clear that there is a *New Jerusalem* to come when the present creation has disappeared and all have been judged. A future New Jerusalem is crucial to the rhetorical impact intended.

Others think that the New Jerusalem is a metaphor, that is, what it refers to is being *compared* to a city. Park says the picture of the New Jerusalem is transcendent. He continues, "As a transcendent reality, it seems more logical to expect John to describe it metaphorically."<sup>12</sup> But a metaphor for what? The referent is some reality that involves both redeemed human community in resurrected form and God's presence. It is not an existence of disembodied spirits (Rev 11:11-12; 20:6; cf. 1 Cor 15:35–55), and God's presence is different from his presence with them that believers in Jesus experience in this world (Rev 21:3).

The New Jerusalem in Revelation is depicted metaphorically as the bride of the Lamb. The technique of using the figure of a woman for a literal city is common in the Old Testament, and is used twice in Revelation (for Babylon: Rev 17:18, and for the New

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<sup>12</sup> Park, "Regained Eden," 141.

Jerusalem: Rev 21:9–10).<sup>13</sup> Although John sees an actual woman for Babylon, he only hears that Jerusalem is a bride (Rev 21:2, 9; cf. 19:7-8). He never sees a female figure, only a city. This might lead readers to expect that the New Jerusalem is the reality to which the figure of a bride refers, or that the image of a city has more points of continuity with the reality being described than the image of the bride.

There has been some debate over whether the New Jerusalem is a place. Gundry, for example, says it is only the society of the redeemed. Yet he locates this society in the new earth as a place. It is very difficult for humans to imagine personal existence without some kind of spatial location. Believers expect to experience bodily resurrection (1 Cor 15; cf. Rev 11:11), which implies some kind of spatial existence. Revelation does seem to depict the New Jerusalem as a place.<sup>14</sup>

Some interpreters note that some of the descriptions of the New Jerusalem are impossible in the world as we know it. For example, Park points out that gold is not translucent.<sup>15</sup> Yet as Park also suggests, “the light of God’s glory is so overwhelming that it can shine through otherwise opaque metal.”<sup>16</sup> Thus the seeming “impossibilities” need not result in nonsense, but could be descriptions of rather literal conditions. Osborne

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<sup>13</sup> For a fuller discussion of the use of the two women *topos* in Revelation, see Rossing, *Choice between Two Cities*. Rossing notes (pp. 15–16) that the two women are transformed into cities as soon as they have been used to introduce the basic ethical contrast. This is typical of how the *topos* was used in ancient discourse. A similar thing happens in *4 Ezra* 10:26, 44, where the weeping woman is transformed into a city. The woman is a figurative image representing the city, but the city is literal.

<sup>14</sup> Rudolph, in his examination of the concept of life in the book of Revelation, defines life as “the cognitive existence of a being within a specified framework of time and space with the possibility of participation in the action in that realm.” (Abstract of “There Will Be No Death”). Note that Rudolph feels that both time and space are necessary for life. The book of Revelation does not state specifically that time comes to an end. Rev 10:6 is more correctly translated, with the more modern versions, that there would be no more delay (so NASB, NIV etc).

<sup>15</sup> Park, “Regained Eden,” 141. He cites W. W. Reader, *Die Stadt Gottes in der Johannesapokalypse* (Göttingen: George August Universität, 1971), 40–44, as containing a list of such literal impossibilities.

<sup>16</sup> Park, “Regained Eden,” 213. Other objections could be similarly answered, e.g. with resurrection bodies, believers may be able to cope with moving around a huge cubical city, etc. or, more likely, the laws of earthly physics no longer apply.

suggests that what we now know spiritually will be experienced physically.<sup>17</sup> Physicality may be different than what it is now, however. How the mode of existence, space and time will be in a “new” creation may be difficult for people to conceptualize since they have known only the mode of the present physical universe.<sup>18</sup>

### *Continuity and Discontinuity*

Clearly, some aspects of the new creation will be beyond the capabilities of present imagination. Creation and Jerusalem will be “new,” that is, in some ways unlike what has gone before. For example, the New Jerusalem is not like any place in the physical universe as we know it, since the sea, and the sun, moon, and probably stars seem to be missing. If the entire new heaven and earth is the New Jerusalem, this is a new kind of universe. The resurrection bodies that the saints will have seem to operate on different principles than the “natural laws” of our present life, since there is no more death. However, the fact that the New Jerusalem makes use of the name and so many of the concepts connected theologically to Old Testament Jerusalem indicates that these concepts are part of the reality that will be experienced. There is a continuity on which we can hang our thoughts about how people will experience it.

One way of seeing the continuity from the Old Testament in the use of the name Jerusalem is by looking at how types and antitypes work in the Bible.<sup>19</sup> There is a pattern in the New Testament of understanding objects, persons and actions in the Old Testament as foreshadowings, analogies, or “types,” fulfilled in the New Testament by realities having to do with Jesus Christ (Rom 5:14; Heb 11:19). There are always certain areas of continuity or correspondence between the type and the fulfillment. Some of these

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<sup>17</sup> Osborne, *Revelation*, 735.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Paul’s description of the resurrected body in 1 Cor 15:40–44.

<sup>19</sup> For a discussion of the use of types in the Bible, see Treier, “Typology.”

fulfillments are explored at length in the book of Hebrews, but the idea appears throughout the New Testament. A type was a kind of “educating sign” to establish concepts that would enable people to understand God’s program as it unfolded. Once the reality that the type represented came, the type itself was no longer needed. For example, animals were sacrificed under the old covenant, and this taught God’s people the principle of blood sacrifice for atonement (Lev 4:35; 17:11; cf. Exod 12:13, 23). Once Christ, the true Passover Lamb (1 Cor 5:7) and Lamb of God (John 1:36), that is, the sacrifice that the Passover and other blood sacrifices foreshadowed, has laid down his life, animal sacrifices become redundant (Heb 9:26–28; 10:26). The death of Jesus can now be understood by analogy according to the principles taught by animal sacrifice. The items of continuity between type and fulfilment in the death of Jesus are the innocent victim (called a lamb), the shed blood, the offering of the blood to God, and the result of atonement and forgiveness.<sup>20</sup> But other aspects of the type are only incidental.<sup>21</sup>

Jerusalem can be seen as one of these “types.”<sup>22</sup> The principle of a community where God and his people live together, where justice prevails, and security and prosperity are guaranteed, is first presented in the Old Testament theology of Jerusalem/Zion. As the church comes into being, old Jerusalem is eclipsed as the bearer of this image. Yet the church in this age does not yet experience the fullness of the fulfilment of the type. This awaits the new heaven and earth, where the eschatological community is still called Jerusalem. This accords with the way the Old Testament

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<sup>20</sup> Christ’s death provides the real atonement because the victim is infinitely more valuable, and the sanctuary in which the offering is made to God is the original heavenly one, not the earthly copy (Heb 9:11-15).

<sup>21</sup> For example, Jesus as the “Lamb” does not need to have a tail to fulfil the type.

<sup>22</sup> So also Augustine, *Catech.* 20:36, “[Jerusalem], the most illustrious city of God, which in her bondage was a type of that free city which is called the heavenly Jerusalem” (trans. Christopher, *Instruction*, 66).



prophets see eschatological reality in terms of the city of Jerusalem. The author of Hebrews (Heb 13:14) and John in Revelation both retain the language of “city” and of Jerusalem/Zion when talking about the future state of believers. In fulfilment, the particularity of the type broadens into universality.

Likewise, Jesus says, “In my Father’s house are many places to stay (μοναί). I go to prepare a *place* (τόπος) for you” (John 14:2). “The Father’s house” in John 2:16 is the Temple in Jerusalem (cf. Luke 2:49). By using these words, Jesus may be linking the idea of this “place” he is going to prepare to the Temple and Jerusalem as well as heaven. This may suggest that readers are meant to expect that life beyond this world will be in a new temple and in a New Jerusalem.<sup>23</sup> In Revelation this is depicted as a temple-city. But exactly how many aspects of old Jerusalem and its Temple as type will be included in the New Jerusalem is difficult to know until one sees the actual fulfilment.

#### *Sets of Relationships in the New Jerusalem*

The book of Revelation leads us to expect that in the New Jerusalem, believers will enjoy perfected relationships with God, with each other, with angels and with nature. These are all relationships attached in some way to Jerusalem/Zion in the Old Testament.

Right from the beginning of creation, it seems that God’s aim was to live in intimacy with his human creatures. Earthly Jerusalem was instituted as the foretaste, the educating sign, of this reality. There is no other entity in the Bible that so clearly unites the two concepts of the dwelling place of God and the human community.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> The “father’s house” in Israelite and Jewish society was the extended family and basic social, economic and theological unit of society (see Wright, “Family,” *ABD* 2:762–69), so perhaps what Jesus is mainly referring to here is the security and provision of the family. But since John has used these words already in his Gospel in another sense, it is not unreasonable to see the words “my Father’s house” linking the Temple and heaven as both being God’s presence (as does Carson, *Farewell Discourse*, 21–22).

<sup>24</sup> Genesis does not say that God dwelt in Eden, though he walked there, and the first family was only an embryonic “community.” The Tabernacle was a place for God to dwell in the midst of the community, but

Jerusalem in the Old Testament was the place of God's dwelling, specifically for the purpose of meeting with his people. Revelation 21:3 stresses the importance of the close relationship with God that believers will experience in the New Jerusalem. He will be "with them," a phrase that guarantees prosperity and success. They will "see his face," their names will be acknowledged before God (Rev 3:5), and they will inherit the new creation as his children (21:7). In the letters to the churches, Jesus promises that the overcomers will dine with him (Rev 3:20; cf. 19:9), sit with him on his throne (3:21), walk with him in white (3:4), and receive the "morning star" (2:28), which is himself (22:16). The saints will be his "bride." This paints a picture of the saints enjoying warm and satisfying fellowship with God and Christ.

In the New Jerusalem the saints will have relationships with each other. Jerusalem in the Old Testament was also the central meeting place for God's people. The prophets foresaw a time when not only Israelites, but all nations would gather there to worship God. People from every nation will be in the New Jerusalem. All of them will be ruling with Christ, so there appears that there will be equality of persons under God, with all being of kingly and high-priestly status. They will worship and reign with Christ and with each other. As a society, they will be a city, which implies a complex web of relationships. Since they are a people, each person will find his or her identity in the whole. There will be enjoyment of mutual love among all the redeemed.<sup>25</sup>

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the Tabernacle, and later the Temple, were not the community the way Jerusalem was. Jerusalem/Zion, however, was seen as both God's dwelling place and the human community.

<sup>25</sup> This can be inferred from the stress laid on love of each other as a Christian virtue in the rest of the NT (John 13:34–35; 15:12, 17; Rom 12:10; 13:8; 1 Thess 3:12; 4:9; 1 Pet 1:22; 4:8; 1 John 3:11, 23; 4:7, 11, 12; 2 John 5; cf. Gal 5:13; Eph 4:2; 2 Thess 1:3), a virtue not unknown to the OT (Lev 19:18), cf. Rev 2:4, 19. One of the questions that many people have is whether in the next life believers will be able to recognize each other as the persons they knew and loved on earth. Since their names are acknowledged before God (Rev 3:5), it appears that individual identity is retained. The book of Revelation does not say more about this issue, although there is evidence in the rest of the NT that recognizable individuality will

Believers will share the New Jerusalem with angels. In the Old Testament, golden angels stood over the ark in Jerusalem, but the host of angels surrounding the throne of God was more a feature of heaven (e.g. 1 Kgs 22:19; Neh 9:6). It is fitting that angels are in the New Jerusalem, since it comprises both heaven and earth. Revelation mentions angels that stand at the gates of the New Jerusalem, and the city is shown to John by another angel, who calls himself a “fellow servant” to John and other human believers. The angels worship God together with the “great multitude” of the redeemed in Rev 7:10–11. Hebrews 1:14 says that angels minister to those who will inherit salvation, but the Bible generally says little about human relationships with angels, perhaps due to the human tendency to worship them (Col 2:18; Rev 19:10; 22:8).<sup>26</sup> The human relationship with angels can likely be explored and enjoyed properly in the New Jerusalem (cf. Heb 12:22; Rev 5:11; 7:10–11).

The fact that in the New Jerusalem there is no more curse (Rev 22:3) indicates a new relationship between humanity and nature. When Adam sinned, the ground was cursed, and no longer yielded food to humanity easily. With the curse gone, nature and people will be in harmony again.<sup>27</sup> The Temple in Jerusalem was decorated with nature motifs, such as palm trees, flowers, and lions (1 Kgs 6:29-35; 7:36). Birds found refuge at God’s altar (Ps 84:3-4). Pictures of the eschatological age and New Jerusalem in the book

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be retained. Believers are already part of the new creation even as they live in this age (1 Cor 5:17) and yet are still individuals, and their individual bodies will be resurrected (1 Thess 4:13–18). Moses and Elijah appeared from heaven to talk with Jesus, and were still recognized as individuals hundreds of years after their death (Luke 9:30–31). Individual identity will likely be necessary for the saints to enjoy the fellowship envisioned in Heb 12:23. For more argument in favour of continued personal identity after death, see Simon, *Heaven*, 216, and for a defence of the “eternal distinctness of each soul,” see Lewis, *Problem of Pain*, 135–42.

<sup>26</sup> For discussion of the issue of prohibition of worship of angels in first-century Judaism and Christianity, and specifically in the book of Revelation, see Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration*, esp. 51–103, 245–61.

<sup>27</sup> An example may be that the tree of life (in that trees belong to nature) provides monthly food and its leaves are for the healing of the nations (Rev 22:2).

of Isaiah also hint at a new harmony between people and animals (Isa 11:6–9; 65:25; cf. Hos 2:18; Rom 8:19-22).

In earthly life, most people find it difficult to balance all their relationships. This is partly because they are unable to concentrate on more than one thing at a time. When we are concentrating on tasks, or on relating to one person or group of people, we are not consciously relating to someone else.<sup>28</sup> Can anyone then have a perfect relationship with God and with other people at the same time? According to the Scripture, love of God is not incompatible with love of fellow saints. Instead, the one implies the other (e.g. 1 John 5:2). But if we conceive of love and communion as including a conscious concentration on the other, it is difficult to imagine how to fully obey both of the two great commandments mentioned by Jesus, which are to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and also to love our neighbours as ourselves (Mark 12:30-31). Perhaps part of the benefits of the new resurrection nature will be that the saints will be able to enjoy full conscious communion with God and with others simultaneously.

The New Jerusalem as a set of wonderful relationships reflects the Old Testament picture of Jerusalem as the place where God meets his people and the people and nations come together before him.

#### *A Condition*

Life in the New Jerusalem is different from life in this world. Revelation expresses many of these differences negatively, by saying what will *not* be there: death, tears, mourning, pain, night, and the sea. There will be no hunger or thirst or unpleasant

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<sup>28</sup> This is the dilemma expressed by MacDonald, *Diary of an Old Soul*, 21, entry for Feb 13: "Two things at once, thou know'st I cannot think / When busy with the work thou givest me, / I cannot consciously think then of thee. / Then why, when next thou lookest o'er the brink / Of my horizon, should my spirit shrink, / Reproached and fearful, nor to greet thee run? / Can I be two when I am only one?"

heat (Rev 7:16; cf. 2:7; 22:14, 17). There will be no more curse, and nothing impure will enter the city, although the gates will not be shut. There will be no more sun or moon or temple. What there is, instead, is God's unmediated presence, glory, and throne. Those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will enter the city and live in God's presence.

These statements imply that everyone in the New Jerusalem will have constant good health and abundant life and energy. They will always be joyful, comfortable and contented. They will be confirmed in holiness and therefore free from the pressures of temptation or guilt. They will also be free of any anxiety about the future because the wonderful conditions of the New Jerusalem will be permanent. People there will be free from loneliness, as they enjoy fellowship with God and the Lamb, and with the saints. In sum, they will experience all that the New Testament means by "eternal life." This is an extension of the theology of Jerusalem/Zion that depicts it as secure and prosperous.

### *An Active Life*

Although life in the New Jerusalem will be free of trouble, it will not be an inactive life. Believers will fulfil their two functions as priests and kings. All have the high-priestly privilege of serving in the Holy of Holies. What worship will be like there is not specified, though the earlier chapters of Revelation give us examples of worship songs and acclamations<sup>29</sup> which probably model both the worship the church is meant to have on earth, and what she will continue in the New Jerusalem. The worship activities will be a way for the saints to enjoy their close relationship to God. All believers will also have the kingly privilege of reigning with God. Some interpreters think this just means

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<sup>29</sup> The worship passages of Revelation are Rev 1:5-7; 4:8-11; 5:9-14; 7:9-12; 11:15-18; 14:2-3; 15:2-4; 16:5-7; 19:1-7; cf. 12:10-12. Worship is one of the most important themes in the book of Revelation.

they will participate in ruling the New Jerusalem, that is, all will have a share in organizing and regulating its life.<sup>30</sup> Certainly, the fact that the nations bring their glory into the city suggests that there will be a cultural life and scope for people to use their talents and gifts, in service to God, displaying the creativity that is part of being made in God's image (an image which is renewed in believers, according to Col 3:10; cf. Rom 8:29; 2 Cor 3:18). It may also be that God, being so powerful and creative, has other projects of which we know nothing, and perhaps believers will reign with him in these projects as well. Whatever the case, the pleasures of discovery and accomplishment will not be missing from the New Jerusalem. The description of the New Jerusalem's beauty also suggests that aesthetic senses will be satisfied. This aspect of the New Jerusalem draws on Jerusalem's traditional role as the royal, cultic and cultural centre of God's people.

#### *The Particularity of the Name Jerusalem/Zion*

Some people might feel it inappropriate to use the name of a particular city that belonged to a particular nation as the name for the final destination of all redeemed humanity. Is such particularity appropriate in the global Christian culture and pluralistic context in which we live? There is no way to obliterate the fact that, in the Bible, God's purpose for the world has been channeled historically through a particular nation. But just as Abraham was called to be a blessing to *all* nations (Gen 12:3), Jerusalem was chosen to be the joy of the whole earth (Ps 48:2; Lam 2:15; cf. Isa 62:7). The New Jerusalem of Revelation gives its light to all nations and welcomes their glory and honour (Rev 21:24,

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<sup>30</sup> E.g. Bauckham, *Theology*, 142.

26). People from every nation enjoy the kingly and high priestly status of its citizens (Rev 7:9, 15–17). For God, the particularity is a method to reach the universal.

The final state of believers is called “Jerusalem” in Revelation because it fulfils the theological themes introduced via Jerusalem in the Old Testament. In the New Jerusalem is found the throne of God and the Lamb, where God reigns as King. It is the ultimate place of fellowship between God and his people. It has complete security, prosperity, peace and happiness. It is the place where God’s people have loving fellowship among themselves. It is the place where people from every tribe and nation join in that fellowship to worship God and the Lamb. It is the Promised Land of Rest. It is the solution designed and provided by God, not humanity. It is made possible because humanity has been transformed by the gracious act of God.

#### *Motivated by the New Jerusalem*

The book of Revelation seeks to motivate believers in Jesus to persevere in faithful living and witness until death by showing the glorious future that awaits those who do so. In contrast to the disrepute, pain, poverty, and death that usually followed faithful witness for John’s readers, if they were faithful until death, they would be honoured citizens in their own city where there would be no more lack, pain, or death. They would be high priests and kings, having access to the very face of God. This meant they would enjoy full fellowship and communion with the highest personality of the universe.

Such a future was likely very attractive to John’s readers. And it may be attractive to Christians in all ages who are persecuted and killed for their faith in Christ. This may

be especially true for those in cultures where ascribed status is important, the so-called “shame based” cultures, where social honour is so deeply desired.<sup>31</sup>

But for Christians who suffer little or nothing for their stand for Christ, who live in individualistic cultures where social approval is less desired, who fear boredom more than martyrdom, can the vision of the New Jerusalem as described in Revelation be motivating? The testimony of many is that it can. They have emphasized the aspects of its joys that appeal to them most. For example, John Wesley longed for its sinless perfection;<sup>32</sup> Elizabeth Phelps and Rebecca Springer looked forward to reunion with family;<sup>33</sup> Billy Graham looks forward to meaningful work;<sup>34</sup> many who feel their isolation have looked forward to true intimacy with God himself.

At times, Christians have been carried away by what they most desire into unbalanced views of what their final state will be, overemphasizing the beatific vision at the expense of human fellowship, or vice versa. The vision of the New Jerusalem in Revelation brings them closer to reality. It is both God’s presence and a human community. It involves service as well as contemplation. No other biblical image expresses all that the final state will be so clearly as “Jerusalem.”

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<sup>31</sup> Social science critics maintain that the Mediterranean cultures of John’s day were such cultures. See e.g. Malina, “Honor and Shame in Luke–Acts,” and Malina, “Social-Scientific Methods,” 4–7.

<sup>32</sup> Wesley especially notes the fact that in the New Jerusalem there will be no more temptation to sin in “The New Creation,” *Works of John Wesley*, 6:295–96.

<sup>33</sup> Springer, *Intra Muros* and Phelps, *The Gates Ajar*.

<sup>34</sup> Graham, *Till Armageddon*, 207–19.



*Practising for the New Jerusalem*

What is the practical conclusion of this study for Christians? Since the place in which they will end their journey is the holy city, the New Jerusalem, it is both their duty and their privilege to begin to practise both its intimacies now.

Intimacy with God is the greatest good of the final state. People's cultivation of that intimacy here and now, through prayer, contemplation, study of the Scripture, and joyful service, introduces them to its joys. As they begin to acquire a taste for this kind of bliss, their eager anticipation of its fulfilment grows. This in turn strengthens their motivation to persevere in faith and love, and actually reach the New Jerusalem.

On the other hand, one cannot neglect the community of the saints. Here and now Christians must persevere in seeking and enhancing that community. The community of God's people in this world has its pains and disappointments. Yet no one has been more disappointed by this community than God himself. If he can keep on seeking it, making the ultimate sacrifice to perfect it, pouring out his love on it, and reaching out to expand it, who are his people to withdraw? They must persevere with it, glimpsing in its limited blessings the fuller joys of fellowship in the great City to which they are travelling.

The church as a whole should also be guided by the two great intimacies modelled in the New Jerusalem. Sometimes there is tension in churches between a focus on worship of God and a focus on fellowship with each other and meeting each other's needs. Neither of these should be neglected. If the church is true to the destiny God has prepared for her, she must find a way to pay full attention to both these aspects of church life.

### *Conclusion*

The New Jerusalem as depicted in the book of Revelation encompasses important ideas about the final state of believers. It is a real future experience. Its attractions include peace and plenty, harmony with the rest of creation (natural and angelic), reunion with loved ones, fellowship with the saints of all ages, and meaningful activity with rest from burdensome toil. But its supreme joy is unmediated communion with God and the Lamb. All of these characteristics are related to the theology of Jerusalem/Zion. Historically, Christians have found it difficult to keep a balance among all these aspects. Their situations and needs, or the ideas of their times, have attracted them to some aspects of the New Jerusalem more than others, sometimes to the point of falsifying the overall picture. When the book of Revelation is used as authoritative Scripture, meditating on the biblical picture of the New Jerusalem and embracing it is the corrective for this imbalance. It will help believers to act rightly in this life: to bear trials with fortitude, treat creation responsibly, pursue loving attitudes and action toward other people, use their abilities diligently under God, and seek an intimacy with God that will prepare them to enjoy that closer communion with God in the New Jerusalem to the full.

The biblical revelation gives the name “New Jerusalem” to the final state of believers. Antecedent Jerusalem theology in the Christian Scriptures makes Jerusalem a good image to carry the full import of the many aspects of the final state. Perhaps most importantly, Jerusalem as a city, as a human community, is the corrective for views that place all emphasis on the constant vision and worship of God to the exclusion of community, and Jerusalem as the place of God’s presence is the corrective for views that

overemphasize the continuation of earthly relationships and customs and neglect the relationship with God. Sharkey puts it well: “These two interpretations of the New Jerusalem are interdependent and complementary: the New Jerusalem as locus of God’s presence emphasizes *God* with his people; the New Jerusalem as the eschatological community stresses the *people* with its God.”<sup>35</sup> The Bible has no other image that so well integrates God and community. Jerusalem, with its dual nature, is a very appropriate name for the final state of God’s people.

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<sup>35</sup> Sharkey, “Heavenly Jerusalem,” 287. Emphases hers.

## CONCLUSION

### *Summary of the Argument*

At the beginning of this work, I set out to demonstrate that the theology of Jerusalem/Zion in the Old Testament informs the content of the term “New Jerusalem” to give us a clearer picture of the nature of the final state of the redeemed in Rev 21–22. This has been attempted by addressing material relevant to the five aims of the dissertation stated in the Introduction.

*1. Discover the sources of New Jerusalem theology in Old Testament Jerusalem/Zion theology.*

Chapter 1 addressed this issue by investigating the material on Jerusalem/Zion in four blocks of material: the Pentateuch, the Historical Books, the Psalms and the Prophets.

The material in the Pentateuch is interpreted by further canonical writings (as well as Second Temple materials) as referring to Jerusalem as a place to worship God even in the time of Abraham. Melchizedek served there (Salem; Gen 14:18; cf. Ps 76:2) as a priest of YHWH. Abraham paid tithes there and was blessed by Melchizedek. Abraham was directed to what later became the Jerusalem Temple site to sacrifice Isaac (Gen 22:2; cf. 2 Chron 3:1) but God saw his devotion and provided a sacrifice to substitute for Isaac. This introduced the idea of Jerusalem as a place to meet God, offer sacrifice and find provision. When the Israelites had crossed the sea out of Egypt, they sang of the

mountain of God's inheritance and a sanctuary there that God had built for himself to which he was leading the Israelites. This introduced the idea that God's mountain and sanctuary pre-existed the entrance of Israel into the Promised Land and that these were the goal of the Exodus. Finally, Deuteronomy spoke of a place in the Land where God would choose "to put his Name," the place to which there would be annual pilgrimages of God's people and where all sacrifice and worship should be performed. This material in the Pentateuch prepared the way for the introduction of Jerusalem/Zion as the place God chose, where worship and sacrifice should be done, and which represented the destination or goal of God's people in their approach to YHWH.

The Historical Books tell how this worked out in history. The Israelites entered Canaan and had various temporary worship sites where the Tabernacle, altar or ark were located, but it was not until Jerusalem was conquered and the ark was brought there in the time of David that all the Pentateuchal hints about the central place came together. God's choice of Zion was closely linked to his choice of David as Israel's king and his promise to give David a perpetual dynasty. While David and Solomon obeyed God, Jerusalem prospered and expanded. The land of which it was the capital grew to include the territory of several surrounding nations. But after Solomon started to worship other gods, the kingdom was divided. Jerusalem's territory was drastically reduced. Although, in God's grace, David's line continued to reign in Jerusalem for many generations (1 Kgs 11:36; 15:3-4; 2 Kgs 8:19; 19:34; 20:6), Jerusalem suffered the indignities of defeat, damage and paying tribute to foreigners (e.g. 2 Kgs 12:17-18; 14:13-14). The biblical writers attribute this to the sins of the nation and the kings (2 Kgs 12:3; 14:4; 15:4, 35; 23:26-27). Two incidents are recorded in which kings trusted God when attacked, and God

delivered the city (under Jehoshaphat: 2 Chron 20; under Hezekiah: 2 Kings 18–19; 2 Chron 32; cf. Isa 36–37). But finally, the sins of Manasseh and of the nation as a whole led to God abandoning the city and allowing it and the Temple to be destroyed, and the people carried into exile (2 Kgs 24:20; 25; 2 Chron 36). Chronicles ends on a hopeful note: Cyrus has decreed the rebuilding of the Temple. In Ezra-Nehemiah, the Temple is rebuilt, and then the city. The celebration for completion of the city walls is greater than for the Temple (Ezra 6:16–18; cf. Neh 12:27–47). This signals an increasing tendency to view the city as the larger sanctuary. Nevertheless, the book of Nehemiah ends with Nehemiah still struggling to get the inhabitants of Jerusalem to obey God's law. Disobedience is viewed as the cause of Jerusalem's first destruction, and it threatens the rebuilt city (Neh 13:18). Thus the Historical Books show that the Jerusalem/Zion established in the history of Israel met only a few of the ideals foreshadowed in the Pentateuch. The Historical Books finish with the future of Jerusalem still somewhat in doubt.

The Psalms, for the most part, depict an ideal Zion modelled in some respects after the holy mountains of Canaanite lore. God established this place (Ps 87:1–2a), where he dwells (Ps 132:13; cf. 68:16), and is enthroned (Ps 9:11), and from which he rules the world (Ps 68:29; 99:1–5). Zion is inviolable (Ps 48:3–8; 125:1; 76:3; 87:5; 132:13–18) and glorious (Ps 26:8; 27:4; 48:9; 50:2; 76:4; 84:1; 87:3; 102:16; 132:14). From Zion help comes to God's people (Ps 9:4, 9–10; 68:5; 146:7–9), and to Zion they go on pilgrimage to worship and meet with God (Pss 84, 122). Since Zion provides access to God, who is the source of all that is good, Zion is their joy and delight (Ps 9:14; 27:6; 48:2; 136:16; 137:6). A few Psalms, however, lament the same destruction of

Jerusalem and the Temple reflected in the Historical Books (Pss 74; 79; 102; 137). The laments betray a feeling that such an event is an anomaly. Surely God will have to redress the dishonour to his name and the grief of his chosen people by re-establishing Zion.

The prophets provide a synthesis of all this Jerusalem/Zion material. Firmly rooted in the history described in the Historical Books, they realistically observe the sins of Jerusalem and predict doom and destruction for the city (e.g. Isa 29:1–4; Jer 7:14–15; Mic 3:9–12). Even the post-exilic prophets tie their views of Jerusalem’s fortunes to the behaviour of her inhabitants. But they also believe in the ideal Zion foreshadowed in the Pentateuch and described in the Psalms (e.g. Isa 2:2; Mic 4:1–5; cf. Ezek 40:2; 47:1–12; Zech 13:1; 14:8). They predict an eschatological glorious future for the city that matches the glowing picture in the Pentateuch and Psalms (e.g. Isa 29:5–8; Mic 4:1–4). The picture includes cleansing the inhabitants from the sins that attract judgment (Isa 54:13; Jer 24:7; 31:31–34; Ezek 11:19–20; 16:60; 36:25–29; 37:23–26; Zech 12:10–14). The future they predict for Jerusalem goes far beyond what was actually achieved in the return from exile. This leaves an “eschatological excess”<sup>1</sup> available for further writers, including the authors of the New Testament, to exploit.

Key concepts in the Old Testament materials about Jerusalem/Zion include: it is the place where God dwells and where he can be accessed and from which he dispenses justice, help and provision, ideally it is high, glorious and inviolable, though due to human sin it is vulnerable; it is connected to the Davidic kings as the seat of their rule; and it is the focus of the human community that worships God. The prophets promise that

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<sup>1</sup> “Eschatological excess” is a term used by Richard Bauckham to explain how much of the material in the book of Revelation exceeded any first or second-century historical events, leaving many of the predictions yet to be fulfilled in the eschaton (Bauckham, *Theology*, 152–54).

though the ideal has not been realized in history, it will be realized in the latter days through God's act of purifying and transforming the human nature of the community.

*2. Investigate how developments in the Jerusalem/Zion theology of non-canonical Second Temple Jewish literature act as a lens for the interpretation of the Old Testament view of Jerusalem used in the picture of the New Jerusalem in Revelation.*

This literature expands the hints in the Old Testament about a pre-Davidic history of Zion by saying that God established Zion right at the creation as the place for contact between himself and humanity (e.g. *T. Mos.* 1:17–18; *3 Macc.* 2:9; *4 Ezra* 10:45–46; 4Q380 1 I). Jerusalem is identified as the location of the Garden of Eden (*1 En.* 26:1–2), and Adam, when driven from the Garden is pictured as living and praying on Mount Zion, as is Enoch (e.g. *Apoc. Mos.* 5:3; *Vita* 30:2; *2 En.* 68:5; 72:6). Salem and Moriah connected with Abraham are clearly identified as Jerusalem (Josephus, *Ant.* 7:333; 1QapGen XXII,13; *Jub.* 18:13). David's role in conquering Jerusalem is downplayed (e.g. *T. Mos.* 2:4), and Solomon fulfils what David planned (e.g. *4 Ezra* 10:46). In this and some other accounts, the Temple and city almost seem to merge. As in the Old Testament, Jerusalem is the only authorized place of worship (4Q372; *Tob* 1:4–7; 5:13), and the city is delivered from Sennacherib because of their faith (*Sir* 48:18). Some materials have traditions about the preservation of the Temple furniture and the need for divine permission to destroy the city at the time of the Babylonian conquest (*2 Macc* 2:4–8; Eupolemus, in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.39.2–5; *Liv. Pro.* 2:11–12; *4 Bar.* 1:9–10; 3:1–11, 17–20; 4:4; *2 Bar.* 6–8; 80:2; cf. *L.A.B.* 26:13). Others agree that the Temple and ark were captured and destroyed (*4 Ezra* 10:22; *T. Mos.* 3:2). Yet the Temple site is pictured



as still a place to meet God even after the destruction (Bar 1:1–10; 2:20–24; 2 Bar. 10:4; 34:1; 35:1).

Some materials paint a positive picture of Jerusalem restored after the exile (e.g. *Let. Aris.* 83–120; *3 Macc.*), while others are dissatisfied with its impurity (e.g. *1 En.* 89:73–74; *T. Levi* 17:11). However, Jerusalem is always seen to have cosmic importance. There is a heavenly city, sometimes called “Jerusalem,” to which saints go after this life (*T. Ab.* 2:6; *Apoc. Zeph.* 5:3; *4 Bar.* 5:35; *2 En.* 55:2). The heavenly Jerusalem is the true Jerusalem (*2 Bar.* 4:2–7). Jerusalem is supremely the place of prayer and worship (*Apoc. Ab.* 25:4; *T. Mos.* 1:18). Jerusalem has an important role to play in most of the eschatological scenarios of Second Temple literature (e.g. *1 En.* 90–91; *4 Ezra* 13:36; *Sib. Or.* 5:243–73; *2 Bar.* 32:2–4; *Jub.* 1:27–28; *T. Dan* 5:12–13; 4Q554–5; 5Q15; 1Q32; 2Q232; 11Q18).

The New Testament authors, therefore, worked in an environment where Jerusalem was identified with Eden, was supremely the place to meet God, existed as the true prototype in heaven, and was to be involved in the world’s final events.

*3. Demonstrate how Jerusalem/Zion theology is developed in the New Testament in the light of the coming of Jesus as Messiah.*

In the Gospels, the earthly city of Jerusalem forfeits its link with the glorious eschatological city of the prophets by its rejection of Jesus (e.g. Luke 13:34–35; 19:41). Instead, it falls into the old pattern of sinful Jerusalem denounced by the prophets (Luke 21:22). The prophets saw a continuity between the sinful city and the future glorious one. But in the New Testament, there is a dividing of the ways. The Old Testament prophecies of the restoration of Zion and the Temple are applied to the resurrection of Jesus (e.g.

John 2: 21; 12:32), the formation of the church (Acts 15:14–18; Heb 12:22), and the heavenly hope of believers in Jesus (e.g. Gal 4:26; Heb 13:14). Earthly Jerusalem is no longer necessary for worship (John 4:21). Instead, earthly Jerusalem is going to be destroyed (Luke 19:41–44). Zion theology is applied to Jesus and to the church and its glorious eschatological future.

The Gospels show Jesus giving an opportunity to Jerusalem to receive her King and accept his purifying work (Matt 21:1–17 par). But these overtures are rejected (Matt 21:15, 23; Luke 13:34). Jesus then predicts divine abandonment (Matt 23:37–39; Luke 13:35) and destruction (Matt 24:1–2; Mark 13:2–4; Luke 19:43–44) of the Temple and city. Jesus is depicted as the new locus of God's presence with his people (Matt 1:22; 18:20; 28:20), the object of the pilgrimage of the nations (Matt 28:19; John 12:31), and his resurrection inaugurates the restoration of Israel and Jerusalem (Matt 26:61; John 2:19–21).

In Acts, the gospel starts from Jerusalem, and a remnant there believe (Acts 2:38–41). But as the Jerusalem leaders stir up persecution (Acts 8:1, 4; 11:19–21), the believers are scattered. When Paul begins to evangelize, he makes his headquarters in Antioch, and finally, being rejected by the city, moves on to Rome, never to return to Jerusalem.

Paul's letters are remarkable for the way they replace the Old Testament Land theme with justification in Christ (e.g. Gal 3). Believers have their citizenship in heaven (Phil 3:20) and their mother is the heavenly Jerusalem (Gal 4:26). The deliverer will come *from* Zion to bring the Jews to faith in Jesus (Rom 11:26)

The author of Hebrews shows Jesus bringing his people to a better heavenly Jerusalem (Heb 12:22) because the earthly one was not the real “rest” promised by God (Heb 11:39).

Chapters 1 to 20 of the book of Revelation continue in this tradition, by showing current Jerusalem/Zion as the church on earth that has its true home in heaven.

*4. Investigate what the book of Revelation teaches regarding the New Jerusalem, taking into account the Jerusalem/Zion theological antecedents.*

The author of Revelation paints a picture of the New Jerusalem taken mainly from the glorious-future-of-Zion scenarios of the Old Testament prophets. The New Jerusalem is the new heaven and earth of Isaiah 65. It is both the dwelling place of God and the location of the human community. It contains numerous intimations of intimacy with God: the images of bride and husband, parent and child, walls and gates, and the Holy of Holies; use of the covenant formula; and details such as the absence of the curse and the location of the throne in the city so that God’s servants see his face. It shows the New Jerusalem as a community, just as Jerusalem in the Old Testament was under the Sinai covenant that included large emphasis on care of the neighbour. The New Jerusalem is full of images of life, including the tree of life, the river of life, the book of life, and light. All of these images have Old Testament links to Jerusalem/Zion. The New Jerusalem’s security is depicted by it being on a high mountain, having strong walls, and the absence of the sea. Old Testament Jerusalem is a model of the New Jerusalem in that they are both the place of God’s holy presence, the seat of God’s rule, and the place of his community. That the Bible closes with the book of Revelation and its picture of the New Jerusalem gives a sense that Jerusalem has been God’s goal all along. The rest of the

New Testament emphasizes that the whole point of being a Christian is to have blessed access to God, and that God has had a plan to be together with redeemed humanity “from the foundation of the world.” Jerusalem in the Old Testament was a type of that plan, and the New Jerusalem is its fulfilment.

The prophets had already synthesized material on Jerusalem as a sinful human city and Zion as God’s cosmic mountain to posit that historical Zion that was potentially ideal but actually sinful would be transformed into one that was actually ideal because its potential for sin would be removed. Merging together the ideal Zion of the future, the ideal Paradise of the past (Eden) and the ideals of the historic Temple and early monarchy, Revelation depicts a Zion that is the ultimate place of intimacy with God. It is also the ideal “city” or community of God’s people. Its king is the one in whom God as King and the line of David merge. Its people are the redeemed from every age and nation. It is pure, secure, glorious and joyful. God’s ancient desire and plan for uniting humanity with each other and with himself has been achieved.

*5. Suggest how the theology of the New Jerusalem in Revelation can contribute to a biblical theology of the final state of believers in Jesus.*

Chapter 5 points out some aspects of a theology of the final state of the saints that can be gleaned from Revelation’s portrait of the New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem is more than a literary image. It is a community and a future condition. Although people in this world may not be able to imagine what it will be like spatially, its continuity with earthly Jerusalem leads us to expect that it is a community with a set of relationships. Revelation depicts relationships of people especially with God and with each other, but also with angels and with nature. The saints will experience a condition of comfort, joy

and peace, and will engage in fruitful activity. The use of the name “Jerusalem” for this reality is not meant to privilege any ethnic group or period of history, but to encompass them all in God’s cosmic plan. This chapter closed by discussing how Revelation’s picture of the New Jerusalem can motivate believers in Jesus, and how they can and should start right now practicing the two main intimacies of the New Jerusalem, that is, with God and with fellow believers.

### *Suggestions for Further Study*

The next step, I think, is to examine various Christian expressions of the final state and measure them by Revelation’s picture of the New Jerusalem. Most systematic theologies have a section about the life to come, and there is a wealth of popular material to be engaged.

Peter Stockmeier contends that the meagre biblical statements about heaven limit “subjective projections” of heaven to some extent, but they are often supplemented according to the spirit of the age.<sup>2</sup> Early Christians took the reality of heaven as a “place” for granted because they bought into the ancient cosmology that saw the cosmos divided into three places: heaven, earth and the underworld.<sup>3</sup> When times were hard for believers, heaven was valued as a compensation for “joys foregone in earthy life,” so was seen as fairly material.<sup>4</sup> Augustine was influenced by Hellenistic philosophical models that downplayed the material and emphasized unity in the universe. He therefore emphasized

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<sup>2</sup> Stockmeier, “‘Models’ of Heaven,” 43. Simon, *Heaven*, 34–35, notes that theologians like Schleiermacher and his successors have been so influenced by the secular spirit of their age that they ignored the promise of heaven completely and leave it out of their theologies.

<sup>3</sup> Stockmeier, “‘Models’ of Heaven,” 44.

<sup>4</sup> Stockmeier, “‘Models’ of Heaven,” 46.

that in heaven the saints “reach their fulfilment in the vision and apprehension of God.”<sup>5</sup> Yet to Augustine, the city of the blessed was also a true community.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, heaven as a city, which, to many, implied a hierarchy of authority, was used by the Roman Catholic Church to justify church hierarchy, the papacy, and the transfer of much heaven symbolism to the city of Rome (and images of Rome to heaven).<sup>7</sup> Heaven was also pictured as an academy, where perfect knowledge would be attained, and as paradise, where individuals were rewarded with pleasures according to their good deeds. Stockmeier notes that Dante gave a more effective vision of heaven to the middle ages than the theologians.<sup>8</sup> One might note the similar influence of Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and C. S. Lewis’s novels and essays on the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Stockmeier’s analysis points out the two poles in Christian views of heaven. One pole emphasizes communion with God to the exclusion of “material” elements and sometimes even human community. The other emphasizes human relationships and maintenance or improvement of the status quo of earthly life while reducing emphasis on communion with God. Along the way, Stockmeier has also pointed out the large influence of imaginative literature in shaping Christians’ ideas about heaven.

Alister McGrath in *A Brief History of Heaven* discusses the views and influence of catechetical writers like Augustine, Baxter, and C. S. Lewis, and creative writers like Dante, Bunyan, Milton, Elizabeth Phelps and C. S. Lewis, among others. To this list

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<sup>5</sup> Stockmeier, “‘Models’ of Heaven,” 47.

<sup>6</sup> Stockmeier, “‘Models’ of Heaven,” 48. Jelinek, “City Metaphor,” 50, says that Augustine was more influenced by Platonism and asceticism in his early writings, but later “gave more attention to the body and relationships with others in heaven, including the semi-spiritual nature of the resurrection body.” This impression is confirmed by what he says in *Confessions* X (trans. Sneed, 165) written in 397, compared with later reflection in the *City of God*, 22:30, written around 427 (trans. Bettenson, 1088).

<sup>7</sup> Stockmeier, “‘Models’ of Heaven,” 49.

<sup>8</sup> Stockmeier, “‘Models’ of Heaven,” 50–51.

could be added Rebecca Springer (*Intra Muros*), Billy Graham, and writers of popular accounts of near death experiences and visits to heaven. Hymns and other kinds of Christian songs also express popular views of heaven and the final state. For those to whom the Christian canon is authoritative revelation, the biblical picture of heaven has an authority and truthfulness that surpasses current cultural tastes and aspirations. The findings of biblical theology need to be used to evaluate popular expressions and create new ones.

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