

Psalm 48 — “The Beauty & Protection of Zion — The City Of Our God”

Whoever did not see Jerusalem in her glory has never seen a beautiful city. (Talmud)

Ten measures of beauty descended to the world, Jerusalem took nine (Talmud)

- God Himself calls Jerusalem “My City” (Isa 45:13), My Holy Mountain (Ps 2.6), and “the Apple of His Eye” (Zech 2.8)

Background to Psalm 48

- Psalm 48 centers on the Glory of “OUR GOD” (bracketed; v.1,1 4) & who is faithful to ZION.

Hermeneutic, Interpretation and Authorial Intent:

- Perhaps its provenance (=what gave rise to the writing of Ps 48) was a wonderful deliverance of old —> but there’s something forward looking here - way beyond anything of the *past*; it looks *ahead* prophetically to the *future* earthly Kingdom when Jesus has returned to earth and reigns from Zion for 1,000 years.
 - **Note the language of the text:** v.2 = Zion is the joy of the “whole earth” & v.10 = so is your praise to the ends of the earth.

THESIS — As we study this psalm together, let’s gaze upon the beauty & protection of ZION, the city of our God in **3 lessons derived out of the text:**

1. Celebrate God’s Greatness in Zion (1-3)
2. Contemplate God’s Protection of Zion (4-8)
3. Communicate God’s Covenant amidst Zion (9-14)

I. Celebrate God’s Greatness in Zion (1-3)**II. Contemplate God’s Protection of Zion (4-8)**

Protection PROCLAIMED

Protection PICTURED

Protection PERMANENT

III. Communicate God’s Covenant Amidst Zion (9-14)

*****But why all this talk and theology about Zion?***

A “mini-biblical-theology” of ZION/JERUSALEM —

✓ Zechariah 1.14 = Thus says the LORD - I am exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem and Zion

PSALMS —

Psalm 78:68 (Psalm 132:13-18)

PROPHETS —

Daniel 9:24

Obadiah 17, 21

Micah 4:2, 7

Zechariah 2:4-12

Zechariah 8:1-2, 20-22

Zechariah 12:8

Zechariah 14:8-11

ISAIAH - the Jerusalem Prophet

Isaiah 2:3

Isaiah 11:9

Isaiah 18:7

Isaiah 52:1-8

Isaiah 60:1-9

Isaiah 62:1-7

Isaiah 65:11, 18-19

Isaiah 65:25

Isaiah 66:10-20

Psalms 47-48 are also Messianic Psalms that tell of the rejoicing and praise that will erupt on the earth once God’s King, Jesus, reigns for a thousand years over the peoples of the earth from Zion....Psalm 48:1-3 leaves us with no doubt as to the place where God’s King, Jesus, will rule over the kingdoms of this world...God’s King will surely rule the world from a gloriously restored Israel and Jerusalem will not only be its capital, but also that of the entire world. (Jonathan Brentner)

The Millennial Kingdom

The CITY of the Kingdom (Jerusalem)

Why believe in a future, 1,000 year earthly millennial kingdom?

- Without the millennium, God loses the battle in history.
 - Without the millennium, history has no climax.
 - Without the millennium, God would break His land-promise to Abraham (unconditional)
 - Without the millennium, God would break the Throne promise to David (unconditional)
- Only premillennialism employs a consistent, literal, straightforward, and clear hermeneutic!

Primary Texts: Isaiah 2:1-4; 33:20-24; 35:1-10; Isaiah 62; 65:18-25; Zechariah 8:1-23; 14:1-11

Key Point #1—Jerusalem will become the most important/prominent (and elevated!) city in the world.

- Ezekiel 48:35; Zechariah 8:2-3; Micah 4:7

Key Point #2—GENERAL FEATURES OF JERUSALEM (in the kingdom)

- Jerusalem will be the center of the millennial earth (Isa 2.2-4; Jer 31.6; Micah 4.1; Zechariah 2.10-11)
- Jerusalem will be the center of the Kingdom rule (Ezekiel 43.5-6; Joel 3.17; Micah 4.7)
- Jerusalem will be a glorious city, bringing honor unto the LORD (Isa 62; 61.3; Joel 3.17)
- Jerusalem will be protected by the power of the King (Isa 14:32; 25.4; 26.1-4; 33.20-24)
- Jerusalem will be greatly enlarged over its former/present area (Ezekiel 48:30-35; Zech 14:10)
- Jerusalem will be accessible to ALL in that day (Isa 35:8-9)
- Jerusalem will become the center of the worship of the whole world, for all 1000 yrs (Zech 8:8, 20-23)
- Jerusalem will endure forever (Isa 9:7; 33:20-21; Joel 3:19-21)

Key Text #1: Isaiah 62— clearly the focus is on the "city" - v.1, 6, 7, 11, 12 ("city"! [Jerusalem = Zion])

★ **ZION'S COMING BEAUTY [=Jerusalem]**

- widespread** (2a) & **distinguished** (new name; 2b) & **God-graced** (3) & **Delighted** (4-5)
- Isaiah 62:4-5 - restoration of Jerusalem is described as a **joyful union** — like a Marriage

Key Text #2: Isaiah 35 — The Joy of Zion - a world of joy, peace & prosperity: Jesus reigns on Earth.

Zion/Jerusalem will specially be marked by...

- Beauty and restoration of Creation, Agriculture (1)
- Saints will see the glory & majesty of God! (2b)
- Physical infirmities will be eliminated (5-6)
- Widespread holiness and obedience (8)
- Protection, Security and Peace (9)
- A great restoration & return to Zion (10a)
- Exceeding gladness and joy (10b)

Key Text #3: Isaiah 62:1 - What do we do?

- ➔ We long for Jerusalem to be restored.
- ➔ We long for true righteousness to shine!
- ➔ We long for God's salvation to radiate brightly!

GLORIOUS THINGS OF THEE ARE SPOKEN

Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God.

He whose Word cannot be broken
formed thee for His own abode.

On the Rock of Ages founded,
what can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
thou may'st smile at all thy foes.

See, the streams of living waters,
springing from eternal love,
well supply thy sons and daughters
and all fear of want remove.

Who can faint while such a river
ever flows their thirst to assuage?
Grace, which like the Lord, the Giver,
never fails from age to age.

Blest the citizens of Zion,
Washed in the Redeemer's blood;
Jesus, whom their souls rely on,
Makes them kings and priests to God.
'Tis His love His people raises
Over self to reign as kings:
And as priests, His worthy praises,
Each his thankful offering brings.

Savior, since of Zion's city
I through grace a member am,
let the world deride or pity,
I will glory in Thy name.
Fading is the worldling's pleasures,
all his boasted pomp and show;
solid joys and lasting treasures
none but Zion's children know.

THE KING IN ALL HIS BEAUTY

O lift your eyes to heaven, see
The Holy One eternal
Behold the Lord of majesty
Exalted in His temple
As symphonies of angels praise
Now strain to sound His glory
Come worship, fall before His grace
The King in all His beauty

*How worthy, how worthy, how worthy
The King in all His beauty*

Now see the King who wears a crown
One made of shame and splinters
The sacrifice for ruined man
The substitute for sinners
As earth is stained with royal blood
And quakes with love and fury
He breathes His last and bows His head
The King in all His beauty

Now see the Savior lifted up
The Lamb who reigns in splendor
The hope of every tribe and tongue
His kingdom is forever!
Bring praise and honor to His courts
Bring wisdom, power, blessing
For endless ages we'll adore
The King in all His beauty

"Jerusalem's destiny was ordained nearly 5,000 years ago (3,000BC) when a small number of families decided to settle on the lowest of the Jerusalem hills. They chose this hill because of the abundant water flowing beneath it—the Gihon Spring—and the nearby fertile valleys and beautiful ridges for planting vineyards, which ensured sustenance. In time, the hill would become known as the City of David."

—Meir Ben-Dov, *Historical Atlas of Jerusalem*, xiii