

# Psalm 125

JULY 20, 2022

# An outline

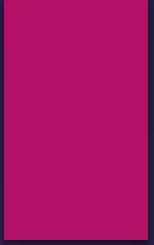
- ▶ 1. peace
  - ▶ 2. blessing
    - ▶ 3. enmity (monstrous imperial enemies in Daniel)
    - ▶ 4. blessing
  - ▶ 5. peace (even with nearby enemies)

- ▶ Psalm 125. A Song of Ascents.
- ▶ <sup>1</sup>Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever.
  - ▶ <sup>2</sup>As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds his people, from this time forth and forevermore.
    - ▶ <sup>3</sup>For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest on the land allotted to the righteous, lest the righteous stretch out their hands to do wrong.
    - ▶ <sup>4</sup>Do good, O LORD, to those who are good, and to those who are upright in their hearts!
- ▶ <sup>5</sup>But those who turn aside to their crooked ways the LORD will lead away with evildoers! Peace be upon Israel!

# A song of ascents

## HEADER

(part of Biblical text): possibly collected after the Exile for the three annual feasts in Jerusalem as they ascended toward Mount Zion



⇒ Those who trust in the LORD are  
like Mount Zion,  
⇒ which cannot be moved, but  
abides forever.

VERSE 1

An aerial, top-down view of an ancient city built on a hillside. The city is enclosed by a thick stone wall and contains numerous small, rectangular buildings with flat roofs. The surrounding landscape is terraced, with fields and paths visible. The overall color palette is muted, with earthy tones of brown, tan, and green. A solid magenta square is located in the top right corner of the image.

# Mt. Zion

IN THE CITY OF DAVID

Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever.

- ▶ Habakkuk 2:4: Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but **the righteous shall live by his faith.**
- ▶ Romans 1:16–17: For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. <sup>17</sup>For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “**The righteous shall live by faith.**”
- ▶ Galatians 3:11: Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “**The righteous shall live by faith.**”
- ▶ Hebrews 10:38: but **my righteous one shall live by faith**, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.”


Those who trust in **the LORD** are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever.

- ▶ Promise to **Moses**: “The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. ... The LORD spoke with you face to face at the mountain, out of the midst of the fire”
- ▶ Promises to **Patriarchs**: “I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.”
- ▶ Promise to **David**: “I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, ... and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”
- ▶ Promise in **Prophets**: “I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”



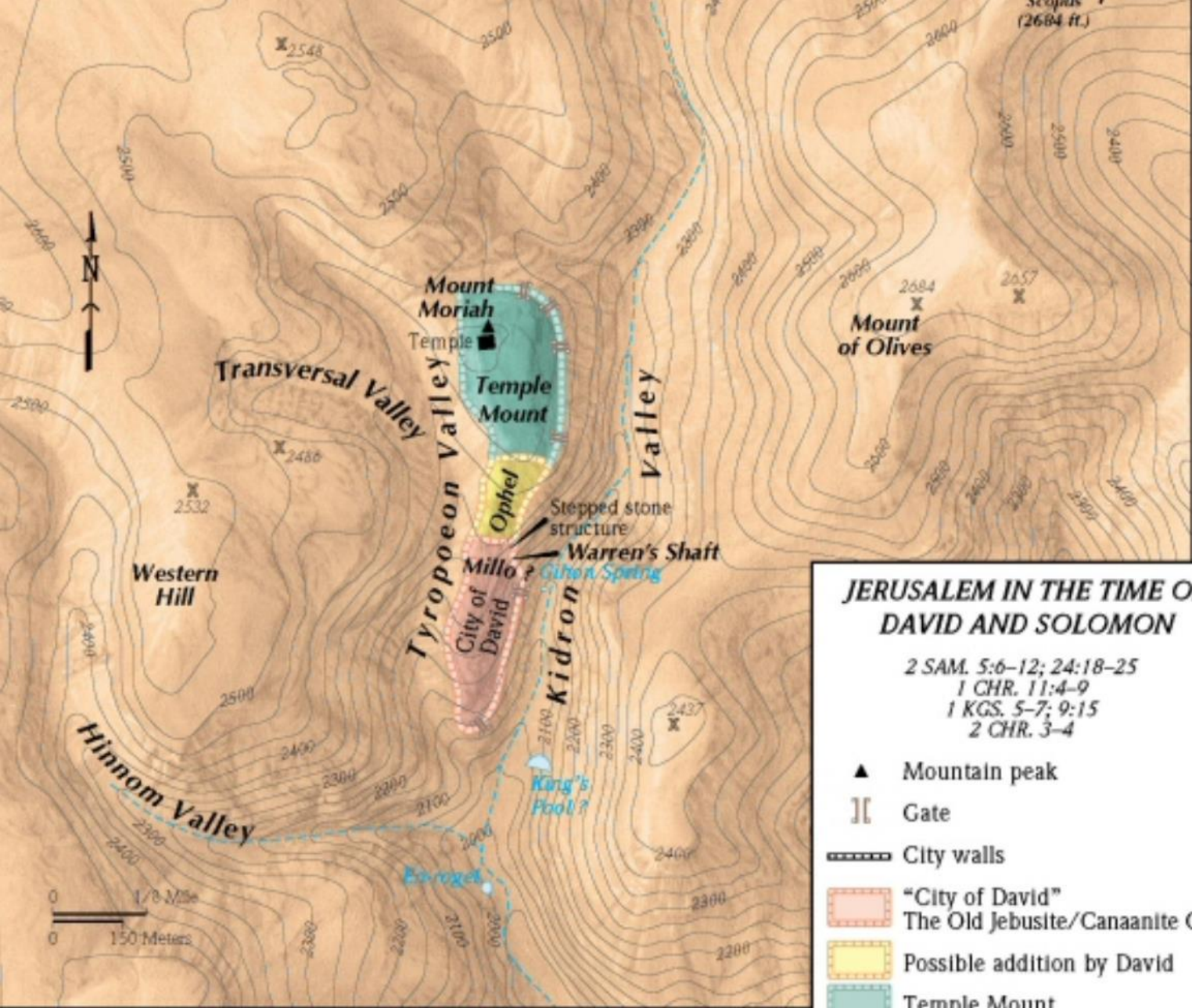
Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion,  
which cannot be moved, but abides forever.

- ▶ “...**false trust** in Zion ... The psalmist is not advocating such false trust. He is actually looking beyond Jerusalem to the Lord, who alone truly endures forever.” (Boice)
- ▶ Hebrews 12:22: But you have come to **Mount Zion** and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering ...
- ▶ Jebus conquered by David and Joab
- ▶ Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Jerusalem



⇒ As the mountains surround  
Jerusalem,  
⇒ so the LORD surrounds his people,  
from this time forth and  
forevermore.

VERSE 2



**JERUSALEM IN THE TIME OF DAVID AND SOLOMON**

2 SAM. 5:6-12; 24:18-25  
 1 CHR. 11:4-9  
 1 KGS. 5-7; 9:15  
 2 CHR. 3-4

- ▲ Mountain peak
- || Gate
- City walls
- ▭ "City of David"  
The Old Jebusite/Canaanite City
- ▭ Possible addition by David
- ▭ Temple Mount
- x Spot elevation
- ~2400~ Contour interval = 33ft. (10m)

# Surrounding Mountains

MOUNT SCOPUS (LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN)

MOUNT OLIVET

MOUNT OF CORRUPTION

MOUNT OPHEL

MOUNT ZION (ORIGINAL, TEMPLE MOUNT)

NEW MOUNT ZION

ANTONIA FORTRESS HILL



Level of the  
Mediterranean Sea  
0 ft

Level of  
Dead Sea  
-1,302 ft

Mt. Zion  
2,540 ft

Mt. Moriah  
2,440 ft

Mt. of Olives  
2,660 ft

Mt. Gerizim  
2,849 ft

Mt. Ebal  
3,077 ft

Mt. Gilboa  
1,648 ft

Mt. Tabor  
1,930 ft

9,232 ft

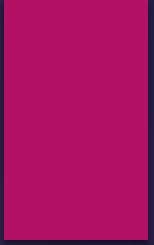
# Surrounding Mountains

As the mountains surround Jerusalem,  
so the LORD surrounds his people,  
from this time forth and forevermore.

- ▶ Deuteronomy 33:27: The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms....
- ▶ Psalm 34:7: The angel of the LORD **encamps around** those who fear him, and delivers them.
- ▶ 2 Kings 6:17: Then Elisha prayed and said, “O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see.” So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the **mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire** all around Elisha.

As the mountains surround Jerusalem,  
so the LORD surrounds his people,  
from this time forth and forevermore.

- ▶ Isaiah 4:5: Then the LORD will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, and smoke and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory there will be a canopy.
- ▶ Zechariah 2:5: And I will be to her a **wall of fire all around**, declares the LORD, and I will be the glory in her midst.' "
- ▶ John 10:28–29: I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.



⇒ For the scepter of wickedness  
shall not rest on the land allotted  
to the righteous,  
⇒ lest the righteous stretch out  
their hands to do wrong.

VERSE 3

# scepter

SYMBOL OF POWER AND AUTHORITY

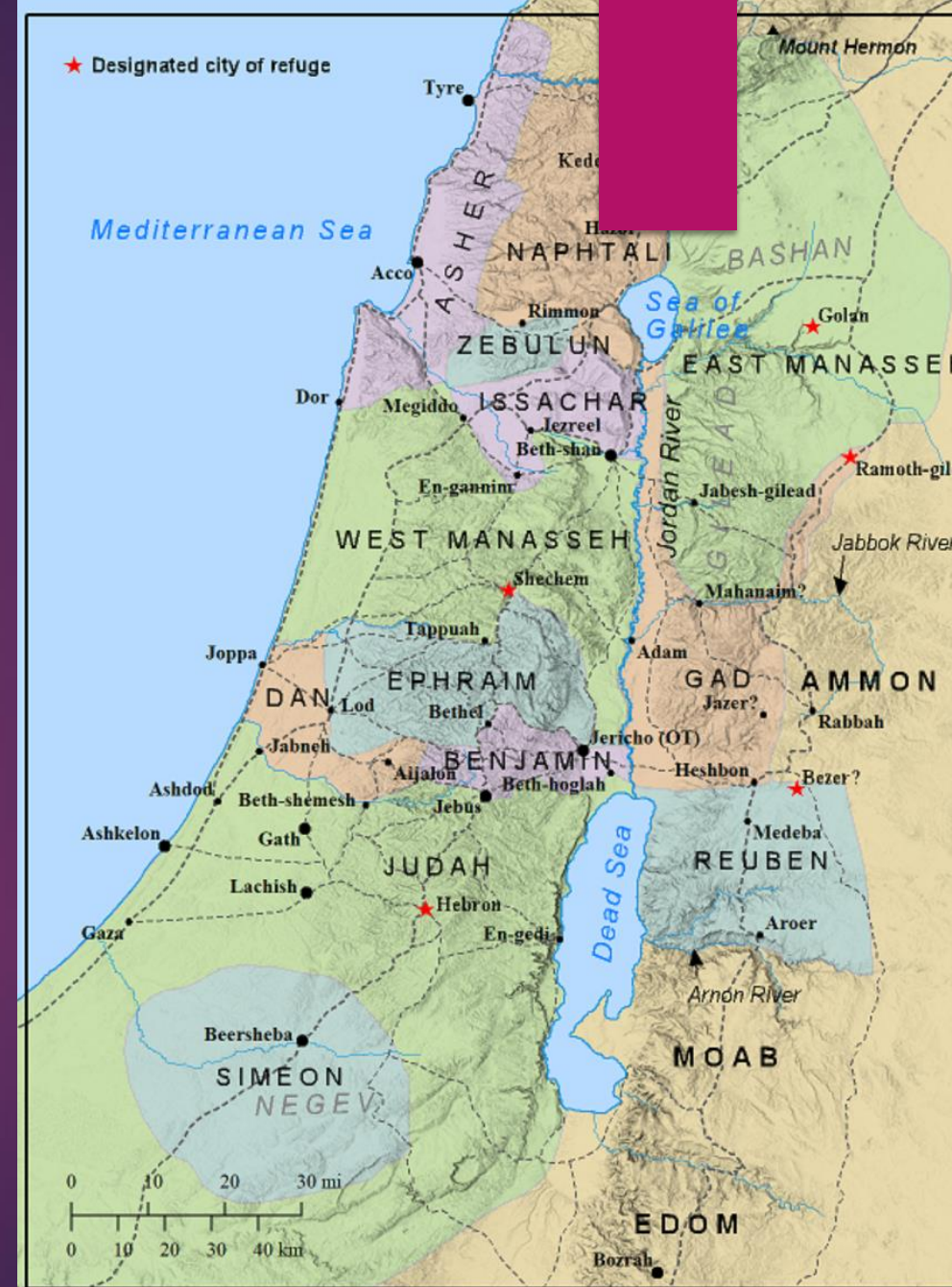
- “The scepter shall not depart from Judah” (Genesis 49:10)
- King Ahasuerus to Esther (4:11; 5:2; 8:4)



# allotted

THE LAND ALLOTTED TO THE RIGHTEOUS, BUT "land" ISN'T IN THE TEXT

And the LORD said to Aaron, "You shall have no inheritance in their land .... I am your portion and your inheritance among the people of Israel. (Numbers 18:20)



For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest on the land allotted to the righteous, lest the righteous stretch out their hands to do wrong.

- ▶ Cushan-rishathaim/Mesopotamia (Othniel)
- ▶ Eglon/Moab (Ehud, Shamgar)
- ▶ Jabin/Canaan (Deborah & Barack)
- ▶ Midian (Gideon, Abimelech, Tola, Jair)
- ▶ Philistia & Ammon (Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon)
- ▶ Philistia (Samson, Eli, Samuel, Saul, David)

Resist

For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest on the land allotted to the righteous, lest the righteous stretch out their hands to do wrong.

- ▶ Assyrian empire
- ▶ Babylonian empire (like a lion with wings of an eagle)
- ▶ Medo-Persian empire (like a bear with three ribs in its mouth)
- ▶ Greek empire (like a leopard with four wings and four heads)
- ▶ Roman empire (terrifying with bronze claws, iron teeth, and ten horns)

Submit

For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest on the land allotted to the righteous, lest the righteous stretch out their hands to do wrong.

- ▶ “But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not to be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea **flee to the mountains.** (Mark 13:14)

FLEE

For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest on the land allotted to the righteous, lest the righteous stretch out their hands to do wrong.

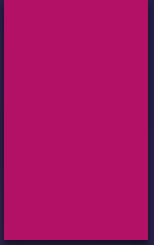
- ▶ British: "Black Robed Regiment"
- ▶ "Presbyterian rebellion"
- ▶ "There is no use crying about it. Cousin America has eloped with a Presbyterian parson."

For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest on the land allotted to the righteous, lest the righteous stretch out their hands to do wrong.

- ▶ Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* IV.20.30–32: "law of the lesser magistrate"
- ▶ John Knox and the barons (Queen Mary Stuart)
- ▶ Samuel Rutherford, *Lex Rex*

For the scepter of wickedness shall not **rest** on the land allotted to the righteous, **lest the righteous stretch out their hands to do wrong.**

- ▶ No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will **not let you be tempted** beyond your ability... (1 Corinthians 10:13)
- ▶ If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. <sup>18</sup>But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up." (Daniel 3:17–18)



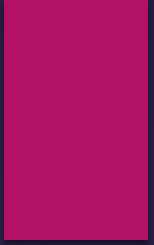
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are good,  
⇒ and to those who are upright in  
their hearts!

VERSE 4



Do good, O Lord, to those who are good,  
and to those who are **upright in their hearts!**

- ▶ The **law of his God is in his heart**; his steps do not slip. (Psalm 37:31)
- ▶ ... the people **in whose heart is my law** ... (Isaiah 51:7)
- ▶ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will **put my law within them**, and I will write it on their hearts ... (Jeremiah 31:33)
- ▶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup>And I will put my Spirit within you, and **cause you to walk in my statutes** and be careful to obey my rules. (Ezekiel 36:26–27)



⇒ But those who turn aside to their  
crooked ways  
⇒ the LORD will lead away with  
evildoers!  
⇒ Peace be upon Israel!

VERSE 5

But those who turn aside to their crooked ways  
the Lord will lead away with evildoers!

Peace be upon Israel!

- ▶ Those who turn aside: outward-only Israelites and Jews
- ▶ Evildoers: gentile unbelievers
- ▶ The LORD of the Covenant reigns over all!
- ▶ Note the link of peace for the godly with the destruction of rebels.

But those who turn aside to their crooked ways  
the Lord will lead away with evildoers!  
Peace be upon **Israel!**

- ▶ Who is Israel? “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem” (Psalm 122)
- ▶ V. 2: “so the LORD surrounds his people”
- ▶ “replacement theology” (national Israel replaced by NT Church)
  - ▶ God’s earthly people (Israel), God’s heavenly people (Church)
  - ▶ Return of Levitical sacrifices (memorials)

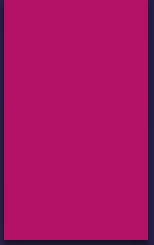
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Peace be upon Israel!

- ▶ Romans 11: cultivated olive tree
- ▶ Faithful Israel: part of this tree
- ▶ Gentiles: branches cut from a wild olive tree
- ▶ Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, **how much more will their full inclusion mean!** (Romans 11:12; Stephen Atkinson, Oct. 13, 2021; *Puritan Hope*)
- ▶ “To pray for the propagation of the gospel and kingdom of Christ to all nations; for the conversion of the Jews, the fulness of the Gentiles”


“God, while executing his just vengeance upon feigned and counterfeit Israelites, who rend and tear in pieces her bowels, gathers together the upright in heart, and openly shows by his blessing the fatherly love which he bears towards them.”


Peace be  
upon Israel!


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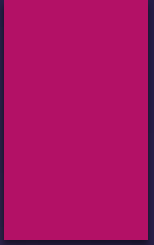
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