

Hebrews 13:14

There is a close connection between Jerusalem and the Mosaic system (the Temple was located in Jerusalem and the sacrificial system was based in the Temple). The Temple and its sacrificial system, pilgrimages, and the seat of government were all in this city. Of all cities on earth none approaches Jerusalem, in God's sight, for its beauty or purpose. And yet, we as believers have something better to look forward to. A continuing city. The eternal New Jerusalem. The admonition to these Jewish believers is to not only leave their religious system behind but also their beloved city Jerusalem. Perhaps we have a shadowed reference to the destruction of Jerusalem in just a few years. Believers are, as Paul says, to "...count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ." Philippians 3:8. If Jewish believers of the first century are told that earthly Jerusalem is temporary and we are to look for something better, how much more should this apply to believers who live in a city and country that is not Jerusalem, Israel?

"For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

I. EARTHLY JERUSALEM

A. A glorious past

"Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city;..." 2 Chronicles 6:6

"Thus says the LORD God: This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her." Ezekiel 5:5

"...the LORD had said, 'In Jerusalem I will put my name.'" 2 Kings 21:4

"Whoever has not seen Jerusalem in its splendor has never seen a beautiful city."
Babylonian Talmud, Sukka 51b

"Of the ten measures of beauty that came down to the world, Jerusalem took nine."
Babylonian Talmud, Kiddushin 49b

"This beautiful city is the heart and soul of the Jewish people. You can't live without a heart and soul. If you want one simple word to symbolize all of Jewish history, that would be Jerusalem."
Teddy Kollek, former Mayor of Jerusalem, August 11, 1998

An unidentified Rabbi made these comments:

"To us the world is like an eye. The white is everything else. The iris is Israel, land of the Jews. And the pupil, it is, of course, the Holy City, Jerusalem. But the gleam in the center of the pupil - that gleam is Moriah, the Temple Mount."

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, They shall prosper that love thee..." Psalm 122:6

B. A glorious future in the Millennium Kingdom

1. Jerusalem will be the center of Messiah's reign - Isaiah 2:2-4 (Micah 4:1-3); Zechariah 14:16
2. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.
3. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
4. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.
16. And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

2. Jerusalem will finally have her peace - Isaiah 65:17-19
 - 17 For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.
 - 18 But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.
 - 19 And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

3. Jerusalem's Temple will be rebuilt - Zechariah 6:12-13; Isaiah 56:6-7
 - 12 And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD:
 - 13 Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

 - 6 Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant;
 - 7 Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.

4. Jerusalem is attacked by Satan at the end of Millennium - Revelation 20:7-9
 - 7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,
 - 8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.
 - 9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

.....yet for believers we have something better.....

II. HEAVENLY JERUSALEM

- A. New Jerusalem is a literal city - Hebrews 11:13-16; Revelation 21:2,10
 - 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.
 - 14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.
 - 15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.
 - 16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

 - 2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
 - 10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

- B. The inhabitants of the eternal Kingdom - Hebrews 12:22-24
 - a. God the Father (*Judge*)
 - b. Jesus the Son (*Mediator*)
 - Revelation 21:22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.
 - 23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.
 - c. Angels
 - d. Old Testament believers which would include tribulation saints (*righteous men made perfect*)
 - e. The Church (*To the general assembly and church of the firstborn*)
 - f. Nothing is mentioned about Millennium saints. It is obvious they will be in heaven as the only alternative is hell. Do they go into heaven in glorified bodies? Or do they go into heaven in immortal bodies without sin?

C. The inhabitants of the new (eternal) earth

a. Israel (Jews) - Isaiah 66:20-22

- 20 And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the LORD out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the LORD, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD.
- 21 And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the LORD.
- 22 For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain.

b. Nations (Gentiles) - Revelation 21:23-26

- 23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.
- 24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.
- 25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.
- 26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

D. New Jerusalem is inhabited by the church - John 14:2-3; Revelation 21:9-10 (1 Corinthians 3:5-15 (see Ephesians 2:13-22)

- 2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.
- 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.
- 9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.
- 10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.

"Saved Israel will be on earth in Jerusalem and Palestine generally during the eternal state, just as the Church will be in Heaven in the New Jerusalem in the order of God's tomorrow."

David Clifford, The Two Jerusalems in Prophecy, Loizeaux Brothers, 1980 rev. ed., p. 189

E. New Jerusalem is open to all in Heaven - Revelation 21:22-26 (includes Old Testament, Tribulation, and Millennium saints)

- 22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.
- 23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.
- 24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.
- 25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.
- 26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

F. New Jerusalem has no sin or its effects - Revelation 21:1-4

- 1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.
- 2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- 3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.
- 4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.