

“Zion”, its Origin and Significance in the Scriptures

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The name “**Zion**” occurs 152 times in the OT, and 7 times in the NT as “**Sion**”. KJV

When Israel entered Canaan they attacked Jerusalem but were not able to take the whole city. Judges 1:8, 21
In the S.E. corner there was a stronghold, on a small hill, held by the Jebusites. Israel could not defeat them.

But when David became king, his men found a way to get into the stronghold and take it. 2Samuel 5:6-10

“Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion: the same is the City of David.” 2Samuel 5:7

David’s royal dwellings were built there. 2Samuel 5:9, 11, 1Chronicles 11:5

The Ark of the Lord of Hosts was brought into the City of Zion, and placed in the Tabernacle of David. 2Samuel 6:12, 17

North of the stronghold of Zion, on the same ridge which runs N-S through Jerusalem, is the small hill of **Mount Moriah**.

Traditionally this was the place where Abraham prepared to offer Isaac as a sacrifice. Genesis 22:2

Later, King Solomon built **the Temple** there, in the place that David had prepared, in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

2Chronicles 3:1, 1Chronicles 21:18-28

Today we call it the “Temple Mount”, or “The Dome of the Rock”. The “Wailing Wall” is part of this.

In the time of Josephus, around AD70, the location of **Zion was erroneously thought to be in the S.W.** corner of Jerusalem.

(New Bible Atlas, IVP, Page 106. *First published in 1985.* Editors: Bimson, Kane, Paterson, Wiseman.)

Today, the location of the original Zion/ City of David lies outside the City wall in the S.E. (Proof from archaeology.)

When Israel came out of Egypt, they journeyed to Mount Sinai, where Moses received the Law and built the Tabernacle.

The Ark of the Covenant is described in Exodus 25:10-22, and was placed in the Most Holy place in the Tabernacle of Moses.

Exodus 26:31-34.

The presence of God dwelt above the Mercy Seat, between the two cherubim. Exodus 25:22

The Lord of Hosts communicated with His people through Moses from above the Mercy Seat. Exodus 25:22

Israel was also made aware of **the presence of the Lord** with them each day, by the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. Exodus 13:21, 22

Every morning the camp was surrounded by the provision of daily manna. Exodus 16:4

These evidences of the presence of the Lord lasted for the 40year journey through the wilderness, from Egypt to Canaan.

After Israel entered Canaan, the Tabernacle of Moses was located at Shiloh, Joshua 18:1, 1Samuel 1:3

Through a series of events the Ark of God came to rest in the house of O-bed-e-dom, which was exceedingly blessed.

2Samuel 6:12

As soon as King David saw this, he immediately took steps to bring the Ark of the Lord of Hosts into the City of Zion.

2Samuel 6:12-17

David was a man after God’s own heart, 1Samuel 13:14, Acts 13:22, and he esteemed the presence of God above all else.

David erected a tent for the Ark, called the Tabernacle of David, in the City of Zion. 2Samuel 6:17, 1Chronicles 15:1, 25, 16:1,

Amos 9:11-15

David appointed Levites, singers, musicians and priests to minister unto the Lord continually each day, in the Tabernacle of

David, before the Ark of the Presence of the Lord of Hosts, in Mount Zion, the City of David. 1Chronicles 16:4-6, 37

The Tabernacle of Moses continued at Shiloh, without the Ark of God in the Most Holy Place, for a time.

Later it was shifted to Gibeon. 2Chronicles 1:3, 4

After the Ark of the Lord of Hosts was brought into the City of Zion, the City of David, 2Samuel 6:12, 17, 1Chronicles 15:1–16:3,

Zion became the place where the presence of the Lord dwelt.

This continued for the thirty three years of the reign of King David in Jerusalem. 2Samuel 5: 1-5

Because the presence of God was the most significant aspect of the life of the nation of Israel, Exodus 33:13-17, Zion took this pre-eminent place during the reign of King David. This was the place where the God of Israel dwelt, ZION.

Over time, **the name of “Zion”** came to be used for **the whole City of Jerusalem, the nation of Israel, and for the Gospel Church of the New Testament. The significance of the name “Zion”, is that it is the dwelling place, of the presence of the Lord our God.**

Jesus said, “Where two or three are gathered in My name, there am I in the midst of them.”

Matthew 18:20. **This is the place in the New Testament where the Lord has chosen to put His name.** Deuteronomy 12:5, 11, 14, 18, 21, 26. **This is the place where we as priests of the Living God, offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God.** Hebrews 13:15, 16, 1Peter 2:5, 9

For this reason we can understand Hebrews 12:22-24, where it says that **“believers in Jesus Christ have come to Mount Zion.”** And it adds that we have come to **the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the Blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than that of Abel.**

“Zion” is a special feature in the Psalms, many of them written by King David.

“Glorious things are spoken of thee, (Zion, as in verse 2.), O city of God.” Psalm 87:3

We cannot quote all the references to Zion. We will select a few to indicate how Zion became so significant in the Word.

Psalm 2:6, The Lord says, **“I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion.”**

Psalm 9:11, **The Lord dwells in Zion.**

Psalm 48:1, **Zion is the City of our God, His Holy Mountain, v2, Zion is the joy of the whole earth, v3, God is in her palaces, v8, God will establish her for ever.**

Psalm 50:2, **Zion is the perfection of beauty, from which God will shine forth.**

Psalm 78:68, **God loves Zion.**

Psalm 102:13, **The Lord will arise and have mercy on Zion for the time to favour her has come, v16, The Lord shall build up Zion and He shall appear in His glory, v17, He will hear the prayer of the destitute and not despise their prayer.**

Psalm 110:2, **The Lord sends the rod of Christ’s strength out of Zion, so the He rules in the midst of His enemies.**

Psalm 125:1, **Mount Zion cannot be moved, but abides for ever.**

Psalm 126:1 **When the Lord brings back the captivity of Zion there is great laughter and singing, v5, and we sow in tears and reap in joy.**

Psalm 132:13, **The Lord has chosen Zion, for His dwelling place, v14, His resting place, v15, God abundantly blesses her provision, v16, He clothes her priests with salvation, and her saints shout aloud for joy.**

Psalm 147:12-15, **The Lord strengthens the bars of the gates of Zion, and blesses her children within her, v14, He makes peace in her borders and fills her with the finest of the wheat.** (This is expressed in my own words from the context.)

Isaiah 2:1-4, **At the second coming of the Lord, Zion will be exalted above all kingdoms of the earth and all nations will flow to Zion. For out of Zion the Lord will send forth His Law and His Word to all nations.** (My own words.)

Isaiah 35:10, **The ransomed of the Lord shall come to Zion with singing and everlasting joy on their heads.**

Isaiah 51:3,11,16, **Zion will be the beautiful garden of the Lord, v11, The ransomed will come with great joy and gladness. v16, And the Lord will say to Zion, “You are My people.”**

Isaiah 52:7,8, **The beautiful feet upon the mountains say to Zion, “Your God reigns.” v8, The watchmen see eye to eye when the Lord brings again Zion.**

Isaiah 62:1-3, **The Lord shall send His righteousness and salvation out of Zion which shall be seen by all peoples.**

Isaiah 66:8, **Shall a nation be born at once? (“in one day”), as in 1948, May 14th, for as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children.**

Joel 2:1, 15, **Blow the trumpet, (shofar), in Zion, sound an alarm in My Holy Mountain, the day of the Lord is coming. It is near. 2:32, and whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord shall be delivered, for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be salvation. In the New Testament, this is applied to the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to all who call upon His Name.** Romans 10:13.

Zechariah 9:9, John 12:15, Matthew 21:5, **Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, your King comes unto you: He is Just, and has Salvation; Humble and riding on a donkey.**

1Peter 2:4, 5, 6, 7, 9, (expressed in my own words), **we come to our Lord Jesus, as unto a Living Stone, rejected by men but chosen by God, and Precious.** Matthew 21:42, Psalm 118:22. We also as living stones are built up into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Just as it is written Scripture, **Behold I lay in Zion a Chief Corner Stone, Chosen and Precious:** and whoever believes in Him shall not be put to shame. Isaiah 28:16. Unto you who believe, He is Precious. This is the Stone which the builders rejected, but is now made the Chief Corner Stone. Psalm 118:22

In the New Testament, the Gospel Church is identified with Mount Zion of the Old Testament, as the Place where the Lord has put His Name, and where His Presence dwells. Matthew 18:17, 18, 19, 20.

Revelation 14:1, **And I looked, and, lo a Lamb stood on Mount Sion, (or Zion), and with Him an hundred and forty four thousand, having His Father’s name written in their foreheads.** (Hebrews 12:22, the Heavenly Jerusalem, is also Mount Zion.)