

## ***Why We Love Jerusalem: The Most Unique City in History***

### **I. JESUS' ZEAL FOR JERUSALEM**

A. Jesus is zealous for Jerusalem—so much so that He will live and reign there forever. He has great affection for this city. There are vast implications of this for Israel, the Church, and the nations. We ask the Spirit to teach us what He sees and feels about Jerusalem. In the Bible, *Zion* is used 160 times, usually referring to earthly Jerusalem, and occasionally to heavenly Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup>***"I am zealous for Zion with great zeal..."***<sup>3</sup>***I will return to Zion, and dwell [live] in the midst of Jerusalem."*** (Zech. 8:2–3)

B. We love Jerusalem, because the Lord zealously loves Jerusalem (Ps. 78:68; 87:2). Jerusalem is unique in that it is the only city that God repeatedly declared His love and zeal for.

<sup>2</sup>***The LORD loves the gates of Zion [Jerusalem] more than all the dwellings of Jacob.*** (Ps. 87:2)

C. Jesus declared that Jerusalem is His own city, calling it "the city of the great King" (Mt. 5:35). He was quoting from Psalm 48, a prophecy about Jerusalem being the joy of the earth (Ps. 48:2).

<sup>35</sup>***"Jerusalem...is the city of the great King."*** (Mt. 5:35)

<sup>2</sup>***...the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion...the city of the great King.*** (Ps. 48:2)

D. Earthly Jerusalem continues *forever* (1 Chr. 23:25; 2 Chr. 33:4; Ps. 48:8; Ezek. 43:6-7; Joel 3:20; Mic. 4:7). The renovated earth continues *forever* after it is cleansed by fire after the Millennium (Ps. 37:29; 78:69; 104:5; 105:10; 125:1-2; 1 Chr. 28:8; Isa. 60:21; Jer. 25:5; Ezek. 37:25; Ezra 9:12). The two main opposing views: the earth is *renovated* or *annihilated* after the Millennium.

<sup>25</sup>***The LORD ...has given rest to His people that they may dwell in Jerusalem forever.*** (1 Chr. 23:25)

<sup>69</sup>***He built His sanctuary...like the earth which He has established forever.*** (Ps. 78:69)

### **II. THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM**

A. The Millennium is the time frame in which Jerusalem is transformed by the glory of God. The Millennium is a literal 1,000-year period in which Jesus will rule the whole world from Jerusalem in righteousness, peace, and prosperity (Rev. 20:1-6). *Millennium* is from the Latin word *mille*, meaning a thousand. The kingdom will be fully manifest worldwide in every sphere of life and society (politics, economics, education, agriculture, social institutions, etc.).

<sup>4</sup>***I saw thrones, and they [saints] sat on them...they reigned with Christ for a thousand years...***

<sup>6</sup>***They shall be priests of God...and shall reign with Him a thousand years.*** (Rev. 20:4–6)

B. This period of worldwide blessing will be initiated by Jesus' coming (Isa. 2:1-4; 9:6-9; 11:1-16; 65:17-25; Ps. 2; 110; Mt. 6:10; 17:11; 19:28; 28:19; Acts 1:6; 3:21; Rev. 20). The result will be 1,000 years of unprecedented blessing and glory, as Jesus restores the agriculture and animal life to many of the conditions of the garden of Eden (Isa. 35:1-8; 51:3; Ezek. 34:29; 36:35; 47:6-12).

### III. TEN REASONS WHY THE CITY OF JERUSALEM IS UNIQUE IN HISTORY

- A. #1. Jerusalem is unique as the city at the *center of God’s plan*, spiritually, politically, and geographically, etc. He designed the earth and orchestrated history around His purpose for Jesus and His city. God’s eternal purposes and end-time plans are “*Jerusalem-centric*.” What happens in Jerusalem is a timing indicator for what happens in the nations on God’s prophetic calendar. Daniel 9 is one of the most important Jerusalem-centric prophecies (Dan. 9:24-27). The devil’s plans are Jerusalem-centric—he is at war for the control of Jerusalem (Zech. 12-14; Rev. 11-13).

<sup>5</sup>*This is Jerusalem; I have set her at the center of the nations... (Ezek. 5:5; NAS)*

- B. #2. Jerusalem is unique as the *eternal governmental capital* of Jesus’ worldwide reign. At Jesus’ coming, He will establish His throne in Jerusalem to judge all nations (Mt. 25:31-32). In the Millennium, the nations will call Jerusalem the city where God’s throne is. Their leaders will often gather there, because Jesus’ name or majesty will be manifest there in a great measure.

<sup>17</sup>*“Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name [majesty or glory] of the LORD, to Jerusalem.” (Jer. 3:17)*

<sup>31</sup>*“When the Son of Man comes in His glory...then He will sit on the throne of His glory.*

<sup>32</sup>*All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them...” (Mt. 25:31–32)*

- C. #3. Jerusalem is unique as *Jesus’ own city*. He called it “the city of the great King.”

<sup>35</sup>*“Jerusalem...is the city of the great King.” (Mt. 5:35)*

- D. #4. Jerusalem is unique as the *City of Truth*, to which the nations will come to receive wisdom from Jesus in the Millennium (Isa. 2:3; Zech. 8:3). He has far greater wisdom and knowledge than Solomon on justice, righteousness, science, math, music, government, economics, etc. (1 Kgs. 10:4–7). He will host “conferences” there to teach His Word and ways on many subjects.

<sup>3</sup>*Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth... (Zech. 8:3)*

<sup>3</sup>*Many people [nations] shall...say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD ...He [Jesus] will teach us His ways... and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.” (Isa. 2:3)*

<sup>4</sup>*When the queen of Sheba perceived the wisdom of Solomon...there was no more spirit in her...<sup>7</sup>[She said] “You exceed in wisdom...the report which I heard.” (1 Kgs. 10:4–7)*

<sup>12</sup>*“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom...!” (Rev. 5:12)*

- E. #5. Jerusalem is unique as the “*worldwide worship center*,” to which all nations will come in order to worship Jesus (seeing Him in person; Zech. 14:17). All the kings will worship Jesus and base their governments on Scripture (Ps. 72:11; 102:15; 138:4; 148:11; Isa. 62:2; Rev. 21:24).

<sup>11</sup>*Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him [worship]; all nations shall serve Him. (Ps. 72:11)*

<sup>17</sup>*...whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts [Jesus], on them there will be no rain. (Zech. 14:17)*

- F. #6. Jerusalem has a **unique beginning**—God chose Jerusalem long before Israel entered Canaan. Moses prophesied in song of Jerusalem, or Zion, without naming it specifically (Ex. 15:1, 17) about 500 years before David captured the city (2 Sam. 5). They sang of God’s sanctuary, His temple, as being on God’s mountain where the Lord would reign forever.

***<sup>1</sup>Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the LORD...<sup>17</sup>You will...plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance [Jerusalem], in the place, O LORD, which You have made for Your own dwelling, the sanctuary [temple]...<sup>18</sup>The LORD shall reign forever. (Ex. 15:1, 17–18)***

1. Abraham was shown “the place” of the city (Jerusalem) whose builder is God. There at Mt. Moriah (Jerusalem) he offered Isaac (Gen. 22); this was a type of Jesus’ death.

***<sup>8</sup>Abraham...was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance ...<sup>10</sup>He waited for the city...whose builder and maker is God. (Heb. 11:8–10)***

2. Abraham’s first connection to Jerusalem was when he met Melchizedek, king of Salem (Gen. 14:18; Heb. 7:1–2). In Jewish tradition, Salem is an ancient name for Jerusalem.

- G. 7. Jerusalem has a **unique impact on the nations** through history. The nations (and individuals) are affected by blessing or cursing her and by praying for her (Gen. 12:3; Ps. 122:6; Ezek. 9:4–6).

***<sup>3</sup>I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you... (Gen. 12:3)***

1. The Scripture promises blessing on any who pray for peace in Jerusalem (Ps. 122:6).

***<sup>6</sup>Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: “May they prosper who love you...” (Ps. 122:6)***

2. In Ezekiel’s day, God protected those who “sighed and cried,” or prayed, for Jerusalem.

***<sup>4</sup>The Lord said [to angels], “Go through...Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry [pray] over the abominations that are done within it...”***

***<sup>6</sup>Utterly slay old and young...but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark. (Ezek. 9:4–6)***

- H. #8. Jerusalem has a **unique measure of conflict** against it. All nations will gather against her (Joel 3:2, 12; Zech. 12:3; 14:2; Zeph. 3:8). There is a battle for the control of Jerusalem—it is a spiritual, political, and military battle. Satan will go to prison after Jesus is received as the king of Israel in Jerusalem (Mt. 23:39; Rev. 19:17–20:3; Ps. 24:7–10). Jerusalem is the most attacked city in history. It has been destroyed and rebuilt 20 times, and has changed hands 86 times.

***<sup>2</sup>I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem... (Zech. 14:2)***

***<sup>39</sup>...you shall see Me no more till you say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.” (Mt 23:39)***

- I. All nations will come to the “valley of decision,” to stand for or against Jerusalem. The end-time outpouring of the Spirit is connected to deliverance in Jerusalem (Joel 2:28–32).

***<sup>14</sup>Multitudes, multitudes....for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. (Joel 3:14)***

***<sup>28</sup>...I will pour out My Spirit...<sup>32</sup>and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance... (Joel 2:28–32)***

- J. #9. Jerusalem has a **unique destiny** with an unprecedented measure of God’s glory and blessing. Isaiah 60-62 and Zechariah 1-2 best describe God’s glory to be released in millennial Jerusalem.
1. Jerusalem will be filled with God’s glory in the Millennium. The leaders of the nations will come to Jerusalem to receive an impartation of God’s glory (Isa. 60:2-3; 62:1-2). The Lord’s glory will be seen on the people of Jerusalem (Acts 2:3 was a token of this).  
**<sup>2</sup>The LORD will arise over you [Jerusalem], and His glory will be seen on you.** **<sup>3</sup>The Gentiles [nations] shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising...** (Isa. 60:2-3)  
  
**<sup>2</sup>In that day the Branch of the LORD [Jesus] shall be beautiful...<sup>5</sup>the LORD will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion...the shining of a flaming fire by night.** (Isa. 4:2–5)  
  
**<sup>3</sup>There appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.** (Acts 2:3)
  2. Jerusalem will be an eternal excellence and a praise in the earth (Isa. 61:15; 62:7). There will be an excellence in the city because of the Excellent One giving leadership to it. Jerusalem will excel in her beauty, government, economics, civic life, schools, parks, etc.  
**<sup>15</sup>I will make you [Jerusalem] an eternal excellence, a joy of many generations.** (Isa. 60:15)  
  
**<sup>7</sup>Give Him [God] no rest till He...makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.** (Isa. 62:7)
- K. #10. Jerusalem is a **unique picture** of what God will do in the nations. Jerusalem will receive both the greatest measure of glory and the severest disciplines of the Lord. We must understand what the Scripture says about the blessings and judgments on Jerusalem because of the principle that I call “**like kind, but lesser degree.**” Both the blessing and judgments that God will release on Jerusalem in the Tribulation and the Millennium will be released in **like kind, but to a lesser degree** to other cities. By seeing how far God is willing to go in His commitment to Jerusalem, we gain insight into what He will do in other cities. God never changes (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:4-8). What He does *in fullness* in Jerusalem shows us what He will do *in part* in the nations.

#### IV. THE RELATIONSHIP OF EARTHLY JERUSALEM TO THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM

- A. The centerpiece of God’s eternal purpose is the return of Jesus to establish His kingdom rule over all the earth as He joins the heavenly and earthly realms together. **Heaven** speaks of the supernatural realm where God’s presence is openly manifest. **Earth** speaks of the physical realm where natural processes and physical sensation reach full expression. Jesus will rule the earth with natural processes still in place, but enhanced by the Spirit’s supernatural dimension.  
**<sup>9</sup>...made known to us the mystery [hidden plan] of His will...<sup>10</sup>that He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth.** (Eph. 1:9–10)

- B. The New Jerusalem descends to earth twice: first, at the beginning of the Millennium when Jesus returns (Rev. 21:10), and at the end of the Millennium, when the new earth begins (Rev. 21:2). One view shared by many is that the New Jerusalem will descend to “a place” just above millennial Jerusalem. The Lord intentionally named earthly Jerusalem after the heavenly Jerusalem because the two Jerusalems are dynamically connected together forever.

<sup>10</sup>*He...showed me the great City, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven... (Rev. 21:10)*

- C. There are at least *four reasons* that I believe the New Jerusalem is close to millennial Jerusalem, yet without being on the earth during the Millennium. Reasons include: *The size* of millennial Jerusalem is about 10 miles across (Ezek. 48:15-19, 30-35; 45:6), whereas the New Jerusalem is about 1,500 miles long (Rev. 21:16). *The kings* come into the New Jerusalem to bring their glory (Rev. 21:24). *The leaves* in the New Jerusalem are to heal the nations on the earth (Rev. 22:2). *The angels* guard the entry to the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:12, 27; 22:14-15). Find more on this at [mikebickle.org](http://mikebickle.org), under the *End Times and Eternity* category, then go to *Millennium*.

- D. Jesus’ *one throne* is expressed in both the New Jerusalem (Rev. 22:3) and millennial Jerusalem (Jer. 3:17; Ezek. 43:4-7; Zech. 6:12-13). At His coming, the heavenly and earthly realms will come together. The contact point or place of *dynamic convergence* between the two realms will be the union of the two Jerusalems.

<sup>3</sup>*The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it [the New Jerusalem]. (Rev. 22:3)*

<sup>6</sup>*I heard Him [Jesus] speaking...from the temple...<sup>7</sup>He said, “Son of man, this is the place of My throne...where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever.” (Ezek. 43:6–7)*

- E. The New Jerusalem is a city about 1,500 miles high that will be connected to earthly Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem is as a “mountain-sized temple”—the Lord’s *Mountain-Temple-House*.

<sup>3</sup>*Jerusalem shall be called...The Mountain of the LORD of hosts. (Zech. 8:3)*

<sup>2</sup>*...the mountain of the LORD’s house [the millennial temple] shall be established on the top of the mountains...all nations shall flow to it. <sup>3</sup>Many people [nations] shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD...He [Jesus] will teach us His ways...” out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. (Isa. 2:2–3)*

- F. Revelation 21:9–22:5 refers to the New Jerusalem *during* the Millennium. We conclude this because the nature of things mentioned is out of character with the eternal state.

- G. Millennial Jerusalem will be the joy of the whole earth. The kings of the earth will be awestruck when visiting Jesus and seeing the New Jerusalem (Ps. 48:4–6).

<sup>1</sup>*Great is the LORD...in the city of our God...<sup>2</sup>the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion...the city of the great King...<sup>4</sup>Kings assembled, they passed by together. <sup>5</sup>They saw it, and marveled; they were troubled, they hastened away. <sup>6</sup>Fear took hold of them there... (Ps. 48:1–6)*

## V. OUR RESPONSE TO THE LORD CONCERNING JERUSALEM

- A. Believers are exhorted to *rejoice* and *mourn* for Jerusalem. We *rejoice* with Jerusalem by seeing how God is moving in her midst now and what He will do in the future. We are not to be critical, disinterested, or disengaged from her. We *mourn* for her by understanding her pressures, attacks, and failures. Jesus mourned over her sin, judgment and difficulties (Mt. 23:37; Lk. 19:41–44).

***<sup>10</sup>Rejoice with Jerusalem...all you who love her; rejoice for joy, all you who mourn for her... (Isa. 66:10)***

***<sup>41</sup>He saw the city [Jerusalem] and wept [mourned] over it, saying, <sup>43</sup>“...for the days will come upon you when your enemies will...surround you and close you in on every side, <sup>44</sup>and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.” (Lk. 19:41–44)***

- B. Believers are exhorted to *pray* for Jerusalem—peace only comes from Jesus and on His terms (Ps. 122:6).

***<sup>6</sup>Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: “May they prosper who love you...” (Ps. 122:6)***

- C. Believers are exhorted to *sing, shout, proclaim, praise, say, and declare* His purpose for Jerusalem to all the nations (Jer. 31:7-10).

***<sup>7</sup>Thus says the Lord: “Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, ‘O Lord save Your people, the remnant of Israel!’”...<sup>10</sup>Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, ‘He who scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd does his flock.’” (Jer. 31:7–10)***

- D. Believers are exhorted to understand God’s plan for Jerusalem and to tell it to the next generation (Ps. 48:13); we do this as we “walk, go around, count, mark well, and consider” her by studying the glorious things about Jerusalem in the Word (Ps. 87:3), what has happened to her throughout history, and what is happening to her in contemporary events.

***<sup>12</sup>Walk about Zion, and go all around her. Count her towers; <sup>13</sup>mark well her bulwarks; consider her palaces; that you may tell it to the generation following. (Ps. 48:12–13)***

- E. We study her ancient stones that testify of her past encounters with God (Ps. 102:14).

***<sup>14</sup>For Your servants take pleasure in her stones, and show favor to her dust. (Ps. 102:14)***

- F. Be a “student of Jerusalem”—she is mentioned over 800 times in Scripture, and Zion 160 times.

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