

Zion

The name Zion in Hebrew means Dry Place. It is a hill on the south-western side of Jerusalem. The City of David, also known as Jerusalem, was sometimes known as Zion (2 Samuel 5:7; 1 Kings 8:1; Romans 11:26). Since the coming of Jesus, Zion is the word that describes God's people, under divine order, under divine Leadership, with divine authority.

The rulers of this earth – governments and monarchs, have conspired together to reject Jesus, the Messiah; the Lord's anointed. Psalm 2:2 & 3; 'The kings of the earth take their places; the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and His anointed One. They say, "Let us break Their bands of restraint asunder and cast Their cords from us'."

In Acts 4:25 to 27, this scripture is quoted as we read about Herod and Pontius Pilate collectively choosing to reject Jesus. Following this, we see what is going on in heaven. Psalm 2:4 to 12 is a dialogue between God the Father and Jesus the Son. 'He (God) Who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord (Jesus) has them in derision and in supreme contempt; He mocks them. He (God) speaks to them in His deep anger and troubles them in His displeasure and fury saying, "Yet have I anointed My King (Jesus) on My holy hill of Zion." (Now Jesus speaks) "I will declare the decree of the Lord: He (God) said to Me (Jesus) 'You are My Son; This day (the day of Jesus' resurrection) I have begotten You. Ask of Me (God) and I will give You (Jesus) the nations as Your inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth as Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like potter's ware'." (Now God speaks) "Now therefore O you kings (monarchs), act wisely; be warned, O you rulers of the earth (governments); serve the Lord with awe and fear; rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son and pay homage to Him in purity, lest He be angry and you perish in the way, for soon shall His wrath be kindled. O blessed are all those who seek refuge and put their trust in Him'."

Romans 11:26; 'And so all Israel will be saved. As it is written; the Deliver will come from Zion. He will banish ungodliness from Jacob (Israel)'.

Psalm 110:2; 'The Lord will send forth from Zion the sceptre of Your strength; rule then, in the midst of Your foes.

Nothing that happens on earth can change the fact that Jesus our Messiah; God's anointed One, is the King of Zion and will be forever. When Jesus was resurrected from the dead, He became God's appointed Ruler. Revelation 19:16 says Jesus is the King of all kings and Lord of all lords. They are not empty words. What that means is; He is the Ruler of all rulers and the Governor over all governments.

Turn to Psalm 89:3. This is God speaking again; "I have made a covenant with My Chosen One; I have sworn to David My servant; Your Seed will I establish forever, and I will build up Your throne for all generations." Although this Psalm speaks about a person, the hidden meaning is referring to Jesus, the Messiah. The covenant mentioned here had Jesus in mind. This is the Seed that would sit on the throne forever. David and his family have long since died out and none of His race have sat on the Jewish throne for more than 2,000 years, but Jesus will reign forever. The word Christos in Greek, and the word Messiah in Hebrew, both mean 'Anointed One'. He is Jesus; The Anointed One; the Chosen One.

Continue on in Psalm 89:26 for more dialogue between God the Father and Jesus. "He (Jesus) shall cry out to Me (God), You are My Father, My God and the Rock of My salvation!" If we put these two Psalms together, in Psalm 2, we have the Father saying, "You are My Son" and here in Psalm 89 we have Jesus acknowledging His relationship with God by saying, "You are My Father." The Son recognises God as being the Rock of His salvation by His resurrection. The Father recognises the resurrected Son to be His King at His right hand, on His holy hill of Zion. Continue in verse 27; here is God speaking again; "Also I will make Him the Firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth." Because Jesus is the Firstborn of the resurrected dead, He is also the Ruler of all kings on the earth.

Colossians 1:15 to 18; 'He (Jesus) is the exact likeness; the image of the invisible God; He is the Firstborn before all creation. For it was in Him that all things were created, in heaven and on earth, things seen and things unseen, whether thrones, dominions, rulers or authorities; all things were created and exist through Him, by His service and for Him. And He Himself existed before all things, and in Him all things consist; are held together. He is also the Head of His body, the church; seeing that He is the Beginning, the Firstborn from among the dead, so that He alone in everything and in every respect might occupy the chief place'.

It is very interesting that Jesus is the exact likeness and image of God. God forbids the worship of any image, idol or religious icon because we are made in His image. God's image is Jesus so we are to worship only Jesus. One image (Jesus) totally and completely represents God. If we want to know what God looks like, we must look at Jesus. Jesus said in John 14:9; "He who has seen Me has seen the Father." Jesus is the Firstborn before all creation. He is not created; He is begotten. Jesus is the author of all creation. By Him were all things created. Jesus is eternally self-existent (John 5:26).

Jesus was around before the world was created; long before He came to earth as a baby and we see that in John 17:5; "And now Father, glorify Me and restore Me to such majesty and honour I had with You before the world existed."

Hebrews 5:5; 'So too, Christ did not exalt Himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed and exalted by God, Who said to Him; "You are My Son; today I have begotten You".'

Colossians 1:18 deals with creation; Jesus was there at the first creation and is now the Firstborn of the new creation. If we are in Christ, we are a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). Jesus was the Firstborn before the original creation and is the Head of the new creation.

Here are seven facts: (1) Jesus is the image of the invisible God.

(2) Jesus is the only begotten of the Father before all creation. He is not created; He is begotten.

(3) By Him were all things created. He is the creator. John 1:1 to 3 says; 'In the beginning – before all time – was the Word (Jesus) and the Word was with God and the Word was God Himself. He was present originally with God. All things were made and came into existence through Him; and without Him was not even one thing made that has come into being'.

(4) He is eternally self-existent. There was never a time when He wasn't here (John 5:26).

(5) Jesus sustains all things; upholds all things and by Him all things consist. He sustains the universe. Even the cross on which Jesus hung, came into being by His power. The men who crucified Him were also created by Him.

(6) He is the Head of the body and the Beginning of the new order/covenant.

(7) He is the First begotten – not from creation but from the dead. In all things He has the first place. In all of creation – He is uniquely and totally first.

Revelation 1:5; 'From Jesus Christ the Messiah, Who is the faithful Witness; the Firstborn of the dead and the Prince or Ruler of the kings of the earth'. Jesus was the faithful Witness while on earth. It was because of His own testimony that He was put to death. When they asked if He was the King of the Jews, He answered truthfully and said; "I Am." Two courts condemned Jesus; the Jewish court and the secular Roman court. Because He is the Firstborn He is also the Ruler. From Genesis 14:18 right through to Revelation, we see the exaltation of Jesus to the Father's right hand.

Hebrews 6:20 tells us that Jesus was our Forerunner, so we could go to glory and not be separated from God eternally. We have been called, justified, glorified, made alive, resurrected and enthroned as kings and priests. That is where we are as Christians. Our ministry is a king/priest ministry. Back in Psalm 110:2 we read; 'The Lord will send forth from Zion...' What or where is Zion? It is the Heavenly Jerusalem. Turn to Hebrews 12:22 to 24; 'You have come to Mount Zion, even to the city of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem and the countless multitudes of angels in festal gathering. To the church of the Firstborn, who are citizens in heaven, and to the God Who is Judge of all, and to

the spirits of the righteous, who have been made perfect, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant'.

Notice everything written here is in the past tense; it has already happened. We are already, as Christians, on Mount Zion. There is an earthly Jerusalem and a heavenly Jerusalem. We have come to a heavenly display of dignity, honour and power. We are already citizens of heaven. As part of the church of the Firstborn we have an amazing future. As born-again believers our names are enrolled in heaven in the Lamb's book of Life. It doesn't matter if your name is registered in any church or not. What seriously matters, is that your name is enrolled in heaven.

Zion is the word that describes God's people, under divine order, under divine Leadership, with divine authority. When God's people meet in divine order, under divine Leadership, they will have divine authority. This order is of paramount importance; we must come under divine (God's) Leadership in order for us to have divine authority. That is where we as Christians are now. Turn again to Psalm 110:2 & 3; 'The Lord will send forth from Zion ... the sceptre of Your strength; rule then in the midst of your enemies. Your people will offer themselves willingly in the day of your power, in the beauty of holiness and in holy array out of the womb of the morning. To You will spring forth Your young men, who are as fresh as dew'.

The sceptre is a show of power. It is divine authority in a human hand. One day, the Lord Jesus will stretch out the sceptre and bring the nations into subjection to God's will. Jesus – the King of kings, Lord of lords, Ruler of all rulers, from the throne, will rule throughout the whole earth. We Christians must not be ignorant of our divine authority. Jesus is not going to rule by Himself – He is going to rule and reign with us (Revelation 20:4). The authority on earth, is vested on earth in God's people.

In Psalm 110:3, where it says 'willing', in Hebrew, it means a free willing offering. The word 'power' here denotes an army. We are part of God's 'army' that will usher in the new age/covenant and God will only accept recruits who are coming by their free will. He will never force anybody. The 'beauty of holiness' is spiritual beauty; an inner beauty. The 'womb of the morning' is the birth of the new age/covenant. 'Morning' is light that comes after the darkness and we have to admit, this age is very spiritually dark indeed. From this scripture, we can see that there will be a period of darkness that will end in a spiritual birth of a new morning. Just as in the early morning, the dew sparkles on the grass, so men (people) will appear in the beauty of holiness. What will the army of people do? Read Matthew 24:14; 'And this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world as a testament to all the nations, and then will come the end'. That is not the end of the world; it is only the end of this age.

To show what this means; Jesus came to earth as our Messiah to usher in the new age of grace. Before Jesus came, mankind were subjected to the strict law of Moses and only people who converted to Judaism could find redemption. If people lived thousands of kilometres away from Israel, they probably had never heard of the One true God, and therefore could have been lost for eternity. Once Jesus came, lived and died and took our sicknesses and sins, and was resurrected, the Gospel was then spread throughout the world. Further to this, during the three days Jesus was dead, He went to Sheol – the waiting place of the dead – to preach the Gospel to those who had died without hearing about God. Thus Jesus has given every generation a chance to accept Him as their Saviour. Once the Holy Spirit was sent to earth during the day of Pentecost, the new age of God's grace was ushered in and the law of Moses was fulfilled. That meant the Jews no longer had to sacrifice animals; they no longer had to be circumcised; all mankind could go straight to God to pray and did not have to go through the high priest; and best of all, Gentiles could also be redeemed. When Jesus comes again He will be ushering in the next new age – the age of the Messianic Kingdom – ruled from Jerusalem. That age will last for one thousand years then will come the judgement of all mankind. Some will go to everlasting life with God and all those who reject God on earth will go to everlasting damnation. After that, humans will never again live on the earth because it will be burned up. We are waiting for Jesus to come and usher in the new age – the age of the one thousand years Messianic rule.

Psalm 22:27 & 28 tell us that; 'All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall bow down and worship before You. For the Kingship and the Kingdom are the Lord's and He is the Ruler over the nations'. Verse 31; 'They shall come and declare His righteousness to a people yet to be born – that He has done it and that it is finished'.

At the time that Psalm was written, this present generation was not yet born. This is the generation who are God's army on earth, put here to declare His righteousness to all nations before the end of this age and the birth of the new age – which is the Messianic thousand years.

Psalm 102:13 to 16 says this; 'You will arise and have mercy for Zion (God's people), for it is time to have favour for her; yes, the set time has come. For your servants take pleasure in the stones and show favour for her dust. So the nations shall revere the name of the Lord and all the kings of the earth, Your glory. When the Lord builds up (restores) Zion, He will appear in His glory'. Verse 18; 'Let this be recorded for the generation yet unborn, that a people yet to be created shall praise the Lord'.

We are the generation this Psalm is speaking about. There is a set time on God's 'calendar' to favour Zion. Not because we deserve it but because God said He would. Those Christians who really love God, also love His people the Jews and Israel (Mount Zion). If you don't love Zion then you don't really love God and you will be put to shame. Read Psalm 129:5 'Let them all be put to shame and turned backward who hate Zion'. The Lord is at this time, building up Zion. The church and Israel are both being restored and it is happening in this generation. This is the generation Psalms 22 and 102 spoke about. We are the generation created to praise the Lord. Ephesians 5:19 tells us to speak out to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, offering praise with voices and making melody with all our hearts to the Lord.

Further on in Ephesians 5:26 & 27, we learn that Christ gave Himself for the church so He could sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word; that He might present the church to Himself in glorious splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; that she might be holy and faultless. Redemption is by His blood; sanctification is by the washing of water by the Word. In order to be ready to meet Christ, the church must have both redemption and sanctification. Read in 1 John 5:6; 'This is He Who came with water and blood (His baptism and His death), Jesus Christ – not by the water only, but by the water and the blood. And it is the Holy Spirit Who bears witness, because the Holy Spirit is the truth'.

We are redeemed by His blood and we are sanctified by the Word of truth. The result is as we have seen in Ephesians 5:27. Jesus is coming for a bride without spot or wrinkle and the only way to reach that glorious result, is by the washing of the Word of God. There are three marks of the church as the bride of Christ: (1) Glorious (2) Holy (3) Without spot or blemish. This order is important. The only thing that will make the church holy is the glory. Holiness is not negative, it is positive. Glory is God's personal presence made manifest. God is omnipresent and where He is, there is also His glory.

The God of Glory appeared to Abraham. When Israel came out of Egypt, God's glory came down as a cloud. Israel was marked out by the cloud and the pillar of fire. The glory actually came down and indwelt in the Holy of Holies in a beautiful glorious golden light. It was the glory that made God's people holy. It is the presence of the God that distinguishes us from the non believers – His glory. When we have His glory we will be holy. It is beautiful to see the faces of God's people when God's glory is upon them. It is not up to the church leaders to all of God's work. All believers need to be busy going about God's work, putting God before our own earthly desires. What happens on earth will one day be burned up – but what happens in the Kingdom of God will last for eternity. What we do in God's service will be given to us as rewards in heaven.

The best part of all this is; it is all true. We are the people of Zion. Isaiah 51:16; 'And I have put My words in your mouth and have covered you with the shadow of My hand that I may plant the heavens and lay the foundations of a new earth and say to Zion; "You are My people".'

Amen and God bless you.

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