

Mount Zion

Mark Mickelson

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I had a request for a sermonette. I had mentioned in a sermon one time the difference between Zion and Mount Zion, so I had a request to come back to that topic to directly focus on it a little more. As I studied it more fully, I thought to myself this thing could expand as far as you want to go, but at some point you're going to get past the point of what I know for sure, into the point of what I think. What I believe, I can put back into a sermonette; we'll just skip the part about what I think. But I do want to mention something; if you remember the story in Daniel 2, of the great image that is struck at the feet by a stone, the comment is made, *the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth*. So one thing we have to be careful of, when you're talking about poetry, prophecy, when you're talking about things, in part, that are symbolic, *mountain* can't always be just a big pile of rock and dirt that we have on the earth, and when we see Mount Zion, we're going to have to allow for the fact that *mountain* includes rule, governance, God's authority in various ways. Zion is a little different than that; Zion is a location. So I want to offer a few comments, at least, for reflection.

I took the New King James and I just looked up "Zion", which is used 160 times in the New King James. "City of David", which is Zion—and I'll address that—is used forty-six times, and "daughter of Zion" is used twenty-eight times. So what have you got? You've got a specific location that's identified in the Bible at a specific point in time. You have, then, that becoming representative of a regional area, effectively Jerusalem, and then you have the daughters of Zion, who are the descendants of those who were there, and some of it is literal, some of it is typical, or some of it is symbolic. If you then go to "Mount Zion", you have twenty-one times in the Bible—again, from the New King James. You have "the mountain of God"—eight—"the mountain of Yehovah"—five—and "My Holy Mountain"—eleven. Those are related in various ways. You can keep moving, you can go a little bit further where the terms are addressed and add a few more. Mount Zion is where God dwells. Zion is a specific location on the map in what is Israel today. I want to show you that from scripture.

If we go back and consider, you have a literal reference, you have a figurative reference, and much of the prophecies are actually, if you'll notice, in a form of poetry; when you get to poetry, it's symbolism that expands and is used in a broader way. So I want to keep this to maybe the most basic, fundamental sense.

I want to start with [The Bible Topical Index](#); on the inside back cover is a picture of a mountain. That's actually Grand Teton, from a time when I had a chance to climb around on it, and the scripture is from Isaiah 2:3, which says:

Isaiah 2:3 *“Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD [Yehovah] from Jerusalem. (NKJV)*

So you have Zion and Jerusalem, you have the mountain of the LORD and the house of the God of Jacob, in the same verse—both concepts are there, but they are contrasting concepts, they are not just repetition of the same thing. Someday this is going to be a collector’s copy when I’m gone, so you might want to get yours while you can. ((laughs))

1 Chronicles 11:4; I’ll just read the paragraph as it’s listed in my notes, a copy of which you have.

1 Chronicles 11:4 *And David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which is Jebus, where the Jebusites were, the inhabitants of the land.
5) But the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, “You shall not come in here!” Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion (that is, the City of David). (NKJV)*

It wasn’t the City of David before he took it, it became that after he took it. It’s a specific place, it is the stronghold, it is the fortress; it’s not even the top of the ridge, on the hill, where the mosque is today, it’s down the hill away—that was Zion.

*6) Now David said, “Whoever attacks the Jebusites first shall be chief and captain.” And Joab the son of Zeruiah went up first, and became chief.
7) Then David dwelt in the stronghold; therefore they called it the City of David.
8) And he built the city around it, from the Millo [the landfill] to the surrounding area. Joab repaired the rest of the city.
9) So David went on and became great, and the LORD [Yehovah] of hosts was with him. (NKJV)*

We have a very specific reference in scripture; Zion was a fortress, it was the Jebusite fortress that David conquered, and it became the City of David—the core of what would become Jerusalem. So you have now Zion being a location, which is also now a reference to the people of that location, and also, prophetically, the descendants of the people of that location. It kind of broadens in its usage.

Following your outline, Hebrews 12 describes Mount Zion, beginning in verse 18.

Hebrews 12:18 *For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire [which was where the commandments were given], and to blackness and darkness and tempest,
19) and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore.*

20) *(For they could not endure what was commanded: “And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow.”*

21) *And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.”)*

22) *But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels,*

23) *to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all ... (NKJV)*

This is a reference to where God’s presence is, it’s a reference to where God dwells. It could be a reference to where He dwells temporarily. He was in the first temple, He was in the tabernacle. When He was in the first temple, the time came when God warned Israel that if they didn’t straighten out—Israel went into captivity, Judah remained—if they didn’t straighten out, He would leave them as well. They didn’t straighten out and He left. That was addressed in a sermon—Rick actually addressed that some time back, where that record is, in scripture. The warning is pretty amazing right there—God said, I’m with you, you do as I say. I’m with you, and if you don’t do as I say, if you don’t use what I gave you, if you don’t keep moving with what your responsibility is, I am leaving. Or, I’ll go somewhere else—I’ll go give someone else an opportunity. So that reference is very clearly a warning in scripture. Mount Zion is where God dwells; Zion is a physical location, it can describe the people of that location, and the descendants of those people, depending on how it is used.

If we’re looking at all of these terms, I would expect that you can find a term that’s prophetic, you can find a term that’s poetic, and you can say, well, what about here, and the best argument I can give for that is the reference to our God, the Father, in scripture. If you have 6,000–7,000 references to Yehovah, and you start out and you find a whole string of them that work together and match, and it matches what the description was in the New Testament, looking back, you have the answer. But first, I had an answer that I understood, without necessarily knowing every single implication where that term was used, but the God of Bethel—the time came when I knew the answer to that. The time came when I knew how the angel—the messenger—was speaking in first person or in third; there were times when Zechariah 14 now became clear. So I would assume with Zion and Mount Zion, if you start out with a body of scripture that makes sense and is in agreement, that in time some of the additional scriptures might then fall into place. It gives us the corner pieces and the edge pieces of the puzzle to put in place. Isaiah 24 then contains a scripture that has sort of popped out to me, and I’ve used it a number of times, but it puts, again, both concepts back together as when we started in the book of Isaiah. Let’s begin with verse 21.

Isaiah 24:21 *It shall come to pass in that day that the LORD [Yehovah] will punish on high the host of exalted ones, and on the earth the kings of the earth. 22) They will be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and will be shut up in the prison; after many days they will be punished. (NKJV)*

That is a very clear reference to the time of the destruction of Babylon, the destruction of Satan's rule, the binding of Satan and the demons, and the later punishment that will take place after the Millennium. Then it says this:

23) Then the moon will be disgraced and the sun ashamed; for the LORD of hosts will reign [He's going to be there; it's His presence] on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His elders, gloriously. (NKJV)

If God goes to Jerusalem and places His presence there, then His throne is in Jerusalem. If He leaves Jerusalem, because of the disobedience or the unwillingness of His people to obey and serve Him, then His throne is where He places it, back wherever that would be—that's His option and His choice.

There's a difference between Mount Zion and Zion (Jerusalem), and the distinction here, is, when God comes down to the earth, they will be in the same place.