

# On to Zion

By

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## **BUT WHERE IS ZION?**

“And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; ... the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isaiah 35:8-10).

The fact that the Israelis have taken full possession of the City of Jerusalem has caused many to think that this means a victory for God in fulfillment of the above prophesy.

In fact, the entire political program of driving out the Arabs (who received possession of Palestine when the Romans moved out) and creating the State of Israel is called Zionism. Simply stated, it means creating a Jewish nation with headquarters in Jerusalem from which the “Zionists” may fulfill their own plans of world ruler ship and, according to their own claims, make themselves their own Messiah.

Whatever the future events unfold of the Zionists’ power and program, it is not the fulfillment of the ancient promise to the “redeemed of the Lord” as above. (Isaiah 35:8-10). This promise is that the “ransomed of the Lord” shall return, not to a political and geographical Zion in the land of Palestine, but to the eternal Zion of which Jerusalem is only a type.

In the Hebrew letter it is stated: “For you are not come unto the mount that might be touched” (Mt. Sinai) “But you are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and 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” (Hebrews 12:18, 22-24). Further on, in Verse 28, the Zion to which we come is said to be a kingdom which cannot be shaken. This is the Zion of the redeemed, the ransomed of the Lord, and does not yet exist except in type and promise.

All promises in scripture referring to an inheritance for God’s people are part of the promise made to Abraham. This promise is interpreted for us by the Apostle Paul. The promises, Paul explained, were not to the descendants (plural) of Abraham, but to Christ. “He said not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ” (Galatians 3:16). This is to say that it was not the fleshly descendants, known today as Semites, whether Arabs or Jews, who were to inherit the promise to Abraham, but those who are the joint-heirs with Christ. Note carefully: “For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the

righteousness of faith” (Romans 4:13). Thus, it is plain that one does not receive the promise to Abraham merely because he is a fleshly descendant (a Semite), but only as he becomes a Christian and is made righteous by faith in Christ, can he inherit with the “seed,” that is, Christ.

In the Galatian letter, Paul makes it clear that Christians, and no others, regardless of ancestry, are to inherit the promise.

“If you are Christ’s, then are you Abraham’s seed, heirs according to promise” (Galatians 3:27 Compare 3:7, 26).

Since the promise to Abraham was to his “seed” – meaning Christ as we have seen above – all Christians share in this promise. “If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ ...” (Romans 8:17).

This fits the description of the prophecy in Isaiah that the highway to Zion “is the way of holiness,” and “the unclean shall not pass over it.” The only way to become holy and clean is through } the atonement of Jesus, the substitutionary death which is absolutely essential for the justification of any person, whether he lived during the period before Calvary or in the period since.

Even under the law, the only way to be considered clean was by the blood atonement, which was made by the sacrifice of animals, but which was made valid only by the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary “for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins ...” (Heb. 10:4). Those who participated in the animal sacrifices had their faith in the ultimate coming of the Messiah who became the perfect sacrifice for sin, “we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all ... for by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified” (Hebrews 10:10, 14). Hence, every person that ever walked in the way of holiness on the highway to Zion is one whose faith has been in Christ, whether he lived on the other side of the Cross or on this.

It also fits the description: “The ransomed of the Lord shall return.” Christ is the **REDEEMER**, the one who paid the “ransom” price for man and “redeemed” man from death. Thus, every Christian is one of the “ransomed of the Lord.”

But what of Zion? Where is it? As we have already shown, from the Hebrew letter, Christians do not come to the physical and geographical mount, but to the “heavenly Jerusalem.” In Revelation 21:1-2 this Jerusalem is pictured as the people of God coming down to a new earth to live forever.

Abraham did not expect to inherit a parcel of land in the country we know as Israel. In fact, the promise of a land was made to Abraham and to those of similar faith, but the scripture says “they all died in faith, not having received the promise” . . . “and these all having had witness born to them from their faith, received not the promise; God having

provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect” (Hebrews 11: 13, 39-40).

Now, if the promise of a land of their own was not fulfilled during their lifetime, and if we, as Christians, are to share in that promise as “sons of Abraham” and “joint-heirs with Christ,” it is obvious that the promise does not mean a few hundred square miles of land known as Israel and Jordan.

The promise was that Abraham and his seed are to inherit the **WORLD** (Romans 4:13). This will be only after the “first heaven and first earth are passed away” (Revelation 21: 1). Then shall be fulfilled the promise: “But be you glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy; And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying” (Isaiah 65:18-19: cf. Revelation 21:1-5).

This will be the “new earth wherein dwells righteousness” of which Peter wrote. It will not be in this present world. Jesus plainly stated that “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered unto the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence.”

“The principles that Christ the King laid down make impossible any evaluation of his Kingdom or Government with any form of government in the world. He will have none of them. The floor will be thoroughly purged first. The tares neatly bound in bundles and burned, **THEN** shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” (Matthew 13:37-43) F. B. Eastman in **PRESENT TRUTH MESSENGER**.

The eternal purpose of God is for His chosen ones to have dominion over the earth. This was the original purpose when God said. . . “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and ‘over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth” (Genesis 1:26). By man’s rebellion and sin, he forfeited this power over the earth and the entire earth suffered because of this forfeiture (Romans 8:19-22). But, through Christ, God is ransoming a people – His chosen ones – for an ultimate fulfillment of the eternal purpose. The earth, now under the curse of Genesis 3:18 and under the power of Satan, the Prince of this world (John 5:19), will be destroyed along with all unbelievers; then, and not until then, the true sons of God shall be manifested (Romans 8:19) and will enter into their full inheritance of the Promised Land.

The ultimate Zion is the everlasting kingdom of God, the new heaven and the new earth, created for the habitation of the children of God, who are cleansed by the sacrificial death of Christ, made righteous through faith in him, born of the water and the spirit, adopted into the household of God and called the sons of Abraham by faith. “Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation . . .” (Isaiah 28:16). Jesus claimed to be this stone. Paul stated that Jesus is the stone of sure foundation and that there is no other. (1 Corinthians 3:11).

Our entrance into Zion is predicated upon our being built upon this stone; hence, Zion is equivalent to the church. It is the entire population of the redeemed in the new heavens and new earth.

The political affairs of men are not outside the providence of God. The wars and general destruction that is current in our world is a part of God's Judgment upon rebellious man, and such Judgments form a large portion of prophesy of the last days. God has not relinquished His control over the affairs of men. God is still sovereign. However, the ultimate purpose of God and the ultimate aim of the Christian is not to be consummated in this present world.

Whatever may happen regarding political Zionism and modern Israel, such a Government is not the Zion to which Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all their spiritual brethren look. We are marching to Zion, as Christians, but our Zion is the eternal new creation yet to be manifest after this present world is consumed in the fire of Judgment.

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