

**Jerusalem.** The origins of the city are lost in antiquity, but evidence of civilization on the site stretches back to 3000 B.C., and the city is referred to by name in Egyptian texts as early as the beginning of the second millennium B.C. According to Ezekiel 16:3, the site was once populated by Amorites and Hittites; and, if it is to be identified with Salem (Gen. 14:18; Ps. 76:2), it was ruled in Abraham's day by the petty king Melchizedek, who was also "priest of God Most High." Some hold that the "region of Moriah" (Gen. 22:2), where Abraham was tested with the sacrifice of Isaac, was what became the temple site, but this connection has not been proved.

**Jerusalem in History.** At the time of the conquest Jerusalem (otherwise known as Zion, the name originally given to the southeast hill where the earliest fortress was located) was populated by the Jebusites, a Semitic tribe ruled over by Adoni-Zedek. Joshua soundly defeated an alliance of rulers headed by Adoni-Zedek (Josh. 10) but never took Jerusalem, which became a neutral city between Judah and Benjamin. It was still administered by Jebusites, even though the men of Judah overran and burned at least parts of the city (Judg. 1:8, 21). This situation changed when King David decided to move his capital from Hebron. He decisively conquered the Jebusites (2 Sam. 5:6–10) and established Jerusalem (or Zion) as his strategic center and political capital. Calling it the City of David (2 Sam. 5:9), he fortified and beautified it until his death, and his successor, Solomon, pursued the same course even more lavishly.

The division of the kingdom immediately after Solomon's death marked the beginning of several stages of decline. Now the capital of the southern kingdom only, Jerusalem was plundered by Egyptians under Shishak as early as the fifth year of Rehoboam (1 Kings 14:25–26). Fresh looting took place in Jehoram's reign, this time by a concert of Philistines and Arabs; and part of the walls were destroyed in skirmishes between Amaziah of the southern kingdom and Jehoash of the north. Repairs enabled the city under Ahaz to withstand the onslaught of Syria and Israel, and again the city providentially escaped when

the northern kingdom was destroyed by the Assyrians. But eventually the city was captured (597 B.C.) and then destroyed (586 B.C.) by the Babylonians, and most of the inhabitants killed or transported.

Persian rule brought about the return of a few thousand Jews to the land and city, and the erection of a smaller temple than the majestic center built by Solomon; but the walls were not rebuilt until the middle of the fifth century under the leadership of Nehemiah. Jerusalem's vassal status continued under the Greeks when Alexander the Great overthrew the Persian Empire; but after his untimely death (323 B.C.) Jerusalem became the center of a brutal conflict between the Seleucid dynasty in the north and the Ptolemies of Egypt in the south. The struggle bred the Jewish revolt led by the Maccabees, who succeeded in rededicating the temple in 165 B.C. Infighting and corruption contributed to the decisive defeat of the city by the Romans in 63 B.C. and its pacification in 54 B.C.

Herod the Great came to power in 37 B.C. as a vassal king responsible to Rome, and embarked on the enlargement and beautification of the temple and other buildings, projects not completed until decades after his death. The Jewish revolt that began in A.D. 66 inevitably led to the destruction of the city by the Romans in A.D. 70. A further revolt under Bar Cochba in A.D. 132 led to the city's destruction once again (135). This time the Romans rebuilt the city on a smaller scale and as a pagan center, banning all Jews from living there—a ban that was not lifted until the reign of Constantine. From the early fourth century on, Jerusalem became a "Christian" city and the site of many churches and monasteries. Successive occupiers—Persians, Arabs, Turks, Crusaders, British, Israelis—have left their religious and cultural stamp on the city, which since 1967 has been unified under Israeli military might. The political future of the city, especially the Old City, is uncertain, as the Palestinian-Israeli peace talks unfold.

**The Centrality of Jerusalem.** From the time that Jerusalem became both the political and the cultic capital of the children of Israel, it progressively served as a bifocal symbol: on the one hand it reflected the people and all their sinfulness and waywardness; on the other it represented the place where God made himself known and the anticipation of all the eschatological blessing that God had in store for his people. In Scripture, Zion is the city of God (Pss. 46:4; 48:1–2) and therefore the joy of the whole earth (Ps. 48:2). The Lord himself has chosen Zion (Ps. 132:13–14), which consequently serves as his abode. But if Jerusalem thus becomes virtually equivalent to "temple," it can in other images represent all of God's covenant people; indeed, to be "born in Zion" is to know God and experience

his salvation (Ps. 87:5). These strands come together at least in part because the temple is located on the holy hill called Zion (Ps. 15:1; Isa. 31:4; Joel 2:1); equally, the holy hill is set in parallel with Jerusalem (Dan. 9:16–17). Hence Jerusalem is the holy city (Neh. 11:1; Isa. 48:2; 52:1), so much so that going up to Zion is virtually equivalent to approaching Yahweh (Jer. 31:6) and salvation out of Zion is, of course, from the Lord (Ps. 14:7; cf. Pss. 128:5; 134:3).

*Jerusalem's Sin.* Precisely because of these associations, the sin of its people is the more grievous. The prophets (esp. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Micah) speak of Jerusalem as a prostitute, fallen away from God, guilty of idolatry and of flagrant disregard of God's commandments. The city must stand under the judgment of God (e.g. Isa. 1:21; 29:1–4; 33:9–14; Jer. 6:22–30). Jerusalem's social and religious transgressions are so gross and persistent that Ezekiel labels it "the city of bloodshed" (Ezek. 22:2–3; 24:6). In its sin Jerusalem is counted as part of the pagan world (Ezek. 16:1–3) and will certainly be destroyed (Ezek. 15:6). The citizens of Jerusalem are worse than Samaria and Sodom (Lam. 4:6; Ezek. 16:44–58; cf. Amos 2:4–5; Mal. 2:11). The city taken by David will now be taken in judgment (Isa. 29:1–7).

Analogous to this bifocal casting of Jerusalem's symbolic significance stands the prophetic intertwining of threatened destruction and promised eschatological blessing. Because Jerusalem is so sinful, it must be judged and destroyed (Isa. 1:21; 32:13–14; Ezek. 22:19); the guilty must be brought to account (Zeph. 1:12). At one level this judgment is executed in the horrors of the exile (2 Kings 24:13, 20; Jer. 42:18; 44:13; Lam. 1–5); but according to Jesus this is not the only judgment Jerusalem must face (Matt. 23:37–39).

*Jerusalem's Glory.* Yet all is not gloom. Nations used by God to punish Jerusalem must themselves be called to account (Ps. 137:1, 4–9; Isa. 10:12). Promises for the restoration of Jerusalem following the exile become linked with promises of eschatological blessing (Isa. 40:1–5; 54:11–17; 60; cf. Hag. 2:19; Zech. 1:12–17). Yahweh can no more forget Jerusalem than a woman can forget her child (Isa. 49:13–18). Ezekiel anticipates the return of Yahweh to Zion (43:1–9). In Zion, Yahweh will inaugurate his eschatological rule (Pss. 146:10; 149:2; Isa. 24:23; 52:7; Obad. 21; Mic. 4:7; Zeph. 3:14; Zech. 14:9), whether personally or through Messiah (Zech. 9:9–10), his servant (Isa. 40–66).

Although there are frequent demands that Jerusalem (and by metonymy all Israel) repent as a presage of the eschatological glory, yet ultimately Jerusalem's glory rests on God's saving intervention (Isa. 62; 66:10–15). He it is who washes away the filth of Zion's sin (Isa. 4:4). Jerusalem will become the eschatological capital

(Isa. 16:1; 45:14), will be awarded a new name expressive of Yahweh's delight and rights (Isa. 62:4, 12; Jer. 3:17; 33:16; Ezek. 48:35; Zech. 8:3), will be built with unfathomable opulence (Isa. 54:11–17), and will be secure from all enemies (Isa. 52:1; Joel 2:32; 3:17). The redeemed who return to Zion constitute the holy remnant (2 Kings 19:31; Isa. 4:3; 35:10; 51:11)—a theme which suggests that the early return to Jerusalem after the exile constitutes an anticipation of an eschatological return (Isa. 27:13; 62:11; Zech. 6:8, 15). The temple is central to the city (Ezek. 40–48; cf. Isa. 44:28; Zech. 1:16).

The eschatological glory to be experienced by Zion is accompanied by a transformation of nature and by long and abundant life, heroic strength, economic prosperity, joy, and thankful praise (Isa. 11; 12:4–6; 61:3; 62:8–9; 65:20; Jer. 33:11; Zech. 2:4, 5). Although there is repeated assurance that the nations that have savaged Jerusalem will themselves be ravaged, in another emphasis the nations of the earth, after an unsuccessful campaign against Jerusalem (Isa. 29:7–8; Mic. 4:11), join in a great pilgrimage to Zion, where they are taught by Yahweh to live according to his will (Isa. 2:2–4; Jer. 33:9; Mic. 4:1–3; Zech. 2:11). In all this Jerusalem retains a central place.

*Jerusalem in NT Teachings.* In the NT "Zion" occurs only seven times: Romans 9:33 and 1 Peter 2:6 (citing Isa. 28:16), Romans 11:26 (citing Isa. 59:20), Matthew 21:5 and John 12:15 (cf. Zech. 9:9; Isa. 40:9; 62:11—all with reference to the inhabitants addressed as the daughter of Zion), and in two independent uses, Hebrews 12:22 and Revelation 14:1 (both "Mount Zion"). But "Jerusalem" occurs 139 times. Even many of the occurrences in the Gospels and Acts that at first glance seem to bear nothing more than topographical significance tend to fall into identifiable patterns. Jerusalem is still "the holy city" (Matt. 4:5; 27:53), the home of the temple and its priestly service, as well as the center of rabbinic authority. Jesus must die in the Jerusalem area (Matt. 16:21; Mark 10:33–34; Luke 9:31), in direct conflict with these central Jewish institutions. His death and resurrection stand in fulfillment of all they represented; but the irony and tragedy of the sacrifice is that the people connected with these institutions recognized little of this salvation-historical fulfillment. The temple had become a den of thieves (Mark 11:17), and Jerusalem itself lived up to its reputation as killer of the prophets (Matt. 23:37–39; cf. Luke 13:33). Jerusalem must be destroyed by foreign invaders (Matt. 23:38; Luke 19:43–44; 21:20, 24). In Acts Jerusalem is the hub from which the gospel radiates outward (Acts 1:8), the site both of Pentecost and of the apostolic council; but if it is the moral and salvation-historical center of Christianity, it is also the ideological home of Judaizers who

wish to make the entire Mosaic code a precondition for Gentile conversion to Jesus Messiah—a position Paul condemns (Gal. 1:8–9). Paul himself, however, is quick to recognize how beholden all other believers are to the Christian remnant of Jerusalem (Gal. 2:10; 2 Cor. 8–9) which in a salvation-historical sense is truly the mother church. At the same time, Paul uses Jerusalem or Mount Zion in a modified typology to align freedom, Christians, and the blessings of the heavenly Jerusalem over against law, Jesus without Christ, and Mount Sinai (Gal. 4:21–31).

A still deeper connection links OT treatment of Jerusalem to the “heavenly Jerusalem” (Heb. 12:22), to which Christian believers have already come, and to “Jerusalem above” (Gal. 4:26), which in an extended typology embraces new covenant believers and relegates geographical Jerusalem and its children to slavery: Jesus fulfills and to that extent replaces the OT types and shadows that anticipated him. Jesus enters Jerusalem as messianic king (Mark 11:1–11) and is concerned to see Jerusalem’s temple pure (Mark 11:15–17) precisely because the city and temple anticipate his own impending death and resurrection—events that shift the focal meeting place between God and man to Jesus himself (Mark 14:57–58; John 2:19–22). This constitutes part of a broader pattern, worked out in some detail in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in which the gospel and its entailments simultaneously fulfill OT institutions and expectations and render them obsolete (e.g., Heb. 8:13). The ultimate goal is the new Jerusalem.

**Jerusalem and the Church.** Difficulties in rightly relating OT and NT materials on Jerusalem have contributed to the church’s changing perceptions regarding itself, the Jews, and Jerusalem. Especially in the wake of the destruction of A.D. 132–35 Christians saw themselves as the exclusive heirs of the covenant people of old: Christians constituted the true Jerusalem. Geographical Jerusalem became a focal point for Christian piety and tradition, an ideal location for monasteries and basilicas, especially after Helena, mother of Constantine, devoted great attention to Christian sites around the city. The Constantinian settlement (early fourth century) continued to see Christianity as the legitimate heir of Judaism, but its mingling of ecclesiastical and spiritual authority led both to persecution of Jews and to substantial disillusionment when Rome, perceived as the successor of Jerusalem, was ransacked by barbarians. The latter event prompted Augustine to write his famous *City of God*, which shifted the focus of the true city from both Jerusalem and Rome to the spiritual dimension; but this stance was easily overlooked during the height of medieval Catholicism, when Rome’s authority frequently extended itself to all temporal spheres. The Ref-

ormation, and especially the Puritan awakening in England, while preserving a certain harshness toward Jews, became progressively interested in Jewish evangelism—not in order to restore the Jews to Jerusalem, but to reincorporate them into the people of God and thus (in the case of the Puritan hope) to usher in the expected millennial age.

Modern theological treatments frequently focus on the replacement theme (W. D. Davies, *Gospel and Land*) or use the city as a cipher for a colorful intermingling of sociology and Barthianism (J. Ellul, *Meaning of the City*). Conservatives tend to dispute how much of the OT promises regarding Jerusalem’s restoration are taken up in NT typological fulfillment. Positions range from a thoroughgoing affirmation of typology (various forms of amillennialism) to equally thoroughgoing disjunction (various forms of dispensationalism). The typological cannot be ignored, nor can the NT’s substantial silence on the future of Jerusalem and the land; but some passages, notably Luke 21:21–24, anticipate the restoration of Jerusalem’s fortunes, whether in the empirical city or in the eschatological antitype.

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See also JERUSALEM, NEW.

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