

Hebrews 12:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

Analysis

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, This magnificent verse contrasts Sinai's terror with Zion's glory. 'But ye are come' (proselēlythate, προσεληλύθατε, perfect tense—'you have come and remain') indicates believers' present, permanent standing. Unlike Sinai (external, temporary, terrifying), we approach Mount Zion—'the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.' This is the ultimate reality foreshadowed by earthly Jerusalem, the eternal city prepared by God (Hebrews 11:10, 16; Revelation 21-22).

'An innumerable company of angels' (myriasin angelōn, μυριάσιν ἀγγέλων, 'ten thousands of angels' or 'myriads') describes the vast angelic host worshiping God. Unlike Sinai where God's presence drove people away, in the heavenly Jerusalem we join angels in joyful worship. The phrase may connect to Daniel 7:10 ('thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him') and Revelation 5:11, depicting innumerable angels surrounding God's throne.

This illustrates the New Covenant's superiority. Believers have already, spiritually, arrived at heaven's throne room. Though still on earth physically, we worship with angels around God's throne through Christ. This isn't merely future hope but present reality accessed by faith. Reformed theology emphasizes believers' union

with Christ seated in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6), making corporate worship a participation in heaven's ongoing adoration of the Lamb.

Historical Context

Mount Zion, Jerusalem's hill where David established his capital and Solomon built the temple, became synonymous with God's presence among His people. Prophets used Zion imagery to describe God's ultimate dwelling with redeemed humanity (Isaiah 2:2-4; 60:1-22; Zechariah 8:3). The 'heavenly Jerusalem' transcends earthly Jerusalem (destroyed 70 AD), pointing to eternal reality. Jewish apocalyptic literature (2 Baruch, 4 Ezra) described heavenly Jerusalem existing in heaven, descending at history's consummation. Hebrews declares believers already have access to this reality through Christ. First-century readers, likely before Jerusalem's destruction, needed to understand that true worship wasn't tied to earthly temple but occurred in heavenly sanctuary through Christ's mediation.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does understanding that you've already 'come to Mount Zion' change your perspective on worship and spiritual reality?
2. What difference does it make that you worship alongside 'innumerable company of angels' whenever you gather with believers?
3. In what ways should you cultivate awareness of participating in heavenly worship even while still on earth?

Interlinear Text

ἀλλὰ προσεληλύθατε Σιὼν ὅρει καὶ πόλει θεοῦ
But ye are come Sion unto mount and unto the city God
G235 G4334 G4622 G3735 G2532 G4172 G2316

ζῶντος Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἐπουρανίω καὶ μυριάσιν
of the living Jerusalem the heavenly and to an innumerable company
G2198 G2419 G2032 G2532 G3461

ἀγγέλων
of angels
G32

Additional Cross-References

Galatians 4:26 (References Jerusalem): But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

Philippians 3:20 (Parallel theme): For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

Revelation 14:1 (Parallel theme): And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

Psalms 48:2 (Parallel theme): Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

Revelation 21:2 (References God): And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Isaiah 51:11 (Parallel theme): Therefore the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

Revelation 22:19 (References God): And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Revelation 3:12 (References God): Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

Hebrews 11:10 (References God): For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Hebrews 13:14 (Parallel theme): For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

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