

Isaiah 33:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.

Analysis

Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities (קָרֵא צִיּוֹן קָרֵית מוֹעֵדֵנו) chazeh Tsion qiryat mo'adenu)—behold (קָרֵא, chazah) Zion, city of our מוֹעֵד (mo'ed, appointed feasts, assemblies). **Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation** (עַיְנֶיךָ) eynekha tire'enah Yerushalaim naveh sha'anah)—Jerusalem as a (naveh, habitation, dwelling) that is (sha'anah, quiet, tranquil, secure). **A tabernacle that shall not be taken down... not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken** (אָהָל) ohel bal-yits'an bal-yissa yetedotaw lanetsach vekhol-chavalayv bal-yinatequ).

Zion, city of pilgrimage festivals (Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles), will be permanently secure—a tent (אָהָל, ohel) that's never taken down, stakes (יַתְּדִים, yated) never removed, cords (חֶבֶל, chevel) never broken. The tent imagery evokes Tabernacle—God's movable dwelling—but promises permanence. Hebrews 12:22-24 says believers 'are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.' Revelation 21:2-3: 'I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God... the tabernacle of God is with men.'

Historical Context

Jerusalem's three annual pilgrimage festivals (Deuteronomy 16:16) made it 'city of appointed times.' Assyrian siege threatened to end this—no festivals under occupation. God's deliverance preserved worship. The tent metaphor contrasts nomadic insecurity with permanent dwelling. Tabernacle was portable; Temple was permanent but destroyed (586 BC). Ultimate fulfillment: eternal city where God dwells with humanity (Revelation 21:3), never again disrupted.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Jerusalem as 'city of our appointed feasts' picture the church as gathering place for worship?
2. What does the permanent tent metaphor teach about security in God's presence—no more displacement or exile?
3. How do you experience Zion's stability now as citizen of heavenly Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22-24)?

Interlinear Text

תְּרָא יְנֵה עִינֵּב מַזְעֵד כֵּן קָרְבָּת צֵי זָן בְּ	upon Zion the city of our solemnities thine eyes shall see	H2372 H6726 H7151 H4150 H5869 H7200
בְּלֹא פָּל שָׁאָת נִזְבְּנָה יְרֻשָּׁלָם	a quiet a tabernacle that shall not be taken down	H1077 H6813
Jerusalem habitation H3389 H5116 H7600 H168		
בְּלֹא עִסְקָה יִתְדָּחַת לֹא צָחָק כָּל	be removed not one of the stakes thereof shall ever	H1077 H5265 H3489 H5331 H3605
בְּלֹא סְבָכָה יִגְתְּלַחֲה	thereof be broken	H1077 H2256 H5423

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 46:5 (Parallel theme): God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.

Isaiah 32:18 (Parallel theme): And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places;

Isaiah 54:2 (Parallel theme): Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes;

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