

Jeremiah 31:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; As yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah and in the cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity; The LORD bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness.

Analysis

God promises that Jerusalem and its surrounding cities will again pronounce a blessing over Zion: 'The LORD bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness.' The title 'habitation of justice' contrasts with the corrupt city that oppressed the poor and perverted justice. The restoration will not merely rebuild structures but establish righteousness. The 'mountain of holiness' refers to the temple mount, which will again be the place where God dwells and His people worship in holiness.

This vision of Jerusalem as a place of justice and holiness points beyond the historical return to the ultimate city of God. Revelation 21-22 describes the new Jerusalem where nothing unclean enters, where God dwells with His people, and where justice perfectly reigns. The church is presently this 'habitation of justice' insofar as it embodies righteousness and worships in spirit and truth. Yet the full realization awaits Christ's return.

The phrase 'as yet they shall use this speech' indicates that blessing will replace cursing. Jerusalem had become a byword of destruction and judgment (Jeremiah 24:9), but it will again be associated with God's favor. This reflects the biblical pattern: what God judges, He ultimately restores and blesses. His purposes are always redemptive, even when they include judgment.

Historical Context

The returned exiles did rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, and worship resumed. However, the city remained under foreign control and never achieved the glory envisioned by the prophets during the Second Temple period. This pointed forward to the true fulfillment in Christ, who established a new temple (His body and the church), gathered a new people, and promised a new Jerusalem descending from heaven (Revelation 21:2).

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What does it mean for Jerusalem to be a 'habitation of justice'—how should God's people embody justice in their communities?
2. How is the church both the partial fulfillment of this promise now and awaiting its complete fulfillment in the new creation?
3. In what ways does restoration include not just rebuilding physical structures but establishing righteousness and holiness?

Interlinear Text

כֹּה	יֹאמְרוּ ו	יְהוָה	צְבָאוֹת	אֱלֹהֵי י	יִשְׂרָאֵל ל	ע וד
H3541	As yet they shall use H559	The LORD H3068	of hosts H6635	the God H430	of Israel H3478	H5750
	יֹאמְרוּ ו	אֶת	הַדָּבָר	הַזֶּה	בְּאֶרֶץ	יְהוּדָה
	As yet they shall use H559	H853	this speech H1697	H2088	in the land H776	of Judah H3063
	וּבְעָרֵי יו	בְּשׁוּבוֹ י	אֶת	שְׁבוּתָם	יְבָרֵכֶם	
	and in the cities H5892	thereof when I shall bring again H7725	H853	their captivity H7622	bless H1288	
	יְהוָה	נְוֵה	צֶדֶק	הַר	הַקֹּדֶשׁ:	
	The LORD H3068	thee O habitation H5116	of justice H6664	and mountain H2022	of holiness H6944	

Additional Cross-References

Zechariah 8:3 (Holy): Thus saith the LORD; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain.

Isaiah 1:26 (Righteousness): And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.

Jeremiah 50:7 (Righteousness): All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers.