

Psalm 122:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together:

Analysis

Jerusalem's unique character is highlighted: 'Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together.' The Hebrew 'chabar' (compact together) means joined, united, bound together - emphasizing architectural and social cohesion. Unlike scattered villages, Jerusalem's tight construction created unity, mutual protection, and concentrated worship. This compactness symbolizes the unity of God's people gathered around His presence. The physical architecture mirrors spiritual reality: believers are 'fitly framed together' (Ephesians 2:21) into a holy temple. The verse celebrates not just the city's stones but the people who gather there as one body. Unity characterizes God's people when they assemble for worship. Division and fragmentation contradict the nature of the church as God designed it.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern cities were typically compact for defensive purposes, surrounded by walls with tightly packed buildings. Jerusalem's construction on multiple hills required careful engineering to create a cohesive urban space. The city's layout facilitated community life and made the temple accessible to all residents and pilgrims.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does physical architecture serve as metaphor for spiritual community?
2. What produces 'compactness' or unity among God's people gathered for worship?
3. In what ways does modern individualism threaten the 'compact' nature of Christian community?
4. How does Paul's use of architectural imagery (Ephesians 2:19-22) develop this psalm's themes?
5. What practices strengthen the bonds that hold believers together as one body?

Interlinear Text

וְיַרְשֵׁל מִן־יְהוָה שְׁחַבְּרָה תְּחִזֵּן לְהַעֲמִיד בָּבְנֵי־הָעָם כִּי־עַיר
Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together
H3389 H1129 H5892 H2266 H0 H3162

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 5:9 (Parallel theme): So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward.

Psalms 147:2 (References Jerusalem): The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.

Nehemiah 4:6 (Parallel theme): So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.