

Psalm 48:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

Analysis

Mount Zion is 'beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth.' The Hebrew yapheh (beautiful) suggests perfect proportion and attractiveness. 'Sides of the north' may reference ancient mythological language for the divine mountain, applied here to Jerusalem. Zion is 'the city of the great King'--God's royal residence.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern mythology located the divine mountain in the north. By applying this language to Zion, Israel claimed that the true dwelling of the true God was Jerusalem, not mythological Zaphon.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Zion's beauty point to the greater beauty of God's presence?
2. In what sense is Jerusalem 'the joy of the whole earth'?

Interlinear Text

בְּאֵלֶּה	נֹזֶל	וְשָׁמֶן	כָּל	רָזֶה	בְּאֵלֶּה	כָּרְמֵל
Beautiful	for situation	the joy	H3605	of the whole earth	is mount	Zion
H3303	H5131	H4885		H776	H2022	H6726
בְּבָנֶה	לְהַרְחֵב	כְּלָבִים	וְעַמְּדָה	בְּרִכְתִּים	בְּבָנֶה	בְּבָנֶה
on the sides	of the north	the city	King	of the great		
H3411	H6828	H7151	H4428	H7227		

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 50:2 (Parallel theme): Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.

Matthew 5:35 (Kingdom): Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

Lamentations 2:15 (Parallel theme): All that pass by clap their hands at thee; they hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying, Is this the city that men call The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth?

Isaiah 14:13 (Parallel theme): For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

Hebrews 12:22 (Parallel theme): 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,

Ezekiel 20:6 (Parallel theme): In the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands:

Daniel 11:16 (Parallel theme): But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed.

Isaiah 66:10 (Parallel theme): Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her:

Daniel 8:9 (Parallel theme): And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land.

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