

The Holy Mountain (Zion)



Mount Zion, Jerusalem
By W. H. Bartlett (1809-1854)

In the 125th Psalm we find the words, "They that trust in the LORD *shall be* as mount Zion, *which* cannot be removed, *but* abideth for ever."

Mount Zion, in the Bible, means any mountain with a temple atop it. In the East, people feel that the highest place is the best place to build a temple because it is closer to God.

Our tradition is that St. Thomas, the doubting Apostle, was the founder of Christianity in India, and built a church outside Madras on a hill.

The people regard these mountains as very sacred. People may be seen going up and down the mountain at any time of the day or night, to worship at the temple. Even if there are wild animals on the mountain, the people are not afraid because they believe they will not be harmed on the holy mountain.

In the summer, people voluntarily carry water up the mountain to water the trees and grass. Anyone who is hungry is free to eat of the fruit of any of the trees on this mountain, but no one may destroy or deface anything there; not even a stone is moved or touched in an area fifty feet from the base of the mountain, to the very top.

I remember once when the British wanted to build a railroad which would destroy part of one of these holy mountains, that the people became desperate. God's holy mountain must not be touched. When the day came for the machinery to move the earth of the mountain, all the people came, even women with little babies in their arms, and children, and laid down in front of the earth-moving equipment. They would rather lay down their lives than to see the sacred mountain defaced. These people believed that God was in the mountain.

In the book of John we find an example of the common practice of worshipping in the mountain; this is where Jesus was speaking with the woman of Samaria, who said to him: [John 4:20] "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."

Let us look for a moment at the first verse of Psalm 121, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." I do not believe this translation is quite correct, for I am sure the Psalmist knew that God did not live in the hills, even though the pagans who lived around about the Israelites often believed this way.

In the next verse, we read, "My help *cometh* from the LORD, which made heaven and earth." Because of this, I feel that the writer of the Psalm was asking a question in the first verse: "Shall I lift mine eyes unto the hills ...?" and then in the second verse, answering this with the glad affirmation: "My help *cometh* from the LORD, which made heaven and earth."

We Christians are like Mount Zion, because God lives in us by His Spirit. [Psalm 125:1 - "They that trust in the LORD *shall be* as mount Zion, *which* cannot be removed, *but* abideth for ever."] He will never leave us or forsake us. He will provide our needs and sustain us, because He abides within us.

And as Jesus said to the woman of Samaria [John 4:21-24], "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the father ...But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."

What a wonderful blessing this is for believers of today. Those who trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be removed and that in this, the Holy Spirit age, we may worship Him in spirit and in truth. God bless you.

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