

# **The Gates of Zion**

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## **Introduction**

Gates provided access to the city of Jerusalem and the Temple mount. The names of these gates often reflected their location and usage. Keeping these names straight is complicated because the walls of Jerusalem changed over time – expanding in times of prosperity and shrinking after periods of deprivation. When the walls and gates of Jerusalem were rebuilt, they were often identified by different names.

In the Old Testament, one reads of Benjamin’s Gate, the Beautiful Gate, the Corner Gate, the East Gate, the First Gate, the Fish Gate, the Fountain Gate, the Gate of Ephraim, the Gate of Foundation, the Gate of Joshua, the Horse Gate, the King’s Gate, the Middle Gate, the Miphkad Gate, the New Gate, the North Gate, the Old Gate, the Potsherd Gate, the Prison Gate, the Refuse Gate, the Shallecheth Gate, the Sheep Gate, the South Gate, the Upper Gate, the Valley Gate, the Water Gate, the West Gate, etc. The New Testament refers to the Sheep Gate (John 5:2) and the Beautiful Gate of the Temple (Acts 3:10).

## **Physical Significance**

The physical gates of a city afforded protection and peace (Josh. 2:1-7; 6:1-2; Psa. 127:1; 107:16; 147:13). Physical gates of a city were also a place of assembly and association (Ruth 4:1-12; cf. Deut. 25:5-10).

## **Spiritual Significance**

The gates of spiritual Zion provide protection and peace (Psa. 122:1-9; 147:12-20). The gates of spiritual Zion are also a place of assembly and association (Psa. 100:1-5; 118:15-29).

## **Conclusion**

In Psalms 87, the sons of Korah exclaimed, “The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the other dwelling places of Jacob” (Psa. 87:1-7). Affirming the superiority of the New Covenant over the Old, the writer of Hebrew said, “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven...” (Heb. 12:18-24).

Have you entered the gates of spiritual Zion? Enjoy the protection and peace that belong to citizens of the city of God. Share in the blessings of assembly and association that belong to members of the Lord’s church. Render obedience to the gospel of Christ while there is time and opportunity.