

Zion, the City of God

by George Warnock

The true Israel's understanding of God's promise is that He will do better than at their beginnings and has prepared a new inheritance, too great to measure, in the form of the New Jerusalem.

Scripture: Psalm 46:4, Ezekiel 36:11, Romans 4:13, Romans 8:17, Hebrews 1:2, Hebrews 11:9-10, Hebrews 11:16, Hebrews 12:22

Topics: "Heavenly City", "Eternal Inheritance"

Description

George Warnock preaches about the contrast between the cities built by fallen men, which lead to corruption and chaos, and the heavenly city prepared by God for His people. He emphasizes the importance of God's men, like Abraham, who continue to seek a city with foundations built by God. Warnock uses the analogy of a father offering his estranged sons a vast inheritance, symbolizing God's promise of a heavenly city to His people. He challenges the audience to set their sights on the heavenly Jerusalem, the true Zion, where believers become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

Transcript

"There is a river, The streams whereof shall make glad The city of God..." (Ps. 46:4; See Ps. 87:2-3).

Cain is the first man mentioned as having built a "city." God's men were not builders of cities, but continued to look for "a better country." The cities of fallen men invariably lead to visions of greatness, to merchandising and profit-making, and eventually to corruption and chaos. God's men, like Abraham, continue to look "for a City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10). Therefore the true Israel, having caught the true vision, are quite prepared to forget the whole land of their former heritage, that they might possess the City that God has prepared. (See Heb. 11:15-16.) The true Israel understands what God meant when He said, "I... will do better unto you than at your beginnings" (Ezek. 36:11). Let us use an illustration.

As my sons grow older I promise them a piece of land on the old homestead. Through disobedience they leave home, and the promise remains unfulfilled, and seems to come to nought. They are scattered far and wide and the homestead goes into ruin. But in the meantime I acquire a vast inheritance... too great to even measure... a land filled with rivers and lakes and fruitful plains and meadows and forests and treasures unspeakable. When my estranged sons return home I show them the new land, and tell them it is all theirs to own and possess. But in dullness of heart they reply: "I can't believe that fable... I just want the two acres you promised me when I was a boy..." Will I give them what they want? I suppose I would,

but I would be grieved that they would doubt my word and generosity, and settle for the two acres. Will God give natural Israel the little parcel of land they are striving to hold on to? Well, it's part of the world--and the whole world is Abraham's inheritance (Rom. 4:13). But once they catch a glimpse of the New Jerusalem, such as Abraham did, they like their father will consider themselves to be but foreigners in a strange land (Heb. 11:9-10), After the Captivity, they might have returned to their land, and occupied it in peace and safety, had they walked in obedience. But now, with hearts turned to God, they are no longer excited about a few acres of real estate... for they have caught a vision of something better, much better: "Now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. 11:16). Now they have come to the true Zion, "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb. 12:22). Their Lord and Master is "heir of all things" (Heb. 1:2), and as they suffer with Him and bear His reproach, they too become "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17). This is no small inheritance, for all things have been given to the Son, and they as "kings and priests unto God" are joint-heirs with Him!

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