

God's City – Jerusalem – Awesome

By Pastor Don Ginkel

Cities always seem to rise and dominate the land. Mention Washington D.C., and you think of the United States; Paris is France; London is England; Rome is Italy; Moscow is Russia; and Jerusalem is Israel. Jerusalem. This, by far, is the most important city on earth for all time!

Nadine and I took a trip to the Holy Land. We ate by the Sea of Galilee and stood in the water of the Jordan River. Of all the places we went to, the City of Jerusalem was the crowning jewel. But God has now built a New Jerusalem, a city of unparalleled beauty.

Hebrews 11:8-10,16, “By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger (*an alien*) in a foreign country (*you are also living in a “foreign country”*); he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him in the same promise. For he was looking forward (*be sure you do the same*) to the **City** (*New Jerusalem*) with foundations (*suggests permanency*), whose architect and builder is God. . . . Instead, they (*and other OT saints*) were longing for (*not Palestine or the earthly Jerusalem*) a better country—a heavenly one. There God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a **City** for them (*and He has prepare the City for you, too!*).”

The heaven of God and the new heaven and new earth created for man shall be joined, shall be the Holy City, New Jerusalem, God's Tabernacle with men, God tabernacling with them, they His people, He with them, their God. The final consummation of all God's plans in the creation of the world has been reached. . . . No more dead bodies of saints in the graves of the old earth, no more souls of saints in the Jerusalem above, no more souls on the old earth in mortal bodies. . . . In this vision (Revelation 21 and 22) the holiness of God's union and communion is stressed (*Interpretation of St. John's Revelation*, pp. 619-620, by R. C. H. Lenski).

*Come, we that love the Lord, And let our joys be known;
Join in a song with sweet accord, Join in a song with sweet accord
And thus surround the throne, And thus surround the throne.
We're marching to Zion, Beautiful, beautiful Zion;
We're marching upward to Zion, The beautiful city of God.*

Hebrews 12:22-23, “But you have come to Mount Zion (*Israel came to the physical mountain; we are going to the heavenly Zion*), to the heavenly Jerusalem, The City of the living God (*we will see it with our own eyes, and we will live there with God forever*). You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful gathering (*we will see them and their joyful assembly*), to the church of the firstborn, who names

are written in heaven (*Revelation 21:27b*). You have come to God (*and His City*), the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect.”

Life and perfection are found wherever you go in the City! Paradise lost is now Paradise regained and more! The opening chapters of Genesis tell of man in his innocence, then sin and fading joy. The closing chapters of Revelation tell of a new Paradise with unfading joy. God will again walk and talk with His people. What a magnificent City! What an awesome God! Can we hear a “Hallelujah”? Can we hear an “Amen”?

*At last the march shall end, the wearied ones shall rest;
The pilgrims find their home at last, Jerusalem the blest.
Rejoice, rejoice, give thanks and sing!*

Dear heavenly Father, in great compassion You called Your chosen people from Egypt and led them to the Promised Land. In Jerusalem You revealed salvation through Your Son. Please help Your pilgrims in this generation. I look for a new city, Jerusalem above. Father, help me see this City now by faith. Holy Spirit, enlighten my weak mind as I search the holy Scriptures that, learning more about Jerusalem the golden, I may yearn for the day when I say farewell to everything here and join You there. In the name of Jesus, my only Savior and Redeemer. Amen.

(*Our Awesome God*, pp. 97,99,101,105,106, by Don Ginkel). Student Guide #160 and Leader’s Guide #161 from Church Press, Inc.

OUR AWESOME GOD

Lesson 9: HIS CITY—AWESOME

Introductory Thoughts
God’s Promise of the City
How Isaiah Saw It
How Abraham Saw It
How Paul Saw It
How John Saw It
How You Will See It