

## A New Heavens and a New Earth

# The New Jerusalem

*The name of the city of my God [is] new Jerusalem.—Revelation 3:12*

*George Tabac*

The new Jerusalem is a beautiful picture of the kingdom found in chapters 21 and 22 of Revelation. As we review the architectural and mathematical details of this magnificent pictorial structure, notice how it would be absolutely impossible to design it without divine inspiration. It corroborates the entire Bible's prophetic teaching regarding God's plan for mankind's salvation in the Millennium through the instrumentality of "The Christ," as well as correlating the dimensions of the sun, earth, and moon, something that would have been impossible to know thousands of years ago, except by the Creator.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; ... And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Revelation 21:1,2).

The setting for the New Jerusalem is after Armageddon when the present ecclesiastical heavens and the evil social structure of earth have passed away. The New Jerusalem is actually a picture of the kingdom overall. It begins in the heavenly phase: Jesus together with his Church becomes the spiritual government. When the "heavens" class is complete, the New Jerusalem symbolically comes down from heaven to picture the beginning of the earthly phase of the kingdom.

Revelation 21:16 tells us that the New Jerusalem is a perfect cube with length, width, and height of 12,000 furlongs (fifteen hundred miles).

### **The Twelve Gates**

Revelation 21:12,13 tells us the city had a great and high wall with twelve gates, three on each side facing the four points of the compass. Verses 14 and 17 tell us the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in each the names of the twelve apostles of the lamb, and the wall was 144 cubits.

Why would an architect put twelve foundations under a wall that goes around the city? And what does the wall being 144 cubits mean?

We believe the 144-cubit wall refers to the thickness of the walls, not its height. The wall completely surrounds New Jerusalem. Not only is there a wall on four sides, there is a wall on the top and bottom as well.

But why have walls on the top and bottom? Walls in ancient times were built to protect all who lived inside them. This is also true for New Jerusalem. The walls on the top and bottom show us an absolute, total, perfect protection, even from spirit beings. These walls picture the Church as all-powerful divine spirit beings who will keep all enemies restrained or bound so they can not hurt those within.

### **Twelve Foundations = Twelve Apostles**

Because the wall completely surrounds New Jerusalem, including the top and bottom, we can understand why the wall has twelve foundations. There are twelve edges to a cube, edges that surround and hold the cube together. This beautifully shows how the twelve apostles are the foundations upon which the walls (a picture of the Church) are built and held together.

Because there are twelve edges to a cube, picturing the twelve foundations, and each edge is 12,000 furlongs long, we have a beautiful picture of the entire Church because twelve foundations or edges multiplied by 12,000 furlongs in length equals 144,000. Thus the Church class of 144,000 will completely surround the city and be a wall of protection to those inside.

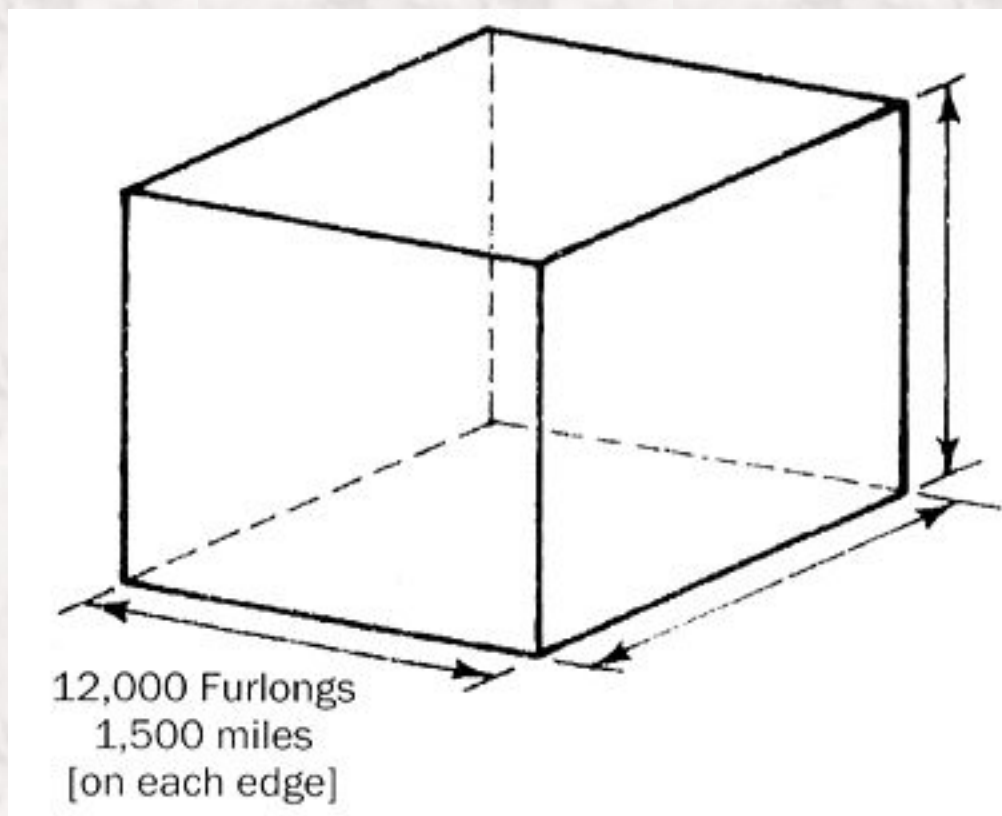
The area of one wall of New Jerusalem is  $12,000 \times 12,000$  furlongs or 144 million square furlongs. 144,000 multiplied by 1,000 years is 144 million, a picture of how the Church of 144,000 will be a wall of protection for the thousand years of the Millennial kingdom.

The symbol continues to teach what could only have been known to the Creator of the universe when this vision was given. The area of one wall of the cube is 144 million square cubits. The area of all six sides is 864 million square furlongs. Consider these words from Jesus: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matthew 13:43). The diameter of the sun is 864,000 miles. Thus New Jerusalem's walls, with an area of 864 million square furlongs, is the same as the sun's diameter of 864,000 miles multiplied by a thousand years. This illustrates how the Church (the walls of this city) will shine as the sun to enlighten and protect all within the city for the thousand-year duration of the kingdom.

But is it correct to compare units of measure such as furlongs with feet and miles? Yes it is! First, we believe feet and miles are divinely appointed units of measure because they are based on the divisions of twelve: twelve inches to one foot,  $12 \times 440$  feet to a mile, etc. Twelve is a divine basic building block: twelve sons of Jacob, twelve tribes of Israel,  $2 \times 12 = 24$  divisions of the priesthood, twelve hours in a day, twelve hours in a night,  $12 \times 12 = 144$  [thousand] members of the Church, etc. Second, when we convert the dimensions of New Jerusalem to units of measure based on twelve (i.e., feet and miles), it produces beautiful, harmonious lessons. It correlates with the dimensions of our sun, moon, and earth because the same great architect brought them into existence using this same divine measuring rod based on units of twelve.

New Jerusalem's measurements also correlate with the size of the earth. New Jerusalem is a cube

12,000 furlongs on an edge. *Smith's Bible Dictionary* says one furlong is 220 yards (660 feet). Thus 12,000 furlongs  $\times$  660 feet = 7,920,000 feet. The *New American Standard* translates 12,000 furlongs directly into 1,500 miles (1,500 miles  $\times$  5,280 feet to a mile = 7,920,000 feet). The diameter of earth is 7,920 miles and New Jerusalem is 7,920,000 feet on each side.



We stand in awe as we behold the work of the great architect of the universe who designed and created our earth and sun. Then he gives us the New Jerusalem picture with measurements that correlate exactly with the dimensions of earth and sun.

Only our great God and creator knew these dimensions thousands of years ago when the Bible was written. He gave them to strengthen our faith and show us that this beautiful picture of New Jerusalem was designed by him. This last symbol in the Bible, the New Jerusalem, is his final way of telling us that everything he gave us in the Bible is true and will be fulfilled! The Church will indeed shine as the sun in God's thousand-year kingdom! God will indeed bless all the families of the earth in "The New Jerusalem!"

### **Gradual Progressive Steps Pictured**

The New Jerusalem illustrates the progressive steps that all must take in the kingdom to receive everlasting life. When mankind is gradually raised from the tomb, their reawakening will be outside the city where they hear the call from Jesus and the Church: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Revelation 22:17). For one to receive life one must have a thirst or desire to do right, to want to partake of the water of life. This call will be heard when one

is outside the city walls. The only way one can enter this city to drink the water of life is through the gates which picture consecration to righteousness.

“Blessed are those who **wash their robes**, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city” (Revelation 22:14, *NASB*). The resurrected must do something before they can enter the city: they must wash their robes. These robes refer to their own unclean condition. Their condition of heart must be washed and cleansed before they can enter, a process similar to the priests who washed at the laver before they could enter the Holy of the Tabernacle. Those who want access to the trees of life by entering through the gates of the city, must repent, wash themselves, and make a consecration to righteousness.

Consecration at the gate is also shown in how the gates were constructed: “The twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a **single pearl**” (Revelation 21:21, *NASB*). Jesus gave a parable about a single pearl: “The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it” (Matthew 13:45,46).

The primary lesson in this parable is for the Church. The Church sees the pearl as the high calling to immortality and gives everything in full, complete consecration for that pearl of great price. Similarly mankind will hear a call, an invitation to enter through this “gate of pearl” which they will see as the opportunity to gain perfect, everlasting human life.

“It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates **twelve angels**; and names were written on them, which are the names of the **twelve tribes of the sons of Israel**” (Revelation 21:12, *NASB*). At each gate there is an angel or messenger, a picture of the Ancient Worthies (see Hebrews 11). They will be the earthly instrumentalities to convey the knowledge of what will be required to enter the city.

The names of the twelve tribes of Israel are on the gates, showing how everyone who enters through the gates will become an Israelite by entering a covenant relationship with God under the New Covenant through consecration. They will become Israelites indeed.

The gates of the city will never be shut: “On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there” (Revelation 21:25, *NIV*). The nighttime of sin and death will be over. Christ and the Church will shine as the sun, and the opportunity to enter through the gates into covenant relationship will be open to **all** throughout the kingdom.

Entering through the gates into the city pictures the start of a walk up the Highway of Holiness: “The twelve gates were twelve pearls,— each one of the gates severally was of one pearl; and the **broadway** of the city was pure gold, as transparent glass” (Revelation 21:21, *Rotherham*). The King James merely refers to the street of the city. But the Greek word refers to a **broadway**! It is the beautiful Highway of Holiness (Isaiah 35:8). The gates into the New Jerusalem open up to the

**broadway**, the Highway of Holiness.

“And he pointed out to me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, issuing forth out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the **broadway** thereof” (Revelation 22:1,2, *Rotherham*). Down the middle of the **broadway**, or Highway of Holiness, will be the grandest river that ever flowed on the face of the earth, a river of water of life coming from the throne of God and the Lamb. This is the same river described in Ezekiel 47, where the water comes out of the temple and goes out the east gate to the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea is a picture of mankind in the tomb of death, all of whom will be raised from the dead since everything the river touches receives life.

But just being raised to life in the kingdom will not provide eternal life. To gain life one must go to the source of that water in the New Jerusalem. One must make a consecration, enter in through the gates, start walking up the highway, and partake of the fruit from the trees of life on each side of the river: “On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations” (Revelation 22:2, *NASB*). In a footnote on this verse Rotherham says: “Based on Ezekiel 47:7 where it refers to ‘very many trees’, here, ‘tree’ may be generic.” In keeping with this observation, we notice it says: “On either side of the river was the tree of life (singular). If there is a tree on both sides of a river, there is more than one tree. Thus “tree” must be generic implying “trees of life” on both sides of the river, as in Ezekiel 47 where there are many trees.

The ending of the kingdom work pictured by New Jerusalem is one of the most sublime in Scripture: “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Revelation 21:4).

“And they shall reign for ever and ever” (Revelation 22:5). Yes, at the end of the kingdom, mankind will have dominion over all the earth as kings; they shall reign forever and ever, throughout the billions of years of eternity as perfect human beings, in direct covenant relationship with God.