

# THE CITY FOURSQUARE

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John 14:2-3, Jesus said, *“In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also”*(John 14:2-3). Revelation 21:9-27 gives a description of the place that has been prepared for us, the place Jesus will come one day to take us to, where we will spend all eternity with him and with the Father.

## **The Lamb’s bride**

The heavenly city of Jerusalem is referred to as “the bride, the Lamb’s wife” (Rev 21:9). Christ is the Lamb (Rev 5:6-12), and his bride is the church (Rom 7:1-4; 2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:22-33; Rev 19:7-9). But here the focus is on the city, which is the eternal dwelling place of both the Lamb and the church (Php 3:20). This city is a spiritual place and there will be nothing physical in heaven, because everything that we see with these eyes is temporal (2 Cor 4:18). But God uses very beautiful and precious things that we are familiar with to give us an idea of how marvelous a home has been prepared for us for eternity. The light of the city is “like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal” (Rev 21:11). The city is surrounded by a great and high wall (Rev 21:12). The wall has twelve gates, with an angel at each gate, and each gate is named for one of the twelve tribes of Israel (Rev 21:12). There are three gates on each of the four sides of the city (Rev 21:13). The wall has twelve foundations, and each one bears one of the names of the twelve apostles (Rev 21:14). Thus, the faithful of both covenants are represented by the twelve gates and the twelve foundations. We can see similar symbols with the 144,000 redeemed in Revelation 7 and 14 and we see it again with the measurement of the wall in 21:17.

## **The measurement of the city**

The angel who spoke with John had a golden reed with which to measure the city and its gates and its wall (Rev 21:15). The city is very unlike any city upon this earth, as it is shaped like a perfect cube. *“And the city lies foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal”* (Rev 21:16). The city is enormous, measuring about 1,360 miles in its length, width and height! Excluding the height, the length and width alone give the city a total area that is about half the size of the continental United States (or about seven times the size of Texas)! The wall is 144 cubits (about 216 feet) high (Rev 21:17), which once again uses the combination of twelve times twelve. The context, which mentions both the tribes of Israel and the apostles of Christ, would therefore include all of God’s redeemed. Thus, the city with its gates and size is open to all (see Rev 3:20;

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22:17; Acts 10:34-35), and, with its wall that is as high as a twenty-storey building, is completely protected and safe from any danger or intruder.

## **The beauty of the city**

The beauty of the city is vividly portrayed in Revelation 21:18-21. The wall is of jasper and the city is “pure gold, like unto clear glass” (Rev 21:18). The twelve foundations are “garnished with all manner of precious stones” (Rev 21:19). Each foundation is made from a different precious stone, and the twelve respective stones are jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprasus, jacinth and amethyst (Rev 21:19-20). Each of the twelve gates is made of one pearl (Rev 21:21). The street of the city is pure gold like transparent glass (Rev 21:21). There is no temple in the city, because “the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it” (Rev 21:22). The city does not depend on the sun or moon for its light, because “the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof” (Rev 21:23). This shows the magnitude of the power and glory of the Father and his Son. The beauty of the city as described in these verses is magnificent beyond compare and difficult to comprehend. How could we not do whatever is necessary to make this place our eternal home?

## **Who will enter the city**

But Revelation 21:24-27 makes it clear that this great city will not be the eternal home for everyone. Only “the nations of them which are *saved* shall walk in the light of it” (Rev 21:24). Only those who believe in the Lord and obey him will be saved (Rom 2:5-11; Eph 2:8; Heb 5:9). But we see again that the gift of eternal salvation is offered to everyone of every nation, as the *nations* of them which are saved will walk in the city foursquare.

According to Revelation 21:27, only “they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life” will enter the city. The verse also says that “there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defiles, neither whatsoever works abomination, or makes a lie.” This agrees with Revelation 21:8. This also agrees with Revelation 20:15, which says, “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Only those in the Lord’s church have their names written in heaven (Heb 12:23). And only the names of those who overcome will remain written there (Rev 3:5).

Therefore, only faithful Christians will enter heaven. We must make sure that we get our names written in the Lamb’s book of life and then keep them there. As we read the glorious description of heaven in Revelation chapter 21, we should be motivated to turn away from everything that does not work God’s righteousness, and keep all of God’s commandments always. Then we will be prepared to enter that great heavenly city one day.