

END TIMES



End Times (Student Lesson Seven)– The New Heaven and Earth – New Jerusalem Illustrated

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Revelation 21:9 – And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

Revelation 21:10 – And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

Revelation 21:11 – Having the glory of God: and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;

Revelation 21:12 – And had a wall great and high, *and* had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:

Revelation 21:13 – On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

Revelation 21:14 – And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

Revelation 21:15 – And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

Revelation 21:16 – And the city lieth 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.

Revelation 21:17 – And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred *and* forty *and* four cubits, *according to* the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

Lesson Notes:

The New Jerusalem illustrated.

(Revelation 21:9-10) – One of the seven Angels that poured out the vials of wrath as a judgment against man and creation (Revelation 16:1) reappears to carry the Apostle away in the spirit and capture a view of the future. The vision of Holy Jerusalem descending from heaven referenced in verse two of this chapter is repeated here with more details.

The angel in the text identifies the city as the bride of the lamb. This does not mean that God is marrying a city, but rather that the city is being presented and prepared like a bride, adorned and dressed for the Husband-Creator (Revelation 21:2). The city is set apart for God and His chosen people (The Bride) to cohabitate forever.

During the age of man, Old Jerusalem was a physical place for God's chosen to gather and worship on special High Holy Days. Three annual treks were required to honor God and fulfill the requirements of Torah law. The people gathered to worship and returned to their daily lives outside the Holy Place. The temple Levites assigned daily responsibilities were the only continuous residents inside Temple Square.

The New Jerusalem is not a physical location for God's chosen to visit upon occasion; it is an eternal dwelling place in God's presence. The residents of eternity will not depart from God's presence to return to a life outside of the Holy Place.

(Revelation 21:11) – The city within the walls is transparent and clear as pure crystal, reflecting God the Creator's character and splendor. The brilliance of light is compared to Jasper, a jewel stone, as opposed to sunlight. The sun is a light source that illuminates darkness; the only evidence of its presence is the absence of darkness. Jasper is first mentioned to describe God's presence in Revelation 4:3 and used three more times in this chapter. Jasper is among the select luster stones that naturally reflect the presence of light. Luster stones capture the radiance and presence of light, reflecting its purity in its most unaltered form. Describing the brilliance of God as jasper stone emphasizes God's presence in the environment around Him, not just the absence of darkness.

(Revelation 21:12-13) – The Holy City is insulated by a great high wall with twelve gated entries. An angel is assigned as a guardian and gatekeeper, preventing outside access or exit. The high walls depict the seclusion and separation from all other environments. The residents of eternity are set apart within the gated community to preserve the perfection and order of the New Heaven and Earth. Because sin and the vices of men have become extinct, there is no threat to God's Kingdom or His people; however, the physical structure and design of the Holy City reflect the preservation and protection of order.

An Angelic protector covers each of the twelve gates. Angels have been guardians of gateways since creation, including the entry into the Garden of Eden. The gateways are named to honor each one of the twelve tribes of the House of Israel. The tribal households were all intended to be a doorway to the same path that would lead all families (nations) to the house of God. (Genesis 12:3)

The symbolism indicating that the tribal houses were selected to lead others to the House of God is indicated by geographical markers identified with each tribe and gateway: three gates in each geo-quadrant—North, South, East, and West.

(Revelation 21:14) – The walls of the Holy City are laid upon twelve contiguous foundations. The number twelve is a Biblical symbol of finished work or a completed series of actions. The finished work symbolized by the foundation supporting the Holy City is the teaching and preaching of the Gospel. The great commission inaugurated by the first Apostles continued from their generation until the End Times when God raised new witnesses. Without the declaration of the gospel, there would be no residents of eternity. Without the first Apostles, the work would have never begun, and therefore, their names are written upon the layers of the Holy City foundation.

(Revelation 21:15) – Measurement details are captured in the divine vision, providing a detailed perspective of what John was privileged to see. An Angel with a golden reed measures the height of the city walls in cubit dimensions. The reed, a tall, slender, hollow stalk that generally grows alongside a waterway, naturally measures in units of 6 cubits or 18 feet. (Ezekiel 40:5) The wall height around the city measures 216 feet taller than any human but is thought to accommodate the height of its Angelic guardian.

(Revelation 21:16) –The Holy City is represented as a perfect square with equal measurements for its length and breadth. Perfection symbolizes completeness, representing something finished as nothing can be added. The Holy City is a complete and finished work; it will never be amended.

In the days of Moses, the Ephod, or breastplate of the Holy Priest, was designed as a four-square Holy Garment. (Exodus 28:16-21,28-30) It was adorned with three rows of precious stones, each representing one of the Hebrew tribes. As the priest stood before the Holy Place, the perfectly squared Ephod garment served as a proxy representing the tribes. Seeing the precious stones, God acknowledged the memorial (record) of His covenant with the tribes and forgave them when the High Priests offered sacrifices on their behalf. God's forgiveness discharged their sin debt, restoring them to perfection (completeness). When God applies grace to forgive sin, nothing can be added or taken away from the restoration that replaces the debt of sin.

The Holy City is the highest representation of God's grace to forgive. Its four-square dimensions affirm the restoration that replaced the sin debt of the residents of eternity as perfect and final. Their place in eternity cannot be lost or taken away.

The four-square city is 12,000 furlongs or approximately 1,500 miles squared (*one-furlong 660ft). The total measurement is equivalent to 38.75 square miles for a total circumference of 1500 miles or 1500 miles squared, with a circumference of 2,250,000 miles. The scale and size are unimaginable, as it should be impossible for humans, who have existed only in a temporal environment, to comprehend the expanse required to host the presence of God.

Another hidden symbol, which dates back to the Greek era, was revealed when we analyzed the origin of the furlong measurement unit. The term was coined to represent the running distance of a stadium. Running in the stadium, particularly when facing obstacles or dangers, was a celebrated event in the ancient Greek and Roman games, which laid the foundation for the modern-day Olympics. The furlongs used as units of measurement for the Holy City offer a hidden reference to the human journey, representing the effort to overcome significant obstacles and ultimately attain eternal life.

(Revelation 21:17) – The final measurement recorded is the thickness of the wall structure; it is listed at 144 cubits or 432 feet wide. The calculation is associated with the width dimension of an Angelic to accommodate the guardians stationed as gatekeepers along the perimeter.

Revelation 21:18 – And the building of the wall of it was *of* jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

Revelation 21:19 – And the foundations of the wall of the city *were* garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation *was* jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

Revelation 21:20 – The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

Lesson Notes:

(Revelation 21:18) – The Jasper is the dominant feature among the precious stones. The crystal clarity of the stone portrays the brilliance of God's presence through the walls of the Holy City. The city is overlaid in pure gold. The gold is not oxidized as it would be presently on earth. A loss of substance and continuity causes oxidation. Loss does not exist in the New Heaven; therefore, the gold in eternity is pure to the point that it's clear as glass.

(Revelation 21:19-20) – A foundation of twelve layers supports the city walls. Each layer is made from a precious stone. The feature stone, Jasper, is the first layer, emphasizing the brilliance of God's presence as the primary foundation. The other precious stones include: sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius, chrysolite, (chrysolite), beryl, topaz, chrysoprasus, (chrysoprase), jacinth, amethyst.

A common thread connects these precious stones: they are all derivatives of the silica (quartz) mineral. This mineral is found in the formative ingredients of 35% of rocks forged in the earth. Silica is the largest and most important group of minerals, prevalent in up to 90% of the Earth's crust.

One of the most common occurrences of silica is in sand and the numerous products made from it. Silica is a compound ingredient in various other minerals and synthetic products. It is used in structural and microelectronic materials, as well as in foods and pharmaceuticals.

The only stable form of silica on Earth's surface is "quartz," a German word that means "transparent/hard." The crystalline rock forms after cooling from igneous activity, such as volcanic or other geothermal events. The oldest and most widespread igneous activity on Earth is found in Africa, the native homeland of quartz.

The Holy City is an origin story for the primary structural foundation of present-day Earth and its natural components. Most of the precious stones listed in the Holy City's foundation are directly synonymous with quartz.

Revelation 21:21 – And the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

Revelation 21:22– And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

Revelation 21:23 – And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof.

Revelation 21:24 – And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

Revelation 21:25 – And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

Revelation 21:26 – And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

Revelation 21:27 – And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Lesson Notes:

(21:21) – Finer details on the material construction of the twelve gates are reviewed. Each gate was created from a single pearl. As is the structure of the entire city, the streets are overlaid in pure gold. The transparent gold will reflect the brilliance of God's presence from every viewpoint.

(21:22) – There is no temple in the Holy City. A temple set apart to worship God was necessary during the age of man. The temple was created to provide a place separated for man to convene with God away from the rest of the world. Eternity offers no options for worshipping the Creator. The New Heaven and Earth are created with the sole purpose of honoring and glorifying God.

(21:23) – God's brilliance makes it unnecessary for the city to host a sun or moon because His glory naturally rested upon it. As the lamb slaughtered for the salvation of man, God was also the light of the world. God is light; it is His divine nature. (John 1:5)

(21:24) – All nations in eternity will walk in the glory of God's light. Kings that ruled during the age of man will surrender (bring) their titles and former glory to give honor to the King of Heaven.

(21:25) – The gates of the Holy City are never shut. The Angelic gatekeepers attend them not because of threat or to prevent entry but as a position of honor in preserving the order of God's kingdom.

The natural brilliance of light always prevails. There is no transition between evening and morning. Light is never absent, meaning night or darkness has no place in eternity.

(21:26) – The nations of man from every culture and people group that have remained faithful to God will enter through the open gates to honor Him.

(21:27) – Although the doors will remain eternally open, nothing or no one that can defile the city can enter. No abominations will be permitted, and nothing contradicting the truth will be allowed to enter the city. The only people allowed to enter the Holy City are those whose names are written in the Book of Life.