

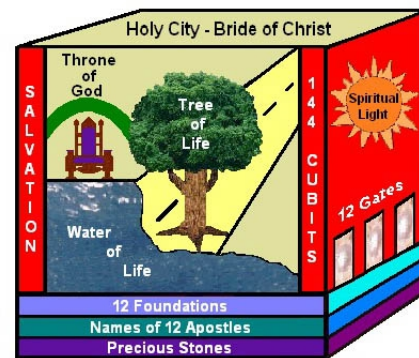
Jerusalem

The Israelites were God's chosen people under the *Law of Moses*, and they were a type of Christians today who are subject to the law of Christ. The Israelites finally acquired a land of their own and a city as their capital in which they worshipped God. The situation of the Israelites worshipping in Jerusalem is analogous to Christians worshipping in the church. Notice also that the throne of their king was located in Jerusalem. Understanding that Jerusalem was a shadow of the church to come in the Christian dispensation ties many concepts together which helps us understand how God used Israel as a pattern of the church. The church is the Christian's new Jerusalem which is the city of God today, and this spiritual city is described in magnificent physical terms in the last two chapters of the book of Revelation. As we study the characteristics of the city of Jerusalem, keep in mind that Christians live in "New Jerusalem" today.

Old Jerusalem



New Jerusalem



After King Saul was killed, David was anointed King and reigned for six months in Hebron and seven years in Judah. He then went up and captured Jerusalem where he reigned over all Israel for thirty-three years (2Sam. 5:5). Jerusalem, also called Zion, became known as the city of David. 2Sam. 5:7 states, "Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David." Also see 2Sam. 5:9. Jerusalem became the capital city of the nation of Israel. 2Sam. chapter 6 relates the story of David bringing the ark of the Lord up to the city of Jerusalem. It was placed in the midst of the tabernacle that had been prepared for it (2Sam. 6:17). After the Ark of the Covenant was brought to Jerusalem, the Lord through the prophet Nathan told David that Jerusalem would be a permanent capital of Israel. 2Sam. 7:10 states,

Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime.

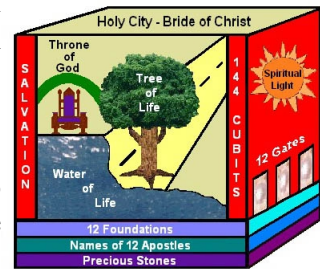
Since the ark of God was in the city of Jerusalem, it became the city where the Jews gathered to worship and observe the feasts of God. The Jews had a specific place to worship, which is made clear in Acts chapter 2, as Jews from every nation were gathered in Jerusalem to observe the feast of Pentecost. In the Christian age we do not have to go to a literal Jerusalem to worship. We do have a spiritual place to worship, which is a likeness of old Jerusalem. Speaking of Christians, Heb. 12:22a says, "But **ye are** come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the **heavenly Jerusalem.**" Christians do not go to old Jerusalem to worship. Instead, we worship in the "heavenly Jerusalem." As was previously discussed, mount Zion represents the church.

In this passage Zion is also called the "city of God" and the "heavenly Jerusalem." Hebrews 12:23 then calls Zion the "church of the firstborn." Therefore, the "heavenly Jerusalem" is a descriptive term for the church. Literal Jerusalem was the city of David, and it was a pattern of the spiritual city of God, the "heavenly Jerusalem," which

is the church. Christians today have a place to worship that is a likeness of the physical place where the Jews worshipped. We worship God in the heavenly Jerusalem, the church. Christ fulfilled the Law



of Moses. He took it out of the way and nailed it to the cross (Col. 2:14). This in effect did away with the nation of Israel. Many Jews still live in a place called Israel today, but it is nothing like the Israel of old. The ordinances of the Law of Moses are no longer observed. The lineage of the throne of David is no longer intact. The Jews are no longer God's chosen people. They are



simply a race of people attempting to govern themselves in a land named Israel. They refused the Messiah and because of that, they are no longer his people. They lost what God had previously given them. Remember, Adam and Eve also lost everything they had when they were cast from Eden. When Israel turned from God, they lost their Promised Land and their status as God's chosen people. God even destroyed their city of Jerusalem in AD 70. This was the final blow that destroyed the old nation of Israel, as it was known in Biblical times. Daniel had prophesied this destruction. See Dan. 9:27 and Matt. 24:15. The old city of Jerusalem simply served as a pattern of a new Jerusalem which was to come during the Christian dispensation. Christians are now the chosen people of God, and we worship God in our spiritual Jerusalem.

Many of the features of the city of Jerusalem had special meanings concerning the church to come in the Christian age. As we examine each of these features, keep in mind that we are living in the heavenly Jerusalem today. Let us look first at the name of the city and compare it to the church today. The literal Jerusalem in Judea was called the city of David. The spiritual Jerusalem in which we dwell today is called the city of the Lord. See Isa. 60:14 and Heb. 12:22. David was a likeness of Christ and the city of Jerusalem that contained David's throne was a likeness of the spiritual Jerusalem (church) where Christ reigns today. The church is also called the heavenly Jerusalem in Heb. 12:22. Literal Jerusalem was a city or collection of God's people. It contained the true worshippers of God. The church is the collection of those who worship God today. It contains the true worshippers of God in the Christian dispensation. Other terms such as "holy city", "holy Jerusalem" and "new Jerusalem" also describe the church. The church is the holy city of God today. It is precisely what John saw coming down out of heaven in Revelation chapters 21 and 22. Rev. 21:2 states, "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." John saw the "new Jerusalem" coming down out of heaven. The old Jerusalem was the literal, physical city where the Jews worshipped. The new Jerusalem is the spiritual city where Christians worship today. It is the church. It is the "bride of Christ" and the city of God. It is the location of the throne of Christ, precisely as the old Jerusalem was the location of the throne of David. Jerusalem was a likeness of the church and David was a likeness of Christ. Christians are subjects of the throne of Christ just as the Israelites were subjects of the throne of David. Notice also that this new Jerusalem was "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Since the church is the bride of Christ (Rom. 7:4), this again defines the church as the "heavenly Jerusalem." This once again agrees with Heb. 12:22 which calls mount Zion "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." Revelation 21:9b-10 also confirms that the vision John saw was a description of the church. The angel tells John,

Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. 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.

As was stated earlier in this book, in order to understand many of the prophecies in the Old Testament, it is very important to understand that Revelation chapters 21 and 22 is a symbolic description of the church.

Jerusalem was a strong city with a great high wall that provided protection to the Jews from their enemies. The heavenly Jerusalem (church) also has a great high wall to protect it. It is described in Rev. 21:12-19 as a wall 12,000 furlongs high and 144 cubits wide. The wall of our spiritual Jerusalem is greater and higher than any wall ever conceived by people in the Old Testament times. Isa. 26:1 says, "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." The church is the strongest spiritual city known to man. A wall of salvation separates the church from a world of sin. Also, Isa. 4:6 describes the church as it states,

And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.

As studied before, the tabernacle also represents the church. The church is truly a spiritual place of refuge for a troubled soul today. To come inside the spiritual wall is to leave a world of sin and find a place of comfort for our souls. As long as we are faithful to God, he will protect our souls from harm. Let us not confuse protection for our physical bodies with protection for our souls. In this world we will have many physical hardships and trials, but if we remain faithful to God, our souls will have peace and comfort forever. Speaking of Christians, John 10:29 says, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." As long as we keep ourselves in the hand of God, no man can harm our souls. No one is powerful enough to break down the great wall of salvation around the church and force us to leave our city. Nothing can harm our souls if we choose to remain faithful to God.

Although the number and names of the gates of the original city of Jerusalem are unknown, there were probably twelve gates. The number of gates and their names may have changed from time to time as the city grew or was destroyed and rebuilt. However, we do know that the city as described by Ezekiel had twelve gates (Eze. 41:31-34). The wall of our spiritual, heavenly Jerusalem also has twelve gates. Rev. 21:12a says, "And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates." The gates of the literal Jerusalem were obviously the means of entrance into the city, and they could be opened in the day and closed at night to keep out intruders. A valuable lesson can be learned by comparing the gates of physical Jerusalem with those of spiritual Jerusalem. The gates of our spiritual Jerusalem are never closed. They remain open day and night. Rev. 21:25 says, "And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there." The entrance to the church is never closed. Anyone who desires to follow God and worship him may enter the city at any time. No spiritual night exists, so the gates of the church are never closed. Jesus is the light of the church and that light never goes out. The only requirement for entrance is doing the commandments of God. Rev. 22:14 states, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

The gates of this great spiritual city are made of pearl. Jesus taught his disciples about a pearl of great price in Matt. 13:45-46. Once someone found the pearl of great price, he was willing to give up all he had in order to own this great pearl. Our attitude should be the same concerning the church today. The gates of the church are the pearl of great price. When one realizes this, he should be willing to give anything or everything he owns in order to become a part of the church and enter through the gates of pearl.

The foundation of our spiritual city has the names of the twelve apostles and prophets written in it. This explains what supports our city. Speaking of the household of God, which is the church, Eph. 2:20 states, "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." The apostles taught the word of God as it was revealed unto them by the Holy Spirit. That is the foundation of our city -- the Word of God.

The Jews had a marvelous city in which to worship. It had a great wall that protected the people from their enemies. The wall had gates that could be opened and closed at the discretion of the people. The throne of King David was also located in this city. Today, we have a magnificent spiritual

city whose foundation is the word of God. Its wall is salvation; its gates are pearl; the light of our city is Jesus who is reigning on his spiritual throne today. Revelation 21:23 says that Jesus is the light of the spiritual city. The church does not receive its light from the sun and moon, but instead, it receives spiritual light from Jesus Christ. The Jews worshipped in the literal city of Jerusalem, which was a symbol or pattern of the spiritual Jerusalem to come during the Christian dispensation. The physical features of that city represented the spiritual features of the church. Just as Jerusalem was the only city where the Jews were instructed to gather and worship by keeping the annual feasts, the church is the only place where we can worship God today. It is a spiritual city made up of all who obey the commands of God. To be a resident of new Jerusalem should be the greatest desire we have. No city in this world can begin to compare with the spiritual city of God.