

The Sanctuary City of God

Revelation 21:9-27



⁹ Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.” ¹⁰ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, ¹¹ having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. ¹² It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed— ¹³ on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. ¹⁴ And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵ And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. ¹⁶ The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia. Its length and width and height are equal. ¹⁷ He also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel’s measurement. ¹⁸ The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass. ¹⁹ The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, ²⁰ the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. ²¹ And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. ²² And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. ²³ And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴ By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, ²⁵ and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. ²⁶ They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. ²⁷ But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

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**The New Jerusalem is
the city of God that
the writer of Hebrews
mentions four times.**



Hebrews 11:10

- For he was looking forward to **the city** that has foundations, **whose designer and builder is God.**



Hebrews 11:16

- But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, **for he has prepared for them a city.**



Hebrews 12:22

- But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering,



Hebrews 13:14

- For here we have no lasting city, but **we seek the city that is to come.**



Revelation 21:9



- Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.”

Previously

In Rev 19:7 the church or the redeemed of God is called the Bride.

Now the city is called the Bride.



Revelation 21:10



- And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God,

I used to believe that this city was going to come down out of heaven and orbit the earth during the post return of Christ millennial kingdom .

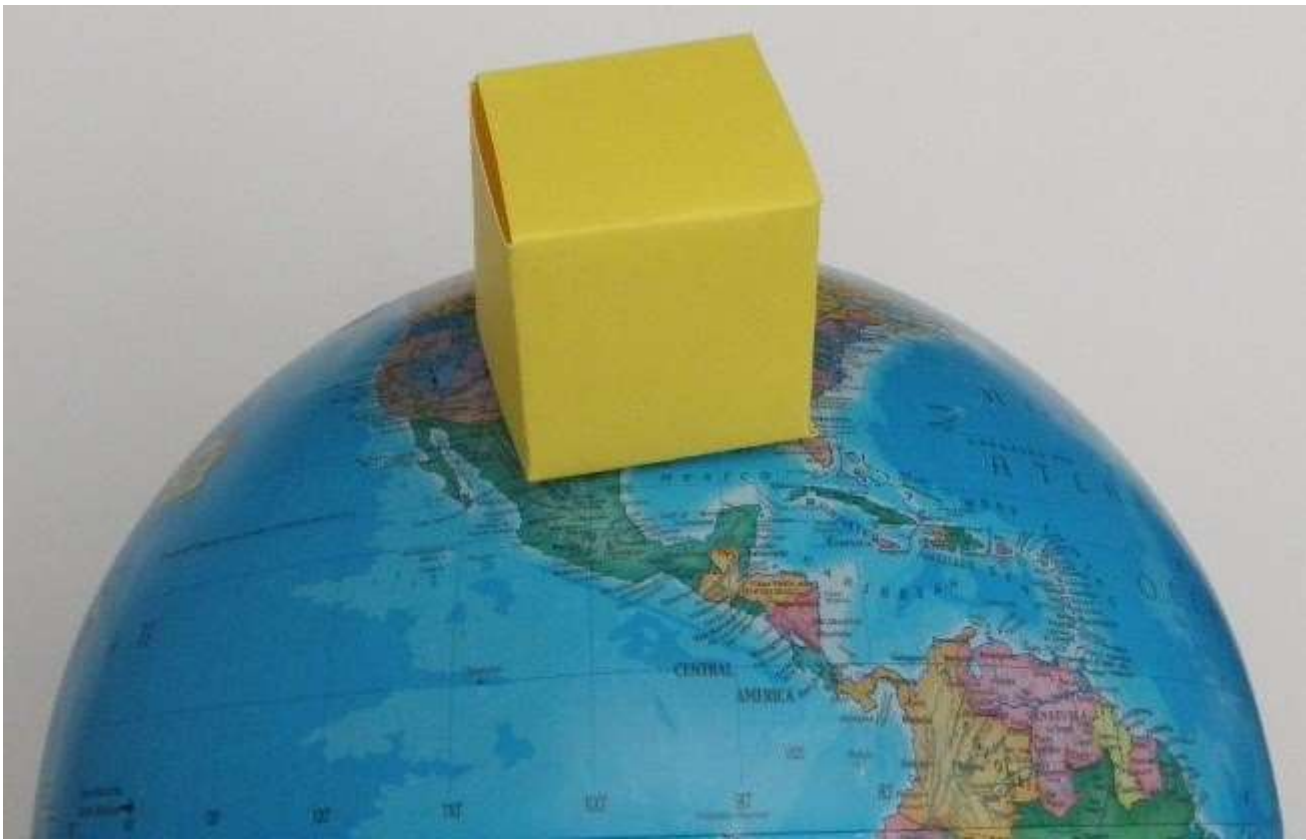
I don't know why I believed that.

John sees this city immediately after seeing the new heaven and new earth NOT before.



Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”





I believe I have completely missed the point of all these descriptions previously and what John was communicating to the church.



What I was supposed to see was the connectivity of this city (Rev 21-22) to:

1) Eden

2) Tabernacle & Temple

3) Prophecies in Ezekiel

4) The city referenced 4 in Hebrews

**5) The promises and prophecies concerning
God dwelling with his people**



Turn Back To Ezekiel 40:2



Ezekiel 40:2

- In visions of God he brought me to the land of Israel, and set me down on **a very high mountain**, on which was a structure **like a city** to the south.



Ezekiel 40:3

- When he brought me there, behold, there was a man whose appearance was like bronze, with a linen cord and **a measuring reed in his hand**. And he was standing in the gateway.



Now Look

At the last chapter and the
last verse of Ezekiel



Ezekiel 48:35

- The circumference of the city shall be 18,000 cubits.
- And the name of the city from that time on shall be,

The LORD Is There.



This bride-city-temple is the ultimate fulfilment of all promises made possible through the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Nations.

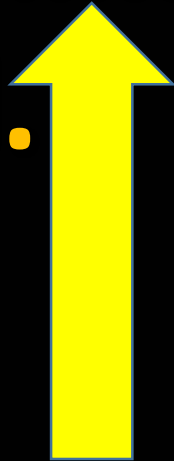
That which was lost in Eden and then partially restored through the tabernacle, then temple, and made possible through Christ dwelling upon his people is ultimately being fulfilled with God dwelling with his people in the New Jerusalem.



Revelation 21:11



- having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.



This pericope is packed full of words that are supposed to remind me of something in the OT so that I see the degree to which the city of God is the consummation and culmination of all the OT prophecies and promises.



This is the second time the glory of God is compared to jasper.

The first occurs in Rev 4:3.

Jasper is also one of the stones of the ephod of the High Priest.



Revelation 4:3



- And he [God] who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald.

Walls and gates are symbols.

There will be no need for either in the new heaven and new earth. Jesus:

Described both a narrow gate and a wide gate—both were allegorical (Mt. 7).

Spoke of the gates of hell—literal or symbolic? (Mt. 16)



Revelation 21:12



- It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed—

We have seen this merging of old testament and new testament before in Revelation.

Revelation does not maintain the distinction between Israel and the church.

Look at v. 14.



Revelation 21:14



- And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

The names of the 12 tribes of Israel and the names of the 12 apostles are both mentioned in the text.

John is not concerned with the actual names because that is not the point.

The point is the unity and continuity of the two.



**Don't miss what just happened in
Revelation 21:14.**

**The foundation to the city is NOT
Judaism. It is not the 12 sons of
Israel.**

**Instead, the foundation is the
apostles of the Lamb.**



Revelation 21:15



- And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls.

**This is the second reference
to a measuring rod.**

**Could 'measuring' have a
figurative meaning behind it
like Revelation 11:1?**



Revelation 11:1



- Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told, “Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there,

**I don't agree with you concerning measuring
having a figurative meaning:**

**In Revelation 11 John is told to measure the
temple of God.**

**In Revelation 21:22 John says, "I did not see a
temple in the city, because the Lord God
Almighty and the Lamb are the temple."**



Revelation 21:16



- The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia.
- Its length and width and height are equal.

The city was laid out like a square; but as its height is the same as its breadth and length, it is a cube. **One structure in the OT is mentioned as a cube in shape, namely the Most Holy place in the temple (1 Ki. 6:20); here the cubic shape indicates that the entire city is a sanctuary and partakes of the holiness of the ancient inner shrine. 12,000 stadia represents approximately 1400 miles, but to translate it into modern mileage is to rob the measurement of its clear symbolism— **an infinite multiple of 12.****

George R. Beasley-Murray



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**What do you think of
the significance of
'the entire city is a
sanctuary'?**



Revelation 21:17



- He also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement.

Why is he
saying
that?

Where have we seen the number 144 before?

Revelation 14:3

and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. **No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.**

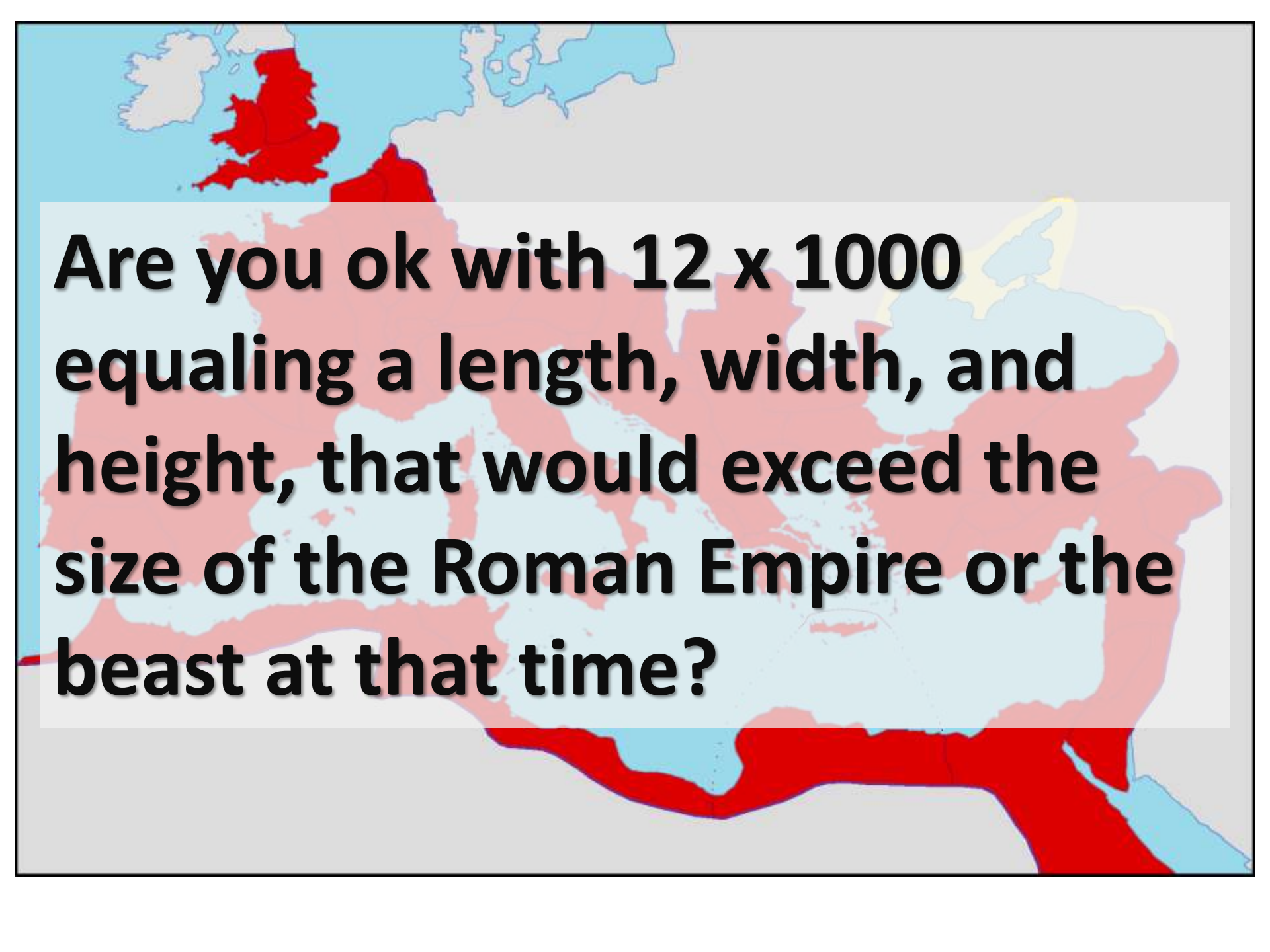


Are you ok with $12 \times 12 \times 1000$ is the number that represents all the redeemed of the earth?

Are you ok with 144 reminding you of $12 \text{ tribes} \times 12 \text{ apostles}$?

Are you ok with 24 elders around the throne reminding you of $12 + 12 = 24$?





**Are you ok with 12 x 1000
equaling a length, width, and
height, that would exceed the
size of the Roman Empire or the
beast at that time?**

Let me ask you: Do you feel like you are being robbed if the city isn't 12,000 stadia?

What if the city is infinite in length like our God?

What if the walls are NOT walls but symbols of the perfect and complete protection we have from all enemies for all eternity in this sanctuary city?



Revelation 21:18



- The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

Are we to take these words literally or is John giving us the most precious and rare of substances to describe the splendor of what God has created?

Revelation 21:19



- The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel.
- The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald,

Revelation 21:20



- the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst.



The stones in the ephod of the high priest are substantially similar to the stones listed in v. 19 and 20.

What is the point?

Having identified the names of the apostles as the foundation John then says that the foundation is decorated with stones substantially similar to the ones on the ephod of the OT high priest—yet he was a picture of the ultimate High Priest.

Once again we see the manner in which this vision is linking the OT with the NT.

I believe we have made a critical mistake creating distinctions between Israel and the church that Revelation seems to be eliminating.



The Significance of Twelve in Revelation

Revelation	Description
21:12	Twelve gates
21:12	Twelve angels
21:12	Twelve tribes
21:14	Twelve foundations
21:14	Twelve names
21:14	Twelve apostles
21:16	12,000 stadia
21:17	12x12 (144) cubits
21:20	Twelve precious stones are listed
21:21	Twelve pearls
22:15	Twelve kinds of fruit

Revelation 21:21



- And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl,

I don't think the 12 or the single pearl should be taken literally.

**Is there something more rare
than a pearl?**

**What did Jesus say about the
value of a pearl?**

**Who could imagine such a pearl
large enough for a gate?**



Matthew 13:45–46

- “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding **one pearl of great value**, went and sold all that he had and bought it.



Revelation 21:21



- And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

Remember 12 is the number that unites the OT people of God with the NT church of Jesus Christ into one people of God, His Son and the Spirit who will live forever with their God.



Revelation 21:22



- **And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.**

The questions I ask myself:

Why would we need or have a temple in a millennial kingdom if we don't have one in the new Jerusalem?

Or why do we need a millennial kingdom if the promises to ALL the people of God are fulfilled in the New Jerusalem?



Or why would we create distinctions like:

- **OT Saints**
- **Church Saints**
- **Tribulation Saints**
- **Ethic Israel**
- **Gentile (the Nations)**

If they are all going to be eliminated for all eternity in the New Jerusalem?



Revelation 21:23



- And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

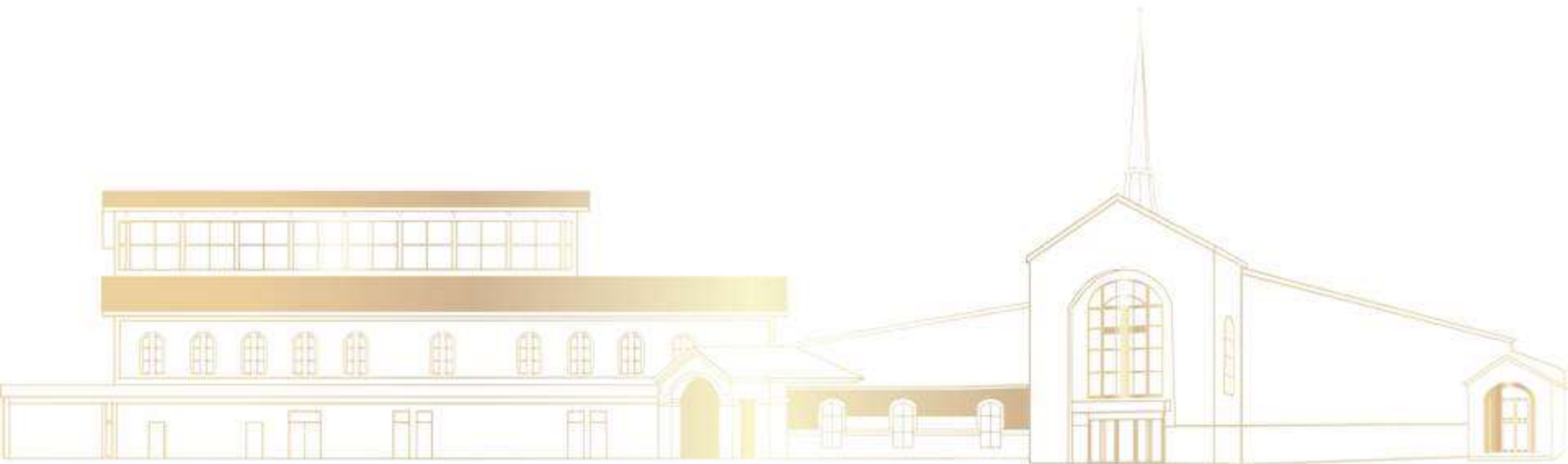
Revelation 21:24



- By its light will the nations walk,
- and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it,

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Nations?



ἔθνος

Transliteration*ethnos***Pronunciation**

e'-thnos (Key)

**Part of Speech**

neuter noun

Root Word (Etymology)

Probably from ἔθω (G1486)

KJV Translation Count — Total: 164x

The KJV translates Strong's G1484 in the following manner: [Gentiles](#) (93x), [nation](#) (64x), [heathen](#) (5x), [people](#) (2x).

**This is ultimate in fulfilment
of the Abrahamic covenant
given to the Father of the
Jews...**

**And the GREAT Commission
given to the 12 Apostles!**



Galatians 3:8

- And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.”



Mark 13:10

- And the gospel must first be proclaimed to **all nations**.



Matthew 28:19

- Go therefore and **make disciples of all nations,** baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,



Revelation 21:25



- and its gates will never be shut by day—
- and there will be no night there.

Wall represent protection and security.

Why were ancient gates shut?

What is the significance of saying the gates 'will never be shut by day' ?

And there will be 'no night there.'



Revelation 21:26



- They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.

The very best (God-glorifying) of culture and society in this world will NOT be lost in the world to come.

Revelation 21:27



- But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Two Cities—the city of man; the City of God

Babylon	New Jerusalem
Great prostitute	Bride of Christ
Sinful	Holy
Unclean	Nothing unclean will enter it
Detestable	Nor anyone detestable
Full of the nations	Full of the nations
Weeping and mourning	No weeping; nor mourning