

It is said that only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life are received into the city. You are written in the Lamb's book of life when you live according to God's guidance. He speaks to you in His Word and by means of your conscience. There are guidelines for life in all religions. You do not have to be Christian to be eligible to enter into God's universal spirituality. The Lamb refers to God as He has revealed Himself to mankind through the person of Jesus Christ. He is there for everyone who desires to know God as a wise, powerful, loving Being.

What Truth Does for You

Also in the vision was a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb. This symbolises the revealed truth of the Word flowing from God. Water represents the truth. Truth does for your mind what water does for your body – cleanses, refreshes and quenches your thirst. Meditate on God's Word when you thirst for truth and He will be with you to enlighten you. He is there to bring comfort and help in times of trouble and will show you the way forward and bless your life as you put your trust in Him.

In the middle of the street and on either side of the river was the tree of life bearing twelve fruits every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. This represents God's life bearing fruit through you as you put your faith into practice with love, by caring for others and turning your back on evil. The leaves of the tree are the many rational ideas from God that become the means of all kinds of spiritual healing, e.g. the truth of His constant love for each one of us, and the life after death.

Your Relationship with the Divine

Finally, it is said that God's people will see Him face to face and His name will be on their foreheads. This means that God is your Creator and Saviour and when you turn to Him, you are drawn to Him in a love relationship and find peace in the knowledge that your spiritual home is with Him in heaven.

The Swedenborg Centre for Spiritual Development
The New Christian Church
Ph:09 527 6819 Email: Swedenborg@newchurch.co.nz www.newchurch.org.nz

The Golden City



A Vision of Your Personal Transformation

There is some beautiful imagery in the Bible, of a vision seen by the apostle John, of a golden city descending from heaven. (See the Book of Revelation, Chapter 21 & 22). It has been revealed from heaven through the Writings of eighteenth century scientist and Christian mystic, Emanuel Swedenborg, that this vision is symbolic of a new spirituality coming to be embraced in the world. On a personal level, it represents the unlocking of your beautiful spiritual potential and your deepening relationship with the Divine, (the city is compared to a bride). This pamphlet explains how the symbolism in this vision can apply to your own personal future.

The Bible's Deeper Meaning

You may be surprised to hear that the Bible is full of deeper meaning that on one level is all about your inner self and what you can become. As explained by Swedenborg, the vision of the beautiful city coming down from heaven holds a message from your Creator for you personally. It signifies a new spirituality flowing down from heaven into all those who are open to seeing deeper truth in God's Word (sacred scripture) and doing what is right. Outside the city remain all those who are involved in evil. These symbolise your own negative tendencies that you need to leave behind you if you wish to enter this new way of being. If you examine yourself to see what needs changing, turn your back on wrongdoing and follow your Creator to the best of your ability, you need not fear—God's love is unconditional—you are forgiven whether you know it or not and He will cleanse and heal your spirit, making you new.

The Measure of a Person or an Angel

In the vision, there was a person with a golden reed to measure the city. The city is said to be equal in length, breadth and height, which pictures a person being loving and wise in equal measure. This is the "measure of a person, that is, of an angel." For an example of being loving and wise, think of putting the Golden Rule into practice—"doing to others what you would like them to do to you." According to the heavenly teaching written down by Swedenborg, you are, in fact, an angel in the making, which is a gradual, life long process.

Walking in Love and Light from Heaven

There are twelve gates to the city, which are always open, which means that there are many ways (twelve means "all") to the experience of God but each gate is made of one pearl, which describes an important process that introduces you to the heavenly way of life. Think of how a pearl is formed – by the oyster overcoming a piece of grit with nacre over and over until it

becomes a thing of beauty. You become a thing of beauty in God's eyes when you overcome irritations in your life with love - over and over. This is your way into your love relationship with the Divine. There are angels (messengers from God) to welcome you, protect and guide you and teach you the ways of heaven, which are revealed to you in the Word when you read it with a prayerful heart.

The city is described as being pure gold like clear glass. This signifies the joy of love flowing into you with divine light out of heaven as you care for others. The street is also pure gold, like transparent glass. This pictures the joy of walking in the way of love and light from heaven.

The Principles on Which to Stand

The foundations of the city are adorned with all kinds of precious stones. These represent the guiding lights provided by the Word of God upon which to base your life – the ten commandments and others that you follow because they are given by God for your happiness.

The name of the city is "the New Jerusalem." It is called Jerusalem because in Biblical times Jerusalem was where the temple was and, therefore, the centre of worship. In the vision there is no temple in the city because God dwells within each one of us. Let Him become the centre of your life and when you change your outer life, He will change your inner life to match. True worship is to live a useful life in obedience to God, while giving Him the glory for the good that you do.

There is no need of the sun or the moon to shine in the city because the glory of God illuminates it. You now have enlightenment, not from natural light, but from spiritual light shining through the truths of God's Word. This is where to go for your guidance in life. Try prayerfully opening the Bible at random and see what messages you are given. See each character as a characteristic of yourself. See the battles as describing your inner struggles (good against evil) and God's anger as His zeal for what is good and His love for saving you from your negative tendencies.