one entrance: it was not thrown open to all the world.  
Access to God was guarded, and granted only to the  
peculiarly-cleansed officials of the king. In the Jerusalem of the millennium also there are to be twelve  
gates. Ezek. xlviii. 31-34.  
 At the gates are “twelve angels.” We understand  
at once the reason of this. They are “ministering  
spirits,” set as sentinels; for nothing that defiles may  
enter the city. Angels do not rule then: they serve.  
It is remarkable that this is the only notice we have of  
angels’ presence near the city. They are no longer  
enthroned, but doorkeepers; they answer to the porters,  
chosen from among the Levites, who kept the  
entrances into the temple. 1 Chron. ix. 24.  
 Something more than a mere “gate” is understood  
by the word. It signifies a porch or a structure  
enclosing the gate, probably containing chambers.  
 The evil city was “the Mother of the Harlots of the  
Earth”; the Holy City is the centre for the Fathers of  
the tribes of God. The names of the twelve tribes  
were engraved both on the stones of the High Priest’s  
breastplate, and on the two onyxes, which rested  
on his shoulder. Here they occupy their final  
place.  
 The city does not now belong to one tribe, nor is it  
included in the lot of Judah or Benjamin: it is the focus of  
all the nations. It is a neutral city, like the book before  
us. It owns all previous dispensations. ’Tis built as  
the dwelling-place of the men of faith, whether of the  
Old Testament or of the New. In this light it is exhibited by the apostle in the Hebrews xi.; xiii. 14. It is mother of all.  
 The arrangement of the gates is symmetrical. The  
city is an exact square; hence the need of access to  
each quarter is the same. It is not erected, like  
most of the cities of men, at different times and