THE DIMENSIONS OF THE CITY

15-17. “And he that talked with me had a golden measuring  
reed, that he might measure the city, and its portals, and its wall.  
And the city lieth foursquare, and its length is as large as its  
breadth, and he measured the city with the reed for twelve thousand  
furlongs. The length and the breadth, and the height of it  
are equal. And he measured its wall a hundred and forty-four  
cubits, (according to) the measure of a man, that is of an angel.  
  
 But two measures are named: first the general  
measure which runs through the great dimensions of  
the city, and then the height of the wall. It is remarkable how little of detail is given here, when compared with the accounts of the tabernacle and the temples of Solomon and of Ezekiel.  
 The city portals are named, but their dimensions  
are not given. It is not a little remarkable, that while  
this is the city of our mansions, no individual habitation of the saints is described.  
 Doubtless the great reason of this want of detail is,  
that God builds this structure, and man the others.  
Man needs exact details. In the New Jerusalem we  
shall enjoy the results of God’s completed architecture.  
 But what a prodigious height! How can this be  
literally understood? By a consideration of the height  
to which the foundations rose. That height is not  
given; save in the very general description, that the  
city’s base was a great and lofty mountain. If we  
suppose that the height of the foundations was two-thirds  
of the whole 12,000 furlongs, we shall, I think,  
get a far more feasible view of the city than on any  
other conjecture.  
 The height of the wall above the foundations is only  
144 cubits.  
 But what is the measure of the cubit? In Ezekiel