

Cultural, Historic, and Geographic Context



Revelation Backgrounds 29 – part 1

New heaven and new earth

Revelation 21



1

Acts 17:11 (KJV)


These (Bereans) were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are from the Complete Jewish Bible by David H. Stern. (Clarksville, MD: Messianic Jewish Publishers, 1998).




2

Revelation 21

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had passed away, and the sea was no longer there. Also, I saw the holy city, New Yerushalayim, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne say, "See! God's Sh'khinah is with mankind, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and he himself, God-with-them, will be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will no longer be any death, and there will no longer be any mourning, crying, or pain; because the old order has passed away." Then the One sitting on the throne said, "Look! I am making everything new!" Also, he said, "Write, 'These words are true and trustworthy!' " And he said to me, "It is done! I am the 'A' and the 'Z,' the Beginning and the End. To anyone thirsty, I will give water free of charge from the Fountain of Life. He who wins the victory will receive these things, and I will be his God, and he will be my son. But as for the cowardly, the untrustworthy, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those involved with the occult and with drugs, idol-worshippers, and all liars—their destiny is the lake burning with fire and sulfur, the second death." 

3

One of the seven angels having the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues approached me and said, "Come! I will show you the Bride, the Wife of the Lamb." He carried me off in the Spirit to the top of a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city, Yerushalayim, coming down out of heaven from God. It had the Sh'khinah of God so that its brilliance was like that of a priceless jewel, like a crystal-clear diamond. It had a great, high wall with twelve gates; at the gates were twelve angels and inscribed on the gates were the names of the twelve tribes of Isra'el. There were three gates to the east, three gates to the north, three gates to the south, and three gates to the west. The wall of the city was built on twelve foundation stones, and on these were the twelve names of the twelve emissaries of the Lamb. The angel speaking with me had a gold measuring rod with which to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. The city is laid out in a square, its length equal to its width. With his rod, he measured the city at 1,500 miles, with length, width, and height the same. He measured its wall at 216 feet by human standards of measurement, which the angel was using. The wall was made of diamond, and the city was of pure gold resembling pure glass. 

4

The foundations of the city wall were decorated with all kinds of precious stones—the first foundation stone was diamond, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh turquoise, and the twelfth amethyst. The twelve gates were twelve pearls, with each gate made of a single pearl. The city’s main street was pure gold, transparent as glass. I saw no Temple in the city, for Adonai, God of heaven’s armies, is its Temple, as is the Lamb. The city has no need for the sun or the moon to shine on it because God’s Sh’khinah gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. Its gates will never close; they stay open all day because night will not exist there, and the honor and splendor of the nations will be brought into it. Nothing impure may enter it, nor anyone who does shameful things or lies; the only ones who may enter are those whose names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.



5

Progressive Unveiling of the Age to Come

Stage	Reference
Hidden	Isa 64:4 “From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him” (Isa 64:4).
Partially revealed “through” the Spirit	1 Cor 2:9-10 But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”— [10] these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit . For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.
Most details “in” the Spirit	Rev 21 & 22, including 21:10 He carried me off in the Spirit to the top of a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city, Yerushalayim,



6

John sees a New Heaven/Earth

Revelation 21:1	References
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.	Isa 65:17-19 "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. [18] But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. [19] I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress.



7

Old things have passed away

Revelation 21:1	References
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.	Isa 66:22-24 "For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the LORD, so shall your offspring and your name remain. [23] From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the LORD. [24] "And they shall go out and look on the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against me. For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh." Rom 8:19-21 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. [20] For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope [21] that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.



8

The New Jerusalem

Revelation 21:2

And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

References

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.

Gal 4:26 But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.

Isa 62:5-7 For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you. [6] On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen; all the day and all the night they shall never be silent. You who put the LORD in remembrance, take no rest, [7] and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth.

9

The Word tabernacled among us

Revelation 21:3

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.

References

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and **dwelt** among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Lev 26:11-12 I will make **my dwelling** among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. [12] And I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people.

Zec 2:10 Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for behold, I come, and **I will dwell in your midst**, declares the LORD

2 Chronicles 6:18 "But will God indeed dwell with man on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, how much less this house that I have built!"

10

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us



Tabernacle model

John 1:14

11

His people

Revelation 21:3

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.**

References

Gen 17:7 And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

Ex 6:7 I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

Rth 1:16 But Ruth said, “Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God.



12

Imanu El - עִמָּנוּ אֵל

Revelation 21:3

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.

References

Isa 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.



13

Former things passed away

Revelation 21:4

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."

References

Isa 25:8 He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken

Isa 65:17 "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind."

2Co 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.



14

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.



Butterfly at Jericho



2 Cor 5:17

15

It is accomplished!

Revelation 21:5-6

And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” And he said to me, “**It is done!** I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.

References

Mat 5:17-18 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. [18] For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.
Jer 31:33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my Torah within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.



16

Living water without payment

Revelation 21:5-6

And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. **To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.**

References

Isa 55:1-2 "Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Joh 7:37-38 On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. [38] Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'"



17

To the thirsty I will give from the springs of the water of life without payment



Waterfalls in Nahal David, En Gedi and Banias/Caesarea Philippi



Rev 21:6

18

Promise to the overcomer

Revelation 21:7	References
The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.	<p>1 Jn 5:4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.</p> <p>Rev 12:11 And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.</p>



19

Promise to the non-overcomers

Revelation 21:8	References
But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”	<p>Rev 9:21 nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.</p>



20

Jerusalem is the Bride of Christ

Revelation 21:9-11

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

References

Eze 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.



21

Twelve gates/tribes

Revelation 21:12-13

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—on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.

References

Num 2:2 “The people of Israel shall camp each by his own standard, with the banners of their fathers’ houses. They shall camp facing the tent of meeting on every side.

Eze 48:30-34 On the north side, three gates, the gate of Reuben, the gate of Judah, and the gate of Levi, the gates of the city being named after the tribes of Israel. On the east side, which is to be 4,500 cubits, three gates (etc. for the remaining tribes)



22

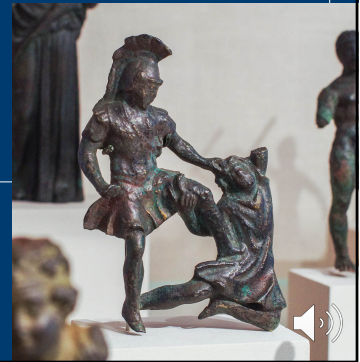
Twelve foundations/apostles

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.

References

Eph 2:19-20 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, [20] built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,



23

Taking measurements

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.

References

Rev 11:1-2 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, [2] but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months.

Eze 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.



24

12,000 stadia 144 cubits

Revelation 21:16-17

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

References



25

Wall of precious stones

Revelation 21:18-20

The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass. 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, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoptase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst.

References

Isa 54:12 I will make your pinnacles of agate, your gates of carbuncles, and all your wall of precious stones.

Exo 28:17-20 You shall set in it four rows of stones. A row of sardius, topaz, and carbuncle shall be the first row; [18] and the second row an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond; [19] and the third row a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; [20] and the fourth row a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. They shall be set in gold filigree.



26

You were in Eden

Revelation 21:18-20

The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass. 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, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoptase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst.

References

Eze 28:13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared.



27

Pearly gates and streets of gold

Revelation 21:21-22

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

References

Pearls:

Proverbs 8:11 and Job 28:18 Wisdom is better than pearls

Proverbs 20:16 There are gold and pearls, but the dearest jewels are lips that speak knowledge

Mt 7:6 Do not give to dogs what is holy and do not throw your pearls before swine

*Revelation 17:4, the whore of Babylon was adorned in pearls (and 1 Ti 2:9 Paul says respectable women should **not** be adorned with pearls!)*

Rev 18:12, and 18:16 the merchants of Babylon mourned the loss of pearls



28


“I am the light of the World”

Revelation 21:23-25

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. By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there.

References

Isa 60:19-20 The sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give you light; but the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory. [20] Your sun shall no more go down, nor your moon withdraw itself; for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning shall be ended.

Gen 1:3-4 And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated 

29

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me shall not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.



Sunset over the Sea of Galilee

 John 8:12

30

The nations will be represented

Revelation 21:26

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

References

Gen 12:1-3 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. [2] And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. [3] I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."



31

Nothing unclean will be present

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.

References



32

Restored Eden

Revelation 22:1-3

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb [2] through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. [3] No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.

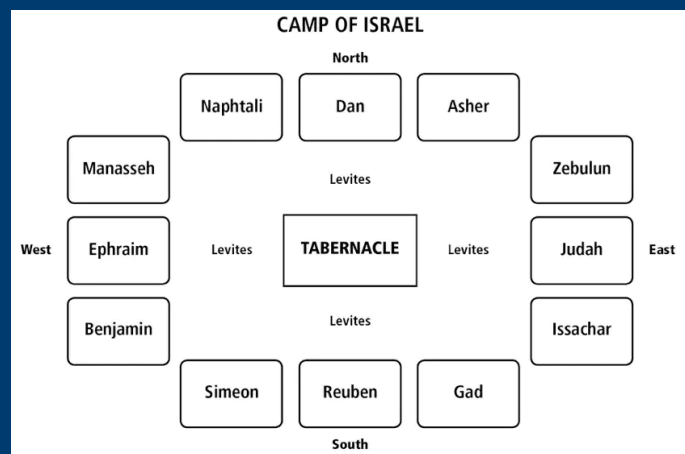
References



33

Irenaeus (130-202) Conjecture – three levels

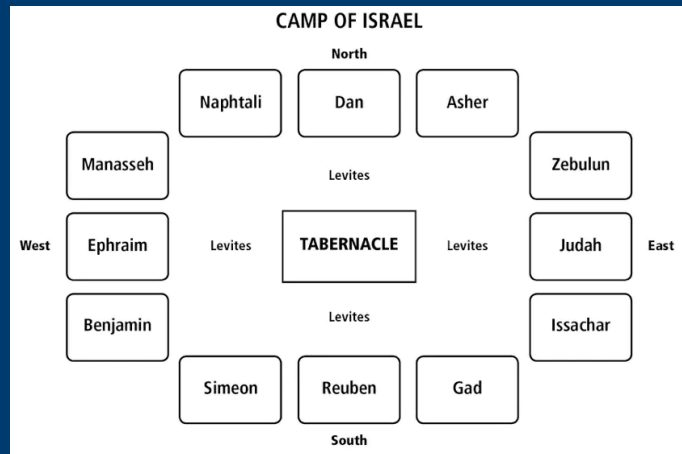
- Tabernacle (Camp of God)
- Levites (Camp of Levites)
- 12 Tribes (Camp of Israel)



34

Irenaeus (130-202) Conjecture – three levels

- Tabernacle (Camp of God)
 - Throne/Temple
- Levites (Camp of Levites)
 - Restored Eden
- 12 Tribes (Camp of Israel)
 - City, extending to walls



35

1 Cor 3:10-15

According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. [11] For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. [12] Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— [13] each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. [14] If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. [15] If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only through fire.



36

Mt 13:23

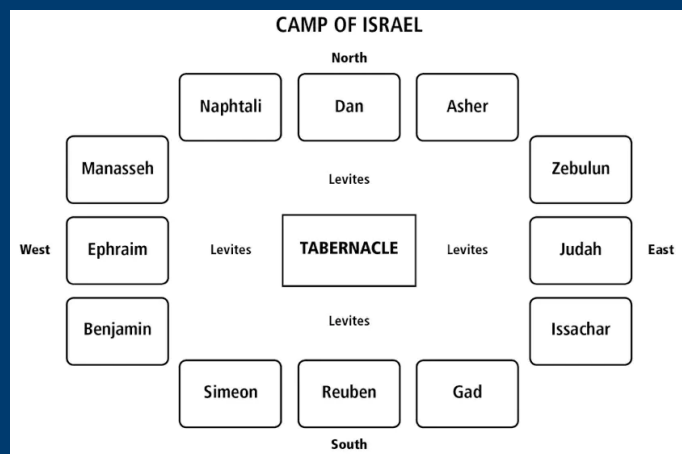
As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a **hundredfold**, in another **sixty**, and in another **thirty**.



37

Irenaeus (130-202) Conjecture – three levels

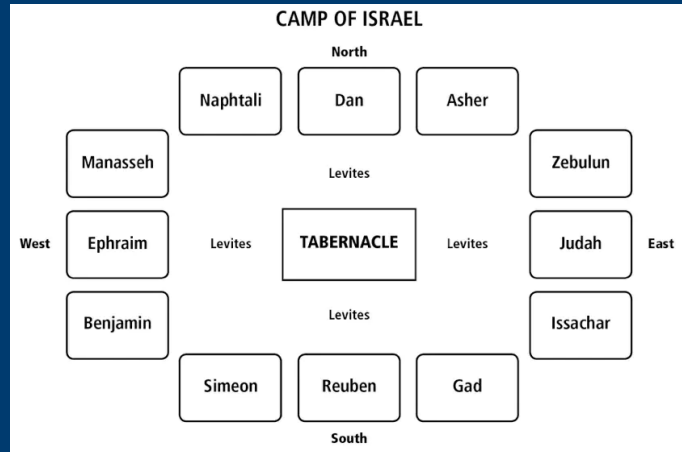
- Tabernacle (Camp of God)
 - Throne/Temple
 - 100-fold
- Levites (Camp of Levites)
 - Restored Eden
 - 60-fold
- 12 Tribes (Camp of Israel)
 - City, extending to walls
 - 30-fold



38

Irenaeus (130-202) Conjecture – three levels

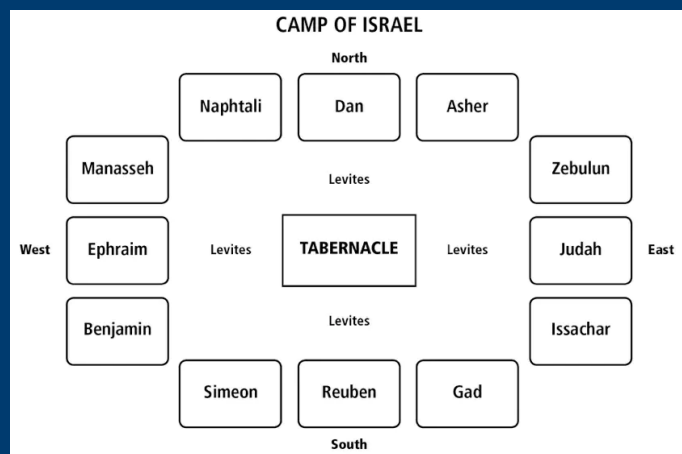
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- Levites (Camp of Levites)
 - Restored Eden
 - 60-fold
- 12 Tribes (Camp of Israel)
 - City, extending to walls
 - 30-fold



39

Irenaeus (130-202) Conjecture – three levels

- Tabernacle (Camp of God)
 - Throne/Temple
 - 100-fold
- Levites (Camp of Levites)
 - Restored Eden
 - 60-fold
- 12 Tribes (Camp of Israel)
 - City, extending to walls
 - 30-fold



40

Luke 14:7-11

Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, [8] “When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, [9] and he who invited you both will come and say to you, ‘Give your place to this person,’ and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. [10] But when you are invited, **go and sit in the lowest place**, so that when your host comes he may say to you, ‘**Friend, move up higher.**’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you. [11] **For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.**”



41

It is not usable either for the soil or for the manure pile



Dung cake manufacture in Ucok, Turkey

Luke 14:35

42



Talmidim
Way

43