

# What Is Meant By “New Heavens and a New Earth?”

## Bible Answers About Denominations

Jehovah promised through Isaiah, near the close of his great book, the following: “For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind” (Isa 65:17 KJV). The Lord then had Isaiah to repeat this prophecy: “For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain” (Isa 66:22 KJV). The same terminology also appears twice in the New Testament (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1).

Isaiah’s prophecy is declaring that the coming of the Messiah would introduce a new spiritual and moral order or arrangement. Paul speaks of this new order: “that in the dispensation (arrangement) of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him” (Eph 1:10 NKJ). Isaiah’s new heavens and new earth are the new arrangement to which Paul refers, and before which all old dispensations must pass away. The entire system of Judaism, animal sacrifices, and ceremonial rites, will pass away and make room for Christianity. Chapter 65 begins with the great prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles. This is an undeniable reference to the beginning of the Christian age when the Gospel was to be taken to all the nations, to the entire world, and to the whole creation—manifestly to the Gentiles (Matt. 28:19; Mk. 16:15). It is evident from the remainder of chapter 65 that the Lord is speaking symbolically of this new order under Christ in contrast to the old under the Law of Moses for He says: “The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, saith the LORD” (Isa 65:25 KJV). The “holy mountain” of which Isaiah speaks is Zion of Messiah’s rule (Isa. 2:2-4). Isaiah was not writing of the new heaven and new earth of John’s vision (Rev. 21:1), but of the new creation and order under Christ—the new dispensation we are now under.

The Book of Revelation is a broad declaration of the ultimate, universal, and final triumph of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ over all the forces and power of Satan which He exercised in this world. When the Son of God ascended to the right hand of the Father on high, all power, sovereignty, dominion, Lordship and rule in the divine government over the universe was given unto Him (Matt., 28:18; Eph. 1:22, 23). The government of Christ shall consummate itself in total conquest and absolute victory in the putting down of all rebellion and wickedness of opposition to the Majestic dignity of heaven and the holiness of God, the Father. All of this is why Christ is now reigning in the heavens. His kingdom is an everlasting government, a government which no power on earth or otherwise is capable of shaking or causing to fall (Heb. 2:12-28). When His rule is completed in the accomplishment of all the divine plans and purposes of the Father, then He will return unto His Father the government of the universe. Paul declared in reference to that victory day, “Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father;

when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He hath put all things under His feet. But when He saith, all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor 15:24-28 KJV). This ultimate victory is what is described in the highly symbolic language in the Book of Revelation.

This final conquest and overthrow of Satan, and his wicked rebels and agents, together with death, and hades were cast into the lake of fire and brimstone as recorded in the closing portions of the 19th and 20th chapters. Revelation 21 begins by picturing the vision in which "the holy city, the new Jerusalem," is seen coming down out of heaven from God, adorned, prepared, or made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. It was at this appearance of the holy city that the voice out of the throne announced, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Rev 21:3 KJV). Let it be noted that this scene and the accompanying announcement was not made until after several very important things had already been recorded as finalized by the power of the reigning Lord:

- The devil was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, wherein the false prophet and the beast had already been delivered for torment forever (Rev. 19:20; 20:10).
- The existing heaven and earth, and the sea were all passed away (Rev. 20:11; 21:1; 2 Pet. 3:10-13).
- The judgment takes place of all the dead and living; every man being sentenced according to his life's choice while on the earth (Rev. 20:12-13; 15).
- Then death and hades were cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14).

It was not until John had been shown the final and complete victory by Christ over Satan and death that he was shown the vision of the tabernacling of God, HIMSELF, with His people. This is the new heaven and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness (2 Pet. 3:13). This blessed state is described as: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev 21:4 KJV). John pictures the nations "walking therein," bringing in only their glory. Excluded, however, will be all who are unclean and evil. "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev 21:24-27 KJV).

Finally, the vision of the saved at home with God closes with this wonderful promised blessing: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev 22:14 KJV). The "new heaven and new earth" is the heavenly city of God and the righteous will dwell forever in this blessed state. This agrees with all other passages regarding the blessed state of the righteous.

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