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**Heaven and Earth -  
The New Heavens  
And New Earth Are  
Not Future**



By Dan Maines

## **The New Heavens And New Earth Are Not Future**

### **Introduction**

† Most people have been taught that the new heavens and new earth are about a future physical planet, but that's not what scripture teaches when you actually read the context (Isaiah 65:17-20; Revelation 21:1-4).

† Isaiah 65 defines what the new heavens and new earth are, and Revelation 21 is directly quoting and fulfilling that same

prophecy, not introducing something new (Isaiah 65:18; Revelation 21:2).

† When we let scripture interpret scripture, it becomes clear this is covenant language describing the transition from the Old Covenant world into the New Covenant world, fulfilled in their generation (Matthew 24:34-35; Hebrews 8:13).

† Scripture itself uses heaven and earth as covenant language, not just physical creation, showing this is about covenant structure and relationship (Deuteronomy 30:19; Deuteronomy 31:28).

### **Isaiah 65:17-20**

17 "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind.

18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing And her people for gladness.

19 I will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; And there will no longer be heard in her The voice of weeping and the sound of crying.

20 No longer will there be in it an infant who lives only a few days, Or an old man who does not live out his days; For the youth will die at the age of one hundred, And the one who does not reach the age of one hundred Will be thought accursed."

† God is speaking to Israel under the Old Covenant, not to a distant future audience thousands of years later (Isaiah 65:1-2).

† The "former things" refers to the Old Covenant order, the system that was about to pass away, not the physical planet (Hebrews 8:13).

† The passage itself defines the new creation as Jerusalem and her people being transformed, not a new physical universe

(Isaiah 65:18).

† Death and sin are still present in this "new heavens and new earth," proving it is not a future perfect world (Isaiah 65:20).

### **Isaiah 66:15-16**

15 For behold, the LORD will come in fire And His chariots like the whirlwind, To render His anger with fury And His rebuke with flames of fire.

16 For the LORD will execute judgment by fire And by His sword on all flesh; And those slain by the LORD will be many.

† Isaiah continues the same prophecy, showing judgment associated with the new heavens and new earth (Isaiah 65:17; Isaiah 66:22).

† This judgment falls on those remaining in rebellion, showing this is a covenant transition, not a future perfect world (Isaiah 66:24).

† The context proves this is about the end of the Old Covenant age and the establishment of the new.

### **Revelation 21:1-4**

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea.

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

3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among the people, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them,

4 and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there

will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

† John is not inventing new language, he's quoting Isaiah 65, showing fulfillment, not a brand new prophecy (Isaiah 65:17).

† The "first heaven and earth" is the Old Covenant system, which passed away in judgment on Jerusalem (Matthew 24:34-35).

† The new heavens and new earth are identified as the New Jerusalem, the covenant people, not a new planet (Revelation 21:2; Galatians 4:26).

† This is covenant language, God dwelling with His people, exactly what was promised throughout the prophets (Ezekiel 37:27).

† Revelation itself says these things were about to happen shortly and were near, not thousands of years in the future (Revelation 1:1-3; Revelation 22:6-10).

## **2 Peter 3:5-7, 10**

5 For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water,

6 through which the world at that time was destroyed by being flooded with water.

7 But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly people.

10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be

discovered.

† Peter compares the coming judgment to the flood, which destroyed a world system, not the physical planet itself (Genesis 6:13).

† This shows the language of heaven and earth passing away is about covenantal judgment, just like in Noah's day (2 Peter 3:6-7).

† The "day of the Lord" is a known Old Testament judgment pattern, fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in that generation (Matthew 24:34; Luke 21:22).

† The "elements" refers to the basic principles of the Old Covenant system, not physical atoms (Galatians 4:3; Colossians 2:8, 20).

### **Hebrews 12:26-28**

26 And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven."

27 This expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;

† God was about to shake heaven and earth, clearly identifying a covenantal transition, not the destruction of the physical universe (Hebrews 12:27).

† The things removed were part of the Old Covenant system, making way for the unshakable kingdom (Hebrews 12:28).

† This perfectly aligns with the passing away of the first heaven and earth in Revelation 21.

## **Historical References**

† Justin Martyr understood prophetic language as symbolic and tied to covenant fulfillment, not always literal cosmic change.

† Irenaeus connected the promises of restoration to the people of God, though later interpretations began to shift toward literalism.

† Eusebius recorded the destruction of Jerusalem as a divine judgment fulfilling Christ's words, marking the end of the Old Covenant age.

† Josephus gives eyewitness testimony of that destruction, confirming the historical fulfillment of those prophecies.

## **How It Applies To Us Today**

† We are living in the new heavens and new earth now, in the completed New Covenant where God dwells with His people (Revelation 21:3).

† There's no need to wait for a future world, the promise has already been fulfilled in Christ (2 Corinthians 1:20).

† Our identity is in the New Jerusalem, the bride, the covenant people, not in a future escape to another planet (Galatians 4:26).

† This should give us confidence and assurance that every promise of God in Christ has already been fulfilled (Hebrews 12:28).

## **Q & A Appendix**

**Q** If the new heavens and new earth are already here, why does the physical world still exist?

**A** Because the language is covenantal, not about the destruction of the physical creation. Hebrews 12:28 shows we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, meaning the change was covenantal, not cosmic.

**Q** Why does Revelation say the first heaven and earth passed away?

**A** Jesus defined that in Matthew 24:34-35, tying heaven and earth passing away to that generation, showing it was the end of the Old Covenant order.

**Q** What about no more death in Revelation 21:4?

**A** That's covenantal death, separation from God under the Law. In Christ, that death is removed, as seen in 2 Timothy 1:10 where He abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

**Q** If this is already fulfilled, why does Revelation describe such dramatic imagery like fire, destruction, and shaking?

**A** Because that's standard prophetic judgment language used throughout the Old Testament for covenant judgment, not literal cosmic destruction. Isaiah 13:10 speaks of the sun, moon, and stars going dark in the fall of Babylon, yet the physical universe remained. The same language is used for Jerusalem's fall (Isaiah 34:4; Matthew 24:29).

**Q** If the new heavens and new earth are covenantal, why call them "new"?

**A** Because God was establishing a completely new covenant order, replacing the old one. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. That isn't about a new planet, it's about a new covenant reality. Hebrews 8:13 says the old covenant was becoming obsolete and ready to disappear.

**Q** Doesn't Revelation 21 say there is no more sea, so how can that be symbolic?

**A** The sea is consistently used in scripture as a symbol of chaos, separation, and the nations in unrest. Isaiah 57:20 says the wicked are like the tossing sea. Removing the sea represents the removal of chaos and separation under the completed covenant, not the literal removal of oceans.

**Q** What about the idea that this must be future because it sounds too perfect?

**A** The language describes covenant perfection, not the absence of physical problems in the world. Hebrews 12:28 says we have received an unshakable kingdom now. The perfection is in our standing with God, not in the condition of the physical world.

**Q** Why do so many people still believe this is future?

**A** Because the time statements are often ignored or redefined. Revelation 1:1-3 and 22:6-10 clearly say these things were about to happen and were near. When those are taken seriously, the interpretation has to stay in the first century.

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

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**Source Index**

† Isaiah 65:17-20; Isaiah 66:15-16; Revelation 21:1-4; 2 Peter 3:5-7, 10; Hebrews 12:26-28; Hebrews 8:13; Matthew 24:34-35; Luke 21:22; Ezekiel 37:27; 2 Corinthians 1:20; 2 Timothy 1:10; Galatians 4:26; Galatians 4:3; Colossians 2:8, 20; Deuteronomy 30:19; Deuteronomy 31:28

† Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho; Irenaeus, Against Heresies; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History; Josephus, Wars of the Jews

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