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**Heaven and Earth -  
The New Heavens  
And New Earth Is  
The Church, Not A  
Future Planet**



By Dan Maines

**The New Heavens And New Earth Is The Church, Not A  
Future Planet**

## Introduction

† Most people read "new heavens and a new earth" and immediately think of a future physical universe, but the Bible itself explains what this means if we let Scripture interpret Scripture (2 Corinthians 5:16-17)

† The prophets, the apostles, and Revelation all point to the same reality, this is about a people being transformed, not a planet being replaced (Ephesians 2:14-16)

† The wow moment comes when we see that the "place" is actually the people of God, the Bride, the Church (Revelation 21:2, 9-10)

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

For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and there shall be heard in her no more the voice of weeping and the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed.

† This "new heavens and new earth" clearly includes death, the child shall die, so this cannot be a perfect eternal state with no death (Isaiah 65:20)

† Sin is still present, the sinner being accursed, which proves this is not describing a sinless future world but a covenantal transformation (Isaiah 65:20)

† God identifies this new creation as Jerusalem and her people, not a planet, this is about a people being made new (Isaiah 65:18)

† Childbirth and lifespan are still functioning in this "new heavens and new earth," proving this is describing covenant life among people, not a perfected eternal state (Isaiah 65:20, 23)

## **Isaiah 66:22-23**

"For just as the new heavens and the new earth,  
Which I make, will endure before Me," declares the LORD,  
"So will your descendants and your name endure.  
And it shall be from new moon to new moon  
And from Sabbath to Sabbath,  
All mankind will come to bow down before Me," says the LORD.

† This new creation is tied to worship patterns like new moons and sabbaths, showing continuity with covenantal life, not a brand new physical cosmos (Isaiah 66:23)

† The focus is on God's people remaining before Him, again pointing to identity and covenant, not geography (Isaiah 66:22)

† The language is clearly symbolic and covenantal, describing access to God rather than a recreated planet (Hebrews 12:22-24)

## **2 Corinthians 5:17**

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, this person is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

† Paul defines new creation as something happening in Christ, not something happening to the planet (2 Corinthians 5:17)

† The old things passing away matches the passing of the old covenant world, not the destruction of the physical earth (Hebrews 8:13)

† This is present reality, not future expectation, believers are already part of the new creation (Colossians 1:13)

## **Ephesians 2:14-16**

For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the hostility, which is the Law composed of

commandments expressed in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two one new person, in this way establishing peace; and that He might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the hostility.

† The "new man" is the new creation, Jew and Gentile united in one body, this is the new heavens and new earth in action (Ephesians 2:15)

† The old covenant divisions are removed, showing that the "old world" that passed away was covenantal, not physical (Galatians 3:28)

† This is about a people being created in Christ, not a universe being recreated (2 Corinthians 5:17)

### **Galatians 4:26**

But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother.

† Paul identifies the Jerusalem above as our mother, meaning it's the source of the people of God, not a physical location (Galatians 4:26)

† This matches Revelation where the New Jerusalem is the Bride, again showing it's a people

† This proves our identity is tied to this Jerusalem now, not a future destination

### **Hebrews 12:22-23**

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,

† This explicitly says we have come, not will come, to the heavenly Jerusalem, proving it's a present reality (Hebrews 12:22-23)

† The heavenly Jerusalem is identified as the church of the firstborn, clearly showing it's a people, not a future city (Hebrews 12:23)

† This connects directly to Revelation 21, confirming the New Jerusalem is the people of God

### **Revelation 21:1-2**

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

† John connects the new heavens and new earth directly to the New Jerusalem, showing they are the same reality (Revelation 21:2)

† The New Jerusalem is described as a bride, not a location, this is a people, not a place (Revelation 21:2)

† The passing away of the first heaven and earth matches the passing of the old covenant system (Hebrews 12:26-28)

### **Revelation 21:9-10**

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, full of the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

† The angel explicitly says the Bride is what he will show, then shows the city, proving the city and the Bride are the same (Revelation 21:9-10)

† This is the wow moment, the "place" is actually the people of God (Ephesians 5:25-27)

† The New Jerusalem is the Church, the redeemed people in covenant with Christ (Hebrews 12:22-23)

† The Bible never describes believers going to live inside the Bride, because the Bride is the believers themselves (Revelation 21:9-10)

## **Historical References**

† Irenaeus spoke of the Church as the dwelling place of God, identifying the people as the true habitation of God (Against Heresies, Book 5)

† Augustine described the City of God as the community of believers, not a physical city descending in the future (City of God, Book 20)

† Eusebius connected the fall of Jerusalem with the transition into the new covenant reality, emphasizing the people of God as the focus (Ecclesiastical History, Book 3)

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

† We are not waiting for a new world, we are living in the new creation right now in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17)

† Our identity is not tied to a future place, it's tied to being the people of God, the Bride of Christ (Revelation 21:2)

† This changes everything, we stop looking outward for fulfillment and recognize what God has already accomplished in His people (Colossians 2:10)

## **Q & A Appendix**

**Q** If the new heavens and new earth is the Church, why does it sound physical in Isaiah and Revelation?

**A** Because prophetic language uses physical imagery to describe spiritual realities, Isaiah shows death and sin still present which proves it's not a perfect physical world, and Revelation interprets it for us by calling the city the Bride (Isaiah 65:20; Revelation 21:9-10)

**Q** Are we in the New Jerusalem right now?

**A** Yes, Hebrews says we have come to Mount Zion and the heavenly Jerusalem, this is present reality, not future (Hebrews 12:22-23)

**Q** Does this mean the earth will never be destroyed?

**A** The Bible shows the passing of heaven and earth as covenantal language tied to Israel's world, not the physical planet (Matthew 24:34-35)

**Q** If the New Jerusalem is the Bride, who lives in it?

**A** No one lives in the Bride, because the Bride is the people of God themselves, Revelation shows the city and the Bride are the same, not separate (Revelation 21:9-10)

**Q** Why does Revelation describe streets, gates, and walls if it's people?

**A** Those are symbolic descriptions showing beauty, security, and perfection, just like the Church is described as a body, a temple, and a building, all different pictures of the same people (Ephesians 2:20-22; 1 Corinthians 3:16)

**Q** What passed away when the first heaven and earth passed away?

**A** The old covenant world, the temple system, the law, and the separation it created, not the physical planet (Hebrews 8:13; Hebrews 9:10)

**Q** Why do people still expect a future physical new earth?

**A** Because they read prophetic language literally instead of letting Scripture interpret Scripture, and they ignore that the New Testament says new creation is already here in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17)

**Q** How do we know this was fulfilled in their generation?

**A** Jesus said all these things would happen in that generation, including the passing of heaven and earth, tying it directly to the first century (Matthew 24:34-35)

**Q** Does this mean there is no future hope?

**A** No, our hope is already fulfilled in Christ, we are in the kingdom, in the New Jerusalem, and in the new creation now (Colossians 1:13)

**Q** Why is it so hard for futurists to believe we're in the New Jerusalem?

**A** Because they're looking for something physical and visible instead of understanding the spiritual reality, the kingdom of God does not come with observation, it is within and among His people (Luke 17:20-21)

**Q** If this is true, what should we be focused on?

**A** Living as the new creation we already are, walking in unity, holiness, and identity as the Bride of Christ instead of waiting for something God already accomplished (Ephesians 4:1-3; Colossians 3:1-3)

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

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## Source Index

† Isaiah 65:17-20, Isaiah 66:22-23, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:14-16, Galatians 4:26, Hebrews 12:22-23, Revelation 21:1-2, 9-10, Matthew 24:34-35, Colossians 1:13, Hebrews 8:13, Galatians 3:28

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies Book 5; Augustine, City of God Book 20; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History Book 3

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