

# Week 4 - The New Heavens and New Earth

## The Epic Story continues ...

In Luke, Jesus tells story of persistent widow. Then asks, *“When the Son of Man comes, will he find [this kind of persistent] faith on the earth?”* Luke 18:8 (AMP). I believe this is a challenge to us.

The table is set for Jesus return.

Satan is enraged. He will set out to destroy God’s people, Israel and the church. He will raise an Antichrist to power and a false prophet to help him deceive the nations. Some of us will be martyred.

The Antichrist will be lauded as a great man. He will broker a peace in the Mideast, allowing Israel to rebuild her temple. His false prophet will perform counterfeit miracles.

Seven years of tribulation to turn hearts of men.

After these things, God will give the word. Jesus will mount a white horse, and *“come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God.”*

We will accompany him on white horses, dressed in the finest robes of pure linen. All the world will see him, with his *“eyes like flames of fire, and his robe dipped in blood.”* Rev. 21

He will set foot on the Mount of Olives and vanquish all his enemies, those gathered against Israel, with the sword of his word. His victory will be mighty.

*“Behold, he is coming with clouds, and every eye will see him, even they who pierced him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of him. Even so, Amen.”* Rev. 1:7 (NKJV)

Jesus will bind Satan and his angels and chain away in the bottomless pit for a thousand years.

Jesus will gather his bride for our wedding day. King of Kings, will serve us at a great wedding feast.

For a thousand years he will reign from Jerusalem.

He’ll put us to work, ruling under him, fulfilling Is. 61:4, *“They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.”*

As volcanic destruction leads to new life, the earth will rise from the ashes.

When the thousand years are up, God will release Satan. And though all will know of his goodness, pride will arise again in the hearts of some, leading to one final rebellion. The rebellion will be quashed, and all who rise up will be cast into Hades with Satan and his demons.

Our planet as we know it will come to its end. But not to worry, a New Heaven and New Earth are coming.

## **The New Heaven and New Earth:**

2 Peter 3:7-9 *"the heavens and earth that now exist are being stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."*

2 Peter 3:13 *"But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth where righteousness dwells."*

Earlier, in 1 Peter 1:3-4, he said, *"He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that will never perish, spoil, or fade."*

I feel the Holy Spirit saying that Jesus words to Nicodemus about being born again is a picture of the earth also. Like our bodies, it must be born again, *"the perishable must put on imperishable."* 1 Cor. 53.

Earth was made for man and suffered the same corruption we did because of our rebellion. Yet, humans and the earth are inseparably linked.

In Revelation, chapter 20 John saw a vision of the Great White Throne Judgment. After that ...

**Revelation 21:1-7** *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. <sup>2</sup>I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup>'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."*

<sup>5</sup>He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true. <sup>6</sup>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 water without cost from the spring of the water of life. <sup>7</sup>Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children."

### **Will this earth be destroyed or renewed?**

Some verses speak of utter destruction: Ps. 102:25-26 *"... you laid the foundations of the earth, and heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain ..."*

Luke 21:33, 2 Peter 3:10

Other verses appear to contradict this idea. Psalm 78:69 (CJB), *"He built his sanctuary like the heights; like the earth, he made it to last forever."*

Theologian Anthony Hoekema writes, *"In his redemptive activity, God does not destroy the works of his hands, but cleanses them from sin and perfects them, so that they may finally reach the goal for which he created them. This principle means that the new earth to which we look forward will not be totally different from the present one, but will be a renewal and glorification of the earth on which we now live."*

Some have likened it to a house torn down to its foundation and rebuilt.

Greek word for "new" is "kainos" which is the same word Paul used to describe us as a "new" creation.

### **What will the New Earth Be like?**

It will be ruled as a kingdom, God's domain. Ps. 89:35-37, *"I will not lie to David: His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me; It shall be established forever like the moon, even like the faithful witness in the sky."*

We will immediately recognize it as our true home. The best of our current earth will be there. God will make it amazing, then allow us to go to work adding to its beauty. God loves the participation of his children.

Ps. 115:16, "The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's; but the earth he has given to children of men."

A perfect fit with God's original plan. He walked with Adam and Eve in the garden (Gen. 3).

### **Will it be the same size?**

### **Will there be seasons and weather?**

Ez. 34: 26 *"I will make them and the places around my hill a blessing, and I will cause the rain to fall when it should—there will be showers of blessing."*

### **Will there be oceans?**

### **Will there be animals?**

### **What about the new Heavens?**

**Will the sun and moon still shine?** Rev. 21:23, says *"the city (New Jerusalem) does not need the sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of the Lord gives it light."* Rev. 22:5 is similar.

**How will it differ from the Present Heaven?** God will relocate the center of his kingdom from heaven to earth where he will dwell with us.

*Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come and make our home with him."* John 14:23

Major difference is that we will have our new, glorified bodies.

### **What will our bodies be like?**

Rom. 8:19-23, *"All creation groans, awaiting for the sons of God to be revealed as God's image bearers."*

We will be given a new name, known only to God (Rev. 3:12). I believe this speaks to our uniqueness.

1 John 3:2

Phil. 3:20-21 (CJB) *"... and make them like his glorious body ..."*

1 Cor. 15:52-53 (CJB) *"For this material which can decay must be clothed with imperishability ..."*

Our bodies will be immortal, free of disease, vigorous with sound minds (like Christ) and sound bodies.

**Will we be beautiful?** No sinless corruption. No scowls. What God remakes he only improves upon.

### **What age will we be?**

**Will we have the same physical capabilities Jesus had: appearing and disappearing, teleporting place to place, and defying gravity?** Sounds cool. Maybe, maybe not. When it says, “*we will become like his glorious body,*” it may or may not refer to such characteristics but to our *immortality* and to *becoming like him in character*.

Doubtful we’ll share all of his characteristics such as his *omniscience* (all knowing), *omnipotence* (all powerful), and *omnipresence* (ability to be everywhere at once).

**Will our bodies shine?** Mat. 13:43 “*The righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.*”

Maybe. Moses and Elijah “*appeared in glorious splendor*” when they met Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration.

We also know that Moses had to wear a veil after being in the presence of the Lord. I believe that every time we are in his presence we will be as Moses was, reflecting his glory and brilliance.

### **Relationships:**

I believe we will have wonderful fellowship with God himself, Yeshua, and the Holy Spirit.

I also believe we will maintain our nearness to loved ones who receive salvation ... family, friends. Though we will no longer be married to our spouses, I believe we will have a very special relationship.

We will have all the time in the world with those we lost too soon. And we will get to know those we only dreamed of getting to know. Over time never ending we will have the opportunity to meet every person who ever lived for God.

Can you imagine the dinner parties! Yes, I believe we will eat in heaven, for the sheer joy of it!

Joy and laughter will abound. There will be no conflict, no unhealthy family dynamics. Everything in heaven will be joy filled and I believe quite a lot of fun!

**The Joy of Discovery:** There are few joys greater than the joy of discovery. The God who always surpasses our expectations will forever give us more of himself and his creation to discover!