

A Study of Heaven – Week 8

The New Heaven and the New Earth

In the first week, we learned from Ecclesiastes 3:11, that God “*has also set eternity in their heart*”. We also know from Hebrews 13:14 that the earth is not our home “*we are seeking the city which is to come.*” There are numerous books and songs about being homesick for a Eden or Heaven. The choir sang an anthem called “Beulah Land”, it says “I’m kind of homesick for a country, to which I’ve never seen before.”

In week 6, I showed you Chip Ingram’s chart comparing Eden before the fall to the earth now and the future earth. Sin has ruined the earth and its inhabitants. We learned that as man goes, so does the earth.

Dr. Jeremiah says “This often unspoken yearning corresponds with God’s plans for the future, for everywhere we turn in the Bible we uncover prophecies and predictions about God’s true utopia – the new heaven and the new earth, wherein righteousness dwells.”

Promises of a New Heaven and a New Earth

What do these verses say about the new heaven and the new earth?

Psalm 102:25-26 – God will change the current heavens and earth

Isaiah 65:17-19 – God told Isaiah about the new heaven and the new earth and a new Jerusalem.

Isaiah 66:22-23 – God told Isaiah that the new heaven and the new earth and those that live there will live forever. And they shall worship God.

2 Peter 3:7-13 – Peter saw the destruction of the old heaven and old earth with a promise of new ones.

Revelation 21:1-2 – John saw a new heaven and a new earth and a new Jerusalem.

Purification (not Annihilated) of the New Heaven and New Earth

The current heaven and earth will be cleansed, glorified and equipped for our eternal use.

Burned up

2 Peter 3:10, 12 some translations tell us that the earth will be ‘burned up’, the ESV and the NIV say that it will be ‘laid bare’. It will be a renewal or re-creation. It will be a purging of decay and sin.

Dr. Jeremiah says “As God created Adam out of the dirt of the ground, so He will recreate the New heaven and New earth from the elements remaining after the universe is destroyed by fire.”

When I think about the destruction of the earth, I think of Terry trying to keep our driveway clear of weeds. She sprays several times a year. It is because the weeds have gone to seed. To remove the seeds, it takes fire. If the New Earth is to be weed free, it takes fire.

New

Revelation 21:5 tells us God will make all things new. As man goes, so does the earth.

According to Walter Bauer's, the word translated as 'new' is 'kainos' means new "in the sense that what is old has become obsolete, and should be replaced by what is new. In such a case the new is, as a rule, superior in kind to the old."

Paul uses the same word in 2 Corinthians 5:17 which tells us that if we are in Christ then we are a new creation.

"The earth's death will be no more final than our own. The destruction of the old Earth in God's purifying judgment will immediately be followed by its resurrection to new life. Earth's fiery "end" will open straight into a glorious new beginning. And as we'll see later, it will just keep getting better and better." (Alcorn)

Pass Away

Revelation 21:1 says that the first heaven and earth have passed away. The Greek word for 'passed away' is 'pa-rer-chom-ai'. It doesn't mean cease to exist, it means changed from one state to another.

One theologian wrote, "The caterpillar passes away, and the butterfly emerges." So it will be with the earth. Just as we will have new glorified bodies, so will the earth.

Like the Flood

2 Peter 3:5-7 – Consider the affects of Noah's flood. It changed the earth but did not destroy it. It cleansed it. It purified it. It made it new.

John Piper says of this passage, “What Peter may well mean is that at the end of this age there will be cataclysmic events that bring this world to an end as we know it—not putting it out of existence, but wiping out all that is evil and cleansing it by fire and fitting it for an age of glory and righteousness and peace that will never end.”

Consider the flood, God passes judgment on the earth and removed all but 8 people and the animals on the ark. God promised He would not destroy the earth by water ever again. (Genesis 9:11)

Like the Resurrection of the Body – Redeemed, Renewed and Restored

Consider Jesus, His body broken and poured out for us. (Mark 14:22–24) He was beaten, He was sleep deprived, He was hanged on a cross until His body was lifeless. This isn't the body that His disciples saw in the upper room after His resurrection. It was new. The same applies to the earth.

To deny Satan

Genesis 1:31 tells us that God was very pleased with His creation. God does not want to get any satisfaction from getting man and God to destroy His creation.

God uses the same earth but it is made new. As 2 Peter 3:10 tells us, *“10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will*

disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.”

Some of the things that will be missing on the new heaven and earth are:

Revelation 21:1 – Sea

Revelation 21:4 – Death, Mourning, sadness, pain

Revelation 21:8 – Sin

The Reversal of the Curse

Genesis 3:17-19 tells us that sin did not affect just mankind but God cursed the ground because of what Adam and Eve had done.

Revelation 22:3 tells us that on the new earth there will no longer be a curse.

Dr. Jeremiah says “God sent His Son into the world, not only to save our souls but also to redeem creation from the results of sin. The work of Christ goes beyond the incredible goal of saving an innumerable throng of blood-bought people. The total work of Christ is nothing less than redeeming this entire creation from the effects of sin.”

Romans 8:22-25 tells us that not only do we groan but so does all of creation groan. We groan because of the impact of sin on our lives and our world. We groan for NASB says redemption, NLT says to be released from sin and suffering.

The Restoration of All Things

Revelation 21:4-5 tells us that the former things will pass away and God will make all things new.

Ephesians 1:9-10 tells us that God had a plan from the beginning. His plan was to send His Son to rule and to reign forever.

Randy Alcorn says of these verses that “Heaven is God’s home. Earth is our home. Jesus Christ, as the God-man, forever links God with mankind, and thereby forever links heaven and earth.”

The veil separating God and man was torn down. There will be one universe with Jesus as the head. Revelation 21:3 – God and man will be together as it was intended at creation.