

New Heavens and New Earth

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Introduction

Isaiah received his call from God to prophesy to His people in a time of crisis and world turbulence. The Assyrians were rising to great power and moving westward in an effort at world conquest. The nation of Israel was ripe for judgment and destruction, having rejected the message of Amos and Hosea. Judah had grown wealthy and opulent under the reign of Uzziah.

The world was in a state of change: the old order was to pass away and a new to take its place. Isaiah was God's mouth to point to a new heaven and a new earth.

I. ISAIAH'S NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH.

- A. Judgement upon the heathen nations:
 - 1. 13:9-13. Babylon — the end of the world for Babylon.
 - 2. 34:1-4. The nations — the earth melts and the heavens are dissolved — the passing of an order.
- B. 51:3-6. Contrast between righteousness, the eternal, and the created universe, the temporal. (vs. 16). The Messiah plants heaven and earth — a new order which follows the passing of the old (vss. 3-6).
- C. 65:16b-19. New heavens and a new earth:
 - 1. Former troubles are forgotten, vs. 16, new heavens and new earth in their stead, vs. 17.
 - 2. Clearly this points to the age of Messiah in "Jehovah's holy mountain," vs. 25 (cf. with Ch. 11).
- D. 66:22-24. Victory! The "seed," spiritual Israel, remains, worships Jehovah God, and looks upon the defeated enemies.
- E. Isaiah's new earth is the new order under the Messiah, the present dispensation.

II. PETER'S NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH, 2 Peter 3.

- A. Verses 1-7. From Creation to the judgment and destruction of ungodly men.
 - 1. The continued order from creation, 1-4.
 - 2. Heaven and earth of old—flood—the heavens and the earth that now are, vs. 6.
 - 3. The judgment to come, vs. 7.
- B. Verses 8-15. The passing of the present and ushering in of the new.
 - 1. The present day of salvation, 8, 9, 15.
 - 2. The day of the Lord (cf. 2 Thess. 2:1, 2, "the coming of the Lord...the day of the Lord").
 - 3. Beyond the judgment "a new heaven and a new earth...righteousness," vss. 11-13.

III. JOHN'S NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH, Rev. 21:1, 2.

- A. 20:1-10. The present reign of the saints under Christ, in victory.
- B. 20:11-15. The passing of the present order and the judgment.
- C. 21:1, 2. The new heaven and new earth beyond the judgment, paralleling Peter's description of the same.

Conclusion

Isaiah's new heaven and new earth looked to the passing of the old order and the establishing of the new under Christ, which is now. Peter's and John's new heaven and earth looked beyond the judgment and passing of the present order to the new and eternal order when time shall be swallowed up in eternity.

The glory of the future surpasses the present as the present surpasses the old. Its description is beyond our ability to grasp — we await the day when our anticipation becomes reality.