

A Fresh Glimpse of the New Heaven and the New Earth

In **2 Peter 3:13**, the Apostle Peter states that “...*we, according to his promise, look for new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*” Peter knew about the promise God made with Abraham.

We find in **Hebrews 11:9-10** that Abraham also looked for a city whose builder and maker is God. To the best of our knowledge, Abraham lived somewhere between 2100 BC and 1900 BC. The Apostle Peter, some 2,000 years after Abraham, in the first century AD, was also looking for that same promised “city”, only Peter called it “**a new heaven and a new earth**”. If we today are to understand **the “new heaven and new earth”** that Peter was looking for, we must examine what the “old heaven and the old earth” actually were.

In the Old Covenant given to Moses at Mt. Sinai, the Holy of Holies was the inner sanctuary of the tabernacle and later of the temple where God’s presence appeared. (**Leviticus 16:2, Exodus 25:22**)

In the Holy of Holies was the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark of the Covenant was covered by solid gold known as the Mercy Seat. Inside the Ark were the stone tablets of the covenant, a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron’s rod which budded. (**Hebrews 9:4**)

The Bible teaches us that the Holy of Holies represented the presence of God to the children of Israel. The High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies once a year to offer blood for the sins of himself and for the sins of the people. (**Hebrews 9:7**) Thus, Old Testament Israel’s whole relationship with God centered around the Tabernacle and later around the Temple. This was their heaven, thus the “old heaven”.

In **Deuteronomy 7:6-8**, we read how God chose the Nation of Israel to be His people. At Mt. Sinai, God gave His Laws and Commandments to His people Israel.

As long as they kept His Commandments, He would bless them and keep them. (**Deuteronomy 7:9, 12-14, Exodus 19:5-6**) The Bible tells us that God chose Jerusalem to put His name there. (**2 Chronicles 6:6, 1 Kings 11:36**)

According to Scriptures, it is very clear that God had chosen Israel and actually put His Name in Jerusalem where the permanent Temple was built. (**1 Chronicles 17:20-21**)

In the Scriptures, the word “**earth**” does not always refer to the physical planet “**Earth**”. An example of this can be found in **Genesis 4:13-14**. Cain was not banished off the planet Earth, but rather from the region where God’s people lived. **Genesis 4:17** tells us that Cain went to the land of Nod and dwelt there. In this sense of the word “**earth**”, the land of Israel with her Temple in the capital city of Jerusalem was the “**old earth**” of God.

Now that we have established exactly what the “**old heaven and the old earth**” actually was according to Scriptures, the Bible speaks of a coming judgment against this “**old heaven and old earth**”.

This judgment was coming because the people of God had transgressed the Law and had broken the everlasting covenant. (**Isaiah 24:5-6**) The Book of Hebrews makes it very clear that the Old Covenant, or the “**old heaven and the old earth**” are getting ready to vanish away. (**Hebrews 8:13**)

The Bible tells us that He took away the first so that He could establish the second. (**Hebrews 10:9**) **Hebrews 10:1** tells us that the Law or the Old Covenant was a shadow of good things to come. The “**old heaven and the old earth**” were getting ready to pass away. A “**new heaven and a new earth**” were getting ready to replace the old.

In this “**new heaven and new earth**”, the Lord said that He will put His laws into our hearts and in our minds. (**Hebrews 10:16-17**) The Apostle Paul proclaimed this same thing happening in **2 Corinthians 3:3**.

No more tables of stone, but rather His word is written on tables of the heart. Now, the blood of Jesus has opened up a new living way into His presence. The veil has been taken away, and now every born-again believer has direct access to the presence of God. (**Hebrews 10:19-22**)

The Temple and the city of Jerusalem were destroyed in judgment in AD 70. Now, it is our hearts, minds, and bodies that house the presence of God. When we are washed through the waters of baptism in Jesus Name and filled with the Holy Ghost, we become the temple of the Lord. **(1 Corinthians 6:19-20)** We become recipients of the promise. **(Acts 2:38-39)** Our bodies become the dwelling place for the presence of God. This is the **“new heaven”**.

The Bible speaks of a New Jerusalem which will take the place of the “old” Jerusalem. The “old” Jerusalem was destroyed when judgment came in AD 70 and was promptly replaced by the New Jerusalem.

Hebrews 12:22-24 tells us that we have come unto the heavenly Jerusalem, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn. **Hebrews 12:27-28** says that the first-century church had already received that kingdom which cannot be moved.

What Adam and Eve lost in the Garden was spiritual life and fellowship with God. Now we have regained this relationship and spiritual life when we are born again of the water and of the Spirit.

The Apostle John wrote about the passing away of the **“old heaven and the old earth”** and the arrival of the **“new heaven and the new earth.”** **(Revelation 21:1-3)** John boldly proclaimed that now the tabernacle of God is with men. His presence is not found in physical buildings anymore, but within our hearts, minds, and bodies. We, who are covenant connected by obedience to the Gospel message **(Acts 2:38-39)** are the **“new earth”**.

The other valuable thing that Adam and Eve lost that day in the Garden was access to the Tree of Life. **(Genesis 3:22-24)** The Tree of Life represented eternal life.

When Jesus came, He brought with Him eternal life to all who would believe and obey. **(John 1:4, 11:25, John 15:1)**

Revelation 22:14 tells us that if we do His commandments, we will have right to the Tree of Life and can enter in through the gates into the city. We can either be born into it or dwell outside of the city.

Outside the city dwells every manner of evil. **(Revelation 22:15)**

Notice that the two coexist. Inside the city is righteousness; outside the city is every kind of sin and wickedness. This is the exact same scenario that we have in our modern world today.

Inside the “city” or church, there is peace and righteousness. Outside the “city” or church, there is sin and wickedness. Another important note, once we leave these mortal bodies and inherit our new immortal bodies, we have arrived. We have no need for the Tree of Life anymore. **(2 Corinthians 5:1)**

Conclusion

Four thousand years ago, Abraham looked for a city whose builder and maker is God. Two thousand years ago, the Apostle Peter proclaimed that he was looking for a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Righteousness means, the quality of being right in the eyes of God including our character, conscience, conduct and word. This only happens when a person obeys the Gospel message that Jesus and the Apostles taught. **(Acts 2:37-39)**

We are living in that day. The prophet Isaiah also prophesied about the coming of a new heaven and a new earth. **(Isaiah 65:17 66:22)** When the “old heaven and the old earth” passed away, the physical planet with the Universe was not destroyed.

The **“new heaven and the new earth”** that the Bible presents is here right now. This is the Kingdom of God which will never end. **(Luke 1:31-33)**

Right now, born again believers have access to the Tree of Life. This Tree is Jesus who gives Eternal life to all who believe and obey. The Bible tells us that Jesus is the only way to salvation. **(Acts 4:12)**

This Tree of Life, which is Jesus, gives us meaning, fulfillment, support for both the physical and the spiritual, and Eternal Life.

Will you live inside the “New Jerusalem”, which is the church, or outside the “New Jerusalem”, the choice is yours. Will you live inside the “city” where righteousness dwells, or outside the “city”, where sin and wickedness dwell.

The choice is Yours. The New Heaven and the New Earth that the Bible describes, are here today. Where will you choose to live?

[BACK](#)