

New Heavens and a New Earth

Key Verse: *"The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD."*
—Isaiah 65:25

Selected Scripture:
Isaiah 65:17-25

THE CONDITIONS WHICH will exist on the earth in the future millennial kingdom are described by the Prophet Isaiah, along with other writers of the Scriptures. Isaiah likens Christ's kingdom to a "new heavens and a new earth." It will be so wonderful that "the former [kingdoms] shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." The "former" kingdoms are those which Paul later describes as being of "this present evil world."—Isa. 65:17; Gal. 1:4

God's creation of "new heavens and a new earth" is not a reference to a new literal heaven or planet Earth, but rather to a new arrangement. The Bible tells us that the "earth abideth forever," and that God "created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited." (Eccles. 1:4; Isa. 45:18) What will be "new" is the governing forces of the kingdom, which will be Christ and his church, made up of the faithful followers of the Master during the present Gospel Age. (Rev. 5:10; 20:6) Together, they will be the heavenly rulers of the kingdom, rather than Satan, whom God has allowed for

a time to reign over mankind. (II Cor. 4:4) This “old” rulership of earth by the great Adversary will be replaced by the “new heavens” of the Christ, head and body.—I Cor. 12:12,27; Col. 1:18

Conditions on earth itself will also be new during the kingdom and very different than that which fallen man has created: “They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat. ... They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble. ... Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.” (Isa. 65:21-24) In our Key Verse we are told that “the wolf and the lamb” will feed together, and nothing will be allowed to “hurt nor destroy” throughout God’s entire kingdom realm.

These wonderful conditions described by God’s holy prophet are certainly a time everyone should look forward to with great anticipation. Isaiah was not the only one to speak of a “new heavens and a new earth.” His prophetic words are confirmed in the New Testament by the Apostle Peter, who writes, “We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”—II Pet. 3:13

The Apostle John also saw this in a vision, and wrote, “I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.” John saw additional details concerning the kingdom, saying, “I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” (Rev. 21:1-4) What a wonderful time that will be! ■