

# The Millennium and the New Earth

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“Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind”  
(Isa. 65:17).

This is our ultimate hope. After the end of our present world, God will create a new heavens and a new earth. St. Peter tells us that “according to his promise we wait for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (2 Pet. 3:13). This will happen after the destruction by fire of the present heavens and earth, as St. Peter affirms, saying, “The day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up” (2 Pet. 3:10). St. John had a vision of this new heavens and new earth and said, “I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more” (Rev. 21:1). When he saw this, he also saw the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven. This is our final eternal state where we will live forever with God after our resurrection. John said, “I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God” (Rev. 21:2).

The prophets often mix as a single event things which in reality are distinct and separated by many years. Isaiah does this here. He begins by speaking of the new heavens and the new earth, and then he speaks of the millennial earth (which precedes the new earth), saying that in that day someone who dies a hundred years old will be regarded as only a child or as someone who was cursed (Isa. 65:20), and that “they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit” (Isa. 65:21). In the eternal state, there will be no death at all nor will we need to plant or eat anything.

This time of longevity and abundant food is a description not of the new earth (that is, the eternal state) but rather of the millennial earth. St. John says that after Christ’s second coming (Rev. 19:11-21), he will reign with the saints and martyrs upon the earth for a thousand years (Rev. 20:4) while Satan will be bound and sealed in a deep pit (Rev. 20:1-3, 7). After the millennium, the eternal state will be established—that is, the new heavens and the new earth; and the new Jerusalem will come down from heaven (Rev. 21:1-2, 10).

It is during the millennium that we are to understand the prophecy of Isaiah that “the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, [and] the lion shall eat straw like the ox” (Isa 65:25). On that day, says Isaiah, “be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy” (Isa. 65:18). The conditions of Eden will then return when all creatures will once again eat only plants (Gen. 1:30), and all carnivorous animals will become peaceful and friendly to man and to each other (Isa. 11:6-9).

For that day and that time we now hope, a time of glory and righteousness and great changes upon the earth, a time of splendor and light. Christ will reign in glory

among us, and Satan will have no more power over us—he will be bound and sealed in a pit so that he can tempt us no more (Rev. 20:1-3). At that time, perhaps those who are resurrected will live already in the new Jerusalem, which has not yet come down upon the earth; but in any case, they will live in glory and light with Christ for a thousand years and in some way be associated with Christ's millennial kingdom of righteousness on earth.

