

Heaven on Earth

Scripture reading: 2 Peter 3:10-13

Many people say that God is going to burn up this earth and destroy this world and make a new world. Let us see what the Word of God is saying. First of all, is this world going to be destroyed? Psalm 104:5, *"Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it SHOULD NOT BE REMOVED FOR EVER."* Psalm 78:69, *"And he built his sanctuary like high palaces, like the EARTH WHICH HE HATH ESTABLISHED FOR EVER."* Isaiah 45:17, *"But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an EVERLASTING SALVATION: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded WORLD WITHOUT END."* The same phrase is in Ephesians 3:21, *"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, WORLD WITHOUT END. Amen."* Ecclesiastes 1:4, *"One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but THE EARTH ABIDETH FOR EVER."* With so many scriptures saying one thing we must believe it, if we have faith and belief in the Word of God. We must believe then that the earth is abiding forever. The earth will remain forever; it will not be destroyed.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea." What are we talking about? The word "EARTH" has three basic meanings. The natural earth or terra firma is the ground on which we stand and is called "earth" in the Bible. Worldliness is also called "earth," and Man is called "highest" earth. Proverbs 8:26, *"While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world."* This verse means to say that the lowest earth would be the ground outside. Next would be the vegetable kingdom, and the next would be humanity which God called *"the highest part of the dust."*

In the face of all this Word that the earth will not pass away, we can only think of two other earths that will pass away: worldliness (earthiness) and the man. The man will be changed, and there will be a new creation man. In that light, look again at this verse. *"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."*

Let us look at another scripture. In 2 Peter 3, Peter is speaking about the fire that will dissolve the earth, and he says in verses 10-13, *"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."*

This Word means that the earth, now as it exists, and the heaven, now as it exists, are not pleasing to God. What heaven? We have to consider the word "HEAVEN" again, because there are also different realms of heaven. There is the invisible realm of heaven and the heaven within the human being wherein God dwells; for wherever God dwells, it is heaven. Now, this is the heaven that God does not like and God is not pleased with, because in this heaven does not dwell righteousness only, for both righteousness and sin seem to be dwelling in the same vessel. God said that this condition must "pass away," and there is going to be great fire on earth, and it *"shall melt with fervent heat,"* and it *"shall pass away with a great noise."* There will be *"new heavens...wherein dwelleth righteousness"* only.

For further proof of this understanding, we look at the third verse in Revelation chapter 21. *"And 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."*

Where did I read this before? It seems to me that this is the great promise of God throughout the whole Bible. He says that at last it has come to pass - the Day of Atonement - "*the tabernacle*" - when God will tabernacle Himself within man. Verse 2 says that this is the great coming.

Let us go back to Revelation 21:2. "*And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*"

Here is the answer. This "*new earth*," this "*new Jerusalem*" is the "*bride*" of Christ which He is talking about. This "*bride*" of Christ is this "*new Jerusalem*" and is "*a new heaven and a new earth.*"

(Excerpt from *The Book of Revelation, Volume 3*, pages 118-120)

Thought for today: Let us strive to become this "*bride*" of Christ who is this "*new Jerusalem*" and is "*a new heaven and a new earth.*"