

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 232

THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH

“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” (Rev. 21:1).

With this passage we come to a most significant truth. While nearly everything in the book of Revelation takes place in the realm either of heaven, earth, or the sea; and while we have explored these from the vantage point of three dimensions of consciousness, experience, and life in which men walk, there is yet a further truth which is vital to our understanding of the visions John saw relative to these realms. The reality is that there are **TWO SETS OF HEAVEN AND EARTH!** There are, indeed, **TWO CREATIONS, TWO WORLDS, AND TWO HEAVENLY UNIVERSES!**

First, let us inquire as to what is meant by the terms “heaven and earth.” These are the two realms first mentioned in the Bible, in the very first verse of the very first book. “In the beginning, God created the *heavens* and the *earth*” (Gen. 1:1). The symbolisms of scripture are always appropriate and fitting. The literal, physical heavens and earth bear a certain relationship to each other which well illustrates the function and administration of the spiritual heavens and earth. The heavens, for example, control earth’s tides, atmospheric conditions, day and night, and seasons. The heavens *rule* and the earth is *ruled*. Heaven influences earth, but the earth in no way affects heaven. From the very first pages of scripture, the sun is spoken of as the *ruler* of the day, the moon and stars as the *ruler* of the night.

The natural sun is the brightest luminary in the natural heavens of our solar system. And to help us in correctly interpreting the meaning of the spiritual sun, we find that God made “the greater light to *rule* the day, and the lesser light to *rule* the night” (Gen. 1:16). Here we first have the idea expressed of both sun and moon being *rulers*. Then we find that God, the supreme Ruler, is called in the Word a “Sun.” “For the Lord thy God is a SUN and a shield” (Ps. 84:11). Also, our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings, is called “the SUN of Righteousness” (Mal. 4:2). He rules. Furthermore, in reference to this principle of the sun and rulership we read, “He that RULETH over men...shall be as the light of the morning, when the SUN ariseth” (II Sam. 23:3-4). Then we find David the king called “the LIGHT of Israel” (II Sam. 21:17).

Concerning saints who are ordained as kings and priests in the kingdom of God we find that they are compared to the sun. “Then shall the righteous SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father” (Mat. 13:43). Of these same ruling members of God’s elect Jesus says, “And he that overcometh...to him will I give power over the nations and he shall RULE them with a rod of iron” (Rev. 2:26-28). Then he hastily adds, “And I will give him the MORNING STAR.” That is, I will give him power over the nations — rulership — and I will give him the position as the morning star to give direction to mankind, to announce and proclaim the dawning of the new day of the Lord! Now consider these meaningful words of Daniel the prophet wherein he foretells the

manifestation of the sons of God, saying, “And they that be wise shall SHINE AS THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE FIRMAMENT; and they that turn many to righteousness as the STARS for ever” (Dan. 12:3). Then we find in Daniel 4:26 that “the HEAVENS DO RULE.” God’s heaven is His throne. “Heaven is **my throne**” (Isa. 66:1). The heavens of God’s Spirit in the symbolic terminology of prophecy is the seat where the *sun*, the mighty God Himself, sits and *rules!* And as God’s heaven is His throne, so the prophetic heavens include all the governmental realm of His kings and priests and judges *through which God rules*, and He is *Lord of all*.

All the above constitutes the heavens of God’s Spirit! But now there is another heaven of rulership which is not that of God by His Spirit. It is the rulership of men, including even the basest of men. This *natural governmental realm* is demonstrated quite clearly in the words of the prophet Daniel to king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, “thy greatness is grown, and REACHED UNTO HEAVEN” (Dan. 4:22). He had just become the most exalted monarch of earth, the greatest ruler among men: the SUN of that governmental “heaven.” The prophet Isaiah, describing the casting down of earthly kings from their thrones, says, “THE LIGHT IS DARKENED IN THE HEAVENS THEREOF” (Isa. 5:30). This statement is most meaningful when compared with the words of Jesus when He foretold the removal and destruction of all the rulers and governmental powers of both Judaism and the entire pagan world, saying, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the SUN BE DARKENED, and the MOON SHALL NOT GIVE HER LIGHT, and the STARS SHALL FALL FROM HEAVEN, and the POWERS OF THE HEAVENS SHALL BE SHAKEN” (Mat. 24:29). These words of our Lord signified the complete dissolving, darkening, and abolishment of all the governmental orders of His day! Within thirty-five years the kingdom of Judah had ceased to exist and within three hundred years the whole pagan system of Rome began to collapse under the power of the gospel of Christ. Those were the “heavens” that passed away!

The sun in prophecy is the most exalted ruler of any order, the moon the second or lesser, and the stars are other governmental authorities and powers. The heavens are the thrones which these rulers occupy, whether the rulers be men, spirits, powers, organizations, ideologies, or some other entity. The earth is that which is ruled by the heavens — that which looks to the sun, moon, and stars for its light and direction. The heavens that Jesus foretold would pass in Matthew 24 were the orders of *that day* when He came in the flesh. In the book of Revelation, however, John is viewing the eventual perfection of the bride of Christ and the manifestation of the sons of God. This prophecy pertains to the eventual *outcome* of the church age, not its *initiation* two thousand years ago. There is an order of human government now, at the end of the age, but all these are soon to pass away, be darkened, fall from heaven, and this time a new, permanent, eternal order shall be inaugurated! In this new day of the kingdom of God the manifest sons of God shall arise in the power of Christ’s resurrection and glory to constitute the celestial bodies that shall rule the earth in the wonderful age now at hand! We are being made to know by the spirit of revelation from God that all that has been giving light in the past, and that has ruled in the past, is going out and shall be darkened forevermore. The glorious *Christ company* shall take the place of all the former sun, moon, and stars. NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH — oh, the wonder of it!

Let us now further pursue this thought of *the two heavens and the two earths*. I know of nothing that will so thoroughly awaken the fathomless depths of wisdom and understanding than the blessed knowledge of the sacred mystery that *Christ saves men right now* from “this present evil world.” And while you, dear reader, may be one of those waiting with rapturous expectation to be whisked away and “evacuated” off this earth to spend eternity in some far-off heaven somewhere, Peter expresses with urgent and profound aspiration the true desire of all sons of God who groan for the deliverance of creation from the bondage of corruption and the triumph of the kingdom of God in all realms, saying, “Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH, *wherein dwelleth righteousness*. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, blameless” (II Pet. 3:13-14). It is an incontrovertible fact that the vast majority of Christians today are not looking for the same thing Peter was looking for — *NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH!*

Multitudes of believers entertain the notion that when the scriptures speak of the “earth” they always refer to this planet that we live on in our physical existence. They think of towering mountains, great rivers, spacious plains, vast deserts, immense oceans, productive farmlands, rocks, soil, wind, clouds, rain, heat, cold, cities, and towns. They conceive this orb that circles our sun as the “earth” spoken of by the Holy Spirit of inspiration. Now, sometimes that is true. But in many cases that is not the truth! In its spiritual meaning “earth” often signifies a dimension, a realm of life, a state of being, a level of consciousness, a plane of understanding and perception. The apostle James speaks of a wisdom that descendeth not from above, but is “*earthly, sensual, devilish*” (James 3:15). Paul tells us that “The *first man* is of the *earth, earthy*: the *second man* is the Lord *from heaven*. As is the *earthy*, such are they also that *are earthy*; and as is the *heavenly*, such are they also that *are heavenly*. And as we have borne the image of the *earthy*, we shall also bear the image of the *heavenly*” (I Cor. 15:47-49). Can we not see by this that when the scriptures speak of “earth” they are not always speaking of the planet called earth. Rather it indicates a dimension of conscious existence which carries the imprint and bears the character of that which pertains to the low realm of the earthly — carnal, worldly, temporal, mundane, physical, ignorant, unperceptive, unspiritual, lustful, sensual, unclean, corrupt, base.

People also have the idea that “heaven” is a *place* somewhere up in the sky — that if you could get a rocket ship powerful enough, and people could live long enough, they could fly that ship through space and eventually actually approach the dazzling light and glory of that celestial world of God, angels, and redeemed men; that heavenly city having impressive gates of pearl, impregnable walls of jasper, wondrous streets of gold leading to millions of extravagant mansions inhabited by heavenly creatures and glorified men, situated beside the sparkling, rejuvenating waters of the effervescent river of life. Now I’m telling you this, my beloved, because this is precisely the concept held by untold millions of Christians concerning heaven and earth!

“*And Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands*” (Heb. 1:10). This passage of scripture reveals two important points which are foreign to the thinking of the vast majority of the Lord’s people. First, “the heavens” (plural) indicate not one singular far-off heaven somewhere, but at least two, or perhaps several, or even many realms of heaven. Second, “the heavens are the *works of thine hands*.” The heavens are not the “eternal dwelling place of God” as the religious systems teach, but they are the works of God’s hands, created, not eternally existing. The very first verse of the Bible makes this truth unmistakably clear. “*In the beginning GOD CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH.*” Not only did the earth and all the heavens have a created beginning, but listen now to what follows in verses eleven and twelve of chapter one of Hebrews. “*They shall perish; but Thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.*”

Jesus said that we should pray, “Our Father, which art *in the heavens*...” That’s how it reads in the Greek text. How many preachers and teachers in the churches today are proclaiming that the heavens where God dwells and the earth are going to perish? Don’t you dare preach that that bright and blessed heaven where Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Paul, Peter, and dear aunt Mary and uncle Joe have gone to is going to perish! Yet the apostle Peter declares, “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” (II Pet. 3:10-11).

Ah, it should be clear to any thinking mind that both heaven and earth are used in different ways and with various meanings. We need to think deeply about these things, beseeching the Lord for wisdom and understanding. There can be no doubt that the prophets were not speaking literally of the visible heavens, or this physical terrestrial ball of earth, or the material mountains, rivers, and trees when they spoke by the spirit, saying, “Let the *heavens rejoice*, and the *earth be glad*; let the *sea roar*, and the fullness thereof. Let the *field be joyful*, and all that is therein: then shall all the *trees of the forest rejoice before the Lord*: for He cometh, for He cometh to *judge the earth*: He shall

judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth” (Ps. 96:11-13). “The Lord reigneth; let the *earth rejoice*; let the *multitude of isles be glad* thereof” (Ps. 97:1). “The *wilderness* and the *solitary place shall be glad* for them; and the *desert shall rejoice*, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and *rejoice even with joy and singing*...and they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God” (Isa. 35:1-2). “The *mountains* and the *hills shall break forth before you into singing*, and *all the trees of the field shall clap their hands*” (Isa. 55:12). “Let the *floods clap their hands*: let the *hills be joyful together before the Lord*” (Ps. 98:8-9). Do the prophets mean that the starry heavens, and the physical earth, fields, trees, floods, wilderness, mountains, and hills will literally feel the emotions of joy and gladness and audibly vocalize the singing of songs and in some magical way actually *clap hands*? ***I don't think so!***

There can be no doubt that we are living in an hour when the Lord is revealing many things about His great purpose and work in His elect. Speaking of the heavens and the earth the apostle says, “As a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be ***changed***” (Heb. 1:12). Then in another place he says, “As we have borne the image of the *earthy*, we shall also bear the image of the *heavenly*. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be ***changed***” (I Cor. 15:49,51). With these exhortations fresh upon our minds let us think reverently on what it means that the heavens and the earth shall be folded up like a garment and be ***changed***; and those who have been of the earth, earthy, shall be ***changed*** to bear a new and heavenly image. Are these two not referring to the same change *within God's elect*? Everyone who reads these lines should seek that God will open his eyes to see that it is something deeper and higher than the external heavens and earth that He had in mind when He spoke through the prophet Isaiah proclaiming, “For, behold, I create *new heavens* and a *new earth*: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create *Jerusalem* a rejoicing, and her people a joy” (Isa. 65:17-18).

Now please don't think the Lord is speaking of the city of Jerusalem over in the Middle East, for He continues, saying, “And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of *weeping shall be heard no more in her, nor the voice of crying*.” These are the same words uttered not of the old earthly Jerusalem, but of the *new heavenly Jerusalem* as John, the beloved disciple of our Lord, exclaimed with holy wonder, “And I John saw the holy city, *new Jerusalem*, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 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. 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. 21:2-4). Saints have read and re-read these precious passages of holy writ taking for granted that they understood perfectly what was written, and frequently reading over the passages never discerning by the spirit of revelation the deep spiritual truth of what God is saying. Truly the Lord is speaking in symbolic language of great spiritual realities fulfilled ***within His people!***

“Nevertheless we, according to His promise, *look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness*. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye *look for such things*, be diligent that ye may be found of Him *in peace, without spot, and blameless*” (II Pet. 3:13-14). It will be a wonderful day when all the Lord's people understand the great truth that there is even now a new heaven and a new earth ***wherein dwelleth righteousness***. “We look for it!” Peter says. Since you are looking for it — now give diligence to be found ***in Him in peace, without spot, and blameless***. In other words — BECOME WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR! When you are at peace, without spot, and blameless, you have then ***discovered within yourself the new heavens and the new earth...the ones wherein dwelleth righteousness!*** This new heaven is the heaven of our regenerated spirit wherein God dwells, and this new earth is the earth of our transformed mind and soul by which we are able to demonstrate through our body in our everyday living, what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Oh, yes!

“If ye know that He is righteous, ye know that *everyone that doeth righteousness is born of Him*. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that *doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is*

righteous” (I Jn. 2:29; 3:7). Can any doubt it — **there** is the NEW EARTH *wherein dwelleth righteousness!* Paul speaks the same truth this way, “For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the *righteousness* of the law might be FULFILLED IN US, WHO WALK NOT AFTER THE FLESH, BUT AFTER THE SPIRIT” (Rom. 8:2-4). It is the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus that makes us free from the law of sin and death. That is the new administration of the new heavens and the new earth! Earth is always the lower realm of things; heaven is the higher dimension of things. The old earth is the old carnal mind, the old Adamic nature, the old self-centered soul and fleshly desires of the body; the old heaven is our former unregenerated, unawakened, unquickened spirit. The new “heavens” are that high and holy rule and reality of God in our spirit, whereas the new “earth” is soul and body brought under the reign of the spirit, thus establishing righteousness in our earth realm. Isaiah presents this new order of heaven and earth wherein dwelleth righteousness and **personalizes it** in these expressive words: “Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call *thy walls* Salvation, and *thy gates* Praise. The sun shall be no more *thy light* by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light *unto thee*: for the Lord shall be *unto thee* an everlasting light, and thy God *thy glory*...and the days of *thy mourning* shall be ended. *Thy people* shall be *all righteous*...the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified” (Isa. 60:18-21).

When righteous Noah stepped out of the ark that bright morning he stepped onto the soil of the very same earth that existed before the flood, and at night he gazed into the star-spangled splendor of the very same heavens above. Yet — *all was changed!* The *old order* of things was gone, and a *new order*, or a *new heavens and earth*, would now be manifested. Was it not a *new heaven* and a *new earth* by being *purged* through the overflowing waters of the flood from the wickedness and corrupt order that previously polluted the earth? With what joy and satisfaction do we now entertain the precious promise: “For behold I create new heavens and a new earth, and *the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind*” (Isa. 65:17). Hallelujah! What a wonderful thing that God shall so thoroughly cleanse our own little world and the whole vast cosmos that even our minds will be purged from the remembrance of it! God will make such a good job of His work, that the past will be completely obliterated and never thought of any more! God shall not end this present evil world and call forth the new by destroying either His creatures or His creation. Not one thing, not one precious person shall be lost! He shall bring this world to an end and establish new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness by **MAKING ALL THINGS NEW** — changed, purified, and transformed by His Holy Ghost Fire! “And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I **make all things new**. And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful” (Rev. 21:5). Not *all new things*, but *all things NEW!* That is the wonder.

The apostle Peter, writing to the elect of the Lord, explained just how this present heavens and earth pass away. By inspiration he wrote, “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**” (II Pet. 3:10). The old world of Noah’s day passed away in the waters of the flood, but the heavens and the earth which are now are **reserved unto fire** (II Pet. 3:7). The book of Revelation is just as clear and explicit as to how the new heavens and earth are brought into being. Hear it! “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life **was cast into the lake of fire. 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 (wickedness of man)**” (Rev. 20:15; 21:1).

When we can truly see and understand by the spirit, and when we do not have a chapter break between the verses quoted, the intent and meaning of what the apostle was seeing suddenly becomes crystal clear. You see, beloved, in the Greek text there are no chapter and verse divisions as we have in our English translations. These were added by the translators for our convenience. Therefore, those whose names or natures are not written in the book of life, who are then cast into the lake of God’s Holy Ghost Fire, is not in the original text the *last verse* of chapter twenty. Nor is the statement, “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth,” the *first verse* of chapter twenty-one.

Because of the chapter divisions in our English Bibles we are led to believe that somehow John is changing the subject, therefore we must start a new chapter. Not so! Read together in sequence as these verses are in the Greek text, can you not see that the new heavens and the new earth are simply the *result* of men whose natures do not conform to the life of God being cast into God's great purifying fire!

I would also point out John's use of the little conjunction "and." The use of this conjunction indicates that something went before and what follows continues the drama. "And" shows that the action is continuous, simply flowing on and on without interruption. For instance, if I say, "I walked down the road *and* I saw a dog that appeared to be lost; *and* I approached the dog *and* spoke friendly to him. He responded at once *and* wagged his tail, *and* as I continued on toward my house he followed me." You will notice that what follows after each connective "and" grows out of, or is the effect or result of, what happened before. If I had not walked down the street I would not have seen the dog. If I had not seen the dog I would not have approached and spoken to him. If I would not have spoken in a friendly manner to the dog he would not have wagged his tail. And if this connection had not been made he would not have followed me home. And...and...and! Now let us quote the passage above again and see just how one action in the drama leads to the next — indeed, how each is the *result* of the action preceding it.

"AND the sea gave up the dead which were in it; AND death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: AND they were judged every man according to their works. AND death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. AND whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. 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. AND I John saw the holy city..." Seeing that "and" was used to continue the thought, it becomes clear that the new heaven and the new earth are the direct result of the cleansing, purging, purifying, refining, and transforming action of the lake of fire! Oh, yes, when a man comes to God's appointed day of dealing, and his nature needs to be cleansed and purified, he is subjected to the *corrective judgment* of God. "No more sea" indicates that the state of being of the restless, surging, sinning, tossed, and tormented masses of people has been dealt with; for when God's great judgment by fire finally comes to a close, the whole world of mankind will have found their everlasting end in the righteousness of the redeeming Christ of God. You can count on that!

Here we have the two heavens and the two earths — the OLD and the NEW! With astonished wonder the Seer or Patmos beheld this scene in spirit and cried out, "And I saw a *new heaven* and a *new earth*: for the *first heaven* and the *first earth* were passed away..." It is significant to note that the word translated "first" is the Greek word *protos* which is rendered in verse four of the same chapter as "the *former* things," and that is a more accurate rendering. "...for the *former heaven* and the *former earth* were passed away." You will understand a great mystery when you see how it is that whatever has ruled or does rule your life apart from the spirit becomes your "former heaven." Of a truth I tell you that the thing that rules or motivates or controls you in either soul or body, in mind, emotion, will, or desire, constitutes the "heaven" over your life! If Hollywood with its glitter and entertainment, its values, standards, and spirit rules you then the ruling heaven over your head is Hollywood. If you "eat, drink, and sleep" sports, then sports are the heaven that rules you. If politics, political ideology, politicians, and some political party is what lights up your life, then you are governed out of the political heavens.

Some people's heaven is the business world; work, climbing their way up the corporate ladder, gaining prestige, position, and power, and *making money*. Those who are ruled from these heavens are obsessed and consumed by this realm, becoming workaholics, often unprincipled in their ethics, stepping on others and destroying people in their selfish, frenzied climb to the top. There is certainly nothing wrong with being in business or earning a good living — it just cannot *rule us!* Other folk's heaven is philosophy, education, pleasure, drugs, sex, or lust. And we cannot fail to mention the various "religious heavens" that rule over billions of lives on planet earth!

Men governed out of the religious heavens fight over religious creeds, forms, organization, traditions, sacraments, liturgies, and a thousand other things; they condemn everyone else to hell, demand obedience upon penalty of eternal damnation, lay heavy yokes of external rules, regulations, laws, dress codes, you cannot do this or that, cannot go here or there, demand tithes and offerings, fleece widows and rob the poor, make merchandise of men's souls, burn heretics at the stake, and blow themselves up as suicide bombers! By the time many so-called "holiness" groups get through with the women in the church, putting them through the dress-making and appearance departments, these very women have lost most of their appeal to their husbands, and then they wonder why the world is filled with "unsaved" husbands! All through the years these holiness groups have imposed an external appearance of "holiness," forcing their people to conform to certain contrived standards of conduct. Such "holiness" focuses primarily on what they wear and the kinds of places they go. Some cannot even go to the county fair, wear a wedding ring, put on make-up, or drink a Coca-Cola! That is not *holiness*, my friend, it is **legalism!**

There are some groups that will split and start a new "church" over the length of the ribbons on a prayer covering, how many buttons are on the sleeve of a coat, how the beard is trimmed, whether one wears a necktie, or whether the chrome on their automobile is painted black. The further one goes in these directions the more ridiculous it becomes! I see these women at the mall dressed in their long dresses and a particular style of head scarf, and I know by their attire that they are some kind of Christian. But it doesn't tell me they are "holy," it only lets me know that they are *carnal*. Where does scripture teach us to be known as Christians by the style of our clothes? You see, I would never recognize these women as Christians because of the love, joy, peace, and glory of God radiating from their countenances — only because of the outer garments they are wearing! Doctrines, creeds, traditions of the elders, commandments of men, and **control over men's lives** — these are the governmental powers of these RELIGIOUS HEAVENS!

Every man has his "heaven" and every man *is the earth* that heaven rules over! For many who read these lines the most recent heavens that have passed away are the heavens of the old-order church systems of man. Of this Paul Mueller wrote, "Once again, in this new Day, the Lord has purposed to do a new thing in the earth. But since all power and authority to do anything in the new earth must come from Heaven, from His throne, or from the realm of Spirit, God must create a new Heaven, or a new realm of Spirit, which He has done. And when the Lord brings forth a new Heaven, He is, by that sovereign act, changing the order of things, that He might do a new thing in the earth. You can beg and plead with the Lord, fast and pray earnestly, asking Him to bless the old-order church works in this new Day, but He may not answer you, for our Father is doing a new thing! There is now a new Heaven, a new throne realm, or a new realm of Spirit, which governs all God's work on earth! And with the coming forth of this new Heaven, *'the former things are passed away.'* God has established a new spiritual order, beginning in the Heavens, and that new spiritual order is beginning to change everything spiritual that pertains to the earth, so that, in the fullness of Father's time, a new earth shall also come forth! And now I join John in declaring, *'And I saw A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH, for the former heaven and the former earth were passed away.'*

"Therefore, we will have to think in terms of doing things on earth according to God's NEW WAY, not our own way, which is the old way, or the way we were accustomed to doing things in the past. A NEW HEAVEN HAS COME FORTH. And that new Heaven is a new Spiritual order, with new principles and new plans for the kingdom of God on earth, which will provide us with NEW METHODS OF WORKING WITH THE LORD and doing His perfect will on earth, during this new Kingdom Day! It is difficult for us to imagine what that new ministry will be like, for we tend to think of 'ministry' in the context of church order, which is the old order of the past. But a new ministry exists in the Heavens of God's Spirit, and those who are Spirit-led and Spirit-directed will be able to read, hear, and receive that new ministry, in the Spirit and by the Spirit. The Lord's chosen elect are ready for change, and they have progressed spiritually with the Lord, as the holy Spirit has led them. *'These are they...'* who are motivated by the Spirit, and are therefore able to discern the will and the way of the Lord pertaining to His kingdom, for the Heavens of Spirit are open to them (Jn. 1:51)" — end quote.

A *new* heaven and a *new* earth necessitate the passing of the *former* or *old* heaven and earth. The *former* and the *present*. The *old* and the *new*. THESE ARE THE TWO SETS OF HEAVENS AND EARTH I SPOKE OF EARLIER. Each heaven has its sun, moon, and stars, its primary source of dominion (sun) in our life; its rules, culture, and pressures (moon) which also direct our thinking, behavior, and activities; and the myriad lesser influences (stars) which likewise affect our actions. The way we think, act, walk, and live out our life *is the earth-realm* ruled from those heavens! And every earth has its mountains and valleys, its rivers and streams, its air and oceans. Here is the truth we must consider. When we see in the book of Revelation events taking place in the sun, in the moon, in the stars, in the earth, with mountains, trees, grass, rivers, streams, seas, and in the air we must understand and know whether these belong to THE OLD HEAVEN AND THE OLD EARTH or to the NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH! John saw them *both*! And until we see them both and are able to *distinguish between them*, our understanding of the Revelation will be dismally defective. For example, when something is taking place involving the sun — is it the sun of the old heaven, or the sun of the new heaven? If something is happening in a high mountain — is it a mountain of the old earth, or a mountain of the new earth? Can you not see the mystery? What a difference it makes when we understand which heaven or earth we are viewing! It is not difficult to determine which heaven the new Jerusalem descends from. “And I saw a *new* heaven...and I John saw the holy city, *new* Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven” (Rev. 21:1-2). There can be no doubt about it — the NEW Jerusalem comes down from God out of the NEW heaven! Those who are looking for the holy city to come down through the stars of the galaxies like a space ship from some distant sphere simply have not learned the ABC’s of SPIRITUAL REALITIES!

Think about it! The Lord has declared, “For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall *remain before me*, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain” (Isa. 62:22). The Lord, our King and Creator of all, has declared that He will create the new heavens and the new earth. And the new heavens and the new earth will be permanent and endure forever. God’s word tells us they “*shall remain (continuously) before me, saith the Lord.*” Now think about all the cataclysmic events that transpire throughout the book of Revelation and then consider this: The *new heavens* and the *new earth* which *remain before the Lord* cannot be darkened, removed, fall, turn to blood, be shaken, visited by earthquakes, plagues, disasters, fire, pestilence, judgments, or ruled by beasts. Can we not see by this that many times in the Revelation it is our *old heavens* and our *old earth* that are being visited by the Lord and dealt with, for all the above mentioned things happen in the heavens and in the earth as they are judged by the mighty power of the Spirit! It is our old heavens and earth that finally completely pass away! It is the sun of our old heavens that is darkened! It is the stars of our old heavens that fall unto the earth! It is the moon of our old heavens that turns to blood! It is our old earth, our natural, carnal, fleshly life where the beast rules that is being shaken, devastated, shrouded in darkness, burned with fire, and brought to naught!

Let your heart meditate deeply upon the wonder and glory of the *new heavens* and the *new earth*. Let us begin with these inspired words of the apostle Paul, “Therefore if any man be *in Christ*, He is a *new creation*: old things are *passed away*; behold, all things are *become new*. And all things (of this new creation) *are of God...*” (II Cor. 5:17-18). I am wonderfully blessed by the rendering of this passage from the New English Version: “When anyone is united to Christ, THERE IS A NEW WORLD; the old order is gone, and a new order has already begun. From first to last, this has been the work of God!” Wonderful! The Williams translation has it, “For if anybody is in union with Christ, he is the work of A NEW CREATION; the old condition has passed away, a new condition has come. This has all originated with God!” Oh, yes! Our new heavens and earth, our new world, our new order and condition originated *in Christ Jesus*, and entering into Him brings to an end the old corrupt order of consciousness, lifestyle, and nature, and the establishing of the new which “after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Eph. 4:22-24).

Thus, these “new heavens” and “new earth” are not a new material heavens of galaxies, stars, suns, moons, and planets, nor a new literal earth. The physical heavens and earth were made perfect, and the scriptures show that they will remain for the ages (Ps. 89:36-37; 104:5). Oh, yes,

God will bless even the natural earth in new and wonderful ways for man's sake, but it will still be this same earth we live on today. The new earth is a *new kind of people*, those who live out of a soul that is under the dominion of the spirit, and new heavens are the *new authority and order* out of the heavens of the Spirit. When the Daystar of the new creation, Christ the Lord, arises in our hearts; when the life-giving rays of the sun, even the Lord the Spirit, break forth upon us in His glory, warmth, and splendor, then this old world within us begins to be dissolved. The old heavens and the old earth within us meet with the all-consuming heat of the Sun of righteousness and fall away to nothing in the light of the glory of God. The Spirit of Jesus within then begins to frame a new heaven and a new earth in soul and body, even one wherein dwelleth righteousness. All things are born anew within us by the creative word of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus and not only the heaven and the earth pass away, but there is *no more sea*; no more great overflowings of the carnal mind, no more inundations of the flesh nature, no more swellings and surgings of unholy emotions and ungodly desires, no more roarings of human Adamic pride, intellect, wisdom, knowledge, reasoning, ego, self-hood, or worldly glory, for the sea is dried up within us never to be anymore at all!

Every apprehended son of God is coming to *experientially know* the new heaven and the new earth! This is what was transpiring in John's experience when he said, "And I *saw* a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." John *saw* the new heaven and he *saw* the new earth! To see the new heaven and new earth means to have a fresh understanding or a new concept about heaven and earth. John saw the new heaven and earth by being *caught up in the spirit* into the day of the Lord. This is a wonderful truth that shows that the new heaven and earth can only be seen *in* the spirit and *by* the spirit! John said, "And I *saw*..." The verb "saw" means to *discern, perceive, cognize, discover, recognize*." We will never discover anything that God has hidden from us, but when by His grace He draws back the curtain and reveals to us the wonders of His glory we are blessed to see things that others cannot see. John says, "I saw!" "I saw a new heaven and a new earth!" John makes it personal, and it must become personal for each of us. By the same spirit of revelation I can now say, "I see!" "I Preston see a new heaven and a new earth!" Do you, my beloved, have it within your view? With the understanding of the spirit and the perception of the mind of Christ can you see a new heaven and a new earth created within your own experience?

It should also be evident that there is a precise order to what John saw. He first said, "I saw a new heaven." He then followed this by saying, "*and* a new earth." Heaven bespeaks the inner world of spirit. Earth signifies the outer life of man. There can never be a new earth until *first* there is a new heaven! That is always the order — heaven comes first and then the earth. "In the beginning God created the *heavens and the earth*" (Gen. 1:1). People are always trying to restrain or change their outer man without a quickening or renewing of the inward man. They try to obey outward rules, regulations, and all kinds of religious observances which will make them appear godly but does not change the nature. And it doesn't work! Can we not see by this that we can only see a new earth after we see a new heaven! If you have not seen a new heaven, a new dominion out of the indwelling spirit, you will never see a new earth, for earth is set in the heavens! From the beginning this has been the divine order.

Heaven is the tabernacle of the earth. In the spiritual sense the new heaven is your spiritual life raised up within you in power and great glory, and the new earth is your redeemed, transformed soul and body. New! "For the former things are passed away." "Behold, I make all things new." "If any man be in Christ, he *is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new*" (II Cor. 5:17). The truth of John's vision is just that. It's not the literal mountains, the trees, the rivers, and the oceans of planet earth that are made new. It is *new men*! When one has truly experienced this his first old religious concept of heaven and his first old religious concept of earth have passed away. His old spiritual and mental-physical state of being have likewise passed away! He has received a new understanding and touched a new reality! It is a state of being and an identity beyond what we have been consciously aware of. The new heaven and the new earth are indeed the *new man*, the *new mind*, the *new spirit*, the *new heart*, the *new nature*, the *new life*, and the *new creation* that we are. Isn't that far better and greater than new mountains, trees, and rivers! The sons of God are within themselves the firstfruits of this new heaven and new earth! It is a new

way of thinking, a new perception of reality, a new consciousness of being, a new dimension of expression, a new plane and power of living! Oh, the wonder of it!

We know the reality of the new earth when God comes down out of the heavens of His Spirit to dwell and manifest in the earth realm — the visible, tangible realm. John said that he saw a new heaven and then at once he said, “And I John *saw* the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God *out of heaven*, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 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” (Rev. 21:2-3). The New Jerusalem, the Holy City, is God coming down out of the invisibility of spirit to manifest His presence, life, and glory visibly in and through a people. The New Jerusalem is the capital of the new earth — the dominion of God formed and crystallized within and through a people in union with Christ. These are God’s elect in whom the heavenly reality has been fully formed! These are they who are the light of the world, for the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of this city! The New Jerusalem is the firstfruits of the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness!

To those who walk in the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God the Holy Spirit is giving a new concept of earth. Multitudes of Christians are possessed of the Babylonish notion expressed in the old song that says, “This world is not my home, I’m just a passing through.” For these poor souls life in the flesh is a toil, a drudgery, filled with weakness, lack, pain, trouble, temptation, and sorrow and they are just waiting to die and get out of here. “Stop the world and let me off” is the popular “rapture” mentality. One thing is very clear — these precious folks have never SEEN THE NEW EARTH! Neither have they seen the NEW HEAVEN! Once you have seen, discerned, perceived, discovered, recognized, and experienced the new earth you no longer have any desire to “go” anywhere! There is no need to go anywhere! God manifested in and through your soul and your body *is* the new earth! That is the new earth “wherein dwelleth righteousness.” Study the word righteousness, my beloved, and you will see that it is fulfilled only *in and through men!* This passage leaves no room for doubt that the righteousness of God expressed in and through our lives constitutes the new earth! Where else would you want righteousness to dwell? Where else does righteousness need to dwell? How could righteousness ever be found in that earth out there except it flows through righteous men? Where can righteousness dwell in such a measure that it transforms everything in the whole world? Only in the lives of mankind! When the righteousness of God is revealed through the lives of all people everywhere, the old earth will have fully passed away for every man, and the new earth will be established in the glory of God. Isn’t it wonderful!

You see, beloved, it is not about what happens to this physical planet called earth upon which we walk. Oh, no! It is not that earth out there at all — it is this earth which *we are* that has become new! And yet — it is wondrously true that the earth out there *is* and *shall be* affected, delivered, and changed by the life of God manifested through the new heaven and the new earth that we are! This is certain, for man is given the dominion over the earth and over all things. The outward world fell under the curse along with its ruler, Adam, and it shall be delivered, cleansed, and restored from the bondage of corruption through its ruler, the many-membered Christ, the second man, the last Adam! The firstborn Son of God demonstrated this wonderful reality when He calmed the storm, fed the five thousand, and turned water into wine. Do you see the new heaven, the new rulership, my brother, my sister, and can you see the new earth? I see a new heaven and I see a new earth! I see a heaven and earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, glory, authority, and power! Oh, yes, I SEE IT!

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY

If you would like to receive these studies write to:

J. Preston Eby
P.O. Box 371240
El Paso TX 79937-1240

All writings are distributed on a free-will basis.