

# **The Glorious New Creation**

SERMON

By

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**TEXT:** Isaiah 65:17-25

**PROP:** Because God will create a new heavens and a new earth and we, his elect, shall dwell there we ought to look to this day and work and pray to hasten it.

## **Isaiah 65:17–25 (ESV)**

**17** “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.

**18** But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness.

**19** I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress.

**20** No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed.

**21** They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

**22** They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

**23** They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity, for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the Lord, and their descendants with them.

**24** Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking I will hear.

**25** The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent’s food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain,” says the Lord.

When we consider the nature of the death of believers and the resurrection of their bodies we must turn to the events that lead up to the Day of the Lord. One

would suppose that the doctrine of the second coming of Christ would be straightforward and that there would be widely held agreement on such an important issue. But that is not the case. Here again liberal theology denies the second coming of Christ because they deny that he ever rose bodily from the dead. Indeed, liberal theology denies anything that is supernatural or miraculous.

We might ask ourselves why we have established the Nashua OPC church when there are so many others in this area. And the answer in general is that no other church in this area consistently subscribes to the doctrines of the Bible as they are summarized in the *Westminster Confession of Faith*. It is of immense importance to each of us that we believe that Jesus is YAHWEH God. We must hold to the doctrines of Grace since we cannot be saved by works. We must belong by grace to the Church of Jesus Christ or we will never enjoy eternal life in the new heavens and the new earth. We believe in the necessity to pursue holiness, to turn away from sin in order to please our God and Savior Jesus Christ. These are not options to us and the doctrines set forth in the entirety of the Bible are essential to our life here on earth and in the world to come.

We take note of the great benefits that accrue to believers by virtue of their death in Christ and the resurrection of their bodies on the last day. How can it not be of use to you to know that death will be swallowed up in victory, that death will have no more sting? Are we weary of life and discouraged in our Christian walk? Because we shall certainly be with God forever in heaven we know for sure that our labor is not in vain in the Lord. The benefits that God extends to believers, to the bride of Christ, are overwhelming. No more so than the great blessings seen in the text before us in Isaiah 65. We who are in Christ will be citizens of the new heavens and the new earth wherein righteousness dwells. What marvelous grace is this! What mercy! What goodness!

There are three main views of the new heavens and the new earth and the context of world events that surround them. The first view, which we call **pre-millennial**, holds that Christ will return a second time, that he will set things to rights in the city of Jerusalem, that he will rebuild the temple, and that he will reign as king there for 1000 years. At the end of this 1000 year period will be the Day of Judgment and the creation of the new heavens and the new earth. The next view of the second coming of Christ, known as **a-millennial**, holds that the 1000 year period mentioned in Revelation 20 (which by the way is only mention of such a period of time in scripture in connection with the second coming) symbolizes the period of time beginning with the death of Christ and ending with his second coming at which time will be the general resurrection, the day of judgment and the creation of the new heavens and the earth. And the last view, known as **post-**

**millennial**, (optimistic a-millennial) holds that during the period of history following the death of Christ the preaching of the gospel and the mission and ministry of the church of Jesus Christ will be eminently successful. So much so that as David writes concerning the heirs of David throne to the Messiah, Great David's greater Son

**Psalm 72:8–11 (ESV)**

**8** May he have dominion from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth!

**9** May desert tribes bow down before him, and his enemies lick the dust!

**10** May the kings of Tarshish and of the coastlands render him tribute; may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts!

**11** May all kings fall down before him, all nations serve him!

**Isaiah 60:1–3 (ESV)**

**1** Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

**2** For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you.

**3** And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

Isaac Watts expressed this same view of the church in his hymn, *How Sweet and Awful Is the Place*

We long to see Thy churches full,  
That all the chosen race  
May, with one voice, and heart, and soul,  
Sing Thy redeeming grace.

After this period of great blessing upon the church on earth, the Lord comes again followed by the general resurrection and the Day of Judgment and the creation of the new heavens and the new earth.

With this overview of eschatology let us turn now to Isaiah 65 where the new heavens and the new earth are mentioned. We need to see first of all that,

**1. The new heavens and the new earth describes the entire Messianic reign of Christ.**

The term new heavens and new earth appears in three texts of scripture.

**Isaiah 65:17 (ESV)**

**17** “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.

**2 Peter 3:11–13 (ESV)**

**11** Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness,

**12** waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!

**13** But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

**Revelation 21:1–2 (ESV)**

**1** Then 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.

**2** And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

In the latter two contexts the end of the world is clearly in view. Peter refers to the destruction of the old creation by fire and John speaks of the new creation in which there is no more death. However in Isaiah’s new creation we see that while old things have passed away and all has become new **death remains**. It would appear therefore that Isaiah’s view of the new creation includes the entire Messianic reign of Christ.

Christ renews the world through his death on the cross. There is newness of life created in one who has been converted.

**2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)**

**17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

When we are converted by the grace of God and made to be new creatures in Christ we become members of the **church** known as the **bride of Christ**. The pains and miseries of this life begin to become less significant and we begin to come to God in prayer. The means of grace the Bible, the sacraments and prayer,

minister to us the great benefits of redemption. As we are sanctified by the work of God's Spirit all things become new and our lives are redirected toward heaven.

So then, Isaiah speaks of the glorious new creation from a different perspective than Peter or John. Next let us take notice of the fact that

**2. All the elect, Jew and Gentile alike, are involved with the glorious new creation.**

**Isaiah 65:22 (ESV)**

**22** They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

By grace we are all members of the commonwealth of Israel. Gentile branches are grafted into the olive tree and so together, Gentiles and Jews as God's elect will long enjoy the work of their hands. Even in the life we begin to experience the great benefits of grace. The church on earth is provided for by her great King and Savior. As the gospel is preached and people everywhere turn to Christ where the Holy Spirit is pleased to work they begin to live in peace with God and one another so their building and planting will not be taken away by enemies.

Furthermore,

**3. All is peace in the new creation where there is no sin or death.**

**Isaiah 65:19–20 (ESV)**

**19** I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress.

**20** No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed.

Notice there is no weeping or crying in the new heavens and the new earth. Weeping, pain and misery are the fruit of sin. It is the devil's business to make us miserable. But here in this new creation there is to be rejoicing. Indeed God's people will be glad and rejoice forever in this place and our rejoicing begins in this life. It is a matter of great joy to belong to Christ and the peace we have with God surpasses any peace we have ever known. Jesus gives his peace to us and even

though we may suffer for the sake of Christ his peace will keep us and be sufficient for us.

Verse 20 informs us that there will be no children who die in infancy in the new creation. When elect infants die their souls go to be with the Lord where the issue of maturity does not exist. Our resurrected bodies will be immortal, incorruptible and mature even though our earthly bodies were infant or adult. Since Isaiah refers to children we must assume that his view of the new creation includes the church on earth. Children in the earthly kingdom of Christ will be regarded as mere youths when they reach the age of 100.

In like token old men will not die when they are young. The death of the saints is not significant any more. **They whole prospect of death whether old or young becomes of little importance because either way we enjoy the great blessings of the kingdom of Christ. We are either at home in the body or present with the Lord in heaven.** Even our work will become pleasant to us in the kingdom of Christ.

#### **Genesis 3:17–19 (ESV)**

**17** And to Adam he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;

**18** thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field.

**19** By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

The Messianic kingdom of Christ brings us enjoy our labor as we begin to labor for the glory of Christ.

#### **Isaiah 65:21–22 (ESV)**

**21** They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

**22** They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

**4. God's people will enjoy the fruit of their labor but in the eternal kingdom there will be no offspring.**

**Isaiah 65:23 (ESV)**

**23** They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity, for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the Lord, and their descendants with them.

There will be no procreation in heaven. Do you remember the situation brought before Jesus by the Sadducees?

**Matthew 22:23–32 (ESV)**

**23** The same day Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection, and they asked him a question,

**24** saying, "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies having no children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother.'

**25** Now there were seven brothers among us. The first married and died, and having no offspring left his wife to his brother.

**26** So too the second and third, down to the seventh.

**27** After them all, the woman died.

**28** In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be? For they all had her."

**29** But Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God.

**30** For in the resurrection they **neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.**

**31** And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God:

**32** 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living."

God created Adam and Eve with the ability to reproduce before they sinned against him in the Garden of Eden, and he gave them the Creation Mandate to be fruitful and multiply.

**Genesis 1:28 (ESV)**

**28** And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

This mandate to fill the earth was necessary if mankind was to survive under the curse of death. In the new creation there will be no death consequently there will be no need to reproduce and as the Lord said, there is no marriage in heaven.

The new creation will be a place where there is peace and righteousness. This peace is so profound that it is like a lion turned vegetarian or a hungry wolf eating right next to a lamb. Even the curse on the serpent in the Garden of Eden will be fulfilled. Nothing will die in the new creation. There will be no disease, no poisonous snakes or spiders. The lack of dangerous animals is simply a picture of peace.

Having seen where we are going to live how shall we apply all of this to our lives. Perhaps Peter puts it best,

**2 Peter 3:14–18 (ESV)**

**14** Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

**15** And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him,

**16** as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

**17** You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability.

**18** But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.