



Consequently you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole building rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. Ephesians 2:19-22

As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him—you also, like living stones are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 2:4-5

#### With God when we die

When we die, the Bible is clear that we enjoy the presence of Christ. Theologians call this the "intermediate state." It's not our final destination. Our final destination is to dwell in resurrected bodies in the new creation. But between this life and the new creation, believers enjoy a further measure of God's gracious presence.

Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise." Luke 23:42-43

We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 2 Corinthians 5:8

I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith." Philippians 1:23-25

And now whether alive in this world, or with the Lord in heaven, we await the final day when God will transform our bodies and we will dwell with God perfectly and completely, forever alive and rejoicing in his presence!

## Revelation 21:1-8 Sermon Notes

### The New Heavens and New Earth

#### Promised in Isaiah

Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says, "My servants will eat but you will go hungry; my servants will drink, but you will go thirsty; my servants will rejoice but you will be put to shame. My servants will sing out of the joy of their hearts, but you will cry out from anguish of heart and wail in brokenness of spirit. You will leave your name to my chosen ones as a curse; the Sovereign LORD will put you to death but to his servants he will give another name. Whoever invokes a blessing in the land will do so by the God of truth; he who takes an oath in the land will swear by the God of truth. For the past troubles will be forgotten and hidden from my eyes. Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more. Isaiah 65:14-19

As the new heavens and the new earth that I will make will endure before me, declares the LORD, so will your name and descendants endure. From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me says the LORD. Isaiah 66:22-23

#### Initially Fulfilled in Christ's Resurrection and Our Conversion

Therefore if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come. 2 Corinthians 5:17

Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation. Galatians 6:15

These are the words of the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation. Revelation 3:14 (The word "ruler" in the NIV is better translated "beginning" especially in light of its allusion back to Isaiah 65:15-16).

#### Finally Fulfilled When Christ Returns

But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. 2 Peter 3:13

## No More Tears

On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines. On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. Isaiah 25:6-8

But only the redeemed will walk there, and the ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and singing will flee away. Isaiah 35:9-10

See also Isaiah 65:19 above, under **The New Heavens and New Earth**.

## God Dwelling with Us

God originally dwelt with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. But when they sinned, God cast them out of Eden, and thus out of his presence. And yet in his mercy God began to reveal that he intended to overcome our sin so that we might dwell with him again. The ultimate goal of our salvation is to be with God himself, glorifying him by savoring him forever with ever-increase satisfaction and zeal. And so God has begun to draw near his people.

### God dwelt among Israel in the tabernacle and temple

At Mount Sinai, God made provision for the tabernacle (and later the temple) to be his dwelling place among the Israelites.

Then have them make a sanctuary for me and I will dwell among them. Exodus 25:8

I will put my dwelling place among you and I will not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God and you will be my people. Leviticus 26:11-12

But will God really dwell on earth with men? The heavens cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built! 2 Chronicles 6:18

### God promised to dwell with his people after the exile

Like Adam and Eve, Israel sinned against God and broke his laws. And just as God ejected our first parents from the garden of Eden, so God ejected Israel from the Promised Land of Canaan. But God still would not be deterred. He promised again through his prophets to make a way for him to dwell among his people and to make a new covenant with them to replace the one Israel had violated.

I will surely gather them from all the lands where I banish them in my furious anger and great wrath; I will bring them back to this place and let them live in safety. They will be my people and I will be their God. I will give them singleness of heart and action so that they will always fear me for their own good and the good of their children after them. I will make an everlasting covenant with them. I will never stop doing good to them and I will inspire them to fear me so that they will never turn away from me. Jeremiah 32:37-40

I will establish them and increase their numbers and I will put my sanctuary among them forever. My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God and they will be my people. Then the nations will know that I the LORD make Israel holy when my sanctuary is among them forever. Ezekiel 37:26-28

And the name of the city from that time on will be “The LORD is there.” Ezekiel 48:35

Shout and be glad, O Daughter of Zion. For I am coming and I will live among you, declares the LORD. Many nations will be joined with the LORD in that day and will become my people. I will live among you and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you. Zechariah 2:10

### God dwells among us in Jesus

Jesus is Immanuel, “God with us” (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23). In Jesus, God himself dwelt among us in bodily form (Philippians 2:6-7; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:2-3). While standing in the temple Jesus said, “Destroy this temple and I will raise it again in three days” (John 2:19). John goes on to explain “the temple he was speaking of was his body. After he was raised from the dead his disciples recalled what he had said” (John 2:21-22). John also said of Jesus, the Word, not only that he was God (John 1:1-2), but that he lived among us:

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father full of grace and truth. John 1:14

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17

What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. And God has said, “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God and they will be my people.” 2 Corinthians 6:16