

29. GLORIFIED JERUSALEM

Isaiah 4:2-6, 60:1-9, 15-21, 62:1-7, 12, 65:17-25, 66:10-16, 22-24

Zechariah 8:2-8, 20-23

When prophesying about the future glory of Jerusalem, Isaiah talks about the Earth, the nations, the temple, offerings that kings will bring there, and his people Israel. On the other hand, the New Jerusalem described by the apostle John in the NT comes down from heaven (Rev 21:2-22:5). It exists in the heavenly realm, the Jerusalem that is above (Gal 4:26), the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb 12:22). So Jerusalem during the millennium will be a twin city; earthly and heavenly, intimately connected, but in overlapping realms, the physical and the spiritual. One is the home of the Church, the other is the capital city of God's chosen people, Israel. The throne of God and the Lamb are in New Jerusalem while the Messiah rules the Earth from a temple in Mount Zion. God will dwell with his people, both the Church and Israel. The Church will see his face and Israel will see his glory shining forth from the millennial temple.

The Lord will create over all of Mount Zion and over those who assemble there a cloud of smoke by day, and a glow of flaming fire by night, and over all the glory there will be a canopy. It will be a shelter and shade from the heat of the day, and a refuge and hiding place from the storm and rain (Isa 4:5-6). What is this canopy, if not the New Jerusalem? Jerusalem is told to arise and shine, for her light has come, the glory of the Lord has risen upon her, and his glory will be seen over her (Isa 60:1). The context is the second coming of the Messiah when darkness covers the Earth and thick darkness the peoples. In the new age, nations will travel to her light and kings will make pilgrimage to the brightness of her dawning. Perhaps Jerusalem will look like a daybreak, with the first rays of the sun piercing the sky. God will make her majestic forever, a joy from age to age.

The Lord himself will be Jerusalem's everlasting light and all her people will be righteous, because all Israel will be saved and their city

will be the center of worship for all nations, the praise of all the Earth. She'll be called Beulah (married) because of all her Israeli inhabitants; she's no longer empty of her people. She's also called Hephzibah (my delight is in her) because Jerusalem is the city that God chose for himself and now she's a Holy City. Ezekiel's last word is that the city's name will be: The Lord is there. Many passages stress that Israel will be the center of the world and their religion and culture will be the standard for the nations who will submit in reverence to them, the people of God.

Zion's righteousness will go forth as brightness, her salvation as a burning torch. The nations will see her righteousness and all the kings will see her glory. The Lord will create Jerusalem to be a joy and her people to be glad, and her inhabitants will live for hundreds of years. Jesus, the Lord and Messiah, will dwell in the temple in Jerusalem, as stressed by Zechariah. Very old people will sit in her streets and boys and girls will play there in security. This is a snapshot of the earthly Jerusalem during the millennium, not the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem. Many people and strong nations will come to seek the Lord and to pray to him because they'll recognize that God is with Israel. The OT prophets were naturally enough inspired to prophesy about the capital of the Messiah's earthly kingdom, rather than the heavenly New Jerusalem.

The Revelation is not so concerned with this earthly city, because it is written to the churches and their future home is the heavenly Jerusalem. But the OT prophets, especially Isaiah and Ezekiel, wrote their prophecies for the people of Israel concerning the future earthly Jerusalem, the temple that will be built there, the Messiah's throne, and his reign over the Earth resulting in a peaceful world characterized by righteousness and the knowledge of the Lord. The OT prophets were interested in the future of the people of Israel; the Church was a mystery to them (Eph 3:6).

However, in contrast to earthly Jerusalem where the one who fails to reach 100 years will be considered accursed, Isaiah catches glimpses of the resurrected Church. But your people who have died will be resurrected and live, Lord. Let those who dwell in the dust wake up and ululate. Your dew is like the morning dew; the Earth will give

birth to her dead (Isa 26:19). And: The Lord Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food on this mountain for all peoples ... On this mountain he'll remove the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the veil that covers people of all nations; he'll swallow up death forever. The Sovereign Lord will wipe away tears from all faces and remove his people's disgrace from all the Earth (Isa 25:6-9). This is the New Jerusalem where there is no more death or crying or pain. The context of Isaiah 24-26 is the Day of the Lord when the Messiah comes to reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem (Isa 24:23), when Babylon falls and cities become heaps of rubble (Isa 25:2), when God's people are warned that they should enter their rooms and shut the doors behind them until God's wrath passes by because the Lord is coming out of his dwelling to punish the people of the Earth for their sins (Isa 26:20-21).

The Old Testament picture

Isaiah prophesies much about a future Jerusalem possessing a glory that has never been seen. The picture is of a redeemed Israel in a transformed land with the nations in submission. His audience, the people of Jerusalem and Judah, would only interpret these prophecies in one way: literally, and so should we. His prophecies about Jerusalem are numerous and consistent and supported in many places by other prophets. If prophecy is not taken literally, it loses its power and becomes subjective, open to all manner of interpretation.

Jerusalem, the world capital

Isaiah 2:2-4 In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will become the highest of the mountains. God will exalt above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. Many people will come and say, Come, let us go up to the Lord's mountain, to the God of Jacob's temple. He'll teach us his ways and we'll walk in his paths. The law will disseminate from Zion, God's word from Jerusalem. He'll judge between the nations and settle disputes for many peoples. They'll beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nations won't take up sword against their neighbours, nor will they train for war anymore.

This first passage is very comprehensive and is repeated in Micah 4:1-3. The following points should be immediately noted because they set the tone for following prophecies made about Jerusalem throughout the book.

- The phrase ‘the last days’ or ‘the latter days’ speaks of a time beyond the horizon; commonly depicting the Messianic reign. Cf. Hos 3:5, Dan 2:28.
- There will be a temple of the Lord at Jerusalem.
- Jerusalem will be raised physically as the highest of the mountains. Some interpret this figuratively, but other prophecies also teach geographical transformation.
- The nations will continue to exist during the millennium.
- The nations will make pilgrimages to Jerusalem to worship the Lord.
- God’s word will go forth from Jerusalem as instruction for the nations.
- The Messiah will rule and judge the nations and settle disputes.
- The millennium will be free from warfare.

Jerusalem, surrounded by God’s glory

Isaiah 4:2-6 In that day, the Lord’s Scion will be beautiful and glorious, this Fruit of the land will be the pride and glory of the survivors in Israel. Those who are left in Zion and remain in Jerusalem will be called saints, all those whose names are written in the book of life. The Lord will wash away the filth of Zion’s women, he’ll cleanse the bloodstains from Jerusalem by a spirit of judgment and a spirit of fire. Then the Lord will create above Mount Zion and all those who assemble there a cloud of smoke by day and a glow of flaming fire by night. The Lord’s glory will be a canopy over everything. It will be a shelter and shade from the heat of the day, and a refuge and hiding place from the storm and rain.

The Messiah is introduced as the Branch of the Lord, a title adopted by Jeremiah (23:5, 33:15) and Zechariah (3:8, 6:12). It is more correctly translated as a scion or shoot as it sprouts from the root. From these passages, we learn the following:

- ‘In that day’ refers to the day of the Lord, when the Messiah arises in the splendor of his majesty (Isaiah 2:20-21).
- The Messiah will be beautiful and glorious (Compare Isaiah 28:5), branching out from the Lord (his deity) but also described as the fruit of the earth (his humanity).
- The Messiah will be the pride and glory of the remnant of Israel during his reign, the millennium.
- The remnant of Israel will be holy, the whole nation being converted after a period of judgment, the great tribulation.
- Over and above Mount Zion and Jerusalem the Lord will create a roof that will be visible as a cloud during the day and as a flaming fire during the night, reminiscent of the pillar of fire and cloud that accompanied Israel in the wilderness (Numbers 14:14). The canopy will cover Mount Zion, its surroundings, its population, and maybe the whole land of Israel. The whole land will be turned into a plain with Jerusalem remaining aloft on its site (Zechariah 14:10). Geba is on the northern border of Judah and Rimmon is on the southern border.
- Jerusalem will be a glorious city, surrounded and protected by the presence of God in the cloud by day and the fire by night.

Jerusalem, the world’s future rallying point

Isaiah 11:9-12 Nothing will harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for knowledge of the Lord will spread over the Earth as water covers the sea. On that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the nations. They will consult him, and his residence will be glorious. On that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the surviving remnant of his people

from Iraq, Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, Syria, and the islands of the Mediterranean. He'll erect a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel. He'll assemble the scattered people of Judah from all over the Earth.

This classic Messianic passage predicts the harmonization of nature. After destroying the wicked upon his return, the Messiah will rule the world with justice and righteousness. Knowledge of the Lord will spread everywhere as the word of God disseminates from Jerusalem. The nations will seek counsel from the king of the Jews, Jesus, the descendant of David and his father Jesse, whose residence will be glorious. He'll establish his reign at Jerusalem and be a rallying point for the nations who will help the dispersed Jews return home.

Jerusalem, where immortals feast with their King

Isaiah 25:6-9 The Lord Almighty will prepare a sumptuous feast for all peoples on this mountain, a banquet of aged wine, delicious meats, and the finest of wines. On this mountain, he'll remove the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the cloth that covers all nations; he'll put an end to death forever and wipe away the tears from all faces. He'll end his people's humiliation all over the Earth. The Lord has spoken. On that day they'll say: Look! This is our God. We put our hope in him and he saved us. This is the Lord in whom we put our hope. Let us rejoice and be happy with his salvation.

The Lord will make a feast for all peoples, that is, his redeemed people from all nations. This is the resurrected Church because these people are immortal; death has been swallowed up forever and they will suffer no more pain or sorrow or tears. The feast is the marriage feast of the Lamb (Reve 19:6-9), the celebration of the union of the Messiah and his Church. It is the feast in the kingdom of God, where the righteous celebrate this union, based on the new covenant made in his blood. Resurrected people won't live in the earthly Jerusalem, but in New Jerusalem which comes down out of heaven from God and is surrounded by a cloud that covers Mount Zion and its glory lights up the whole area. Isaiah refers again to this glory hovering above Jerusalem in chapter sixty.

Jerusalem will be comforted by the Messiah's arrival

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11 Your God said: Comfort my people, comfort them. Speak tenderly to the people of Jerusalem, and proclaim to them that their hard service is over, they have paid for their transgression. The Lord has punished them twice over for all their sins. Listen to the herald calling out and saying: Prepare a way for the Lord in the wilderness, make a straight road for our God in the bushland. Every valley will be raised and mountains and hills will be flattened. Rough ground will be leveled, hilly places will become a plain. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and everyone will see it together. The mouth of the Lord has declared it. ... You who bring good news to Zion, climb a high mountain and shout it aloud. You who bring good news to Jerusalem, raise your voice with a shout. Don't be afraid, announce to the inhabitants of Judah's towns: Here is your God!

Think about the context here; it is about the second coming of Jesus the Messiah when everyone will see him at the same time. During the Messianic reign, Jerusalem's sins will be forgiven, and she'll no longer experience the horrors of war. The comfort will begin when the Messiah returns to Zion and grants Israel victory over her enemies.

John the Baptist partially fulfilled the prophecy of vs 3, when he preached a message of repentance and prepared the way for Jesus, but the rest of this prophecy must wait until the second coming. The two witnesses (Rev 11), dressed in sackcloth and preaching in Jerusalem, will complete the preparation for Jesus' arrival during the last three and a half years. Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed and all humanity will see it at once. Zechariah tells us that the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley. Jerusalem will be raised and living waters will flow to both the Mediterranean and Dead Seas. The whole land of Judah, from Geba, north of Jerusalem, to Rimmon, 35 miles (56 km) southwest of Jerusalem, will become a plain with Jerusalem remaining aloft on its site and Mount Zion will be lit up by the glory of God (Isa 4:5).

Jerusalem can never be forgotten by the Lord

Isaiah 49:14-23 But the people of Zion said: The Lord has abandoned us, he has forgotten us. Can a mother forget the baby she breastfed? Won't she have compassion for the child she bore? Even if she forgets, I'll not forget you! Look! I have engraved your name on the palms of my hands and your walls are always on my heart. Your children are hurrying back, and those who left you in ruins are departing. Look around and see; all your children are gathering together and coming to you. As surely as I live, declares the Lord, you'll wear them all as ornaments, you'll put them on like a bride does. Though you were ruined and made desolate and your land laid waste, now you'll be too small for your residents, and those who invaded you will be far away. You will overhear your children who were born during your bereavement saying: This place is too small to contain us. Make more room for us to live in. And you'll say in your heart: Who bore these for me? My children died and I was childless. They were exiled and taken away. Who brought these up? I was left all alone; where have they come from? This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Look! I'll beckon to the nations and they'll bring your sons back in their arms. I'll erect a banner to the people of all lands and they'll carry your daughters back on their shoulders. Kings will be their foster fathers and queens their nursing mothers. They'll bow down before you with their faces to the ground and lick the dust at your feet. Then you'll know that I'm the Lord. Those who hope in me won't be put to shame.

God never forgets those he has chosen, whether his nation, Israel, his city, Jerusalem, or his saints. Jerusalem lay forsaken for a long time, but she's very dear to God. Her name is engraved on his hands, he loves her like a woman loves her newborn child. He promised that her children would return, and today, that has been fulfilled. Jerusalem is one of the leading capital cities of the world, albeit still in unbelief. In 1950 Jerusalem's population was 120,000. In June 2024, it reached a million. The nations have allowed their Jewish populations to migrate to Israel as Isaiah prophesied, but the prophecies won't be complete until the Messiah arrives, Israel is converted, their land enlarged, and world leaders come and bow at the Messiah's feet.

Jerusalem will be revived

Isaiah 51:3-4, 11, 16-17, 52:1-2, 7-10 The Lord will surely comfort Zion and her ruined state. He'll make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the Lord's garden. Joy and gladness will be found there and the sound of thanksgiving and singing will be heard. Pay attention to what I say, my people, listen to me, my nation. Instruction will go out from me; my justice will be established as light for the nations. ... Those the Lord has redeemed will return to Zion with ululation, everlasting joy will be seen on their faces. They'll be overtaken by gladness and joy while sorrow and sighing will flee away. ... I will put my words in your mouth and guard you with the shadow of my hand. I'll set the heavens in place and establish the Earth and say to Zion: You're my people. Awake, awake! Rise up, Jerusalem. You have drunk from the Lord's hand the cup of his wrath, you who have drained to its dregs the goblet that makes people stagger. ...

Awake, awake, Zion, clothe yourself with strength! God's city Jerusalem, put on your royal garments. The uncircumcised and defiled won't enter you again. Jerusalem, shake off your dust, rise and sit on your throne. Captive daughter Zion, remove the chains on your neck. ... How good it is to see the bearer of good news coming over the hills. He proclaims peace and brings good tidings. He proclaims salvation, and says to Zion: Your God reigns! Listen! Your watchmen cry out together and shout for joy for when the Lord returns to Zion, they'll see it with their own eyes. Burst into songs of joy together, you residents of Jerusalem's ruins, for the Lord has redeemed Jerusalem and comforted his people. The Lord will show all nations the power of his holy arm; people to the ends of the earth will see how God saves his people.

These verses speak of the city of Jerusalem, for many centuries abandoned, defeated, enslaved, and in ruins, and now told to awake and arise and embrace her salvation. The surrounding desert will become like the garden of Eden, joy and singing will be her new experience, and the word of God and justice will go forth from Jerusalem to the nations of the world. She'll be dressed in splendor, a

glorious holy city, where her old enemies and the ungodly will have no place. This is the Lord's doing. The Messiah, Jesus, will return to Zion with a display of strength, defeating the nations that laid siege to her and bringing about her salvation. The whole world will see this great conquest and will have no choice but to submit to the new, righteous, universal King. In vs. 8-10, emphasis is laid on people seeing the Lord's return to Jerusalem with their own eyes. All the nations to the ends of the earth will see how God saves his people.

The future glory of Jerusalem

Isaiah 60:1-7, 11-14, 19-21 Arise, shine, for your light has come, the Lord's glory has risen on you. Look! Gloom covers the earth and darkness is over the nation. As for you, the Lord will rise over you and his glory will be seen above you. Nations will come to your light, and their kings to the brightness of your dawn. Raise your eyes and look about you: All have assembled and are coming to you. Your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the hip. When you see it, your joy will be seen on your face and your heart will throb. The wealth of the seas will be brought to you, and the nations will bring their riches. Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. All the Ethiopians will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the Lord's praises. All Kedar's flocks will be gathered to you, and the rams of Nebaioth will be given to you and be accepted as offerings on my altar, and I'll adorn my glorious temple. ... Your gates will always be open, they'll never be shut, day or night so that the wealth of the nations might be brought to you, their kings leading the procession. (This is millennial, cf. Rev 21:24-26). The nation or king that does not serve you will perish; those countries will be utterly ruined. The glory of Lebanon will be brought to you, juniper, fir and cypress wood, to adorn my temple and glorify the place for my feet. All the descendants of your oppressors will come and bow before you, those who despised you will prostrate themselves at your feet and call you the Lord's City, Zion that the holy God of Israel established. ... No longer will the sun give you light by day or the moon's brightness shine on

you, for the Lord will be your everlasting light; your God will be your splendor (Rev 21:23). Your sun will never set again, and your moon will wane no more. The Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of sorrow will be finished. All your people will be righteous and they'll possess the land forever. They are the scion of the tree I planted, the work of my hands, to display my splendor.

Isaiah 60 is a message spoken by the Lord to the future millennial city of Jerusalem (vs. 14). Her sons and daughters are a future generation of Israel who will be gathered home to Jerusalem (4, 9) and made righteous (21). The nations will bring their wealth to glorify the millennial temple (7, 13). Jerusalem will be glorified, not figuratively, but physically, by a great light, to which Isaiah already referred (4:5), where the whole site of Mount Zion is covered by a cloud by day and a flaming fire by night. Darkness will cover the earth at the end of the great tribulation as a result of the nations fighting an atomic war and the massive earthquakes that will occur upon the Messiah's return. But the Lord will arise upon Jerusalem and his glory appear over it like a sunrise. This is not temporary; it is a permanent phenomenon to which the nations will be attracted.

The apostle John saw the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God (Rev 21:2, 10). He does not give the destination; it comes down from heaven but is not located on Earth. The assumption is that this heavenly city will be located in the sky directly over Mount Zion. The light shining over Jerusalem by day and night is the glory of God whose throne is in the New Jerusalem and whose glory eclipses the light of the sun and the moon (Rev 21:23) so that she does not need them.

Isaiah said: Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Alluding to this passage, John said: The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it (Rev 21:24). John's heavenly Jerusalem is in the sky, its light and glory come from the throne of God and the Lamb which are in it. Isaiah's Jerusalem is on the earth, its light and glory shine upon it from above. John saw no temple in the New Jerusalem, but Isaiah says: The glory of Lebanon will come to you (Jerusalem), juniper, fir and cypress wood, to adorn my sanctuary; and I'll glorify the place for my

feet. There is no clear indication that the Messiah will be visible during the millennium. His presence will be seen in the glory above.

All people of Jewish descent will return to Israel to live and lead the nations in the Lord's worship. The wealth of the nations will be brought there to beautify the Lord's temple, which is called a house of prayer for all nations (Isa 56:7). The Messiah will make this temple glorious with all the treasures of the world. It is the place of his feet, his footstool so to speak. His throne will be in the heavenly city above, his place of worship in the earthly city below. Jerusalem will be majestic forever, as long as the world exists, it will be a joy for many generations. All the inhabitants will be righteous because all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:26). Redeemed Israel (vs. 21) will inhabit the earthly city and inherit their land of Israel forever (Ps 37:9-10, 22, 28-29, 34), while the resurrected Church will inhabit the New Jerusalem and inherit the whole Earth (Dan 7:27, Mt 5:5, Acts 20:32, Rom 4:13-16, 8:17, Gal 4:7, Col 1:12-13). The Greek word for world in Romans 4:13 is κόσμος. Redeemed Israel inherits the land, while the true Church inherits the world.

Jerusalem vindicated

Isaiah 62:1-12 For Zion's sake I'll not keep silent, for Jerusalem's sake I'll not remain quiet, until her justification shines forth like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch. The nations will see your justification, and all their kings will set eyes on your glory. You'll be given a new name that the Lord will bestow. You'll be a crown of splendor in the Lord's hand, a royal diadem in your God's hand. No longer will you be called deserted or your land be called a desert. You'll be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah; for the Lord will take delight in you, and your land will be married. As a youth marries a virgin, so will your builder marry you, and as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you. I have posted watchmen on your walls, Jerusalem and they'll never be silent day or night. You who call on the Lord, don't rest and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes her a city the whole world praises.

These words come from Isaiah but they also come from the heart of God, because he has chosen Jerusalem to be his holy city, and he'll not be content until the nations see her justification which is intimately tied to the justification of Israel as God's people and the Messiah as his appointed regent. Just as the Church will become the bride of Christ, Israel will be born again under the new covenant, filled with God's Spirit and united to him. Contrary to current practice, the eternal holy city of Jerusalem will one day be praised by the whole world.

The millennial Jerusalem

Isaiah 65:17-25 Look! I'll create new heavens and a new Earth. The former things won't be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I'll create, for I'll create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I'll rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people. The sound of weeping or crying won't be heard there anymore. Never again will there be an infant death or an old man who doesn't live a full life. He who dies at a hundred will be considered a youth, and he who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed. They'll build houses and live in them, they'll plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They'll no longer build houses for other nations to live in, or plant trees for others to eat the fruit. My people will live as long as trees; my chosen ones will enjoy the fruit of their labor. They won't labor in vain or bear children doomed to trouble, for they'll be a people blessed by the Lord, they and their descendants with them. Before they call I'll answer; while they're still talking I'll respond. The wolf and the lamb will feed together. A lion will eat straw like an ox, and a snake's food will be dust. They won't harm or destroy anything on all my holy mountain, says the Lord.

The Lord will create new heavens and new earth and the former things won't be remembered or come to mind. These verses relate to Israel's Messianic future and were never thought of in the sense of a new planet. Jeremiah speaks of the same future era when he talks about the ark of the covenant and says: In those days, when your numbers have

increased greatly in the land, declares the Lord, people will no longer say: The ark of the covenant of the Lord. It will never enter their minds or be remembered; it won't be missed, nor will another one be made. At that time, they'll call Jerusalem: The Lord's Throne, and all nations will gather in Jerusalem to honor the Lord's name (Jer 3:16-17).

'New' is usually in the sense of being renewed, as here in John's use of the phrase. There is no biblical teaching that God will create a new planet or other form of territory. The one he created is beautiful and was pronounced to be good before sin entered. The remainder of this passage makes it clear that the renewed Earth and the renewed Jerusalem, in which the Lord will rejoice, are restored and regenerated, as is also the case with this quote from Zechariah: This is what the Lord Almighty says: I'm very jealous for Zion; I'm burning with jealousy for her. This is what the Lord says: I'll return to Zion and live in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the Faithful City, and the Lord Almighty's mountain will be called the Holy Mountain. This is what the Lord Almighty says: Once again men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each of them with a cane in hand because of their age. The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there. (Zech 8:2-5). And many peoples and powerful nations will come to Jerusalem to seek the Lord Almighty and to entreat him (Zech 8:22).

Neither is the new Earth to be regarded as the eternal state of blessing for the righteous. People who die at a hundred years there are regarded as young. People will build houses and plant vineyards without fear of enemies. Animals are there, and wild animals won't be harmful as has already been expressed in the millennial passage of Isaiah 11. The new earth spoken about here and by John (Revelation 21:1) and Peter (2 Peter 3:13) all relate to the Messianic reign on earth.

Jerusalem gives birth to a new nation

Isaiah 66:7-14 Before she goes into labor, she gave birth; before the pains come upon her, she delivered a son. Who has ever heard of such a thing? Who has ever seen such a thing? Can a race be born in a day or a nation be brought forth in a moment? Yet when labor pains came on Zion, she gave birth

immediately. The Lord says: Will I bring to the moment of birth and not give delivery? Your God says: Will I bring to delivery and then close up the womb? Rejoice over Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her. Rejoice greatly with her, all you who mourn over her. For you'll breastfeed and be satisfied and comforted. You'll drink deeply and be happy with the abundance of her wealth. For this is what the Lord says: I'll extend peace to her like a river, I'll gather the wealth of nations to her like a flooding stream. You'll be breastfed and carried on her hip and caressed on her knees. As a mother comforts her child, so I'll comfort you, and you'll be comforted in Jerusalem. When you see this, you'll be happy and you'll flourish like grass. The Lord will cause his servants to know his strength, but his he will pour out his wrath on his foes.

Zion will give birth to a son, later defined as her children, her land, and her nation. To what historic event does this refer? Isaiah is a prophet to Israel and is not concerned with the Church. He always has his people Israel in mind, and from 65:17 on, he's thinking about the new heavens and the new earth at the end of the age when the Messiah reigns. Just as Mother Israel gives birth to the Messiah (Rev 12:1-2), so here, Mother Jerusalem gives birth to a son, a new redeemed nation. Israel exists as a nation today and was born in a day in 1948, but in unbelief. The true Israel of God will be born in one day when the Deliverer comes from Zion and banishes ungodliness from Jacob. Isaiah addresses his words to those who tremble at God's word. He tells those who love Jerusalem to rejoice with her and be glad for her, just as he did in the previous chapter, where God said he's creating new heavens and a new earth, and he's creating Jerusalem to be a joy and her people to be glad. God will extend to the millennial Jerusalem peace like a river and the wealth of the nations will flow to her as her king, the Messiah, rules the world. All humanity will come to worship the Lord at Jerusalem (66:23). The catalyst for this great change is the return of the Messiah when he comes with fire and anger and fury to execute judgment on godless humanity at the battle of Armageddon (66:15-16). That is when the Messianic Israel will be born in one day with a new king, a new government, new borders, and a newly converted population.