

“A New Earth”

by Bryan Matthew Dockens

NASA recently announced the discovery of Kepler-425b, a planet 1,400 light years away, in the constellation Cygnus. Called “the closest twin to Earth, or the Earth 2.0 that we’ve found so far in the dataset” by John Grunsfeld, associate administrator of NASA’s Science Mission Directorate, this exoplanet is drawing considerable attention for its potential habitability by humans. Some even call it a “new earth.”

At creation, God said of man, “*Let them have dominion... over all the earth*” (Genesis 1:26). This planet is man’s present domain, and ruling over it is a tremendous responsibility handed down from the Maker. It is written, “*The heaven, even the heavens, are Jehovah’s; but the earth He has given to the children of men*” (Psalm 115:16). Man must learn to be content with God’s gift (Hebrews 13:5).

To the extent another earth should be sought, the pursuit must be spiritual. “*We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells*” (2 Peter 3:13). Kepler-425b is not the location “*in which righteousness dwells,*” nor will that description apply to any world discovered by telescope. When finally “a new earth” appears, “*the heavens will be dissolved*” because the very “*elements will melt*” (v. 12). The physical universe will be gone when God reveals man’s ultimate home.

Meanwhile, Kepler-425b is a 24.3 million year journey away, were one to travel at the speed of Voyager 1 — 38,610 mph. No one on earth will ever get there. Eternal heaven is a much more realistic destination.

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