

Is Heaven A Real Place?

Introduction

Is there a real heaven? I would say yes because the Bible tells us so. However, the Bible actually speaks of three heavens.

The word Heaven is found seven times in the first chapter of the Bible alone. It is the seventh word into the Bible. In Genesis 1, we see that it means more than the Celestial City.

The First Heaven is spoken of twenty-one times in the Bible. It is where the atmosphere is and where we see blue skies, clouds and birds. The Bible speaks of the birds or fowls of the “air.” For example: Psalm 104:12, “By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches.” The “Dew of Heaven” is mentioned nine times. One example is Genesis 27:28, “Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine:” The 1st heaven is commonly referred to as the firmament which means “expanse or sky.” (Genesis 1:8)

The Second Heaven is where the stars and planets are. We would refer to it as “Outer Space.” Here are a few scriptures that refer to the 2nd heaven

1. Genesis 1: 14-17, “And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,” The phrase “stars of heaven” occurs eleven times in scripture.
2. Isaiah 13:10, “For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.”
3. Psalm 8:3, 4, “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”
4. Psalm 19:1, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork.”

The Third Heaven is the current heaven where God dwells. Although this is a glorious place, this is not the New Heaven described in Revelation 21 and 22. It is far above the sky and our entire known universe. It is a physical place that is full of angels, saints, animals, and much more.

Paul went to the third heaven and came back. (II Corinthians 12:2-4.) “I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth; such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth; how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”

Isaiah saw a glimpse of Heaven. (Isaiah 6:1-7), “In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.”

This text reveals several things about the third heaven:

- The Lord is sitting upon a throne
- The Lord is wearing a robe with a very long train (hem).
- There is a temple in Heaven where He sits.
- Six winged seraphims ceaselessly fly above the throne of God and cry one to another announcing the holiness of the Lord of Hosts.
- There is an altar of live coals.

John also saw the third heaven and penned the book of Revelation. Here are a few observations:

- There is a door in Heaven (4:1). The door is opened to all who hear the first audible voice and the sound of the trumpet.
- There is a throne set in Heaven. It is the same one Isaiah saw (Isaiah 4:2).
- God who sits on the throne is described as being like jasper (clear crystal) and a sardine stone (dark red). This was the best way John could describe God’s glory (4:3).
- There is a rainbow about the throne (4:3). Our rainbows on earth are made of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. This one appears as an emerald, which is green. Green represents life.
- Around God’s throne are twenty-four seats. There are twenty-four elders, clothed in white raiment, sitting on the seats. They wear crowns of gold (4:4).

For a full list of what the book of Revelation discloses as being in the third heaven, visit http://www.fbhc.com/messages/kohl_doctrine_ouranology.html and read Art Kohl's article.

One day these three heavens will no longer exist. (Isaiah 65:17) "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." We do not know what the new heavens will look like but we will see a heaven on earth where Jesus is King and we will reign with Him. We shall dwell with Him, on the new earth, forever.

John 14:1-4 records Jesus telling His followers that there were many mansions in His Father's house. He even said that He would not have told them if it were not so. I do believe that God has a house/place where He dwells and it is full of redeemed saints, angels and lots more. If we die before Jesus returns, we will see it and dwell there too until we take that glorious ride on heavenly horseback through time and space with Jesus at His 2nd coming.

Until Next Time

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