

The Israel of God Bible Study Class

2515 E. 75th Street

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THE HEAVENS?

Many people that call themselves Christians claim they will be raptured off the earth and taken to heaven before the Great Tribulation period. If this is true, which heaven will they be taken to? The scripture clearly states there are three heavens and they all exist at this present time. The scripture also states two of them will be dissolved. Today you will learn several things. The first thing we must do is locate the heavens. Second we must find out who dwells within them. We will begin this study in Genesis, read the scriptures carefully as we locate the second heaven first.

Genesis 1:6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. **7** And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. **8 And God called the firmament Heaven.** And the evening and the morning were the second day.

In verse 6 God divided the waters by making a firmament in the midst of the waters, and He called the firmament heaven. Now, what is in the firmament? Let's let the book tell us.

Genesis 1:14 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: **15** And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. **16** 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. **17** And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, **18** And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. **19** And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

Within this heaven we have the Sun, Moon, and the Stars, which are used for signs and seasons and to give light upon the earth. This is the second heaven. Now let's find the first heaven and also find out who dwells there.

Matthew 24:27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. **28** For whosoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. **9** Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: **30** And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. **31** And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall **gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.**

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Notice verse 31, the Lord send his angels to gather His elect when that great trumpet is sounded. The Lord's elect is Israel. To confirm this, let's take a look at Isaiah chapter 45.

Isaiah 45:4 For Jacob my servant's sake, and **Israel mine elect**, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.

Now we know Israel is the Lord's elect, let's continue. Matthew 24:31 mention the four winds. What we need to do now is locate the four winds. In Matthew 24:31 he says Israel will be gather from one end of heaven to the other. Now, take a look at the Book of Mark.

Mark 13:27 And then shall he send his angels, **and shall gather together his elect from the four winds**, from the uttermost part of the **earth** to the **uttermost part of heaven**.

Both books mention the same thing, except Mark adds the earth. Let's find these four winds.

Revelation 7:1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of **the earth**, **holding the four winds of the earth**, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

You see the four winds are on the earth, but we must find out what the four winds are. We are not going to deal with Daniel's prophecy, what we want to do is find out who these four winds are or what are they. Take a look.

Daniel 7:1 In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters.
2 Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, **the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.** **3** **And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.**

Notice what's being said, "The four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea, four great beasts came up from the sea." The sea in this case represents peoples of all nations. We will go to Revelation for a moment to confirm this.

Revelation 17:1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the **great whore that sitteth upon many waters:**

Remember in Daniel the Beast came up from the sea. This is the same beast. Now take a look at the 15th verse in Revelation 17.

Revelation 17:15 And he saith unto me, **The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.**

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Notice the water or the sea as it states in Daniel represents people. What are these four winds that worked or wrought upon the sea? And what are these four beasts that came from the sea? Take a look.

Daniel 7:17 These great beasts, **which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.**

The four winds are four kings or in other words kingdoms. These kingdoms are Babylonians, Medes/Persians, Greeks and the Romans.

Let's summarize what we have found out so far. We know that Israel is God's elect, and they will be gathered from the four winds. We also have found out that the four winds are four Gentile nations. Now if the four winds are four nations that are upon the earth that would mean the earth is also called heaven. Let's go a little further to confirm this.

Let's take a look at the gathering.

Jeremiah 23:6 In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. 7 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, **which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;** 8 But, The LORD liveth, **which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.**

Let me ask you this question before we continue. The people that call themselves Jews, are they dwelling in safety? NO! So, what would that tell you? They are not Jews.

Let's continue, notice what the Lord says by the mouth of Jeremiah. "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.

Now let's read Matthew 24 again with some understanding.

Matthew 24:31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, **and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.**

Now we see what the four winds (4 nations) are, and we also know Israel will be gathered from them. Let's take a small look at the first resurrection. The next set of verses most people go to

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justify the rapture or going to the third heaven. It will be a gathering in heaven, but, it will be in the second heaven not the third (we will see that later). This gathering will take place at the first resurrection. The first resurrection is after the great tribulation period. It is taught in the churches the Lord will rapture the church before the tribulation takes place. The people who teach this give people a sense of security but it is false. If you don't make it into the place of safety, which is on the earth. You are going to have a serious problem on your hands. Those that make it also must be written in the book of life (Daniel 12:1). You can not be written in the book of life on belief only you must have works and your works are keeping the commandments (James 2:17). Pay close attention to what's being said.

I Thessalonians 4:16 For the **Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout**, with the voice of the archangel, and **with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:**
17 Then we which are alive and remain **shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.**

*Notice a few things, the first thing is it states the Lord shall **DESCEND** from heaven with a shout (the trump 7th trump). Also it states those that are dead in Christ shall rise first. Wait a minute. It did say the dead in Christ shall rise first, what should that tell you? Everyone that ever died from Adam until the first resurrection is still in the grave. Now, look at the 17th verse again. Shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. What does this mean? We will be floating around in the clouds forever? Does that even sound logical? No! We can't stop here. Let's return to Matthew 24 and point something out.*

Matthew 24:29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: **30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven:** and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Notice what the Lord says. Immediately after the tribulation shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven. The Lord will return after the tribulation not before. Now, will we be floating around in the clouds forever? Let see.

Zechariah 14:1 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. **2** For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. **3** Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. **4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives**, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. **5** And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains

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shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the **LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.**

*Where is the Mount of Olives? In Jerusalem. What does it say in verse 5? **The LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.** So those of us that make the cut, we will meet the Lord in the air, which is the second heaven. Then we will return to the earth, which is the first heaven. Will the Saints sit back and allow the Lord to do all the work? What will the Saints do when they return with the Lord?*

Psalms 149:5 Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.
6 Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a **two-edged sword in their hand;**
7 To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people;
8 To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;
9 To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.

The Lord along with the Saints and the Angels will take the earth by force.

Now we have located the First and the second heaven let's take a look at the 3rd.

Acts 1:10 And while they looked **steadfastly toward heaven** as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; **11** Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, **which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.** **12** Then returned **they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet**, which is from Jerusalem a Sabbath day's journey.

The Apostles watched Jesus ascend into heaven, what heaven did He ascend into? Notice also the Apostles left from the Mount of Olives. Remember In the Book of Zechariah how the Lord will return to the Mount of Olives. It states the same thing above in Acts. Now, what heaven did He ascend into?

II Corinthians 12:1 It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. **2** 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.** **3** And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)

Look at the 2nd verse, "such an one caught up to the third heaven." Jesus returns to the third heaven, sitting on the right hand of the Father. Jesus is the only one that was born again, in other words born of the spirit. Now take a look at this verse.

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John 3:13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

So, if no MAN has ascended to heaven but he who came down from heaven, what does that tell you? Once again everyone is still in the grave and will remain there until the first resurrection. Let's take it a little further.

In the next set of verses some people use them to justify people are in the third heaven. Even after reading what the Lord said in John 3:13. Now I want you to pay very close attention and watch how the Bible defines itself. Let's take a look at the souls or people under the altar in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 6:9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls **of them that were slain for the word of God**, and for the testimony which they held:

Look at what John said, "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God. These people must be in heaven, right? (Next verse)

Revelation 6:10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

They were talking to the Lord? (Next verse)

Revelation 6:11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

These people were told by the Lord, rest a little season? They must be in heaven? (Next)

Revelation 6:12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; **13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth**, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. **14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together**; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

Notice something, The sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood, and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together. We will take a look at that later. Let's see if we can find an example of these who were given white robes. Pay close attention here.

Genesis 4:1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. **2** And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of

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sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. **3** And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. **4** And Abel, he also brought of the **firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: 5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect.** And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

Abel, he brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. Cain didn't bring the best that he had, if he did the Lord would have accepted Cain's offering.

Genesis 4:6 And the LORD said unto Cain, **Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? 7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.** And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

Notice something, If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted. Remember the people in Revelation. Did they do well? Were they accepted? Yes. Now look at what the Lord says here.

Genesis 4:8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. **9** And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, "I know not: **Am I my brother's keeper?"**

What did the Lord say in verse 7? if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. Cain committed two sins, murder, and baring false witness. These verses alone let you know that the Law was in effect from the beginning. Notice the next verse.

Genesis 4:10 And he said, "What hast thou done? **the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.**"

*When is the last time you heard someone's blood cry? Blood doesn't cry. It wasn't the blood that was crying it was Abel's righteous acts. Remember this in Revelation. I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: These people were slain for the word of God, and the testimony that they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our **blood** on them that dwell on the earth? Notice it said our blood. Here is the key. What were these people given for their testimony?*

Revelation 6:11 And **white robes were given unto every one of them;** and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

They were given white robes. What does this mean? Let's let the Book tell us.

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Revelation 19:8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

You see it was their righteousness that cried unto the Lord. Paul will clarify this, and you will see indeed it was acts or works that cry out to the Lord.

Hebrews 11:4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by **it he being dead yet speaketh.**

*Look at the 4th verse again. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. **By being yet dead yet speaketh.** Were the people in revelation 6 in the third heaven or were they in the grave? In the grave. Their works or their righteous act will speak for them when the time comes.*

Let's recap a few things. In Genesis we learned the Lord called the firmament heaven (second heaven), He also placed the sun, moon and the stars there. The earth is also called heaven (first heaven) in Matthew 24. We also found out that the third heaven no man has ascended into but Jesus Himself. At the beginning of this study, I mentioned the heavens will be dissolved or in other words the heavens will be no more. Let's take a look at this, and clear up that myth that anyone will dwell in the third heaven. What we'll do first is look at where the Lord's kingdom will be when He returns. This will help you to understand why the heavens will be no more. We will begin in the Book of Psalms.

Psalms 132:11 The LORD hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will **I set upon thy throne.**

This is the Lord speaking by the mouth of David. Note what he says, "Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne." Notice the Lord said I will set upon thy throne. Let's see who this is. Is it the Father or is it the son? Take a look.

Luke 1:30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.
31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, **and shalt call his name JESUS.**

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall **give unto him the throne of his father David:** **33** **And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.**

So you see, the one that said, "Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne" was Jesus. Notice what was said, "the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he

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shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and of his kingdom there shall be no end. For those of us that don't know were David's throne is let's let the Bible tell us.

I Kings 2:11 And the days that David reigned over Israel were forty years: seven years reined he in Hebron, **and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.**

David reigned in Jerusalem. So shall the Lord when He makes His Second Coming. Now let's return to the 132nd Psalm to confirm this even further.

Psalms 132:13 For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation.
14 This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.

The Lord says he desired to dwell on the earth, where is David's throne? On the earth correct? So if the Lord will dwell on the earth, why do some people want to go to the third heaven? Not only will the Lord Jesus dwell here, the Father will also. Once the Kingdoms of the earth are destroyed and the Judgment takes place the Father will descend and dwell on the earth also. Take a look.

Revelation 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the **first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.** **2** And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, **coming down from God out of heaven,** prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, **Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men,** and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and **God himself shall be with them, and be their God.**

Where does man dwell? On the earth! Where did the verse say God will dwell? The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. Now that we have taken a short look were the Lord's Kingdom will be, let's take a look how the heavens will be dissolved. Take a look at what Peter says about this subject. He is the chief Apostle I would think he knows what he is talking about.

II Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

10 But **the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise,** and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

If the Lord says it will come to pass, it will come to pass. Notice what the 10th verse says, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise. And all the evil works will be burned up; meaning anything evil shall be destroyed.

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II Peter 3:11 Seeing then that **all these things shall be dissolved**, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, **12** Looking for and hasting unto the coming **of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?**

As you can see the heavens shall be dissolved at the Lords coming, this is called the day of the Lord. We can't stop here; let's take another look at this in the Book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 34:3 Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. **4** And **all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll:** and their entire host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine and as a falling fig from the fig tree.

This is the day of the Lord as Peter mentioned. There will be several things happening at the same time. As this takes place the Lord will gather Israel and all people that are brought under the banner of Israel. He will take down all the nation with His 2 armies. Notice what it says about the heavens, "all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine and as a falling fig from the fig tree. Let's take one more look at this in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 6:12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and **the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;** **13** And the **stars of heaven fell unto the earth**, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. **14** And **the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together;** and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. **15** And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; **16** And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: **17** For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

Once again the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; the stars of heaven fell unto the earth the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together. Now if the heavens will be dissolved and the Father and Son are going to dwell on the earth, who would a person be following if they say "I'm going to the third heaven? Well, lets let the Bible tell us.

Isaiah 14:12 How art thou fallen from heaven, **O Lucifer, son of the morning!** how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! **13** For **thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:** **14** **I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.** **15** Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

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So, I ask you brothers and sisters, who are you following? Are following Satan the devil? Yes! He is the only person in the entire Bible that makes the statement above in Isaiah. No one is leaving this earth before the Great Tribulation period. And those who meet the Lord in the air will come right back down to this earth and remain with the Lord forever. Remember the 132nd Palms verses 13 & 14. For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. He desires to live on the earth.

Peace unto all that fear God and keep His commandments, in Jesus' name.