

## Auxiliary Sense Files | Senses of the Word "Heaven"

An Auxiliary End Time File of the Website *Jesus and the End Time*

Both the Old and New Testaments of the KJV Bible use the words "heaven" and "heavens" in a number of different senses. These different senses are described in respective headings below and followed by examples of Bible verses that illustrate their use in these senses. In order to keep this file to a reasonable size, the writer will include after each sense heading only two or three examples of verses from each Testament which use "heaven" in that sense----if there are that many. In cases in which the intended sense is not clear from a single verse, a few adjacent verses will be included to show the verse in context. Because these verses have been chosen on the basis of their ability to illustrate the senses in which they use the word "heaven", and not on the basis of their association with the End Time, these verses may or may not appear among those shown in the Auxiliary End Time Text Files.

To assure that all of the most important of the senses of the word "heaven" are included, the writer will treat the different ways in which it is shown in the Bible as variant forms of the same word. Examples of words or phrases that he will treat as variant forms of heaven(s) include: heavens, the heaven, the heavens and the heaven of heavens, among others. To avoid having to constantly distinguish between the singular and plural forms of words of this kind, the writer will often speak of them using the coined word "heaven(s)", a word that he intends to be understood as encompassing both the singular and plural forms thereof.

The senses in which the KJV Bible uses the words "heaven" and "heavens" may be summarized as follows:

**1.) The Sky or Air Sense:** That sense of the word "heaven(s)" in which it refers to a place above the earth where birds fly, where winds blow and from which rain falls. When used in this sense "heaven(s)" refers to what people now commonly call the sky, the air or the atmosphere. Examples of verses that use "heaven(s)" in this sense are shown below.

**(A.) Examples from the Old Testament:**

Ps. 104:12: By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches.

Is. 55:10: For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

Jer. 49:36: And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come.

**(B.) Examples from the New Testament:**

Acts 14:17: Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

James 5:18: And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

Rev. 19:17: And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;

**2.) The Celestial or Astronomical Sense:** That sense of the word "heaven(s)" in which it refers to the place(s) [or expanse(s)] far above the earth where bodies like the sun, the moon, the planets and the stars are located. When used in this sense, the word "heaven" is often associated with the entity that the Bible refers to as "the firmament". Examples of verses that use "heaven(s)" in this sense are included below.

**(A.) Examples from the Old Testament:**

Gen. 1:14-17: 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,

Deut 17:3: And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded;

Is. 34:4: And 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.

**(B.) Examples from the New Testament:**

Matt. 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:

2Cor 5:1: For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Rev. 6:13-14: 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....

**3.) The Supra-Celestial or Transcendent Sense:** That sense of the word "heaven(s)" in which it refers to place(s), realm(s) or plane(s) of existence, that exist above, beyond or otherwise transcend the heaven(s) where the sun, the moon and the stars are located. Examples of verses that use "heaven(s)" in this sense are included below.

(A.) Examples from the Old Testament:

2Chron. 2:6: But who is able to build him an house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him? who am I then, that I should build him an house, save only to burn sacrifice before him?

Neh. 9:6: Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.

Ps. 113:4: The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens.

(B.) Examples from the New Testament:

Acts 7:56: And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

Eph. 4:10: He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.

Heb. 7:26: For such an high priest [a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec] became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens

**4.) The Habitation or Dwelling Place of God Sense:** That sense of the word "heaven(s)" in which it refers to God's habitation or dwelling place. The Bible's use of terms like "habitation" and "dwelling place" may indicate that there are places where God is present in a special way, different from that in which He is present everywhere. Alternatively, its use of such terms may indicate only that it is acceptable to use of a figure of speech that helps satisfy the human need to visualize a place where their prayers are heard and their offerings received. Examples of verses that use "heaven(s)" in this sense are included below.

(A.) Examples from the Old Testament:

Deut. 26:15: Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us, as thou swarest unto our fathers, a land that floweth with milk and honey.

1Kings 8:30: And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive.

Ps. 33:13-14: 13 The Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. 14 From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

(B.) Examples from the New Testament:

Mark 1:11: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Mark 16:19: So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

Eph. 1:20-21: 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

**5.) Earthly Habitation Texts:** Interestingly, the KJV Bible also includes numerous texts which do not use the word "heaven" as such, but which refer to place(s) on the earth where God does or will dwell or make His habitation. Examples of texts of this kind are included below.

(A.) Examples from the Old Testament:

Num. 35:34: Defile not therefore the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I the Lord dwell among the children of Israel.

Ps. 132:13-14: 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.

Is. 8:18: Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion.

Is. 24:23: Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.

Hab. 2:20: But the Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.

Zech 8:3: Thus saith the Lord; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain.

**(B.) Examples from the New Testament:**

Matt. 21:12-13: 12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, 13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.

Matt. 23:20-21: 20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. 21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.

Rev. 21:10: And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

**6.) The Place Where God Reigns Supreme Sense:** That sense of the word "heaven(s)" in which it refers to the place where God is enthroned and reigns supreme as the true king (or ruler, governor, suzerain, etc.) of the universe as a whole and of all the kingdoms included within it. Examples of verses that use "heaven(s)" in this sense are included below.

**(A.) Examples from the Old Testament:**

Ps 11:4: The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

Ps. 103:19: The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

1Kings 22:19: And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left.

Dan. 4:37: Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

**(B.) Examples from the New Testament:**

Matt. 6:9-10: 9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Acts 17:24: God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

Heb 8:1: Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

**7.) The Place of Reward Sense:** That sense of the word "heaven(s)" in which it refers to place(s) where persons that the Bible calls the saints, the elect, the righteous, etc. will enjoy their final reward. Because some Bible verses seem to describe this reward being enjoyed in a place in the heaven(s), while others seem to describe it being enjoyed in a place on the earth or some newly created or greatly transformed replacement for it, the verses shown below will be included under two different subheadings, 7.1 and 7.2.

**7.1 - Texts That Describe a Reward in Heaven or the Heavens:****(A.) Examples from the Old Testament:**

2Kings 2:11: And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

Dan. 7:13-14: 13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

Dan. 12:2-3: 2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. 3 And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

**(B.) Examples from the New Testament:**

Matt. 19:21: Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

Luke 6:23: Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

2Cor. 5:1-2: 1 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

Eph. 2:6: And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

## 7.2 - Texts That Describe A Reward on Earth or Some Other Earth-Like Place:

### (A.) Examples from the Old Testament:

Ps. 37:28-29: 28 For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. 29 The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.

Is. 51:3 + 51:11: 3 For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord, joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody. + 11 Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

Is. 66:20+22: 20 And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations ... to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel to the house of the Lord. + 22 For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain.

### (B.) Examples from the New Testament:

Matt. 25:31-34: 31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

Mark 10:29-30: 29 And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, ... for my sake, and the gospel's, 30 But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

Rev. 21:1-3 + 23-24: 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. + 23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. 24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

**8.) The Personified Entity Sense:** That sense of the word "heaven(s)" in which it seems to refer to one or more living entities. Since it is unusual for human beings to speak about inanimate objects as if they were living things, it may be that verses of this kind use "heavens" in a figurative sense in which it does not refer to the latter as places at all, but rather to persons they believe to inhabit these places. Examples of verses that use "heaven(s)" in this sense are included below.

### (A.) Examples from the Old Testament:

1Chron. 16:31: Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let men say among the nations, The Lord reigneth.

Is. 49:13: Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.

Dan. 4:26: And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule.

### (B.) Examples from the New Testament:

Luke 21:25-26: 25 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; 26 Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

Rev. 12:12: Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

Rev. 18:20: Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.