An Atheist’s View on Life:

I will live my life according to these beliefs

God does not exist
It is just foolish to think
That there is a God with a cosmic plan
That an all-powerful God brings purpose to the pain and suffering in the world
Is a comforting thought, however
Is only wishful thinking
People can do as they please without eternal consequences
The idea that
I am deserving of Hell
Because of sin
Is a lie meant to make me a slave to those in power
“The more you have, the happier you will be”;
Our existence has no grand meaning or purpose
In a world with no God
There is freedom to be who I want to be
But with God
Everything is fine
It is ridiculous to think
I am lost and in need of saving.

A Christian’s View on Life:
(Now...read from bottom to top to see a different view.)

**Commentaries on the Heavens**

At the time of ancient Israel they did not have as complete an understanding of the universe as we do today. So they wrote in terms with which they were familiar. The Jews spoke of three heavens. The first heaven consisted of the earth atmosphere where the clouds and birds were. The second heaven was where the sun, stars, and moon was. The third heaven was the dwelling place of God. When Paul said he was caught up to the third heaven ([2 Corinthians 12:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+12.2&t=NKJV)), he was referring to the very dwelling place of God.

[As a note, the Mormons erringly teach that the three heavens consist of telestial, terrestrial, and celestial. They divide them into compartments dwelt by people after they die.]

**The First Heaven: Earth Atmosphere**

*Then the LORD's anger will burn against you, and he will shut the heavens so that it will not rain and the ground will yield no produce....* ([Deuteronomy 11:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+11.17&t=NKJV))

*The LORD will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands....* ([Deuteronomy 28:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+28.12&t=NKJV))

*"O LORD, when you went out from Seir, when you marched from the land of Edom, the earth shook, the heavens poured, the clouds poured down water.*  ([Judges 5:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Judges+5.4&t=NKJV))

*"Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons.....* ([Acts 14:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+14.17&t=NKJV))

**The Second Heaven: Outer Space**

*In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun... It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other;...* ([Psalm 19:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+19.4&t=NKJV), [6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+19.6&t=NKJV))

*They will be exposed to the sun and the moon and all the stars of the heavens which they have loved and served....* ([Jeremiah 8:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jeremiah+8.2&t=NKJV))

*The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light*. ([Isaiah 13:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+13.10&t=NKJV))

**The Third Heaven: God's Dwelling Place**

*then hear from heaven, your dwelling place...*  ([1 Kings 8:30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Kings+8.30&t=NKJV))

*The One enthroned in heaven laughs; The LORD scoffs at them.*  ([Psalm 2:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.4&t=NKJV))

*In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.* ([Matthew 5:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+5.16&t=NKJV))

**The highest heaven, the third heaven is indicated by the reference to the Throne of God being the highest heaven.**

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**The Three Heavens**(Two Commentaries)

**Cup of Wrath Commentary**:

There are three heavens in the bible.

The first two heavens are natural, and the third heaven is spiritual.

Spiritual heaven is referred to as Paradise.

Paul describes being taken to the third heaven in 2nd Corinthians.

There are three heavens in the bible, two physical and one spiritual.

Throughout the bible, heaven is the antithesis of hell; a beautiful paradise where God, his angels, and his holy temple abide,

*"The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD's throne is in heaven"* ([Psalm 11:4 NASB](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+11.4&t=NASB)),

*"I saw the LORD sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left"* ([2 Chronicles 18:18 NASB](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Chronicles+18.18&t=NASB)),

*"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven"* ([Matthew 6:9-10 NASB](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+6.9-10&t=NASB)).

In the scriptures, however, heaven not only refers to Paradise as we understand it, but can also mean sky (atmosphere), or outer-space. For example, the expression "birds of the heavens" appears frequently, and clearly refers to the sky or atmosphere, not spiritual heaven,

*"he who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat"* ([1 Kings 14:11 NASB](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Kings+14.11&t=NASB))

Also, heaven is spoken of as the domain of the sun, moon, and stars,

*"And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven"* ([Deuteronomy 4:19 NASB](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+4.19&t=NASB)).

So biblical heaven can refer to either the sky, outer-space, or Paradise depending on the context in which it is used.

Even though the bible generally identifies all three distinct locations (sky, outer-space, and Paradise) as heaven, it does not teach that they are all the same thing. Instead, it testifies to the existence of different types or levels of heavens,

*"Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD's thy God"* ([Deuteronomy 10:14 NASB](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+10.14&t=NASB)),

*"But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee"* ([2 Chronicles 6:18 NASB](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Chronicles+6.18&t=NASB)),

*"He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things"* ([Ephesians 4:10 NASB](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+4.10&t=NASB)).

The bible identifies various levels of heavens that are distinct and unique from each other.

We are given further insight into this subject when Paul tells us of how he was taken up to the "third heaven", in ([2 Corinthians 12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+12&t=NKJV)),

*"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...How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter"* ([2 Corinthians 12:2-4 NASB](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+12.2-4&t=NASB)).

Paul identifies the place that he was taken up to as Paradise, indicating that the third heaven is Paradise.

If Paul regards spiritual heaven or Paradise as the third heaven, then what are the first and second heavens? Most likely the sky or atmosphere is the first heaven, and outer-space is the second heaven. So while the bible accurately describes the natural world, it remains that we must use context and common sense to determine what is meant by the word heaven(s) in a particular passage.

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**Cup of Wrath - Three Heavens**

[Cup of Wrath - Three Heavens](http://www.cupofwrath.com/risen-dust/03-heavens.php) **Commentary:**

At the time of ancient Israel they did not have as complete an understanding of the universe as we do today. So they wrote in terms with which they were familiar. The Jews spoke of three heavens. The first heaven consisted of the the earth atmosphere where the clouds and birds were. The second heaven was where the sun, stars, and moon was. The third heaven was the dwelling place of God. When Paul said he was caught up to the third heaven ([2 Corinthians 12:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+12.2&t=NKJV)), he was referring to the very dwelling place of God.

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*"O LORD, when you went out from Seir, when you marched from the land of Edom, the earth shook, the heavens poured, the clouds poured down water.* ([Judges 5:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Judges+5.4&t=NKJV))

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The highest heaven, the third heaven is indicated by the reference to the Throne of God being the highest heaven:

*"But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you.* ([1 Kings 8:27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Kings+8.27&t=NKJV))

*To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it.* ([Deuteronomy 10:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+10.14&t=NKJV))

[Carm - What is the Third Heaven?](http://carm.org/what-does-it-mean-when-bible-refers-third-heaven)