

The Three Kingdoms:

Abstract: Most bible believing Christians are waiting for the “second coming of Christ”. But why did God design two appearances? It is clear that he came the first time in order to die, but after the resurrection why not set up the Kingdom then? A fuller explanation of why God designed two epiphanies or appearances has only been partially explained in most of the current commentaries. Providing an opportunity for the gentiles to come to salvation was certainly part of the plan. But that reason alone does not explain why God designed two “comings”. This study will reveal the much deeper and complex nature of Gods plan and the major reason why it was designed with two appearances. This study will show that there are three Kingdoms, and understanding them and their relationships and requirements, are key to understanding Gods plan for two appearances.

Summary:

This study will establish the following;

1. That there are three kingdoms.
2. The kingdom of heaven.....The first Kingdom
3. The kingdom of men.....The second Kingdom
4. The kingdom of the grave.....The third Kingdom
5. Who rules each kingdom
6. That Christ’s first coming, was for the purpose of breaking the power of the third kingdom, the kingdom of the grave.
7. Christ’s second coming will be to take control of the second kingdom.
8. That each kingdom has entrance requirements.
9. That prior to Christ’s resurrection, no man, had entered the kingdom of heaven.
10. That Satan changed his strategy of opposition once Christ became the sin offering.

The Kingdom of Heaven: First Kingdom

It is plain from scripture that there is a heavenly kingdom. The phrases “Kingdom of heaven”, or “Kingdom of God” appear in numerous new testament verses (the combined phrases appear nearly 100 times in the King James or Authorized version). One such example;

Matthew 7:21 ¶ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the **kingdom of heaven**; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

The Kingdom of men: The Second Kingdom

The concept of an earthly kingdom and of Christ's coming ruler ship of the earthly kingdom is repeatedly found in scripture. We see from the following sampling of Old Testament verses, that there exists an earthly kingdom which will at the fulfillment of prophecy be ruled by Jesus Christ.

2 Samuel 7:16 and thine house and thy **kingdom shall be established for ever** before thee: thy throne shall be established forever.

Isaiah 9:7 of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the **throne of David, and upon his kingdom**, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Daniel 2:44 and in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven **set up a kingdom**, which shall never be destroyed: **and the kingdom shall not be left to other people**, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

It is clear in Daniel chapter 2, from the context of the previous verses that this is speaking of an earthly kingdom.

The Kingdom of the Grave: The Third Kingdom

First of all what is the "kingdom of the grave". According to scripture it is where all the souls who died prior to the resurrection of Christ went. In his epistle to the Romans Paul spoke of "death" reigning. The wording presents a picture of a Kingdom over which death personified reigns.

Romans 5:14 Nevertheless **DEATH reigned** from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

Revelation 9:11 and they **had a king over them**, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.

Having a "king over them" presupposes a kingdom.

When Jacob was grieving the loss of Joseph he said that you [Reuben] shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to sheol (Genesis 42:38).

Genesis 42:38 And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow **to the grave.(Hebrew sheol)**

This clearly shows where Jacob thought he was going after he died. Job in his sorrow spoke many times about the place of the dead (Sheol).

Job 17:16 They shall go down to the bars of the pit (Hebrew sheol), **when our rest together is in the dust.** (King James Version)

New Living Translation (©2007)

No, my hope will **go down with me to the grave.** We will rest together in the dust!"

The location of Hades or Hell is also given in scripture. That it is beneath or at the center of the earth is made plain by scripture.

Proverbs 15:24 The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart **from hell beneath.**
Ezekiel 32:24 There is Elam and all her multitude round about her grave, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which are gone down uncircumcised into the **nether parts of the earth**

Isaiah 14:9 Hell **from beneath** is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.

These representative scriptures show that the bible plainly indicates by usage and meaning that there are three kingdoms.

Rulership of the Kingdoms:

In Mathew chapter 6 Jesus gives his disciples an example of prayer. "After this manner".

Matthew 6:10 Thy kingdom come. **Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.**

This verse tells us that unlike in the Kingdom of earth, God's will is fulfilled in heaven. God rules in the "heaven of heavens"

Psalms 103:19 ¶The LORD hath prepared his **throne in the heavens**; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

There is not much doubt that the kingdom of heaven is ruled by Almighty God. But who rules the Kingdom of the earth?

Who rules earth and the Kingdom of men?

The Bible gives us the answer. In Psalms 115 we read the following;

Psalms 115:16 the heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD'S: **but the earth hath he given to the children of men.** (*Hebrew benai Adam or sons of Adam*)

Gods plan was and is that the sons of God should rule the earth. Adam was created a son of God (Luke 3:38). And the first recorded commands are set forth in the first chapter of Genesis.

Genesis 1:28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: **and have dominion** over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

And yet we see as recorded in the temptation of Christ found in Luke 4:2 – 13, The devil makes what at first would seem an extraordinary claim

Luke 4:5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him **all the kingdoms of the world** in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: **for that is delivered unto me**; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

The devil here claims that he can deliver the “power” or rulership over the Kingdoms of the world. In other words the “earthly kingdom”. He further claims he is able to do this because “that is delivered unto me”. In this instance Satan is telling the truth. If he were not, then it would not have been a temptation as he could not have delivered on his boast.

The bible says of Jesus that he “knows all things” (John 21:17). So Jesus would have known the truthfulness or not of the statement. Satan could never deceive Jesus the son of God. The fact is Jesus did not contend with the devils claim of rulership, but instead countered with the truth that God alone is to be worshipped. Jesus himself gives the question of (present) rulership of the earth as the reason he won’t fight when he is brought before Pontius Pilate.

John 18:36 Jesus answered, **My kingdom is not of this world**: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: **but now** (at the time Jesus was speaking to Pilate) **is my kingdom not from hence**.

The answer to the question of “who rules the kingdom of earth?” depends on at what time in biblical history we are asking the question. It can be seen from Psalms 115:16 and Genesis 1:28 that Gods sons were to rule, but Satan in Luke 4, at the temptation of Christ claimed that he was in charge. How can this be?

The beginning of the answer is found in Paul’s epistle to the Galatians.

Galatians 4:1 ¶Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; 2 But is **under tutors and governors** until the time appointed of the father.

This is the key verse that begins to unravel the puzzle. Paul here is explaining that although an heir (son of God), until the heir has fulfilled the terms of Kingship or dominion, and until he has matured and is ready to rule, he is placed under “tutors and governors”. When a prince is born to a king, if the king dies while the prince is a child, a regent/s or trustee/s are appointed until the prince comes of age, fulfils the charter of rulership, and receives the Kingdom. Until then, the regents and trustees rule in his stead.

This was Adams state when he was created. He had not come of age or yet fulfilled the terms of rulership; which consisted of

1. Be fruitful
2. Multiply
3. Replenish(or fill) the earth
4. Subdue and have dominion.
5. Not eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

These were Gods first commands. Adam although full grown in the flesh, was a babe in the spirit. And so was placed as Paul indicates under guardians. In the book of Deuteronomy Moses under the inspiration of God gives us a hint at Adam and Eve's status after their creation.

Deuteronomy 1:39 Moreover **your little ones**, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day **had no knowledge between good and evil**, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.

Notice Moses is here defining "little ones" as those who cannot discern between Good and evil. The writer of the book of Hebrews again makes the same point!

Hebrews 5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that **are of full age**, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern **both good and evil**.

Again we see it made clear that it is the mature those "that are of full age "are able to discern "both good and evil"

If we use these scriptures, then Adam and Eve were not mature, they were little ones!

This is where Lucifer makes his appearance. He was placed on earth as Adam (mankind's) regent. If a son of God had fulfilled the terms of the kingship, He Satan/Lucifer would have to give up rulership to the rightful heirs.

God placed him and other Angels (guardians), on earth and gave them regency power until his first human son (Adam) was ready. The book of Ezekiel explains about the original nature, creation and duty of the being called Lucifer. The passage is nominally addressed to the "king of Tyre" but it is clear from the verses that this is no ordinary human king, and that the "King of Tyre", is merely a pseudonym for this powerful cherub (mighty guardian angel).

Ezekiel 28:12 Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.
 13 **Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God**; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

14 **Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee** so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

15 Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

God placed him in the garden "and I have set thee so". This explains why Eve was not frightened to be talking to this being (who was not a serpent. In Hebrew "Nachash" as an adjective means "bright and shining". The translators translated the word "Nachash" as a noun hence the word serpent). There are many scriptures that show that the purpose of the angels was to look after (minister) Gods last creation (God rested on the seventh day from ALL his work Genesis 2:2).

Psalms 91:11 For he shall give his **angels charge over thee**, to keep thee in all thy ways.

Hebrews 1:14 Are they not all **ministering spirits(angels)**, sent forth to minister(look after) for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Matthew 18:10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven **their angels** (guardians) do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

These scriptures clearly show the role and guardianship of the Angels. This explains Satan's comments to Jesus that the kingdoms of this world "had been delivered to him". Although Adam was "created a son of God" he failed to fulfill the terms of rulership because of his disobedience. This left the trustees, Satan in charge of the Kingdom of the Earth by default so to speak, and only another son of God could legally take it from him by fulfilling what Adam failed to do.

So the answer to the question of who ruled the Kingdom of men or kingdom of the earth when Jesus came, was clearly Satan. We see Paul acknowledge this when the apostle describes Satan as "the God of this world". In Corinthians chapter 2.

2 Corinthians 4:4 In whom the **god of this world** hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

John 14:30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for (Ruler)**the prince of this world** cometh, and hath nothing in me.

JOHN 12:31 "Now is the judgment of this world, **now shall the ruler of this world** be cast out; 32 and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." (RSV)

Who rules the kingdom of the grave?

Again this question depends on when the answer is given, with the resurrection of Jesus being the pivotal point. Let's examine the scriptures.

....he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy **him that had the power of death, that is, the devil**; Hebrews 2:14

Revelation 9:11 And **they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit**, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.

Revelation 9:1 ¶And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and **to him was given the key of the bottomless pit**.

These scriptures make it plain that Satan also had the power of the grave, hades, sheol or hell.

Citizenship:

When you travel to a foreign country, you need an entry visa. Most countries have entry requirements to allow entry. But when you are born in most countries, you automatically have citizenship. So examining the three kingdoms, we see that we are "born into the Kingdom of men". The entry requirements are

1. Born of the flesh
2. Must be a son of man
3. Must have come by the womb

The bible emphasizes this;

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

This also explains why "to be legal" Jesus was born of a woman so as to qualify to eventually rule the kingdom of men.

The kingdom of heaven has entry requirements that are spelled out in scripture.

1. Must be born of the spirit
2. Must be born of the water
3. "Put on Christ"
4. Must be a son of God

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit**, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Romans 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Similarly, the kingdom of the grave, also has an entry requirement, **that qualification is Sin!**

Psalms 9:17 The **wicked shall be turned into hell**, and all the nations that forget God.

Genesis 2:17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof **thou shalt surely die.**

So now let us summarize what we have established. There are three kingdoms. Previous to the resurrection, Satan controlled the Kingdom of men, and the Kingdom of the grave. The sons of men are born into the Kingdom of men and through our fallen sin nature are pre-qualified for entry at death to the kingdom of the grave. Both places that were under the control of Satan.

Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so **death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:**

So now we begin to understand the reasons for TWO appearances. It is because two of the kingdoms were under the rule of Satan!.

POINT: **Christ's first appearance and purpose of coming was to take back the Kingdom of the Grave.**

Christ's second coming is to take back the Kingdom of men !

Let's look at this more closely. Why was his first coming for the kingdom of the grave?. The reason is that **everyone** that had died prior to the resurrection went to the Grave (Sheol)

POINT: **Nobody who died before the resurrection went to heaven (the third heaven, Gods throne room).**

Let's explain. The bible indicates that the place we call the grave actually consisted of two separate places. One a place of torment and one called Abrahams bosom. Abraham's bosom is not heaven, (Gods throne) but is still part of the kingdom of the grave.

Luke 16:22 and it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;
 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

Nowhere in scripture does it indicate that those in Hell can see those in heaven or those in heaven can see those in hell. If this were heaven, then the rich man would have seen more than Abraham, he would have seen God, his throne, and the angels. In the Book of Isaiah the prophet says that we will not remember the former things when in the new heaven. This would be hard to do, if you could still see hell and all the people suffering torment.

Isaiah 65:17 ¶For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: **and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.**

So what the rich man saw was a temporary holding place (Abrahams bosom) where the righteous dead before the resurrection went. All the righteous dead up until the resurrection did not go to Gods throne room.

This is brought out in the Old Testament by two phrases. One which indicates an unrighteous death, the other a righteous death. Here are the examples;

The righteous death "gathered to his people"

Genesis 25:8 Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was **gathered to his people.**

Genesis 25:17 And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was **gathered unto his people**

Genesis 49:33 And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was **gathered unto his people.**

Genesis 49:29 And he[Joseph] charged them, and said unto them, **I am to be gathered unto my people:** bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite,

Numbers 20:24 Aaron shall **be gathered unto his people:** for he shall not enter into the land which I have given unto the children of Israel, because ye rebelled against my word at the water of Meribah.

Notice it does not say "gathered or taken to heaven" nowhere in the Old Testament can be found someone who died going to live in heaven. No "it's gathered to his people"!

The unrighteous death "Cut off from his people"

Genesis 17:14 And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that **soul shall be cut off from his people**; he hath broken my covenant.

Exodus 30:33 Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, **shall even be cut off from his people**.

Exodus 30:38 Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, **shall even be cut off from his people**.

Leviticus 7:20 But the soul that eateth of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, that pertain unto the LORD, having his uncleanness upon him, **even that soul shall be cut off from his people**.

Leviticus 7:21 Moreover the soul that shall touch any unclean thing, as the uncleanness of man, or any unclean beast, or any abominable unclean thing, and eat of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, which pertain unto the LORD, **even that soul shall be cut off from his people**.

Leviticus 7:25 For whosoever eateth the fat of the beast, of which men offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, even the soul that eateth it **shall be cut off from his people**.

Leviticus 7:27 Whatsoever soul it be that eateth any manner of blood, even that **soul shall be cut off from his people**.

"Gathered to his people", and "cut off from his people" clearly show the two places of "Sheol". One, the temporary holding place known by the Jews as "Abraham's bosom". The other the place of torment

Jesus when he talked with Nicodemus said the following;

John 3:12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

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.

If we take this as read, without any subjective interpretation, then what Jesus plainly stated is that at the time he spoke, **No one, had yet ascended into Gods throne room**. This was the reason he came to release the prisoners (the righteous dead), and that's why he spent three days in the grave

(hades). He defeated Satan to take the kingdom of the grave and release the righteous dead who although not in torment, were not in heaven. Here are the scriptures.

1 Peter 3:18 ¶For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, **being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:**
19 By which also **he went and preached unto the spirits in prison(in the grave)**;

Ephesians 4:9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that **he also descended first** into the lower parts of the earth?)

Paul tells us that Jesus first descended. Why? The answer is clear and revealed in scripture.

Ephesians 4:8 wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he **led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (King James Version)**

The New living translation makes it plainer

Ephesians 4:8 That is why the Scriptures say, "When he ascended to the heights, he led a **crowd of captives** (the released righteous dead) and gave gifts to his people."(The Holy Spirit)

Who had the captives? Satan did. This is made clear in Isaiah 14:12-20

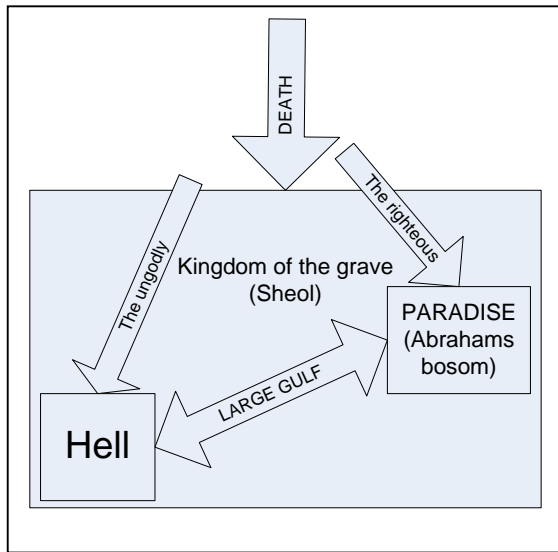
Isaiah 14:12 How **art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer**, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!.....

.....17 That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; **that opened not the house of his prisoners?**

Why else would Jesus go into hell? If not to take back the kingdom and release the righteous dead, this is why Jesus quoted Jonah as the major sign of his first coming.

Matthew 12:40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; **so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**

When he rose from the dead Jesus said this



Revelation 1:18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have **the keys of hell and of death.**

This explains why when Jesus rose from the dead ,“the graves were opened”

Matthew 27:52 **And the graves were opened;** and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, Matthew 27:53 And **came out of the graves after his resurrection,** and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

These were the captives that were released when Jesus took back the Kingdom of the grave.

It was previously shown in the Old Testament that the phrase “gathered to his people” was the designation for the place of the righteous dead, a part of the grave. But the Holy Spirit inspired Jacob to prophesy about the time when the gathering would be not be “to his people” but to Jesus Christ (in heaven)

Genesis 49:10 the scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come (messianic title for Jesus); and **unto him shall the gathering of the people be.**

This was fulfilled at the resurrection when the “graves were opened” when Jesus Gathered his own to heaven. (This was **not the resurrection of the dead** or the rapture, but the release of the righteous **souls** to heaven).

Hebrews 2:14 ¶Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through **death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;**

See what Paul says about the past heroes of faith who were already dead! In Hebrews chapter 11 verse 39

New International Version (©1984)

39; These were all commended for their faith, yet **none of them received what had been promised.**

New Living Translation (©2007)

39;All these people earned a good reputation because of their faith, yet **none of them received all that God had promised.**

New American Standard Bible (©1995)

39;And all these, having gained approval through their faith, **did not receive what was promised,**

International Standard Version (©2008)

39;All these people won approval for their faith **but they did not receive what was promised,**

What was promised? , Paul goes on to explain they all had to wait until Jesus came. God having prepared a better thing (than Abraham's bosom). A city whose builder and maker does not have hands.

Hebrews 11:10 For he (Abraham) looked **for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.**

In other words Abraham sought the heavenly Jerusalem, God's dwelling place. It is clear that he did not receive it ("did not receive the promise") **until Jesus came**, became the Passover lamb that redeemed the SOULS (not the body) from death , freed the prisoners and led them to heaven.

Hebrews 11:40 God having provided some better thing for us, **that they without us should not be made perfect.**

When Jesus rose he had defeated the Kingdom of death. When the righteous dead die now (In Christ) we are passed from "death unto life", we immediately go to Gods throne room, heaven

2 Corinthians 5:8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather **to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.**

At his resurrection Jesus emptied Sheol of the righteous dead and led a triumphal procession to heaven

Satan the deceiver was deceived

The difference between Jesus the son of God and all other living human beings was that **he was sinless**.

1 Peter 2:22 Who **did no sin**, neither was guile found in his mouth:

1 John 3:5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and **in him is no sin**.

What this means is although it was Jesus intention to go to the grave, **he did not meet the entry qualifications!, he was sinless**

POINT:

This explains why up until the time he was arrested and brought before the high Priest, **Satan wanted to kill Him**. He could have legally gone to only one place, heaven

Jesus also knew this, and this is why he would not allow himself to be taken or killed until the due time. In fact he engineered his particular death. It was prophesied.

John 10:18 No **man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself**. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

Acts 2:23 - Peter told the Jews on Pentecost that they had crucified Jesus "by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God".

POINT:

Once the High priest pronounced him the sin offering, "The lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world", Jesus now gained what he needed to legally enter the Kingdom of the grave. The **sins of the world!**

John 11:49 And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

50 Nor consider that **it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people**, and that the whole nation perish not.

51 **And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;**

2 Corinthians 5:21 **For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin;** that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Satan still wanted Jesus dead but NOT AS THE SIN OFFERING (and not on the Passover, and not on the cross). Once Christ's plan became clear. Satan changed his strategy, having through Judas betrayed Christ to be crucified, Satan thought finally he would send Jesus back to heaven (Leaving Satan still in charge, since no Son of God would have fulfilled the requirements).

He must have been astonished when the high priest (through the Holy Spirit) pronounced Jesus the sin offering. Satan now was totally outwitted. His only hope left was to prevent the sacrifice from being

completed. (Notice that the scriptures say that Judas was possessed, and then later tries to stop the crucifixion)

Matthew 27:42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, **let him now come down from the cross**, and we will believe him.

Some objections:

But what about Elijah and Enoch, didn't the bible say they went to heaven. The short answer is no. The scriptures speak about three heavens. Paul in the New Testament describes an experience he had;

2 Corinthians 12:2 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**.

It was commonly understood by Jews of the time that the atmospheric heavens were the first heaven, the stars and planets the second heaven and Gods throne, the third heaven. The terminology used in the Old Testament makes a distinction between the merely physical atmosphere and space and Gods throne by specifying the "heaven of heavens" separately from just the "heavens"

Nehemiah 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.

Now the bible speaks of Elijah being taken up in a whirlwind (2 Kings 2:11) into heaven. By the then common Jewish definition of heaven, when a plane is flown thirty thousand feet into the sky(firmament/ shamayim), the people inside could be said to have been "taken up into heaven". But that does not mean Gods throne room. In the case of Enoch, the bibles wording is also very curious, in that it says "God took Him"(Genesis 5:4). God later tells us that he choose two witnesses for a special purpose during the time of the seven year period known as the tribulation.

Revelation 11:3 ¶**And I will give power unto my two witnesses**, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

So what have they been doing all this time before the tribulation period? That is revealed by scripture also.

Zechariah 4:12 And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?

13 And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. 14 Then said he, **These are the two anointed (chosen ones) ones**, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth

The book of revelation ties the two witnesses to the Zechariah scripture

Revelation 11:3 ¶ And I will give power **unto my two witnesses**, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

4 **These are the two olive trees**, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

After three and a half years the witnesses are killed and resurrected after three days (Revelation 11:6-11). Who are the two witnesses? The scripture says "that it is appointed for men to die" (Hebrews 9:2). This scripture would only be fulfilled if the two witnesses are Enoch and Elijah. These are the only two men who the bible does not yet record as dying. They did not go to the heaven of heavens or the third heaven, but instead are on a mission from God, "standing before the Lord of the whole earth" (Satan).

Lastly we cannot ignore Christ's own words prior to his crucifixion, "that no man hath ascended up to heaven" (John 3:13)

Summary:

We see in the bible two major descriptions of heaven. One in the old testament before the resurrection, one in the new testament after the resurrection. In the first, Isaiah describes only what he sees. Beautiful, awesome creatures called seraphim, and the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Isaiah 6:1 ¶ 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.

2 **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.

3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

The second vision seen by John, is very different, heaven is now full of redeemed humanity.

INSITE: 7:9 After this I beheld, and, **lo, a great multitude**, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

Revelation 5:9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

This verse is talking about the lamb slain. Having redeemed men "to God". This could not have been done until "...stood a lamb as it had been slain"(in other words resurrected) Revelation 5:6.

The twenty four elders in verse Revelation 5 :8- 9 sang a new song ..."for thou wast slain , and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood..." In other words the elders could not be in heaven (redeemed) until the blood was shed and the lamb resurrected ("wast slain"; past tense).

POINT:

- 1. Gods manifestation As father, as son, as holy spirit, symbolizes His power over, and was for the purpose of his manifestations in, the three Kingdoms!.**

The Holy Spirit manifests Gods power and rulership over death and the grave. And was his representation in the grave

- a. 1 Peter 3:18 It was **through the spirit** he preached and released the prisoners' from the grave.
- b. It is the spirit that quickens and breaks the power of death!

- 2. The "Son" manifests Gods power and ultimate rulership over The Kingdom of the earth/men**

Revelation 11:15 and the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of **this world** are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and **he shall reign forever and ever.**

- 3. God in heaven, is manifested as the Father and is sovereign.**

Revelation 4:10 The four and twenty elders fall down before **him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth forever and ever,** and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 Thou art worthy

It was Christ's death and resurrection at **his first coming that** broke the power of the third kingdom (death). **The second time** he returns He will take back the Kingdom of the earth, and rule and reign a 1000 years. And then the prayer that he taught his disciples will be truly fulfilled. "Thy kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." As John saw in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, **The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ;** and he shall reign forever and ever.