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Captain Yahweh and the Starship Heaven

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Let's start the ball rolling here with a little sci-fi story: Stardate - 4004 BCE: You are directed in this your first [command](#), Captain Yahweh, to proceed at warp [speed](#) with your crew of the Starship Heaven to the Sol planetary system in the Alpha Quadrant, third rock outwards, and quietly, discretely, and inconspicuously infiltrate and assist the primitive native hunter-gatherers in the region called the Middle East to attain the next socioeconomic level upwards on the road to their becoming a modern civilization we can openly have diplomatic and trade relations with. Any violation from this Prime Directive will result in the recall of you, your ship and crew to face court-martial.

Postscript: Unfortunately, Captain Yahweh proved unfit for command, suffered a mutiny against him, disobeyed orders, and the rest, as they say, is history. Apart from a modern token presence (UFOs), they (Captain Yahweh, First Officer Jesus Christ, and angelic crew) have all gone now – maybe voluntarily; probably not. So, was Heaven just a spaceship?

Now my basic premise is that God and the Son of God (Jesus Christ – hereafter abbreviated to J.C.) collectively are not supernatural deities but flesh-and-blood extraterrestrials. Recall John 8: 23 "And he [J.C.] said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world" or John 18:36 – "Jesus answered: My kingdom is not of this world". In order for extraterrestrials to get from there (wherever "not of this world" is) to here (Planet Earth), they will need a spaceship or starship. Since God seems to be the Top Dog, let's assume he is in command of just such a starship, and since Heaven is considered the place where God dwells or resides or calls home, then I'll equate the name of his starship with Heaven. God the ET is the Captain of the Starship Heaven. Is there anything in religious texts than helps confirm or contradicts this idea?

There is no absolute agreement among the world's religions or peoples as to exactly what Heaven is. Some deny the existence of a Heaven in any shape, manner or form. To some, it's nebulous, even just a state of mind. It might be all in the mind (a spiritual 'place' or feeling) or a never-never land like another dimension or higher plane-of-existence (whatever that phrase really means as it's never been adequately defined to my satisfaction). To others, Heaven is a physical place, your Great Retirement Home in the Sky. For the purposes of this essay, I'll focus on the traditional monotheistic concept – Heaven is a physical place. Heaven has to exist in our normal four-dimensional space-time in order to accommodate all those past, present and future retirees, except that in reality there actually have never been or will be any heavenly pensioners. But that doesn't alter the physical reality of Heaven.

1) Location; Location; Location: Where Exactly is Heaven Located?

Firstly we need to distinguish the heavens from Heaven. The heavens are just another name for the universe or the cosmos – that celestial dome or vault over our heads and ultimately home to all the gods from all societies. But Heaven is where Yahweh (hereafter God) lives.

Well Heaven, God's home, has to be fairly close by if God is to keep tabs on his Kingdom on Earth since not even God is immune from the restriction posed by Einstein (and confirmed many times over) that being the finite speed of light. So God has got to be close to where it's all happening – where the action is – so as to fulfil his mission and look after his Chosen People.

Heaven certainly can't be placed on top of or inside a fluffy white cloud – that's a kiddie's version of non-reality.

Heaven cannot be located here on Planet Earth since there are many Biblical passages that distinguish the two – Luke 11:2 "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth" or Matthew 6:10 "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" or for a different example, Deuteronomy 4:39 "Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else."

Heaven tends to be associated with the direction we call 'up' or 'above'. Heaven isn't sideways in any [compass](#) direction, nor is Heaven downwards. Heaven is somewhere far above the surface of the Earth. It's often synonymous or at least closely associated with the sky or space, especially to the ancients. Well, when we launch our spaceships, we launch in the upwards direction. Our spaceships have to travel through the sky to each space. Of course to the ancients sky and space were synonymous as they couldn't identify a boundary between one and the other. When we look at our orbiting satellites and spacecraft or where our Apollo astronauts trod the Moon, we don't look down, we look up. However, when looking up, is there any actual real estate, any physical place, we can associate with 'paradise' which is what Heaven is supposed to be? No! The ancients could only have known about the Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. None of these abodes, viewed in the 'up' direction, could remotely be described as a paradise – though the ancients didn't know that. Since no natural solar system abode serves as a

heavenly paradise, and even abodes discovered more recently like Uranus, Neptune and Pluto are hardly paradise-city, we must look elsewhere.

If Heaven isn't the Starship Heaven, if Heaven isn't a spaceship, and if Heaven isn't on Earth or within our solar system, then the next nearest location of Heaven has to be over four light years away, something quite beyond the comprehension of Biblical scholars of that time. That also introduces that finite speed-of-light restriction since any development on Earth that needed God's attention would take over a full eight years before that development got resolved.

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2) Let's Get Physical

Probably most Christians consider Heaven a physical place. A spaceship is a physical place.

Heaven is a kingdom, that is, it has a ruler. Well all ships, aircraft and spacecraft have a Top Dog, usually called the 'captain'. So, the ruler of Heaven is Captain God. Large ships and aircraft, and presumably spaceships (like the fictional NCC 1701Enterprise) have second-in-command [officers](#). In this case, Jesus Christ is the First Officer. And like First Officer Riker and Captain Picard (of "Star Trek: The Next Generation"), there are lots of Biblical references to J.C. standing or sitting at the right hand of God. For example, Mark 16:19 "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he [J.C.] was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God". Ships, aircraft and large spaceships (theEnterpriseagain) will have crew. Well, Captain God has a whole cast of crewmembers – angels, etc.

Now a kingdom must contain abodes, living quarters, where officers and crew live or reside. No doubt Captain God resides in his Starship along with his other officers (archangels) and crew (ordinary angels). In John 14:2 we have J.C. saying that "In my Father's house are many mansions [or dwellings or rooms]". Again, think of Star Trek'sEnterprise(any version) or Voyager or even Deep Space Nine – all have many mansions or dwellings or rooms for all and sundry.

Also you tend to have references that people, even J.C., ascend "into" Heaven, not just go up to Heaven, just like you go into your home or into an aircraft. For example: 2 Kings 2:1 "And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal" and later 2 Kings 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". That sounds a lot like a shuttlecraft transporting an ordinary mortal up to God's spaceship!

3) Enoch Visits the Starship Heaven

Now apparently some flesh-and-blood human mortals have visited Heaven and returned in the flesh-and-blood - Enoch is another example.

Enoch apparently authored a trilogy of books, titled the "Book of Enoch" or "1 Enoch"; then there's the "Second Book of Enoch" and finally "3 Enoch".

While the first chapter of the "Book of Enoch" describes the fall of the Watchers, the angels who fathered the Nephilim, the remainder of "1 Enoch" describes Enoch's visits to Heaven in the form of travels, as well as visions and dreams, and his collective revelations about what he saw and learned.

In that first "Book of Enoch" there's a chapter called "The Astronomical Book" (1 Enoch 72 – 82) which is also called the "Book of the Heavenly Luminaries" or "Book of Luminaries".

This chapter or book contains descriptions of the movement of heavenly bodies and of the firmament, as knowledge revealed to Enoch in his trips to Heaven guided by Uriel. Uriel acts firstly as a guide for Enoch in chapter one of the "Book of Enoch", titled the "Book of Watchers" and he (Uriel) fulfils this capacity in many of the other chapters or books that make up "1 Enoch" like the chapter comprising his astronomical thesis. Now Uriel is one of them there archangels (or senior crewmembers of the Starship Heaven, IMHO) and therefore pretty qualified to act as host and probably chauffeur (shuttlecraft pilot?).

The upshot is that one can visit Heaven up close and personally while in a very much alive physical body and return safely to Earth. Sort of sounds like a Biblical version of Shuttle astronauts visiting the International Space Station!

4) The Afterlife Carrot-and-Stick

So why is there an entire deception over this ultimate Retirement Home in the Sky (Heaven as paradise) concept? Well, it's a version of the old carrot-and-stick approach. Captain God has got to keep the primitives under his jurisdiction on his straight-and-narrow; keep them in line, off the streets and out of trouble. It's like being under the thumb of your parents – if you're good, you get dessert; if not, you get no supper at all. If you're good, an afterlife of paradise awaits; if you're bad, an afterlife of hell awaits. That there is no actual afterlife paradise, or afterlife hell, is beside the point. As long as you think there is, you're under Captain God's thumb and under control.

Now "life wasn't meant to be easy" according to the wisdom of a former Australian Prime Minister, and no doubt in 4004 BC it wasn't for most of the great unwashed. But an afterlife in paradise made all the hardships easier to bear. You were less likely to go out on strike and earn an afterlife down below instead.

5) Resurrection

Now I really have to clear up one very popular conception, or rather a total misconception, and that is, when you die you get resurrected, you go into Heaven, body and all. Consider how many people have died. That would make for one very crowded spaceship! The proof of that 'no body' pudding is that archaeologists, anthropologists, forensic professionals, the police, the medical profession, undertakers, etc. deal with dead bodies all the time. If you dig up your great grandfather's grave you'll find a body in it – a skeleton at least and skeletons qualify as a body or at least a vital part of what makes a body, a body. If somebody dies in a car accident their body doesn't suddenly do a vanishing act Heavenly bound.

Some bodies don't even survive death intact to get transported to Heaven. If you get eaten by a shark, you get converted into fish flesh and fish poo. If you were at ground zero at Hiroshima or Nagasaki your body got vaporised. Many people post death opt to have their bodily remains cremated; ashes either stored in a jar by loved ones or scattered to the four winds eventually to be incorporated into the environment. Your ashes aren't whisked away to Heaven and reassembled into a resurrected you.

Even if the body remains intact post death, it's not going to remain that way for very long. The zombies may not get you; the vampires may be denied; but the itty-bitty germs won't be. A frequent phrase is "what is my purpose in life?" Well, your ultimate purpose for existing is to die and be a food source for bacteria. Your brain, that which contains all of what makes you, you – the 'inner you' rots away consumed as food by various microbes. Whatever remains of the 'inner you' (memories, personality, etc.) is now housed in millions of microbes. You become microbe flesh.

So, scratch out any immediate thought of resurrection and a quick trip to paradise within seconds of your demise.

As to a much later, future, resurrection of the body, forget-about-it! Once dead, you're like that fallen Humpty Dumpty. Once you're fish poo; vaporised; cremated; your brain scrambled and digested and turned into microbe flesh, no jigsaw puzzle or Rubik's Cube enthusiast can put you back together again – now or ever. In a nutshell, neither you nor God (supernatural or extraterrestrial) can unscramble a scrambled egg.

Now there will be multi-millions of people who will vehemently disagree with this. Why? People have a vested interest in God being able to unscramble eggs. People desperately want to and need to believe in an afterlife especially one that dangles paradise in front of you. It's understandable but that doesn't make it so.

6) Is There A Starship Hell?

Now I'm sure the question on everybody's lips is that if there is a Starship Heaven, does this mean there's also a Starship Hell? No!

Nearly all people, therefore nearly all societies and cultures believe in an afterlife – those multi-millions referenced immediately above. Very few of us want to die even though we have no choice in the matter, so it's not surprising that we have opted for the next best thing and invented that security blanket – the afterlife – and we would have done so irrespective of any deities be they supernatural or just plain old extraterrestrials.

Another trait universally shared by humans is the concept and application of symmetry. For every concept there is an equal and opposite one, an anti-concept. If you have goodness you have evil; truth vs. lies; beauty vs. ugly; the yin and the yang. So if you conceive of a paradise afterlife in the above direction, there will need to be an anti-paradise afterlife in the downwards direction. And thus nearly all societies have the underworld, or Hades or Hell or whatever you wish to name it.

But since there is no such thing as an afterlife the application of symmetry in this case is totally irrelevant. So just because you have a Starship Heaven (which has nothing to do with your nonexistent afterlife – those concepts of Heaven/paradise and the afterlife being just God's carrot-and-stick strategy) doesn't mean you have a Starship Hell – an afterlife in Hell also a part of God's carrot-and-stick mind control.

Fortunately, God, his Starship and those carrots-and-sticks have gone away.

Author's note: All Biblical quotations taken from the King James Version.

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