

Message# 308_10-13-2024 – In the Beginning

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Good morning everyone. Thank you for tuning into the message this morning.

I heard from Sam this week and he is saying that he is doing much better. He is asking for continued prayers, though, as he still has some way to go.

I've been hearing from Doug. He's getting fitted for a new leg. Let's pray that that goes well for him. He's sure been through a lot over the last year or so. Please continue prayers for Doug and Mindy.

As we get closer to wrapping up this current series - "In the Beginning" - I am realizing that I think I've just barely scratched the surface on the subject. And, as I have said many times in this series, I think the "why?" has probably been the bigger focus in this - and if I have not shown us the "why does it matter?" - then I certainly have a lot more work to do.

The Bible does not teach that God's Creation is a spinning ball. It is the God-denying "scientists" and "astrophysicists" - the politicians, the 501(c)(3) government "preachers" that teach that God's Creation is a spinning ball. Why? It is because the Bible clearly teaches that the world is not moving - and it is the sun that's moving. And if that's what is not happening - if it's the other way around - the world is moving - and the sun is still - then the Bible is wrong. If the Bible is wrong concerning this one issue - whether or not the sun is moving or the sun is sitting still - then the Bible cannot be trusted on anything else. And friends, if there are still any of you out there who do not believe this matters - then I just don't know what else to say.

If the Bible cannot be trusted - then there is no reason for anyone to believe that there is a God, to believe that there is a Jesus Christ, to believe that there is any reason to even go on with believing anything Spiritually concerning the God of the Bible. We should join right in with the "atheists" who mock a "sky-daddy" - we should join in with Neil DeGrasse-Tyson and Carl Sagan - who say there is no God. All that they claim to know the "universe" has revealed to them - says - "there is no God." And rightfully so.

If it is the world that is spinning at 1000 miles per hour, then revolving around the sun at another 66.6 thousand miles per hour, then traveling infinitely through the "galaxy" at millions of miles per hour - if that's what is true - then we - just like Paul said - are the

most miserable of all men - for wasting our lives believing in fairy tales from our magic book - the Book we call our Bible.

The Bible says the “earth is shaped like the turning of clay into a seal.” The Bible says the waters are encompassed, there is a border that encompasses God's Creation and that border is what keeps the waters enclosed. The Bible says the sky is spread out like molten glass. It's a firmament wherein the sun the moon and the stars are set. If these things are not true - there is no reason to continue with anything related to the things in the Bible.

Why people who claim to be followers of Christ cannot see this as one of the most ultimate - most important - battles in all the world - is one of the biggest mysteries that I've faced in my - more than 62 years.

To stand with the “scientists.” To stand with the likes of Neil DeGrasse-Tyson, Carl Sagan - in their belief systems concerning creation, concerning the origin of the world, the origin of mankind - for someone to call themselves a “Christian” - is to make a mockery of all that is holy and just.

This past week, in our sky here in what the world calls Missouri, Teresa and I have been watching the moon and then a star that has been shining - the moon has been shining and the star has been shining. The two lights - as the Bible calls them - have been the only two lights that we have been able to see in our southwestern sky. I have this app on my phone that lets me point at a star - and it will supposedly tell me what the name of that star is. Before I used the app, though, I just took my phone and made a video of the moon shining and the star shining. I mean, I could see that star shining and twinkling with just my eyes, I wanted to see what it would look like if I zoomed in on it with my cell phone camera. Amazing. Absolutely amazing is all I can say. First of all, I can't believe that a cheap cell phone camera could capture what it did - but looking at the video is one of the coolest things I've ever seen. I'm not going to tell you it was crystal clear, but it was so clear that it just blew my mind.

Then, I took the app and pointed it at the star. The app says the name of the star was Cor Corali. By the way, if you'd like me to send you the video, just email me at charlie@godsendusmen.com and I'll send it to you. I then went online and typed in, “how far away is Cor Corali?”

From earthsky.org

<https://earthsky.org/brightest-stars/cor-caroli-heart-of-charles/#:~:text=And%20Cor%20Caroli%20doesn't,stars%20in%20the%20Big%20Dipper.>

Cor Caroli

Cor Caroli – aka Alpha Canum Venaticorum – is the brightest star in the constellation Canes Venatici the Hunting Dogs. This star, and Chara, Canes Venatici’s 2nd-brightest star, are probably the only two stars you’ll ever come to know within the boundaries of this tiny constellation. You can pick out the pair easily if your sky is dark enough.

Although they aren’t among the sky’s brightest stars, Cor Caroli and Chara are relatively easy to find, due to their relationship on the sky’s dome [that’s interesting] to the famous Big Dipper. This well-known asterism is ascending in the northeast on spring evenings. The two stars of Canes Venatici appear snuggled together, near the handle of the Dipper.

It’s really 2 stars

If you use a small telescope, you’ll see that Cor Caroli is a double star. So it’s easy to imagine father and son peacefully reunited in the heavens, after all their tumultuous years on Earth.

And Cor Caroli doesn’t just appear double. It’s a true binary star, consisting of two stars revolving around a common center of mass. The pair lies [now listen] some 115 light-years away. This is slightly farther away from us than the stars in the Big Dipper. End quote.

So, Teresa and I are sitting there looking at this star, which you could almost make out some detail just looking at it with your bare eyes, then I take out a cheap cell phone camera and take a really awesome video - which - just 10 years ago would have been completely impossible with a cheap cell phone - but anyway - we could see that this star - which is supposedly “115 light-years away” - friends - do you know how far away they say a light-year is? The scientists, the astronomers, the astrophysicists - those who make no apology whatsoever for saying there is no God - do you know how far away they say a “light-year” is?

From NASA. The united states agency that has a serpent, forked tongue in their logo.

<https://science.nasa.gov/exoplanets/what-is-a-light-year/>

Light-year is the distance light travels in one year. Light zips through interstellar space at 186,000 miles (300,000 kilometers) per second and 5.88 trillion miles (9.46 trillion kilometers) per year.

We use light-time to measure the vast distances of space.

It's the distance that light travels in a specific period of time. Also: LIGHT IS FAST, nothing travels faster than light.

How far can light travel in one minute? 11,160,000 miles. It takes 43.2 minutes for sunlight to reach Jupiter, about 484 million miles away. Light is fast, but the distances are vast. In an hour, light can travel 671 million miles.

Earth is about eight light minutes from the Sun. A trip at light-speed to the very edge of our solar system – the farthest reaches of the Oort Cloud, a collection of dormant comets way, way out there – would take about 1.87 years. Keep going to Proxima Centauri, our nearest neighboring star, and plan on arriving in 4.25 years at light speed.

When we talk about the enormity of the cosmos, it's easy to toss out big numbers – but far more difficult to wrap our minds around just how large, how far, and how numerous celestial bodies really are.

To get a better sense, for instance, of the true distances to exoplanets – planets around other stars – we might start with the theater in which we find them, the Milky Way galaxy.

Our galaxy is a gravitationally bound collection of stars, swirling in a spiral through space. Based on the deepest images obtained so far, it's one of about 2 trillion galaxies in the observable universe. Groups of them are bound into clusters of galaxies, and these into superclusters; the superclusters are arranged in immense sheets stretching across the universe, interspersed with dark voids and lending the whole a kind of spiderweb structure. Our galaxy probably contains 100 to 400 billion stars, and is about 100,000 light-years across. That sounds huge, and it is, at least until we start comparing it to other galaxies. Our neighboring Andromeda galaxy, for example, is some 220,000 light-years wide. Another galaxy, IC 1101, spans as much as 4 million light-years.

[This is the garbage people are supposed to believe - if they believe the world is a

spinning ball.]

Based on observations by NASA's Kepler Space Telescope, we can confidently [watch - we can "confidently"] predict that every star you see in the sky probably [I thought it was "confidently - now it's probably - pure double-speak] hosts at least one planet. Realistically, we're most likely talking about multi-planet systems rather than just single planets. In our galaxy of hundreds of billions of stars, this pushes the number of planets potentially into the trillions. Confirmed exoplanet detections (made by Kepler and other telescopes, both in space and on the ground) now come to more than 4,000 – and that's from looking at only tiny slices of our galaxy. Many of these are small, rocky worlds that might be at the right temperature for liquid water to pool on their surfaces.

Remember now, I'm trying to see if there is any way I can wrap my head around 115 light-years away. That's how far away this star is supposed to be that we're just sitting there looking at - our mind telling us - "that sure doesn't look very far away." Continuing with the gobbledy-gook from NASA. Now they're going to reveal a little better with something we might be able to understand.

The nearest-known exoplanet is a small, probably [here we go again - from "confidently - to probably] rocky planet orbiting Proxima Centauri – the next star over from Earth. A little more than four light-years away

(we're trying to figure out 115 light-years - and they are explaining 4 light-years now),

24 trillion miles. If an airline offered a flight there by jet, it would take 5 million years. Not much is known about this world; its close orbit and the periodic flaring of its star lower its chances of being habitable.

So, if you could take an airplane and fly just 4 light-years - not the almost 115 light-years for Cor Corali that we have been looking at this week - it would take 5 million years to get there. [According to their foolishness.] And all of a sudden, the Bible warnings about the foolishness of the Greeks' wisdom, the folly of the foolishness of men - rings louder and louder to me.

The TRAPPIST-1 system is seven planets, all roughly in Earth's size range, orbiting a red dwarf star about 40 light-years away. [So that one would just take you 50 million years to get to.] They are very likely rocky, with four in the "habitable zone" – the orbital distance allowing potential liquid water on the surface. And computer modeling shows

some have a good chance of being watery – or icy – worlds. In the next few years, we might learn whether they have atmospheres or oceans, or even signs of habitability.

One of the most distant exoplanets known to us in the Milky Way is Kepler-443 b. Traveling at light speed, it would take 3,000 years to get there. Or 28 billion years, going 60 mph. End quote.

Really? [Laughing out loud at all of this.] This Kepler-443 b “exoplanet” is supposedly that far away - 2,514 light-years away - not 2,515 or 2,513 - but 2,514 light-years away - and it was supposedly discovered in 2015 by the Kepler Space telescope. Friends, doesn't common sense alone tell us that if their Kepler Space telescope could see something that is 2,514 light-years away - trillions and trillions of miles away - then - they should be able to see the date on a dime that's on the moon - only 238,000 miles away. Why “go to Mars” [110 million miles away] when you could see something that close just looking through your telescope?

Where's the common sense? Do we not know by now that men's little g “governments” in the world have done all they can do to dumb down the people - why - so they'd believe stupid stuff like this. Our minds can't even begin to calculate 28 billion years traveling at 60 miles per hour. Most people live to be 70 or 80 years. They are talking 28 billion years - to get to a “planet” they claim to be seeing with their telescope.

Teresa and I could see the star - all of us could have seen that star if we just looked into the sky this week. The “scientists” - the mathematicians - are telling us that star is 115 light-years away. [About 700 trillion miles.] Again, from NASA, how far is a light-year so kids can understand it?

[https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/light-year/en/#:~:text=For%20most%20space%20objects%2C%20we,miles%20\(9%20trillion%20km\).](https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/light-year/en/#:~:text=For%20most%20space%20objects%2C%20we,miles%20(9%20trillion%20km).)

For most space objects, we use light-years to describe their distance. A light-year is the distance light travels in one Earth year. One light-year is about 6 trillion miles (9 trillion km). That is a 6 with 12 zeros behind it!

That's just one “light-year.” Six trillion miles. The star I'm talking about today - they claim is 115 “light-years” away. Almost 700 trillion miles away. And we're sitting there looking at it as if we could reach out and touch it. Who in their right mind would believe this stuff? Believing this ridiculous stuff that NASA puts out - makes the simplicity of the

Word of God squarely at odds against what these people say.

If this star that we were seeing this week - is 700 trillion miles away - do you have any idea how big it would have to be? I'm not going to take the time - to waste my time - in trying to figure that out. It could be done, according to their Euclidean geometry. Just take the size of the sun that these God-haters say the sun is - factor in that they say the sun - is 8.3 light minutes from - what they erroneously refer to God's World as "earth" - and by using Euclidean geometry - you should be able to figure out the size of Cor Corali. When you see that it has to be almost unmeasureably bigger than the sun - then take your Bible and through it in the trash. God said - In the Beginning - He made two great lights. The sun rules the day and the moon rules the night. The sun and the moon would be tiny little specks compared to these "stars" that NASA claims to know every single detail about. And if you think this - and other "equations" like this - when compared to the Bible - are why people like Tyson and Sagan concluded "there is no God" - then you just have your head completely buried in the sand. They say - I played it for you early on in this series - what they "know" about the "universe" tells them - "there is no God."

I refuse to believe that men like this are just so stupid. I refuse to believe they do not know how ridiculous they actually are. I believe they know exactly how stupid all of this is - but their mission in life - is to keep people deceived - to keep them so caught up in these lies - for the sole purpose of keeping them believing "there is no God" - which means simply this - if there is no God - there is no Law of God. If there is no Law of God - then man is free to do whatever he wants to do. And that is exactly what goes on in the world today.

Then, when you bring the religious deceivers into it - you see - you have to bring the religious deceivers in - because a lot of the common man wants to believe there is a God. He wants to believe in the Bible. He wants to believe in the origins of man -according to God's Creation, the Creation of the World according to the Bible. So, you bring in the religious deceivers - easily identified by their tax-exempt status, the tax-deductible gift, the "prestige" of standing alongside the politicians - bring them in to tell those that haven't been caught up in the lies of the "scientists" - that - "Indeed, there is a God, but that God Himself said He has no Law. And since He has no Law, He commands everyone to obey the 'laws of men.'" They capture the minds of the people coming and going.

When you believe the simplicity of the Genesis account of Creation, then, when you get

to chapter 3, you easily see what God was intending for mankind to know and to understand when He told Adam and Eve they were not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God wasn't telling them they weren't allowed to know right from wrong. He was telling them they weren't allowed to define right and wrong. God is the One Who defines good and evil, right and wrong. Man is not allowed to make his own definitions of right and wrong - which is exactly what it means to make "laws."

This is why God said in His Book - hundreds of times - over and over - to every single generation of people historically chronicled in the Book - "You are to obey My Laws, My Commandments, My Statutes, My Ordinances, My Judgements. You are not to obey the 'laws, statutes and ordinances of the heathen.'" Yet here we are. Hundreds of years after having the completed Word of God - spoonfed - given to us like no others before - and we are still obeying the definitions of good and evil as defined by mere men - Godless men - God-hating men - Christ denying men and women - easily identified in our world today. And that's because people do not believe the Genesis account of Creation. They don't believe in the 6 days. They don't believe in the two great lights. They don't believe in the land and the seas. And when you don't believe in the simplicity of what the Word of God says - the Book becomes worthless. It is not a Book to live by. When God said He Alone is the Lawmaker - that's what the Bible says - but the Bible is not trustworthy. The Bible is not believable. The Bible is not something worth living for - and it certainly isn't something worth dying for. If it's not worth dying for - it certainly isn't something worth losing anything materially in this life for.

God is the Lawmaker. Man was never given that power. Man was never allowed to have that function. NASA continues with its brilliance in capturing the minds of the children.

Looking Back in Time

When we use powerful telescopes to look at distant objects in space, we are actually looking back in time. How can this be?

Light travels at a speed of 186,000 miles (or 300,000 km) per second. This seems really fast, but objects in space are so far away that it takes a lot of time for their light to reach us. The farther an object is, the farther in the past we see it.

Our Sun is the closest star to us. It is about 93 million miles away. So, the Sun's light takes about 8.3 minutes to reach us. This means that we always see the Sun as it was about 8.3 minutes ago.

The next closest star to us is about 4.3 light-years away. So, when we see this star today, we're actually seeing it as it was 4.3 years ago. All of the other stars we can see with our eyes are farther, some even thousands of light-years away.

Do you realize what they are saying? "We have looked into the past - and we did not see God!"

Baloney. Garbage. Bring this garbage to me and if a man doesn't repent of this heresy - I'm not going to give him the time of day.

Thankfully, I don't have very many people that try to convince this NASA foolishness is legitimate - but - from time to time, I do. I just cannot believe that people can be so gullible. The Bible is so simple. So easy to understand - and I really believe that when most people have told me it's either hard to understand - or they just don't get it - it's probably because they really don't put any effort into it. If people would put even a fraction of effort into studying the Bible - as they do the insanity of NASA - it would be an awesome thing to see what they could actually learn.

So this star we've been looking at this week - almost 115 light-years away. Not 114 or 116, but almost 115 light-years away - almost 700 trillion miles away - and - we can see it with our own eyes. We can record it with a cheap cell phone camera - and see it twinkling. Amazing. Just amazing how that is working out.

Well, it isn't working out. Because there is no way that's what reality is. God said - it was God that said - He made two great lights - the sun and the moon. And as we have seen in our past study - the word great in the Hebrew - means size. The biggest two lights are the sun and the moon. That's what God said - and if we don't believe that - then we are hopelessly lost in a world that - in my opinion - has been so devoid of truth - that they've been able to turn just about every thing upside down - from truth to a lie - from lies - to what most people believe is truth.

The thought occurred just today. First of all, it is beyond laughable to me, when someone tells me they believe that NASA "went to the moon." How anyone in their right mind could believe that is incredible to me. And, when you hear most of their reasoning, they answer with, "Well, there were so many people involved, there's just no way they could lie like that and get away with it."

The Bible speaks of two times, both in the Book of Revelation, where the whole world

was deceived. In Matthew chapter 24, Jesus warned of false prophets that would be coming - that - even though it is not possible - but if it were possible - even the very elect would be deceived. Revelation 22:15 says that those who are outside the Kingdom of God

For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

Do you hear what it says? They love lies and they love to make lies. That's what the Word says. Here you have an agency of the u.s. "government" - whose logo has a serpent's tongue in it for goodness sake. And I realize that it's probably just complete coincidence it really didn't mean that - because - even though it was not originally named NASA - it was first named NACA - but the name was changed in 1958 to NASA - and it is a total, complete coincidence that the Hebrew word that is pronounced naw-shaw - is spelled n-a-s-a in its transliteration - from Hebrew to English - and by just another coincidence - of course - it means

to beguile, deceive, to lead astray, to seduce to corrupt, to cause to go astray. You know, kind of like the serpent in the garden. I know, I know, that is so silly to even talk about. It is so silly to think that the first time we find the word beguiled in our Bibles is in Genesis - guess what chapter? Chapter 3. And it's in reference to Adam and Eve being deceived into eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil - and it is just plain stupid to even say the transliteration of that Hebrew word for beguiled in Genesis 3:13 is spelled nasa.

Now don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying the NASA agency is in the Bible. It is not. They are the spirit of the devil, the beguiler. They are not the devil. They are the spirit of antichrist - they are not fulfilling Bible prophecy. These are coincidences. They could be purposeful, but they are coincidental.

Kind of like the social security number being required for pretty much every single financial transaction for u.s. "citizens" and that "law" is Title 42, Section 666.

All coincidence. There's no way it could be "in your face. Look at how we are mocking the God of your Bible." Or, it could also be that God is using their own foolishness and rebellion back against them. And maybe, God is exposing their foolishness as a wake up call for people in our generation to wake up out of their sleep and understand and believe that there is One God, there is One King, there is One Lawgiver - there is One

nation - and it is the responsibility of every living breathing creature to come out from the world - from the little g “governments” of the world - who out of rebellion to the King of kings and Lord of lords - unequivocally state - “Our laws, our treaties, our statutes, our ordinances, our rules, our regulations - shall be the supreme law of the land.”

That statement alone. Take that one statement. Such defiance. Such sticking your fist in the face of God - it is truly amazing that so very few people see it. Drive by nearly every single “church” on this land - and you will see the u.s. flag flying highest and in the position of most prominence - then - if you see a “state” flag - it will be flying in the second position and in the second most prominence - then - if you happen see what they refer to as the “Christian flag” - it flies in subserviance to both of those other flags. Amazing. Just mind-blowing to me.

This can only happen because people do not believe the Bible. They do not believe it is the Word of God. And they do not believe it is supposed to guide them through and to the way they are supposed to live their lives. There's not a single thing in that Book - not even the way the “churchmen” have shredded it - that should make someone believe they are to obey men - and disobey God. But they've done it. Pretty much the whole world lies in deception - and people say that an agency like NASA would be incapable of creating a deception that most - if it were possible - would deceive even the elect.

We live in a world where up is down, right is left, front is back - everything is off. Nothing is at it should be. Yet, when it comes to NASA - there's no way they could pull off a lie - like “going to the moon.” And one of NASA's main “astronots” puts out this video, just a few years ago:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TbUtpmoYyiQ>

Thank God, that just about every single comment on youtube from that video, is from people who are waking up to NASA's lies. This leads me to one of the greatest things ever to come from Carl Sagan's lips - from his book, *The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark*. Quote:

<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/318165-we-ve-arranged-a-global-civilization-in-which-most-crucial-elements>

“We've arranged a global civilization in which most crucial elements profoundly depend on science and technology. We have also arranged things so that almost no one understands science and technology. This is a prescription for disaster. We might get away with it for a while, but sooner or later this combustible mixture of ignorance and power is going to blow up in our faces.” End quote.

Yeah, and let's hope it sooner than later. Our hope is in the hope that people who call themselves Christians will wake up to all these lies - and will once again believe the Bible, believe the God of Creation, believe in Jesus Christ the King of kings and Lord of lords - and they will shake off these earthly chains that come from following men's little g “governments” with all their agencies, and their scientists, and their mathematicians and their sages - and their millions of “laws, statutes and ordinances” and will embrace the simplicity of the Gospel of the Government of God. Stop living the way every else says to live. Stop living according to all these strange voices. Stop living the way all these maniacs want you to live. Quit fearing them.

Fear not man who is only able to kill the body - but fear God - fear the One Who can destroy both the body and the soul.

I recently came across an excellent article. I have found very little in it that I have disagreement with - and you know - for me - that's a pretty big deal. It's not that I want to be disagreeable. No one wants that. I want to be agreeable. But my perspective is so uniquely different than most, it makes it hard. But this article is really really good, I want to share it with you. Even if there are some things in there that I might not agree completely with, it is really good.

I have to admit that all I have read so far is actually an Appendix, but the title intrigued me so much, I just started there. I may not read this whole thing this morning, because there's more I want to get to, but if I have to, I'll just keep going next week.

Appendix A: The Flat-Earth Bible

https://www.cantab.net/users/michael.behrend/ebooks/PlaneTruth/pages/Appendix_A.html

Now, I just need to stop here for a quick second - before we even get started. As you know, I don't care a whole lot for the phrase The Flat Earth. But I'm not going to nitpick this guy. I'm not going to call the Bible a “Flat-Earth Bible” - but I will say absolutely,

beyond any shadow of a doubt - the Bible does not teach a spinning ball world. That, I know and will not apologize for that belief. Now to the article. Quote:

When I first became interested in the flat-earthers in the early 1970s, I was surprised to learn that flat-earthism in the English-speaking world is and always has been entirely based upon the Bible. I have since assembled and read an extensive collection of flat-earth literature. The Biblical arguments for flat-earthism that follow come mainly from my reading of flat-earth literature, augmented by my own reading of the Bible.

Except among Biblical inerrantists, it is generally agreed that the Bible describes an immovable earth. At the 1984 National Bible-Science Conference in Cleveland, geocentrist James N. Hanson told me there are hundreds of scriptures that suggest the earth is immovable. I suspect some must be a bit vague, but here are a few obvious texts:

1 Chronicles 16:30: "He has fixed the earth firm, immovable."

Psalms 93:1: "Thou hast fixed the earth immovable and firm ..."

Psalms 96:10: "He has fixed the earth firm, immovable ..."

Psalms 104:5: "Thou didst fix the earth on its foundation so that it never can be shaken."

Isaiah 45:18: "... who made the earth and fashioned it, and himself fixed it fast ..."

Suffice to say that the earth envisioned by flat-earthers is as immovable as any geocentrist could desire. Most (perhaps all) scriptures commonly cited by geocentrists have also been cited by flat-earthers. The flat-earth view is geocentricity with further restrictions.

*Like geocentrists, flat-earth advocates often give long lists of texts. Samuel Birley Rowbotham, founder of the modern flat-earth movement, cited 76 scriptures in the last chapter of his monumental second edition of *Earth Not a Globe*. [ref. A.1] Apostle Anton Darms, assistant to the Reverend Wilbur Glenn Voliva, America's best known flat-earther, compiled 50 questions about the creation and the shape of the earth, bolstering his answers with up to 20 scriptures each. [ref. A.2] Rather than presenting an exhaustive compendium of flat-earth scriptures, I focus on those which seem to me the strongest. I also comment on some attempts to find the earth's sphericity in the*

Bible.

Scriptural quotes, unless otherwise noted, are from the New English Bible. Hebrew and Greek translations are from Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible. [ref. A.3] The Biblical cosmology is never explicitly stated, so it must be pieced together from scattered passages. The Bible is a composite work, so there is no a priori reason why the cosmology assumed by its various writers should be relatively consistent, but it is. The Bible is, from Genesis to Revelation, a flat-earth book.

This is hardly surprising. As neighbors, the ancient Hebrews had the Egyptians to the southwest and the Babylonians to the northeast. Both civilizations had flat-earth cosmologies. The Biblical cosmology closely parallels the Sumero-Babylonian cosmology, and it may also draw upon Egyptian cosmology.

The Babylonian universe was shaped like a modern domed stadium. The Babylonians considered the earth essentially flat, with a continental mass surrounded by ocean. The vault of the sky was a physical object resting upon the ocean's waters (and perhaps also upon pillars). Sweet (salt-free) waters below the earth sometimes manifest themselves as springs. The Egyptian universe was also enclosed, but it was rectangular instead of round. Indeed, it was shaped much like an old-fashioned steamer trunk. (The Egyptians pictured the goddess Nut stretched across the sky as the enclosing dome.) What was the Hebrew view of the universe?

The Order of Creation

The Genesis creation story provides the first key to the Hebrew cosmology. The order of creation makes no sense from a conventional perspective but is perfectly logical from a flat-earth viewpoint. The earth was created on the first day, and it was "without form and void" (Genesis 1:2). On the second day, a vault—the "firmament" of the King James version—was created to divide the waters, some being above and some below the vault. Only on the fourth day were the sun, moon, and stars created, and they were placed "in" (not "above") the vault.

The Vault of Heaven

*The vault of heaven is a crucial concept. The word "firmament" appears in the King James version of the Old Testament 17 times, and in each case it is translated from the Hebrew word *raqiya*, which meant the visible vault of the sky. The word *raqiya* comes from *riqqua*, meaning "beaten out." In ancient times, brass objects were either cast in the form required or beaten into shape on an anvil. A good craftsman could beat a*

lump of cast brass into a thin bowl. Thus, Elihu asks Job, "Can you beat out [raqa] the vault of the skies, as he does, hard as a mirror of cast metal?" (Job 37:18)

Elihu's question shows that the Hebrews considered the vault of heaven a solid, physical object.

Let me stop for a second and add some of my own commentary. I would certainly say this differently. The reason why the Hebrews considered the vault of heaven a solid, physical object - is not because they just came up with that idea or theory - it's because that's what the Creator told them to believe. That's what the Creator inspired holy men of God to put down, to put in writing what God the Creator said these things were and are. Continuing.

Such a large dome would be a tremendous feat of engineering. The Hebrews (and supposedly Yahweh Himself) considered it exactly that, and this point is hammered home by five scriptures:

Job 9:8, "... who by himself spread out the heavens [shamayim] ..."

Psalms 19:1, "The heavens [shamayim] tell out the glory of God, the vault of heaven [raqiya] reveals his handiwork."

Psalms 102:25, "... the heavens [shamayim] were thy handiwork."

Isaiah 45:12, "I, with my own hands, stretched out the heavens [shamayim] and caused all their host to shine ..."

Isaiah 48:13, "... with my right hand I formed the expanse of the sky [shamayim] ..."

[The KJV says all of this is firmament.]

If these verses are about a mere illusion of a vault, they are surely much ado about nothing. Shamayim comes from shameh, a root meaning to be lofty. It literally means the sky. Other passages complete the picture of the sky as a lofty, physical dome. God "sits throned on the vaulted roof of earth [chuwg], whose inhabitants are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the skies [shamayim] like a curtain, he spreads them out like a tent to live in ..." (Isaiah 40:22). Chuwg literally means "circle" or "encompassed." By extension, it can mean roundness, as in a rounded dome or vault.

Job 22:14 says God “walks to and fro on the vault of heaven [chuwg].” In both verses, the use of chuwg implies a physical object, on which one can sit and walk. Likewise, the context in both cases requires elevation. In Isaiah, the elevation causes the people below to look small as grasshoppers. In Job, God’s eyes must penetrate the clouds to view the doings of humans below. Elevation is also implied by Job 22:12: “Surely God is at the zenith of the heavens [shamayim] and looks down on all the stars, high as they are.”

This picture of the cosmos is reinforced by Ezekiel’s vision. The Hebrew word raqiya appears five times in Ezekiel: four times in Ezekiel 1:22–26 and once in Ezekiel 10:1. In each case the context requires a literal vault or dome. The vault appears above the “living creatures” and glitters “like a sheet of ice.” Above the vault is a throne of sapphire (or lapis lazuli). Seated on the throne is “a form in human likeness,” which is radiant and “like the appearance of the glory of the Lord.” In short, Ezekiel saw a vision of God sitting throned on the vault of heaven, as described in Isaiah 40:22.

The Shape of the Earth

Disregarding the dome, the essential flatness of the earth’s surface is required by verses like Daniel 4:10–11. In Daniel, the king “saw a tree of great height at the centre of the earth ... reaching with its top to the sky and visible to the earth’s farthest bounds.” If the earth were flat, a sufficiently tall tree would be visible to “the earth’s farthest bounds,” but this is impossible on a spherical earth. Likewise, in describing the temptation of Jesus by Satan, Matthew 4:8 says, “Once again, the devil took him to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world [cosmos] in their glory.” Obviously, this would be possible only if the earth were flat. The same is true of Revelation 1:7: “Behold, he is coming with the clouds! Every eye shall see him ...”

[My commentary.] And yes, we know that all those verses are figurative. But God uses things we can see in nature to describe the Spiritual. We know that. Every eye shall see Him would not happen on a ball. Only a few people would see if the world was a ball. Those only on the side of the ball directly facing Him would see. Though these verses are figuratively speaking - they are still easily used to dispel the concept of a spinning ball. And I have no problem doing it. Continuing.

The Celestial Bodies

The Hebrews considered the celestial bodies relatively small. The Genesis creation story indicates the size and importance of the earth relative to the celestial bodies in two ways, first by their order of creation, and second by their positional relationships. They

had to be small to fit inside the vault of heaven. Small size is also implied by Joshua 10:12, which says that the sun stood still “in Gibeon” and the moon “in the Vale of Aijalon.”

Further, the Bible frequently presents celestial bodies as exotic living beings. For example, “In them [the heavens], a tent is fixed for the sun, who comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy, rejoicing like a strong man to run his race. His rising is at one end of the heavens, his circuit touches their farthest ends; and nothing is hidden from his heat (Psalm 19:4–6).” The stars are anthropomorphic demigods. When the earth’s cornerstone was laid “the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted aloud” (Job 38:7). The morning star is censured for trying to set his throne above that of other stars:

You thought in your own mind, I will scale the heavens; I will set my throne high above the stars of God, I will sit on the mountain where the gods meet in the far recesses of the north. I will rise high above the cloud-banks and make myself like the most high (Isaiah 14:13–14).

Deuteronomy 4:15–19 recognizes the god-like status of stars, noting that they were created for other peoples to worship.

Stars can fall from the skies according to Daniel 8:10 and Matthew 24:29. The same idea is found in the following extracts from Revelation 6:13–16:

... the stars in the sky fell to the earth, like figs shaken down by a gale; the sky vanished, as a scroll is rolled up ... they called out to the mountains and the crags, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of the One who sits on the throne ... ”

This is consistent with the Hebrew cosmology previously described, but it is ludicrous in the light of modern astronomy. If one star let alone all the stars in the sky “fell” on the earth, no one would be hollering from any mountain or crag. The writer considered the stars small objects, all of which could fall to the earth without eradicating human life. He also viewed the sky as a physical object. The stars are inside the sky, and they fall before the sky opens. When it is whisked away, it reveals the One throned above (see Isaiah 40:22).

Weaker Arguments

Flat-earthers also offer some scriptural arguments that are (in my view) weak,

ambiguous, erroneous, or irrelevant. (Ironically, it is these that apologists for sphericity usually choose to deal with in their rebuttals to the flat-earthers!) The weak and ambiguous arguments can help support a cumulative picture but are insufficient on their own.

One of the weaker scriptural arguments is that the sky literally has openings (windows) which God can open to let the waters above fall to the surface as rain (see Genesis 7:11, Genesis 8:2, Isaiah 24:18–19, Jeremiah 51:15–16, and Malachi 3:10). While the idea and scriptures are certainly consistent with the flat-earth cosmology, they could (for instance) refer to openings in a spherical shell surrounding a spherical earth. The same applies to the Tower of Babel story in Genesis 11:4, often cited as an attempt to literally reach the heavens.

Likewise, flat-earthers frequently cite the numerous Old Testament verses referring to the earth's foundations (see 2 Samuel 22:16, Job 38:4, Psalm 18:15, Proverbs 8:29, Isaiah 24:18, and numerous others). Foundations are, however, fairly well-covered by geocentricity. No one would argue for a flat earth solely on the basis of "foundations" quotes.

Another less-than-conclusive argument that the Bible is a flat-earth book is its references to the earth's "corners." For example, "After this, I saw four angels stationed at the four corners [gonia] of the earth holding back the four winds ..." (Revelation 7:1). Spherical apologists are quick to point out that the Greek gonia can refer to regions rather than points. Most translations of the Bible opt for points (the King James version says "on the corners of the earth"), implying that the writer viewed the habitable earth as a four-cornered area. (This was indeed the way many early churchmen interpreted it. [ref. A.4] The modern flat-earth model doesn't have literal corners.) The corners could, however, be those regions at the ends of the earth referred to by Jeremiah: "[H]e brings up the mist from the ends of the earth, he opens rifts for the rain and brings the wind out of his storehouses" (Jeremiah 51:16). We shall return to the ends of the earth.

The Biblical view of the universe is relatively clear and consistent. Biblical statements bearing on cosmology are (with one possible exception yet to be discussed) consistent with the well-known flat-earth cosmologies of the ancient Near East, but they are often flatly contradicted by modern science. How do spherical apologists reply?

Spherical Apologetics

Those who claim Biblical support for a spherical earth typically ignore this forest of

consistency and focus on one or two aberrant trees. Some take refuge in audacity. Henry Morris, president of the Institute for Creation Research, cites one of the more explicitly flat-earth verses in the Old Testament—Isaiah 40:22, the “grasshopper” verse quoted earlier—as evidence for the sphericity of the earth. Quoting the King James version “he sitteth upon the circle of the earth” Morris ignores the context and the grasshoppers and claims “circle” should read “sphericity” or “roundness”. [ref. A.5] This divide and conquer strategy is poor scholarship and worse logic.

[I absolutely agree.]

Heroic efforts have been made by apologists to explain away the firmament, which encloses the celestial bodies, has waters above it, and is a masterpiece proving the Creator’s craftsmanship. The late Harold L. Armstrong argued that it is empty Newtonian space, and that the “waters above” still surround the edges of the universe, though perhaps not in liquid form [ref. A.6] . This simply ignores difficulties and invents evidence. Gerardus Bouw tried to identify the firmament as a mathematical plenum [ref. A.7] . In my view, it is a grave error to reinterpret ancient documents to force their authors to speak with modern voices.

[I absolutely agree with that! Again, it's because they want to be accepted by the world.]

Gary Zukov [ref. A.8] and Fritjof Capra, [ref. A.9] for instance, read modern physics into the teachings of eastern mysticism. I consider all such attempts equally suspect.

Perhaps the scripture most frequently offered as evidence of the earth’s sphericity is the King James version of Job 26:7, “He stretcheth out the north [tsaphon] over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing [beliyimah].” (The New English Bible translates it, “God spreads the canopy of the sky over chaos and suspends earth in the void.”) It is not clear what this means. The Hebrew tsaphon literally meant hidden or dark, and it was used in reference to the northern regions. Belyimah literally means “nothing.” That would contradict all of the scriptures which say the earth rests on foundations, but that interpretation is not necessary. We will return to Job 26:7 later.

Speaking of foundations, Gerardus Bouw, in an undated paper entitled “The Form of the Earth,” [ref. A.10] cites a barrage of scriptures about the foundations of the earth or world as evidence for sphericity. All (or nearly all) of these verses have traditionally been used by flat-earthers to prove the earth flat. If one views the earth as an

architectural structure with floor, curtain walls, and a roof, it is natural to assume it has foundations (and, I might add, a cornerstone). Why a sphere would have foundations escapes me. Bouw's argument that these scriptures refer to the earth's core seems strained at best. Also strained is Bouw's interpretation of "the ends of the earth" as the points most distant from Jerusalem, and his identification of the Chukchi Peninsula of the Soviet Union, Alaska, Cape Horn, and the southeastern tip of Australia as the "four corners" of the earth.

Bouw's most interesting argument for sphericity is based on the gospel of Luke. He compares the King James version of Luke 17:31 and 17:34. The former says "In that day, he which shall be upon the house top ..." and the latter "in that night there shall be two men in one bed..." (italics added). Bouw then cites 1 Corinthians 15:52 to argue that the events are simultaneous, claiming simultaneity is possible only on a spherical earth. First of all, the latter claim is wrong. The modern (though not the ancient) flat-earth model has day and night occurring simultaneously at different points on earth. Second, the Greek hemera was used much like the English "day." It could mean the daylight hours, a 24-hour day, or (figuratively) an epoch of unspecified length. Third, Luke appears to have been writing figuratively, and citing Paul to prove otherwise begs the question.

One more spherical argument deserves notice. The 1985 National Creation Conference in Cleveland ended with a formal debate on the relative merits of heliocentricity and geocentricity. Richard Niessen of Christian Heritage College, defending the Copernican view, remarked that the Bible teaches a spherical earth because it treats north and south as absolutes, but east and west as relative. As evidence of the latter, he cited Psalm 103:12 which says, "As far as the east is from the west, so far has he put our offences from us." Again, the modern flat-earth model holds that north and south are absolutes, but east and west are relative. In the ancient flat-earth model, however, east and west were about as far apart as you could get, which seems to be the image Psalm 103:12 was intended to invoke.

In my view, all arguments to prove the Bible teaches a spherical earth are weak if not wrong-headed. On the other hand, the flat-earth cosmology previously described is historically consistent and requires none of the special pleading apparently necessary to harmonize the Bible with sphericity.

I am out of time this week. I will intend on finishing the end of this next week, then moving on to the two things I didn't get to this week.