

# ASTRONOMY IN THE BIBLE

Dr. Robert C. Newman  
Biblical Theological Seminary

## INTRODUCTION

Is religion, like music or food, a matter of taste?

Each religion claims to tell us how things REALLY are

Only Christianity offers much evidence to support claims

Here we compare Biblical statements in 4 areas of astronomy with those of ancients and modern science

## THE SIZE OF THE UNIVERSE

Bible: Ps 8:3-4: amazing to Psalmist that God cares about man; Jer 31:37: heavens immeasurable

Koran: Sura 2: earth a bed, sky a dome; Sura 22: holds sky from falling down; Sura 34: let a part fall

Anaximander, *About Nature*: sun most distant object, about 28x size of earth away

Modern Science: objects apparently 10 billion light years away (1 light year = 6 trillion miles); no end in sight

## THE NUMBER OF STARS

Bible: Gen 15:5: large number; Jer 33:22, Gen 22:17: uncountable, like sand

Hipparchus, Ptolemy: anc. catalogues, about 1000 stars (only about 6000 visible without telescope)

Democritus: speculated an infinite no. of worlds

Modern Science: 100s of billions of stars in each of billions of galaxies; Sir James Jeans, *The Stars in Their Courses*, 137: no. of stars like no. of grains of sand in all oceans of earth

## THE EARTH'S SUPPORT

Bible: Job 26:7: earth hangs on nothing

Hindu Vedas: earth flat & triangular; 7 stages: honey, sugar, butter, wine, etc.; supported by elephants

Greek mythology: Atlas

Greek philosophers: water (Thales); air (Anaxagoras); nothing (Anaximander, contra Aristotle)

Modern Science: support is non-material, by balance of gravity and inertia

## THE EARTH'S SHAPE

Bible: Job 26:10: boundary between light and darkness on earth's surface is a circle; Luke 17:34-36: different times of day in different places

Greek philosophers: flat (Hecataios); pillar-shaped (Anaximander); round (Pythagoras)

## CONCLUSIONS

Have to postulate very lucky guesses to avoid Biblical evidence; contrast ancient Jewish attempts to write

Scripture: 1 Enoch 72:3-7: sun's chariot, gates, winds; 3 Baruch 3:6-8: bore thru heaven's dome

Looks like we have real evidence of God behind the Bible writers here.