

# Divine Biblical Cosmology

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In recent years a revival of a pre-Galileon geo-centric universe and worldview has made its way back, not only in religious but secular circles. The secular “Flat Earth Society,” which in 2017 had its first ever convention, in which many religious and non-religious people attended. In religious circles this Flat Earth view has seen a resurgence in especially the extreme right Christian and Hebrew Roots religious circles.

What has caused this revival in belief of a flat disk shaped earth? For the religious it is taking the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek languages of the Bible literally in every case when speaking of the cosmos, the created order and its operation. Such folks ignorantly fail to take into consideration that these Biblical languages in context, like any other, has its liberal usage of figurative, allegorical and idiomatic speech.

Secularly, it is conspiracy theorists that predominately believe in a flat earth. They believe that NASA and all world governmental space and astronomical organizations are in cahoots together to fool the masses into believing in a heliocentric universe with a spherical earth. To what purpose or advantage over the populace I cannot even begin to figure out. And with the various world governments in disagreement with one another, at each other’s throats, and on the verge of war, I cannot swallow that they would all be united in fooling the people of the world that the world is a sphere and not a disk. You would think that one or

more space agencies of the world would blow such a conspiracy wide open if indeed the earth was flat.

We must remember that the Bible was not penned in a cultural vacuum or void. It was written in a Mesopotamian, Middle Eastern culture, context, worldview and language and biblical cosmological references bear this out. Adonai (YHWH) wanted to relay His Word, Revelation and Will in a culturally understandable and relevant way when it was written and was not so concerned with being scientifically factual. Thus the Bible is not, nor was ever meant to be a scientific text book. That being said, the predominate, pre-scientific cosmological worldview of the time was that the earth was a flat disk (Isa. 40:22, Prov. 8:27, Job 26:10), founded upon water (I Sam. 1:28, Job. 38:4-6, Psa. 104:5), that man lived upon. It was also believed that the flat earth had an underworld of the dead (Job 26:5-6, Jonah 2:5-6) which is called in the Hebrew, “Sheol” and is translated in English Bibles as hell, the grave, or the pit (Num. 16:33). Beneath it was the pillars or the foundations of the earth (I Sam. 1:28, 2 Sam. 22:16, Job. 38:4-6, Psa. 104:5). Beneath that was the abyss (Psa. 24:1-2, 136:6, Gen. 49:25, Exd. 20:4). Bordering the flat earth and sea was the pillars of heaven (2 Sam. 22:8, Prov. 8:29), believed to support a sky dome called the firmament (Gen. 1:6-8, Job 37:18, Psa. 19:4-6, Job 22:14, 37:18, Prov. 8:27-28, Amos 9:6). Josephus in his work, “From Creation to the Death of Isaac” said in 1.1:30 that the firmament was “crystalline,” in other words, solid. This is where the sun moon and stars were affixed and in which could be opened to let water in from the water dome above the sky dome (Gen. 1:6-8, Gen. 7:11, Psa. 148:4) as rain and such. Above that was God’s Temple and throne (Deut. 26:15, Psa. 11:4, 29:3, 10, 33:13, 103:19). This is even hinted at in the Revelation account of the Throne Room of God describing the floor as blue sapphire (like water) and as glass, referring to the solidity of the heavenly vaulted dome (Exd. 24:10, Rev. 4:6, 15:2).

This Biblical Cosmological view fits perfectly the Cosmological worldview found in Babylonian, Sumerian and Ugaritic texts.

A Mesopotamian three tiered cosmology as we have been speaking of above: Heavens, Earth, and The Underworld; is also found in the “New Testament” Scriptures as well.

**That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; - Phil. 2:10**

**And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell (*Sheol/Hades: the underworld*)... - Matt. 11:23**

**And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon... And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea... - Rev. 5:3, 13**

**Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) – Eph. 4:8-10**

To us, due to our modern scientific cosmological understanding, such passages depicting the location of heaven and hell may seem figurative, but to the peoples of the ancient near east and Greco-Roman culture it was not figurative at all. But even today, most religious people believe heaven is, “up there” and hell is, “down there.” This has continually been reinforced in our thinking with things such a Dante’s Inferno and even the old Warner Brothers cartoons.

Without the scientific calculations, instruments and methods we have today, the peoples of the ancient near east described and believed the universe to be as they saw and understood it with the naked eye. Being so close to the ground the earth does seem flat. The night sky does look like a dome and it does appear the sun and moon revolves around us. That is only because of our proximity to the ground. The higher up one travels the better one can see the curvature of the earth and one will clearly see the earth is a sphere and that we are the ones that moves round about the sun.

**“The Bible also contains a picture of the universe that its stories inhabit. It uses cosmic geographical language in common with other ancient Near Eastern (ANE) cultures that shared its situated time and location. Believers in today’s world use the language of Relativity when we write, even in our non-scientific discourse; because Einstein has affected the way we see the universe. Believers before the 17<sup>th</sup> century used Ptolemaic language because they too were children of their time. It should be no surprise to anyone that believers in ancient Israel would use the language of ANE cosmography because it was the mental construct within which they lived and thought.” – Brian Godawa, Noah Primeval, Ch. 39, Pg. 339**

One does not have to take these Biblical passages as literal science to be faithful to God and to believe Adonai created the heavens and the earth. Nor does one have to abandon scientific fact in order to believe the Bible to be the divinely inspired, truthful Word of God.

For more information on this subject I recommend you look into the works of Michael Heiser: [www.drmsb.com](http://www.drmsb.com), [www.nakedbiblepodcast.com](http://www.nakedbiblepodcast.com) and the book one of “the Chronicles of the Nephilim: Noah Primeval” by Brian Godawa