

Stars And The Bible

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The glory of Christ is revealed in the stars. The ancient prophecies predict that the world's Redeemer is also its Creator. In fact, redemption and creation are both revelations of the same power. We read the prophecy in Isaiah 44:14 - "Thus said the Lord: that stretches forth the heavens alone; that spreads abroad the Earth by Myself." The New Testament tells us that God created all things through His Son, Jesus Christ. To show that this is so, we read Hebrews 1:1, 2 - "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds."

In verse 10, the heavens are said to be "the works of His hands", so that when we look at the silent pageantry of the skies, we really see the actual glory of Christ. No wonder the study of astronomy and the Bible is interesting. And, a great many, even among Christians, are not aware that God has definitely invited us to study astronomy. But he really has, and His invitation is found in Isaiah 40:26, reading like this: "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things that brings out their host by number. He calls them all by names of the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power not one fails."

The great telescopes have enabled man to lift up his eyes on high and see farther into the heavens than ever before. Thus in the twentieth century, astronomers accept the divine invitation to "Lift up their eyes on high", and as they turn their gigantic lenses towards the starry depths, searching out the hiding places of the boundless voids, they behold the handiwork of Him "whose goings forth have been from of old - from everlasting." Micah 5: 2.

The heavens prove the existence of God. The stupendous mechanism of the universe with its mathematical perfection did not come into existence through accident. This Earth goes plunging on its tireless journey around the Sun at the rate of a thousand miles a minute. We boast of our airplanes flying through space at 400 miles an hour; but what shall we say of these mighty engines of God rushing in all directions, some of them at the incredible speed of 300,000 miles an hour, whirling and whizzing along their orbits, crossing the tracks of myriads of other planets and stars and never a crash, never a jolt or ajar.

The hands of God's time-piece never vary a fraction of a second. And, every planet in its flight, every sun and star obeys His wilt as it speeds in orderly procession across the illimitable stretches of the universe. The old clock never varies. We stand amazed in the presence of a marvel like that. Every effect must have a cause. And this universe, so vast that it appears to us to be infinite, has a cause greater than itself. That cause is God revealed in Jesus Christ. Genesis 1:1 - "In the beginning God created the heavens and the Earth." No one can go back of the beginning, and in the beginning - God.

While on his memorable expedition to Egypt, Napoleon Bonaparte one night stood on the deck of his ship and listened to his officers. These men were skeptic and argued for hours against the truths of revelation - even the existence of the Deity. At last Napoleon turned away, and as he did so, waved his hand toward the starry midnight sky and said, "Gentlemen, your arguments may all be very clever, but who made all these?" And the officers made no answer, for "the heavens declare the glory of God."

The scriptures tell us that the stars differ in glory or brilliance. This statement is in I Corinthians 15:41 - "There is one glory of the Sun, and another glory of the moon and another glory of the stars: for one star differs from another star in glory." It was once thought that the stars were all very much alike in magnitude and constitution; and that one star was brighter than another simply because it was nearer to us. But there came a time when men learned this was not a sufficient explanation. While there might be instances where one star is brighter than another because it is nearer, it was found that sometimes a very bright star is actually many times farther away than another star very inferior in brilliance. The Bible says, "One star differs from another in glory." This is now proved true. No two stars are alike. Not only do they differ in distance and in size, but in actual brilliance and color.

The star Alpha Centauri is three times as bright as our Sun, Sirius is forty-eight times brighter. Sirius has a companion star which gives only one thousandth part as much light in proportion to its mass.

In fact, the heavens are just a blaze of color. Some stars shine with a bright red light, others are white, while still others are yellow. Truly God must be a lover of the beautiful. All creation is filled with it. The blushing beauty of the rose, the dreamy white of the lily, the silvery sheen of the Sun-kissed ocean, or its feathery foam turned to gold by the yellow light of the moon; all tell the same story, and like the heavens above "declare the glory of God." Like the flowers of Earth "one star differs from another in glory."

The Bible speaks of the infinitude of space. In Jeremiah 31:37 I read, "Thus said the Lord, if heaven above can be measured I will also cast off the seed of Israel for all that they have done, said the Lord." Here it is suggested that heaven cannot be measured. It is beyond

the power of man. Astronomers do not use miles to measure the distances of the stars, but light years. That is the distance a ray of light travels in one year at the estimated speed of 300,000 kilometers a second - over 18 million kilometers per minute, making the inconceivable total of five trillion eight hundred and eighty-one billion, eight hundred and seven million, eight hundred and ten thousand, six hundred and twenty miles [9,460,800,000,000 kilometers]. Multiply this by 4.3 for the distance to the very nearest star, Alpha Centauri; multiply it by 47 and you will have the distance to the North Star, for it is 47 light years away from the Earth. That is, its light that reaches the north tonight from the North Star, started toward the Earth 47 years ago.

The light from Antares takes 370 years to reach the Earth, and some portions of the Milky Way are said to be 100,000 light years from us. During this short talk the light from Andromeda will travel 335,556,000 miles but will still have to traverse over 1,200,000 years at the rate of 186,000 miles a second before it reaches this Earth. No human mind can conceive of such immensity. Surely with the Bible we exclaim, "Behold, the height of the stars - how high they are." Job 22: 12.

Really this Earth of ours is only a tiny speck in the great universe. True it weighs more than six thousand trillion tons, or six followed by 21 zeros, but it would take 1,400,000 earths to equal the Sun. However, the nearest star is five times bigger than the Sun, and some of the stars are so big they could not pass between the Sun and the Earth although the distance between the two is 150 million kilometers.

Walking at the rate of 24 miles a day, you could walk the distance to the moon in 27 years. But traveling at 60 miles per hour it would take 177 years to reach the Sun. To reach Neptune, on the very frontier of our solar system, it would take 3,000 years flying at 100 miles an hour. It is 3,000,000,000 miles away. To aid you in realizing a thousand million, think of this. If you count at the rate of 100 per minute, non-stop night and day, it would take you just 19 years to count one thousand million.

When you read that the British are expending many thousand millions of pounds, it will help you to realize the enormous cost in money alone that it is taking to put down the ruthless despotism that has plunged Europe into bloodshed and horror.

But, really Neptune is not very far away, for Alpha Centauri, the nearest star, is 5,000 times farther away. A round trip ticket at one penny per mile would cost you about £280,000,000,000 to travel to the nearest star. The North Star, however, is eleven times farther away than that.

The Bible teaches that the Sun moves as well as the Earth. "He has set a tabernacle for the Sun which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber and rejoices as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it; there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." Psalm 19:4-6.

Modern astronomers have discovered that this Bible statement is literally true and that the Sun with all the Solar system is traveling at a speed of sixteen miles a second toward a point in the constellation of Hercules. According to mathematical laws there is not one chance out of 400,000 that astronomers have been deceived in their calculations. But we do not need to worry about crashing head-on into the great Vega in the constellation of Hercules, for even at the speed of 16 miles a second or 33,350,000 miles a year, the Sun, with its attendant planets, including the Earth, will require 1,800,000 years to make the journey.

One hundred years ago this fact of the Sun's motion was not believed by astronomers. To them the Sun did not move and the Bible was an ignorant old Book. But after great labor and the invention of better instruments, astronomers find that the old Book was right, and their science was mistaken. The Sun does move.

Yes, the heavens are speaking. Their message is for all who will listen. They flash their signals to Earth. They proclaim the truthfulness of the written word of God. They reveal that the mighty power of the eternal Word is still operating. God still rules in the universe.

How long would it take to explore an entire galaxy? Let us suppose that you were to take one week exploring every star in the galaxy and the Solar System that orbits it. The Milky Way galaxy contains 150 thousand million stars. If each star had a Solar System and we spend one week exploring it, it would take over 2,884 million years to complete. To explore all the galaxies in our Local Group [17 galaxies] this way would take almost 10,000 million years. Some large clusters of galaxies like the Virgo cluster contain thousands of galaxies. Exploring such a super cluster fully would take a hundred times longer.

The Local Group Of Galaxies

Galaxy	Diameter	Distance	Suns	Years
Milky Way	120,000	0	150,000,000,000	2,884,615,385
NGC 147	7,800	2,220,000	1,000,000,000	19,230,769
NGC 185	9,500	2,220,000	1,000,000,000	19,230,769
NGC 205	14,000	2,220,000	10,000,000,000	192,307,692
Andromeda	170,000	2,220,000	300,000,000,000	5,769,230,769
M 32	6,800	2,220,000	1,000,000,000	19,230,769
SMC	16,000	196,000	2,000,000,000	38,461,538
Sculptor	7,500	280,000	3,000,000	57,692
IC 1613	13,000	2,220,000	300,000,000	5,769,231
Triangulum	59,000	2,720,000	10,000,000,000	192,307,692
Fornax	20,000	612,000	20,000,000	384,615
LMC	26,000	173,000	10,000,000,000	192,307,692
Leo I	5,800	750,000	3,000,000	57,692
Leo II	4,200	750,000	1,000,000	19,231
Ursa Major	7,800	222,000	100,000	1,923
Draco	3,300	250,000	100,000	1,923
NGC 6822	5,500	2,150,000	400,000,000	7,692,308

[Diameter = Light Years, Distance From Earth = Light Years]

Clusters Of Galaxies

Galaxy Cluster	Diameter	Volume	Distance
CANES VENATICI I	9.78	3918.78	16.30
CANES VENATICI II	5.43	671.94	24.45
CETUS I	7.06	1476.26	24.45
CETUS II	7.61	1843.81	38.03
COMA I	5.98	894.36	25.54
ERIDANUS	13.04	9288.96	27.17
FORNAX I	6.52	1161.12	39.12
GRUS	6.52	1161.12	35.32
MESSIER 101	5.43	671.94	9.24
MESSIER 66	2.72	83.99	20.10
MESSIER 81	5.98	894.36	5.43
MESSIER 96	5.43	671.94	21.19
CENTAURUS	7.06	1476.26	8.15
PAVO-INDUS	12.50	8175.54	39.12
SCULPTOR	3.26	145.14	3.26
URSA MAJOR N	6.52	1161.12	42.92
URSA MAJOR S	7.61	1843.81	40.75
URSA MAJOR X	5.43	671.94	38.03
URSA MAJOR Y	7.06	1476.26	35.86
URSA MAJOR Z	5.98	894.36	29.88
VIRGO E	8.15	2267.81	32.60
VIRGO III	11.95	7154.86	28.80
VIRGO S	1.63	18.14	32.60
VIRGO V	7.06	1476.26	43.47
VIRGO W	2.17	43.00	49.99
VIRGO X	9.24	3301.26	39.12
VIRGO Y	9.24	3301.26	33.69
VIRGO Z	4.89	489.85	43.47

[Diameter and distance = millions of light years]

[Volume = billion cubic light years]

