

# Historical Concepts of the Earth in Context of the Universe

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While writing this book, The Old Scientist and a group of friends watched a videotape of a debate between a man who claimed to be a Young Earth Creation Science Educator, and a scientist who claimed to be an advocate of the Old Earth Creation Model.<sup>1</sup> During the debate, it became obvious that there are currently at least three points of view of the earth in the context of the universe.

The young earth advocate argued Genesis from the point of view of what he mistakenly assumed was the ancient Hebrew view of the universe. That erroneous opinion of the ancient Hebrews view of the universe was widely held by bible scholars around the year 1900, and still lingers today.

In reality, this view presented by the young earth advocate is a derivative of the concept of the universe held by the ancient Greek scientists. It was not the view held by the earlier Hebrews.

The Old Earth advocate argued an interpretation of Genesis creation accounts from the point of view of modern science around the year 2000. He argued from a point of view that was based on the lack of a mechanism to account of the rise and fall of sufficient water for a worldwide flood. He had no mechanism to explain where the water came from and where it went, and therefore, denied its existence.

What was not presented was an interpretation from the point of view of the ancient Hebrews as found in the bible—as confirmed by the corresponding facts recently discovered by modern science.

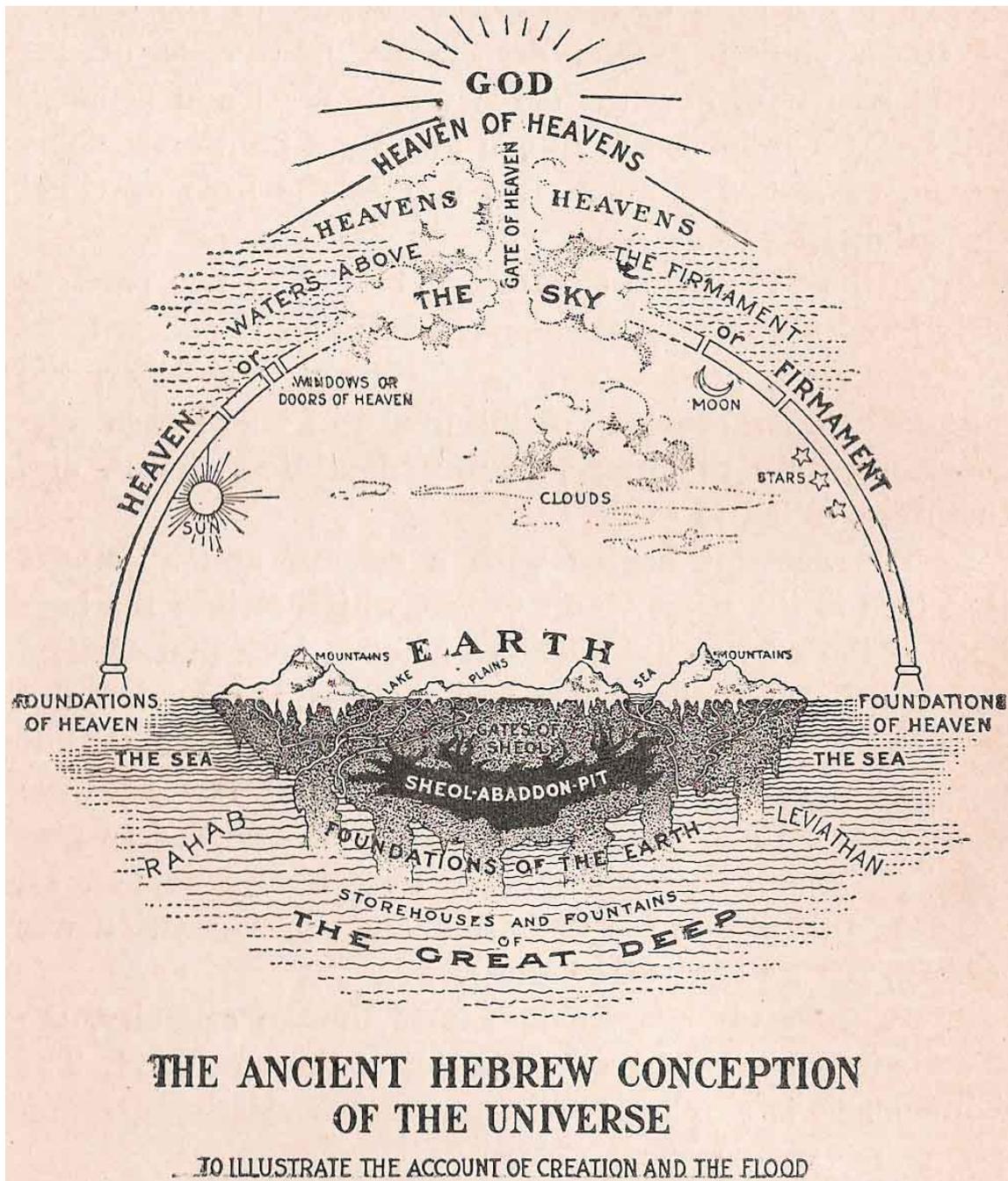
## **Ancient Greek: (Hebrew According to Bible Scholars) (200 BC)**

This ancient Greek view is commonly believed to be the view of the bible and of the ancient Hebrews. That is not true. The ancient Greek philosophers, not the ancient scriptures, were the source of this view.

The ancient Greek view of the universe was an earth-centered series of solid concentric crystalline spheres. The earth was in the center. Crystalline transparent spheres surrounded the earth. One contained and supported the sun. One held back a vast ocean of water from which the earth had emerged long ago. Another held the stars (stationary illuminators.) Others contained the planets (planetary, moveable) illuminators. Another contained the moon. Each crystalline sphere was able to move independently of the other. Very

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<sup>1</sup> The John Ankerberg Debate: Young-Earth VS. Old-Earth, Fall 2000, video tape, Reasons to Believe, P. O. Box 5978, Pasadena, CA 1117, (626) 335-1480, [www.reasons.org](http://www.reasons.org).



Around the year 1900 AD, theologians erroneously believed the Greek philosophy to be the ancient Hebrew concept of the universe. This drawing<sup>2</sup> from 1906 is typical of what was commonly mistaken by theologians to be the ancient Hebrews concept of the universe.

<sup>2</sup> Robinson, George L., Ph.D., *Leaders of Israel, A Brief History of the Hebrews from the Earliest Times to the Downfall of Jerusalem, A.D. 70*, Associated Press: New York, ©1906, p. 2.

complicated mathematical formulas were devised to explain the pattern of movement of each of the spheres. This view of the universe persisted for over a thousand years.

When the bible was translated into Greek from the ancient Hebrew language, it was under the influence of scholars steeped in this concept of the universe. That translation was therefore biased toward this view of the universe. Over the centuries, theologians gleaned a view of the universe, which they erroneously assumed to be the concept believed by the ancient Hebrews. The problem is, the translation from which they gleaned this view was biased toward the view of the ancient Greek philosophy.

### **Modern Science: According to Scientists (2000 A.D.)**

Modern science believes the concept that the Earth is the planet, including atmosphere, erupting volcanoes, birds flying in the atmosphere, airplanes, etc.

Above the earth is all that is considered to be “the Heavens:” the domain of astronomy, moon, sun, planets, comets, solar wind, and water in outer space, stars, and galaxies.

Below the planet earth: Same as above the planet earth.

The Foundations of the “Earth,” in King James language—known to us as the foundations of the continents—is that which supports the continents, keeping them above sea level. Modern science now recognizes the fact that they are floating in the mantle below.

Mechanism for beginning: Big Bang.

Mechanism for water of worldwide flood: None recognized.

Crustal movement: Slow constant creeping of continental plates—no catastrophic movement.

Mountain building mechanism: Not yet totally understood—concept is in transition from slow convection movement of crustal plates as demanded by uniformitarianism philosophy to more realistic, periodic mountain building episodes as recorded in the geologic record or surface renewal mantle overturn events as observed on other heavenly bodies. These episodes may be triggered by some external force such as a catastrophic collision of a meteorite as recorded in the geologic record and as actually observed to occur on other heavenly bodies.

Source for water to fill and maintain the oceans of the earth: Just now the concept is in transition from a belief that it came from interior of the earth to a belief that it came from outer space, captured by our atmosphere.

### **Ancient Hebrew: According to the Bible (c. 1000 BC)**

About a hundred years ago, around the turn of the century—1800’s to 1900’s—theologians thought they had figured out the ancient Hebrew concept of the universe. They were badly mistaken. What they thought was from the ancient Hebrews was in fact the ancient Hebrew concept as filtered through antique Greek science.

The Old Scientist would propose a radical view extracted from the ancient writings of the bible itself—from the Hebrew version of the bible before the ancient Greek scholars inserted their biased view of the universe circa 250 BC at the library of science at Alexandria when and where they translated the bible into the Septuagint (LXX).

First, realize that when you see the word “earth” in the Hebrew concept, it is not referring to the planet earth, rather to the rocks and soil on which one stands and in which one grows plants. In other words, “earth” refers to the dry land—the continents. We visualize a globe including oceans and continents as a unit called the earth. The ancient Hebrew language differentiated between the ocean and the earth. There may or may not have been a word for the concept that included both as a unit. Theologians do not recognize a word that is equivalent to our concept of a planet earth. However, in the phrase “the chambers of the south” in the book of Job, the word translated chambers refers to the planets of the southern sky. In that the word used for a planet inferred a container, and in the *Chronological Order of Creation* account by King David, these chambers were related to water, it may be that the ancient Hebrews realized that planets were associated with water as the planet earth is obviously a chamber containing water.

According to the ancient Hebrew concept, “foundations of the earth” refers to that layer under the land—a layer that we recognize as an under layer around the planet earth supporting both the continents and the oceans. Modern science calls it the mantle. The continents float in the mantle. The ancient Hebrews realized it was a molten support in which the land floats—and sometimes was discovered to be oozing out from under the land as molten lava.

According to the ancient Hebrew texts, before the continents existed, the planet earth existed and was covered with the foundations of the earth, a molten outer layer. Then, as the earth cooled, long before the hydrologic cycle came into existence, fountains of water spewed out of volcanoes and watered the surface, without covering it with oceans.

Then an atmosphere formed and captured water from outer space, separating it from the outer space supply. Thus the oceans were filled. Somehow, the other planets [*chambers of the south*] had something to do with this.

At that stage of development, there were no continents. Water covered the whole planet earth. The continents had not formed, there were none. So stated in the King James version, “*and the earth was without form [continents were not formed] and void [there were none].*”

The next stage was the emergence of the continents. This was a catastrophic event. The seas rolled back, and continents emerged, never again to be missing from the face of the earth. Modern science will recognize this as a surface renewal, major continental movement event, or catastrophic mantle turnover event where the cooled outer surface of the mantle, being more dense than that hotter mantle below, sank, sliding sideways as it sank, dragging the continental material floating on the mantle into a pile. There it continued to float on the surface of the mantle where the pile stuck out above sea level. And became dry land.

Once the continents emerged and became stable, life began to form in various stages as described in the *Seven-Day Creation Account*. Photosynthesis became the basis of the food chain whereby energy in the form of sunlight was converted to food which animals (and other non photosynthesis life forms (parasites, bacteria and viruses) used to fuel their existence and activities. In the food chain, first plants developed, then the higher life forms of animals up to and including humans.

In the ancient Hebrew view—the view presented in the bible—the heavens and the earth did not include the oceans. It referred to the heavens (sun, stars, moon, other planets,) and the

earth (continents.) When you see the word “earth” in the King James version, the original language is not referring to the planet earth. Rather, it is referring to that solid substance on which we stand as opposed to the oceans.

The concept “oceans,” to the ancient Hebrews is a different and separate concept from the “heavens and the earth.” It is translated into the word “deep” in the King James Version.

In the heavens was an abundance of water in which the planets were laid, as in laying a foundation of a building. That is not to say it was liquid water as we visualize water, but widely dispersed water as modern science has realized is the second most abundant molecule in the universe. There was nothing to build the planets on, just open space containing an abundance of water. As recently discovered by modern science, planets appear to be formed in areas of space where water is more abundant than other areas of space.

(The elements of water are the most abundant elements in the universe, particularly in the beginning stages of the universe. When the Old Earth advocate speaks of time required to form the material of which stars and planets are made, he is referring to the time required for the hydrogen of water to be converted into heavier elements. That conversion from water to planets is translated into theobabble in the King James version of the bible where it says, “Who layeth the beams of his chambers (planets) in the waters.”)

Thus, the concept of the earth in the context of the universe, held by the ancient Hebrew, at least as held by whoever wrote the bible, was much more akin to what has been recently discovered by modern science than any theologian has ever imagined, (or at least dared to publish.)

### **Notes Concerning Ancient Hebrew Concept of the Universe**

Earth: That in which crops grow, that on which we walk, known to scientists as continents.

Above the earth: Heavens: Everything out of reach above the earth: Atmosphere, Birds flying in the atmosphere, volcanic eruptions, lava falling from volcanic eruptions, northern lights [aurora borealis,] moon, planets [chambers of the south], sun, solar wind, water in outer space, comets, constellations, stars

Below the earth (below the continents): Everything out of reach below the continents—that on which the continents rest—the foundations of the earth—molten support for the continents [known to science as mantle], (sometimes leaks to the surface as lava flows,)

*“...for the pillars of the earth [are] the LORD'S, and he hath set the world upon them.”*

Samuel, c.925 BC, *Concept of Universe,*

*The Bible: I Samuel 2:8*

In the original Hebrew language, the word translated “pillars” means “molten support.” Obviously that concept was missed by the early translators as rest of the statement is translated assuming the “pillars” are somehow solid vertical posts visualized as stone columns common in ancient Greek architecture.