

We're Not "Flat Earthers"

Internal consistency and inerrancy – Evidenced in Science

God is enthroned above the circle of the earth; its inhabitants are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like thin cloth and spreads them out like a tent to live in. - Isaiah 40:22 HCSB



The Bible abounds with references to nature and natural processes and thus, frequently touches on the various sciences. Those who say the Bible is not a book of science have not read it closely enough.

However, the writers of the Bible do not attempt to formulate these statements in the terminology of a modern chemical or biological treatise. They use every day language comprehensible to all readers, describing the phenomenon in simplest terms.

Nevertheless, they are always amazingly accurate, even when tested by the most rigorous scientific requirements. The so-called scientific mistakes of the Bible are not mistakes at all, nor do they have to be allegorized or explained as cultural accommodations or conventionalities.

For instance the Bible repeatedly teaches that the earth is a sphere, using the Hebrew word "khug".¹ All three passages, in context, clearly refer to the something that is spherical, rounded or arched; in other words it suggests the sphericity of the earth as opposed to a flat or square earth which was the prevailing theory of the time. "Circle" refers to the global sea level, which defines the "circle of the earth"² and the "circle upon the face of the deep"³, and which defines the bounds which the waters cannot transgress as long as the earth endures in accordance with the Noahic covenant.⁴

In the Psalms, we are told that Hashem has removed our rebellious acts as far away from us as the east is from the west. "Far as east is from west" is a figure applied to the limitless scope of God's forgiving grace. One can travel east (or west) forever without coming to its end. This perfectly fits the idea of a global earth. If the earth were flat, you could only travel so far away from your sin. But the Psalmist is trying to convey the sense that our sins are irretrievably separated from us and that is only possible when used with the concept of a globe.

Isaiah was written sometime between 740 and 680BC. From 384-322 the earth was generally thought to be flat. This is at least 300 years before Aristotle suggested, in his book *On the Heavens*, that the earth might be a sphere. Even by 200 BC, the Romans still thought the earth was flat. It was another 2,000 years later (at a time when the majority of the scientists still believed that the earth was flat) that the Scriptures inspired Christopher Columbus to sail around the world. He finally demonstrated the soundness of this ancient biblical principle in 1520 AD.

¹ Isaiah 40:22; Job 26:10; Proverbs 8:27

² Isaiah 40:22

³ Proverbs 8:27

⁴ Genesis 8:22; 9:11