



Who is the Center of The Universe Anyway?

The Myth of the Flat Earth

IRAN ACROSS AN ARTICLE, from Newsweek of all places, that pointed out that humanity as a whole never really believed in the concept of a flat earth. [Douglas Main, "[Even in the Middle Ages, People Didn't Think the Earth Was Flat](#)," Newsweek, 16 January 2016].

"A round Earth appears at least as early as the sixth century B.C. with Pythagoras, who was followed by Aristotle, Euclid, and Aristarchus, among others in observing that the earth was a

sphere." By the first century A.D., "the sphericity of the earth was accepted by all educated Greeks and Romans." [Jeffrey Burton Russell, historian, 1997].

Actually, it should be noted that we have even earlier evidence of the belief.

"When He prepared the heavens, I was there, when He drew a circle on the face of the deep" ([Proverbs 8:27](#)).

"It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, who stretches

out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in" ([Isaiah 40:22](#)).

The Hebrew word translated as "circle" is *chuwg* (or sometimes transliterated as *khug*). It translates the concept of something round, rounded, or dome shaped and can be applied to a spherical shape. For

example, the other place this word is used is "Clouds are a hiding place for Him, so that He cannot see; and He walks on the vault of heaven" ([Job 22:14](#)) to describe shape

of the sky. Notice that "dome" would be an accurate translation in all three usages of the word in the Bible.

Chuwg is not used in the Bible to describe a flat circle or a disk. You cannot take what people wish this word to mean and then state that is how it was used by the writers of the

Bible. The Hebrew word for a flat circle, by the way is *cabab*. "So he had the ark of the LORD taken around the city, circling it once; then they came into the camp and spent the night in the camp" ([Joshua 6:11](#)).

[Proverbs 8:27](#) is of particular interest because it says the oceans (the deep) are round or circular. Yet, it

cannot be describing the shape of the shoreline since they are anything but round.

However, the surface of the oceans (its face) is round or spherical in shape. We

know such to be true because the earth is a sphere and the oceans take on a rounded (or if you will, a circular) shape. A disk shaped world would not give the oceans a circular, rounded, or dome shape.

Isaiah lived about 740-681 BC. Solomon, who wrote Proverbs, lived about 990-931 BC. Thus, the idea that



the earth was spherical has been around for many thousands of years, probably for as long as man has been on the earth.

Douglas Main, the writer of the Newsweek article, goes on to note that Christianity didn't change the acceptance of a round earth.

"While between two and five early popes denied the sphericity of the Earth, the vast majority of people disagreed. "The point is that no educated person believed" the Earth was flat, Russell notes."

So where did the myth arise that ancient people believed in a flat earth?

"The fault lies with 19th century writers such as Washington Irving, Jean Letronne and others. Letronne was "an academic of strong anti-religious prejudices ... who cleverly drew upon both to

misrepresent the church fathers and their medieval successors as believing in a flat earth, in his *On the Cosmographical Ideas of the Church Fathers*," published in 1834, Russell writes."

Wanting to disparage Christianity, these writers decided that early religious people had to have believed in a flat earth -- not because of evidence but because of their own dislike of religion.

"Why bother perpetuating falsehoods? Russell and Gould suggest **the flat-earth myth was used to**

demonize Christians and religion in general, and to lionize scientists. "The falsehood about the spherical earth became a colorful and unforgettable part of a larger falsehood: the falsehood of the eternal war between science (good) and religion (bad) throughout Western history," Russell writes.

"So where did the myth arise that ancient people believed in a flat earth?"

"The reason for promoting both the specific lie about the sphericity of the earth and the general lie that religion and science are in natural and eternal conflict in Western society, is to defend Darwinism," he continues, which was introduced around the same time.

"The flat-earth lie was ammunition against the Creationists. The argument was simple and powerful, if not elegant: 'Look how stupid these Christians are. They are always getting in the way of science and progress. These people who deny evolution today are exactly the same sort of people as those idiots who for at least a thousand years denied that the earth was round. How stupid can you get?'"

People readily accepted this lie because it matches the general belief that modern people are more advanced and knowledgeable than the ancients. The real problem is that we tend to forget the past. *"Is there anything of which it may be said, "See, this is new"? It has already*

been in ancient times before us. There is no remembrance of former things, nor will there be any remembrance of things that are to come By those who will come after" (Ecclesiastes 1:10-11). Sure, our technology has improved, but that doesn't mean our ancestors were ignorant. Nor is there anything inherent in religion that only attracts less intelligent people. History has shown repeatedly that many of our greatest advances have been accomplished by people with strong faith in God.

Knowledge doesn't evolve; it is discovered and sometimes lost, only to be rediscovered again by later generations.

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