



The Heavens Declare the Glory of God

Psalms 19:1 -- The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.

Psalms 8:1,3 -- O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Thy name in all the earth, Who hast displayed Thy splendor above the heavens!... When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou has ordained.

Introduction

1. When one considers the “glory” of God, he is trying to comprehend the very nature of the Almighty and the power and wisdom emanating from Him. The more one understands the Universe that surrounds us, the more one is impressed with the awesome and incredible force needed, not only to bring it all into creation, but also to maintain it.
2. That God is the creator is evident, not only from the fact that it is impossible statistically for all the wonders of astronomical science to be a matter of chance, but from what also the Lord tells us about the Universe in the Scriptures, way before man could fathom it out on his own. It defies reason and knowledge unless it be admitted that it is the omniscience insight of the Divine.

A. What God Told Moses 1450 B.C.

Genesis 1:14 -- Then God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and for years.”

1. First, Moses refers to the heavens where the stars are as an “expanse.” The King James Version uses the term “firmament”, reflecting the Translators knowledge of science at the time. They believed that the stars were locked in their positions and that the Universe was a firm and set piece of work.
2. Not to view them too harshly, even Albert Einstein, when he first considered his own formulas concerning the heavens, could not believe that they lead to an expanding Universe, so he rewrote them to represent the outer regions of space as static.
3. It was not until the 1930s that Edwin Hubble, using the new Palomar Observatory and viewing starlight through spectral analysis, saw that the shift of most stars was toward the red end of the spectrum and proposed the “Big Bang” theory.
4. Yet the Hebrew word, *raqiya*, that Moses used is explained by *Gesenius* (a Hebrew Lexicographer) as meaning, “to spread out by beating, as a tin plate.” It is a metallurgical term describing how metal spreads out while hammered. Thus Moses described the heavens as a “spreading out expanse.”
5. Further, Moses uses an interesting Hebrew word for “light.” The word more appropriately describes a “self contained light source”, or “luminary” (Literal translation). The translators again may also be wrong when they insert the word “moon”, for the moon is not a luminary, it only reflects the light from the sun. The interlinear states, “and the small luminary to rule the night, the stars.”
6. Actually, what causes some confusion is the unique word “and”. It is a three consonant word, the first letter only meaning “and”. The rest, according the *Gesenius* amplifies the word to mean, “and this same”, or “and they shall be called...”
7. Thus Moses identifies the “stars” as luminaries, or self-contained light sources. Again, man did not know this until Hubble discovered it in the 1930s, 3500 years later. Previously the stars were considered to be reflectors of the sun, pinholes in the canopy of the night through which the fires of hell were seen, or angelic beings, etc.

B. What God Told Job 200 B.C.

Job 38:1-2,7 -- Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said, “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?... where were you... when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”

1. When God told Job about the stars "singing" He used the Hebrew word *Ranan*: which interpreted means, "to emit a tremulous and stridulous sound, like a mast or pole in a wind... but not articulate."
2. No man had ever heard anything from the stars. It wasn't until the 1950s, at Bell Laboratories, that the science of Radio Astronomy was born. At first they thought it was interference from enemy jamming devices but gradually determined the noise was coming from the heavens.
3. This is when man started to listen to the stars. In the first ten years of exploring the heavens the amount of energy received from the stars equaled that of a single snowflake hitting the ground.
4. The radio dishes began to expand to the size of the one built in Arecibo, Puerto Rico (Seen also in the James Bond film, Golden Eye). Once they learned they did not have to build the dish so big, but could get the same effect by a series of smaller dishes like the ones in Socorro, New Mexico (26 miles of them), Radio Astronomy took off.
5. However, all they hear is what God described to Job 4000 years ago.
6. There is something more. Note that God mentions when the morning stars sang "together." Perhaps at one time God did start with the stars all together, like Hubble's Big Bang Theory. But who said it first? Of note, though, is that not all stars are moving away. Some have a definite "blue shift" to their spectrum.

C. What God Warned the Psalmist About

Psalms 115:16 -- *The heavens are the heavens of the Lord; but the earth He has given to the sons of men.*

1. For all of man's desire to conquer Outer Space, recent discoveries may preclude man from venturing very far from his home planet.
2. Advances in how we observe the stars have gone beyond Radio Astronomy. We are used to seeing the stars through telescopes that aid the eye, and we view the heavens as a cool dark place.
3. But with the advance of X-ray telescopes, the stars have taken on a more sinister aspect. Rather than the cool void often depicted in Science Fiction movies, the Universe is a very hot, explosive place. The night sky lights up under x-rays and our own sun is relatively cold compared to the magnitude of just about every other star out there, especially the exploding kind like the super novas. Radiation is tremendous.
4. Distances also are very daunting. The nearest star, Alpha Centauri, is 4.3 light years away. That means that it takes light traveling 186,000 miles a second four point three years to get here. Put another way, if Alpha Centauri died we would not know it until more than four years later.
5. The next star, Alpha Canis Minoris (Procyon) is 11.4 light years away, but is almost seven times brighter than our sun. Many of the 7,000 visible stars we see look dimmer only because they are so far away.
6. All this not only begins to limit man in his speculation about interstellar travel (the nearest star would take 16 years to get to by using a propulsion system capable of reaching a quarter of the speed of light. This would be equivalent to strapping a hydrogen bomb on the spaceship's backside), but also brings us into understanding the magnitude of our Universe and the unbelievable power of God to speak it into existence.

Psalms 33:6 -- *By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host.*

Hebrews 1:3 -- *And He... upholds all things by the word of His power...*

C. What God told Jeremiah About

Jeremiah 31:37 -- *Thus says the Lord, "If the heavens above can be measured...*

Jeremiah 33:22 -- *As the host of heaven cannot be counted...*

Nebula shine with the equivalent intensity of a trillion stars and their radio source is known as a Quasar. One is placed as the most distant known object in the Universe and it is receding at 149,000 miles per second. Ptolemy counted 1056 stars and claimed they could not exceed 3000 (150 A.D.). There are now 100 Billion in our Galaxy and trillions of known Galaxies *estimated*.