

billions of years old is not a fact of science but a theory of science' (emphasis in original).

It is, perhaps, a minor point, but I would contend that this belief is not even a 'theory', but is of much lower status. Perhaps it is an assumption, or a conclusion drawn from extrapolations, themselves based on assumptions. It might be an inference from selected data viewed within a certain set of presuppositions about those data, or merely a presumption. After all, to propose that it is valid to extrapolate a process back billions of years from which to draw conclusions that the Earth is billions of years old one must first assert the reality of those billions of years.

Reading further in the letter I find that I am in substantial agreement with his position opposing Dr Helweg's view that the Creation record in Genesis 1 is a statement of whom and not how. This reminds me of those who attempt to explain away New Testament miracles by unusual or peculiar conjunctions of natural processes and features in an attempt, usually futile, to make them acceptable to our atheistic contemporaries.

Dr Helweg's and similar proposals however, make little sense, I consider, for one who believes in the God of the Bible. It is as though there must always be a method of achieving the outcomes God wills which conforms to our expectation of what that method might be. We generally, and wisely, do not take this approach to the New Testament miracles. We do not say that the miracle at Cana tells us who made the water into wine instantly, not how it was done. Well, actually, we are told how it was done: by the word of God. What prevents this method being that employed in the creation of the universe, as Shackelford points out in his reference to Psalm 33:6?

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An infinite universe?

I recently encountered a belief that seems very common among Christians. With the exception of educated young earth creationists, most Christians seem to believe that the universe is unbounded and infinite. There actually seems to be a fear among Christians of a universe that has a boundary. 'If there's an edge, then what's out there?'

I was raised in church and home schooled, and until I read Dr Russell Humphreys' book *Starlight and Time*, I never questioned that the universe was unbounded and infinite. Since secular books and shows in the popular media say or imply that the universe is infinite, I think I picked it up from one of these sources. All it takes is for someone who seems credible to say that the universe is infinite one time, and from then on the average Christian will believe that the universe is infinite.

Many Christians argue that an infinite cosmos shows the infinite nature of God. One dictionary defines the universe as being infinite, or having boundless regions.¹ The same dictionary defines God as being infinite, unbounded or unlimited. Can this be? No other creation is equated with the Creator. Why should the universe be an exception? Equating the universe with God borders on pantheism! *'To whom then shall ye liken me, or shall I be his equal? saith the Holy One'* (Isaiah 40:25).²

The Bible says in numerous places that the universe has expanded. For example, Isaiah 40:22 says, God *'... stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.'*³ If the universe has expanded, then the universe must have a boundary of some sort. Something that is infinitely large cannot get any larger. Where is it going to go?

The Bible also states that the universe will collapse at sometime in the future. Isaiah 34:4 says, *'... the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll.'*⁴ In order for something to get smaller it must have a boundary. The infinitely large cannot become any smaller. There is no centre for it to collapse to.

When I have confronted Christians on this issue, some reject a bounded cosmos immediately, even vehemently. The idea that the universe is unbounded appears to be a case of 'vestigial thinking',⁵ useless thought patterns left over from evolutionary indoctrination. The universe being finite is a scary thought to the unsaved, but Christians have no reason to be frightened by the infinite God who is bigger than the universe and is *'... upholding all things by the word of His power...'* (Heb. 1:3)

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References

1. The word *infinite*: The Random House College Dictionary, revised edition, 1984, Random House, Inc.
2. See also: Isaiah 40:18, Psalms 89:8.
3. See also: 2 Samuel 22:10, Job 9:8, 26:7, 37:18, Psalms 18:9, 104:2, 144:5, Isaiah 42:5, 44:24, 45:12, 48:13, 51:13, Jeremiah 10:12, 51:15, Ezekiel 1:22, Zechariah 12:1.
4. See also: Hebrews 1:10-12, Revelation 6:14, 20:11.
5. I owe this turn of phrase to my mother, Anna Huso.