

**“The pillars of heaven are prostrate and astonished at his rebuke.”  
(Job 26:11)**

## **Pillars Of Heaven**

Dear Friends,

Greetings! The following is being presented as an historical representation of the beliefs of the ancient Hebrews with mainly Old Testament references on which they based their beliefs.

This is followed by an article from Wikipedia showing how this belief was not only accepted by the ancient Hebrews but by virtually every major religion and culture.

### **Ancient Hebrew Conception of the Universe.**

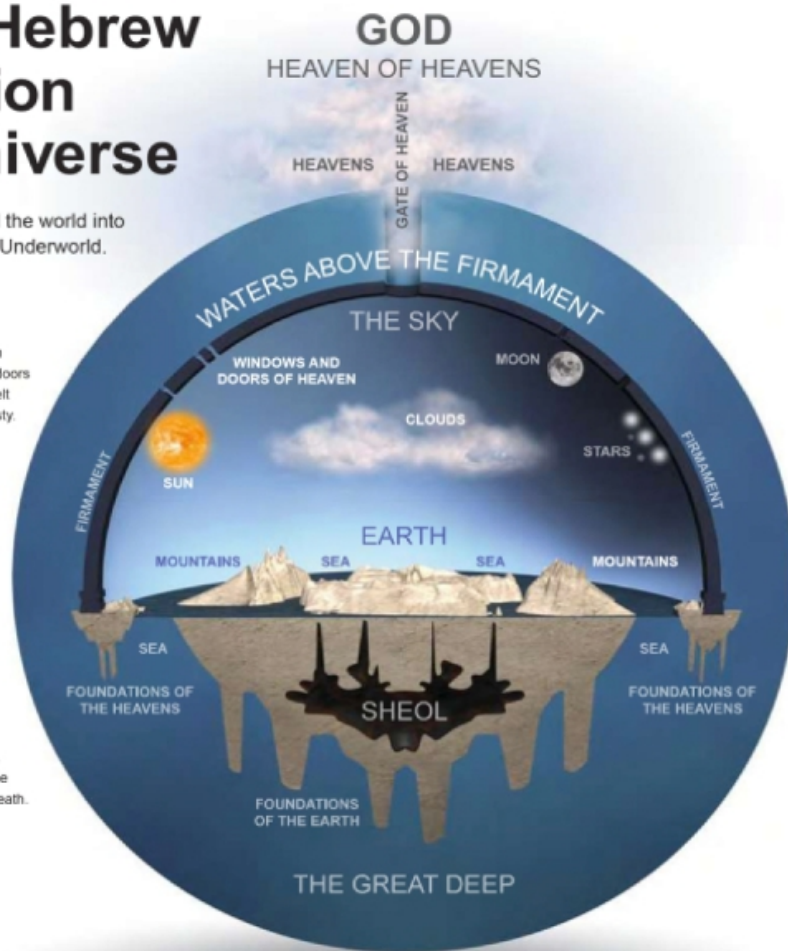
## **Ancient Hebrew Conception of the Universe**

The ancient Israelites divided the world into Heaven, Earth, Sea, and the Underworld.

They viewed the sky as a vault resting on foundations—perhaps mountains—with doors and windows that let in the rain. God dwelt above the sky, hidden in cloud and majesty.

The world was viewed as a disk floating on the waters, secured or moored by pillars. The earth was the only known domain—the realm beyond it was considered unknowable.

The Underworld (Sheol) was a watery or dusty prison from which no one returned. Regarded as a physical place beneath the earth, it could be reached only through death.



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”In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness WAS upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.” Genesis 1:1-5

“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set

them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.” Genesis 1:14-19

“Fear before him, all the earth: the world also shall be stable, that it be not moved.” 1 Chronicles 16:30

“The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.” Psalm 93:1

“Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously.” Psalm 96:10

“WHO laid the foundations of the earth, THAT it should not be removed for ever.” Psalm 104:5

His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh. Deuteronomy 33:17

The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed. 1 Samuel 2:10

For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven; Job 28:24

He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his lightning unto the ends of the earth. Job 37:3

That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it? Job 38:13

According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness. Psalms 48:10

Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be: and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah. Psalms 59:13

By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea: Psalms 65:5

God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him. Psalms 67:7

He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Psalms 72:8

He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Psalms 98:3

He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries. Psalms 135:7

Wisdom is before him that hath understanding; but the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth. Proverbs 17:24

Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell? Proverbs 30:4

Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth. Isaiah 26:15

Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. Isaiah 40:28

The isles saw it, and feared; the ends of the earth were afraid, drew near, and came. Isaiah 41:5

Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away. Isaiah 41:9

I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; Isaiah 43:6

Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. Isaiah 45:22

The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. Isaiah 52:10

When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to

ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures. Jeremiah 10:13

O LORD, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit. Jeremiah 16:19

A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the LORD hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the LORD. Jeremiah 25:31

When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens; and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures. Jeremiah 51:16

And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth. Micah 5:4

And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth. Zechariah 9:10

And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. ” Isaiah 11:12

“Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof;” Job 38:6

”Say among the heathen that YAHUWAH reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously. ” Psalm 96:10

And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH. (KJV) Isaiah 11:12 12

The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the ENDS OF ALL THE EARTH: (KJV) Daniel 4:11

It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in: Job 26: 7 7

He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. Joshua 10:13

And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.” Joshua 10:13

The sun and moon stood still in their habitation: at the light of thine arrows they went, and at the shining of thy glittering spear.” Habakkuk 3:11

Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.” Isaiah 38:8

And two from the New Testament

For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. Acts 13:47

And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

Revelation 7:1

“The flat Earth model is an archaic conception of the Earth's shape as a plane or disk. Many ancient cultures subscribed to a flat Earth cosmography, including Greece until the classical period, the Bronze Age and Iron Age civilizations of the Near East until the Hellenistic period, India until the Gupta period (early centuries AD) and China until the 17th century. That paradigm was also typically held in the aboriginal cultures of the Americas, and the notion of a flat Earth domed by the firmament in the shape of an inverted bowl was common in pre-scientific societies.

The idea of a spherical Earth appeared in Greek philosophy with Pythagoras (6th century

BC), although most Pre-Socratics retained the flat Earth model. Aristotle provided evidence for the spherical shape of the Earth on empirical grounds by around 330 BC. Knowledge of the spherical Earth gradually began to spread beyond the Hellenistic world from then on.

### **Ancient Near East**

In early Egyptian and Mesopotamian thought the world was portrayed as a flat disk floating in the ocean. A similar model is found in the Homeric account of the 8th century BC in which "Okeanos, the personified body of water surrounding the circular surface of the Earth, is the begetter of all life and possibly of all gods." The Israelites likely had a similar cosmology, with the earth as a flat disc floating on water beneath an arched firmament separating it from the heavens.

The Pyramid Texts and Coffin Texts reveal that the ancient Egyptians believed Nun (the Ocean) was a circular body surrounding nbwt (a term meaning "dry lands" or "Islands"), and therefore believed in a similar Ancient Near Eastern circular earth cosmography surrounded by water.

### **Early Christian Church**

The influential theologian and philosopher Saint Augustine, one of the four Great Church Fathers of the Western Church, similarly objected to the "fable" of an inhabited Antipodes:

But as to the fable that there are Antipodes, that is to say, men on the opposite side of the earth, where the sun rises when it sets to us, men who walk with their feet opposite ours that is on no ground credible. And, indeed, it is not affirmed that this has been learned by historical knowledge, but by scientific conjecture, on the ground that the earth is suspended within the concavity of the sky, and that it has as much room on the one side of it as on the other: hence they say that the part that is beneath must also be inhabited. But they do not remark that, although it be supposed or scientifically demonstrated that the world is of a round and spherical form, yet it does not follow that the other side of the earth is bare of water; nor even, though it be bare, does it immediately follow that it is peopled. For Scripture, which proves the truth of its historical statements by the accomplishment of its prophecies, gives no false information; and it is too absurd to say, that some men might have taken ship and traversed the whole wide ocean, and crossed from this side of the world to the other, and that thus even the inhabitants of that distant region are descended from that one first man.

The view generally accepted by scholars of Augustine's work is that he shared the common view of his contemporaries that the Earth is spherical, in line with his endorsement of science in *De Genesi ad litteram*. That view was challenged by noted Augustine scholar Leo Ferrari, who concluded that he was familiar with the Greek theory of a spherical earth, nevertheless, (following in the footsteps of his fellow North African, Lactantius), he was firmly convinced that the earth was flat, was one of the two biggest bodies in existence and that it lay at the bottom of the universe. Apparently Augustine saw this picture as more useful for scriptural exegesis than the global earth at the centre of an immense universe.

Diodorus of Tarsus, a leading figure in the School of Antioch and mentor of John Chrysostom, may have argued for a flat Earth; however, Diodorus' opinion on the matter is known only from a later criticism. Chrysostom, one of the four Great Church Fathers of the Eastern Church and Archbishop of Constantinople, explicitly espoused the idea, based on scripture, that the Earth floats miraculously on the water beneath the firmament. Athanasius the Great, Church Father and Patriarch of Alexandria, expressed a similar view in *Against the Heathen*.

Severian, Bishop of Gabala (d. 408), wrote that the Earth is flat and the sun does not pass under it in the night, but "travels through the northern parts as if hidden by a wall".

Wikipedia

“And they said, Come, let us build to ourselves a city and tower, whose top shall be to heaven, and let us make to ourselves a name, before we are scattered abroad upon the face of all the earth.” Genesis 11:4

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