

SIGNIFICANT INSIGNIFICANCE

God is BIGGER than our wildest imagination and BIGGER than our most eloquent vocabulary. Just look up into the heavens!

Psalm 19:1-3 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

If the universe was just for human beings to live in, then it is enormously oversized – what a waste! BUT, if the universe has actually been created to display the glory of God, then it couldn't possibly be too big! The heavens teach us two things – **GOD IS BIG**, and **WE ARE SMALL**. The skies are like a mammoth billboard over our heads.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

Frederic Schuller – “The universe is ONE of God's thoughts.”

Psalms 33:6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

God said, “Let there be LIGHT.” It came out of His mouth! **That's power!** He quite literally breathed out the stars!

Psalms 104:2 Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

LIGHT travels 186,000 miles/second; 11,600,000 miles/minute; 669,600,000 miles/hour. **That's fast!** Our sun is 93,000,000 miles away from earth – exactly the right distance. The light from the sun is so fast that from the time it leaves the surface of the sun until you feel it on your skin is just 8 minutes.

Isaiah 40:12 Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?

We have to measure the Heavens with a LIGHT YEAR (5.88 trillion miles), but God can measure the Heavens with the span of His HAND!

Isaiah 40:22 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:

THE BLUE MARBLE is a famous photograph of the earth taken on December 7, 1972 by the crew of the Apollo 17 spacecraft (the last manned lunar mission) at a distance of about 18,000 miles, shortly after they had left earth's gravitational pull to begin their journey to the moon. There are no skyscrapers in this photo – they would be far too small.

The Voyager 1 spacecraft, launched on September 5, 1977 is the farthest human-made object from earth. In the vacuum of space with no resistance, it can travel at a speed of 10.69 miles per second, or 38,484 miles per hour. Voyager has been travelling for 31 years this September, and is right now over 9.6 billion miles from earth. Light from earth (which travels at 186,000 miles per second) takes 1.4 seconds to reach the moon, 8.5 minutes to reach the sun, but over 13.8 hours to reach Voyager at its current position.

On February 14, 1990 NASA commanded Voyager 1, having completed its primary mission, to turn around as it left our solar system and take a photograph. One image it returned was later named **THE PALE BLUE DOT**. The picture is taken at a distance of approximately 4 billion miles, and shows the planet earth suspended in a sunbeam. It took hours for the spacecraft just to transmit the picture, and NASA states that our entire planet is “only 0.12 pixel in size.” Al Gore's 2006 documentary film “An Inconvenient Truth” featured the PALE BLUE DOT photo at the end.

It was the brilliant American astronomer Carl Sagan (he died in December a year ago) who pushed NASA to have Voyager 1 take this photograph. And in his 1994 book by the same title (“Pale Blue Dot”), he writes these words ...

From this distant vantage point the earth might not seem of any particular interest. But for us it's different. Consider again that dot. That's here. That's home. That's us. On it everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever was, lived out their lives. The aggregate of our joy and suffering, thousands of confident religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines, every hunter and forager, every hero and coward, every creator and destroyer of civilization, every king and peasant, every young couple in love, every mother and father, hopeful child, inventor and explorer, every teacher of morals, every corrupt politician, every “superstar,” every “supreme leader,” every saint and sinner in the history of our species lived there – on a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam.

The Earth is a very small stage in a vast cosmic arena. Think of the rivers of blood spilled by all those generals and emperors so that, in glory and triumph, they could become the momentary masters of a fraction of a dot. Think of the endless cruelties visited by the inhabitants of one corner of this pixel on the scarcely distinguishable inhabitants of some other corner, how frequent their misunderstandings, how eager they are to kill one another, how fervent their hatreds.

Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the Universe, are challenged by this point of pale light. Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. In our obscurity, in all this vastness, there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves.

The Psalmist would agree with every word in this excerpt except for the last statement, because he knows that ...

Psalm 121:2 My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

The MILKY WAY GALAXY (our “subdivision” in the universe) is 100,000 light years from one side to the other. We live about 2/3 of the way out from the center in a calm place where our solar system can safely reside.

At the active center of our galaxy, stars are still being formed. There are billions of stars in our galaxy, and our sun is just one of them! It’s not the biggest or grandest star in our galaxy; it’s just one, regular star.

If you counted the stars in the Milky Way at a rate of one-per-second, it would take 2,500 years just to count the stars in our galaxy. But God has counted the stars in all the galaxies, and called them all by name!

Isaiah 40:25-26 To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth.

GOD IS BIG, and WE ARE SMALL. But ironically, the fall of man in the Garden of Eden causes me to think I’m much bigger than I really am. Realistically, our lives are just not that important in the overall scheme of what God is doing throughout history (and beyond!) in the universe.

David grasped both concepts ... **GOD IS BIG** and **WE ARE SMALL** ...

Psalms 8:1 O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

Psalms 8:3-4 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

But David also grasped a third concept ... **ALTHOUGH WE ARE INSIGNIFICANT IN THE UNIVERSE, WE ARE SIGNIFICANT TO GOD!**

Psalms 8:5-6 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:

Scientists say that our solar system compared to the Milky Way galaxy is like a quarter compared to the size of North America. The Milky Way Galaxy is just one galaxy among hundreds of billions of galaxies – and those are just the ones we can see! God must get some enjoyment out of watching our ongoing “discoveries” of things He created eons ago!

Hebrews 1:10-12 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

EARTH FROM SPACE SHUTTLE COLUMBIA

- January 26, 2003 – five days before the shuttle and crew were lost

HUBBLE SPACE TELESCOPE IMAGES

THE SUN – OUR STAR

- 93,000,000 miles away
- just the right distance to sustain life on earth
- 100 times the diameter of earth
- It would take 7 million years of the gross national product of the US and Canada for a power company to “run the Sun” for 1 second!

SURFACE OF THE SUN / SUNSPOT

OUR GALAXY WITH BARRED CENTER NUCLEUS

- 1000 light years thick

PLEIADES (THE SEVEN SISTERS)

- 440 light years away, in our Milky Way galaxy

Job 9:8-10 Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea. Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and **Pleiades**, and the chambers of the south. Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number.

BETLEGEUSE

- 600 light years away, in our Milky Way galaxy
- 1000 times bigger than our sun

VELA PULSAR

- 1000 light years away, in our Milky Way galaxy
- collapsed star, emitting pulse 11 times per second – it never stops!
- **SOUND OF VELA PULSAR**

Psalms 148:3 Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.

RING NEBULA

- 2000 light years away, in our Milky Way galaxy
- dying star, 1 light year across, hot blue, cooler yellow, orange, red

HOURLASS NEBULA

- 8000 light years away, in our Milky Way galaxy
- doesn't this look like the Lord is watching us? 😊

ETA CARINA

- 8500 light years away, in our Milky Way galaxy
- superstar of our galaxy
- 100 times the mass (energy) of our sun
- 6 billion times brighter than the sun

WE ARE NOW LEAVING THE MILKY WAY GALAXY ...

SMALL MAGELLANIC CLOUD

- our nearest neighbour galaxy
- 200,000 light years away
- Incubator of new stars – 50 of them being birthed right now, each one 300,000 times brighter than our sun

SOMBRERO GALAXY

- 28 million light years away

WHIRLPOOL GALAXY

- 31 million light years away
- the darling of astronomers – a “grand design” galaxy – two arms
- sits side on to us – great view

CROSS PICTURE

This is Jesus Christ – and He made everything we've been looking at

Hebrews 1:1-3 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

- **GOD IS BIG**
- **WE ARE SMALL**
- **ALTHOUGH WE ARE INSIGNIFICANT IN THE UNIVERSE, WE ARE SIGNIFICANT TO GOD**

The galaxies are astonishing, but they don't have SOULS like we do!

Psalms 103:8-12 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

CENTER OF WHIRLPOOL GALAXY (“X” FEATURE)

- 1100 light years across
- one beam is 100 light years in diameter
- God says, “I made the first move eons ago to show you my mercy”

WE ARE SIGNIFICANT TO GOD!

The God who fashioned the Heavens also fashioned you!

God has made us a promise that if we would become His children, He would literally hold us in His hand and carry us all the days of our lives.

Psalms 33 introduces us to a “star-breathing” God, but then it turns an interesting corner ...

Psalms 33:9 For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

Psalms 33:13-15 The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. **He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works.**

Colossians 1:16-17 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, **and by him all things consist.**

God says that He is literally the One who **HOLDS US TOGETHER** by His power! But how can I really know that is true?

A protein molecule called LAMININ is the cell adhesion molecule within the human body. It is like the REBAR of the human body, the steel bars they put in concrete when they lay the foundations of buildings. It holds your membranes together – it is the GLUE of the human body.

LAMININ – SCIENTIFIC DIAGRAM

LAMININ – ELECTRON MICROSCOPE

The UNIVERSE is one of God's thoughts, but so are YOU. He knows the name of every star, but He also knows YOUR name!

Isaiah 40:27-31 Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God? 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. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

Luke 19:37-40 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

Romans 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

Psalms 19:1-3 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

I will not be outdone by a star that has never tasted grace! If the Heavens declare the glory of God, so will I by my life of worship!