



Scripture and Cosmology: Reading the Bible Between the Ancient World and Modern Science

Kyle Greenwood

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Christians often claim to hold a biblical worldview. But what about a biblical cosmos view?

From the beginning of Genesis we encounter a vaulted dome above the earth, a "firmament," like the ceiling of a planetarium. Elsewhere we read of the earth sitting on pillars. What does the dome of heaven have to do with deep space? Even when the biblical language is clearly poetic, it seems to be funded by a very different understanding of how the cosmos is put together.

As Kyle Greenwood shows, the language of the Bible is also that of the ancient Near Eastern palace, temple and hearth. There was no other way of thinking or speaking of earth and sky or the sun, moon and stars. But when the psalmist looked at the heavens, the delicate fingerwork of God, it evoked wonder. Even today it is astronomy and cosmology that invoke our awe and point toward the depths of divine mystery.

Greenwood helps us see how the best Christian thinkers have viewed the cosmos in light of Scripture—and grappled with new understandings as science has advanced from Aristotle to Copernicus to Galileo and the galaxies of deep space. It's a compelling story that both illuminates the text of Scripture and helps us find our own place in the tradition of faithful Christian thinking and interpretation.

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