

What Does the Bible Teach About the Universe?

October 7, 2021 Thursday Indepth Bible
Class of the Trilacoochee church of Christ

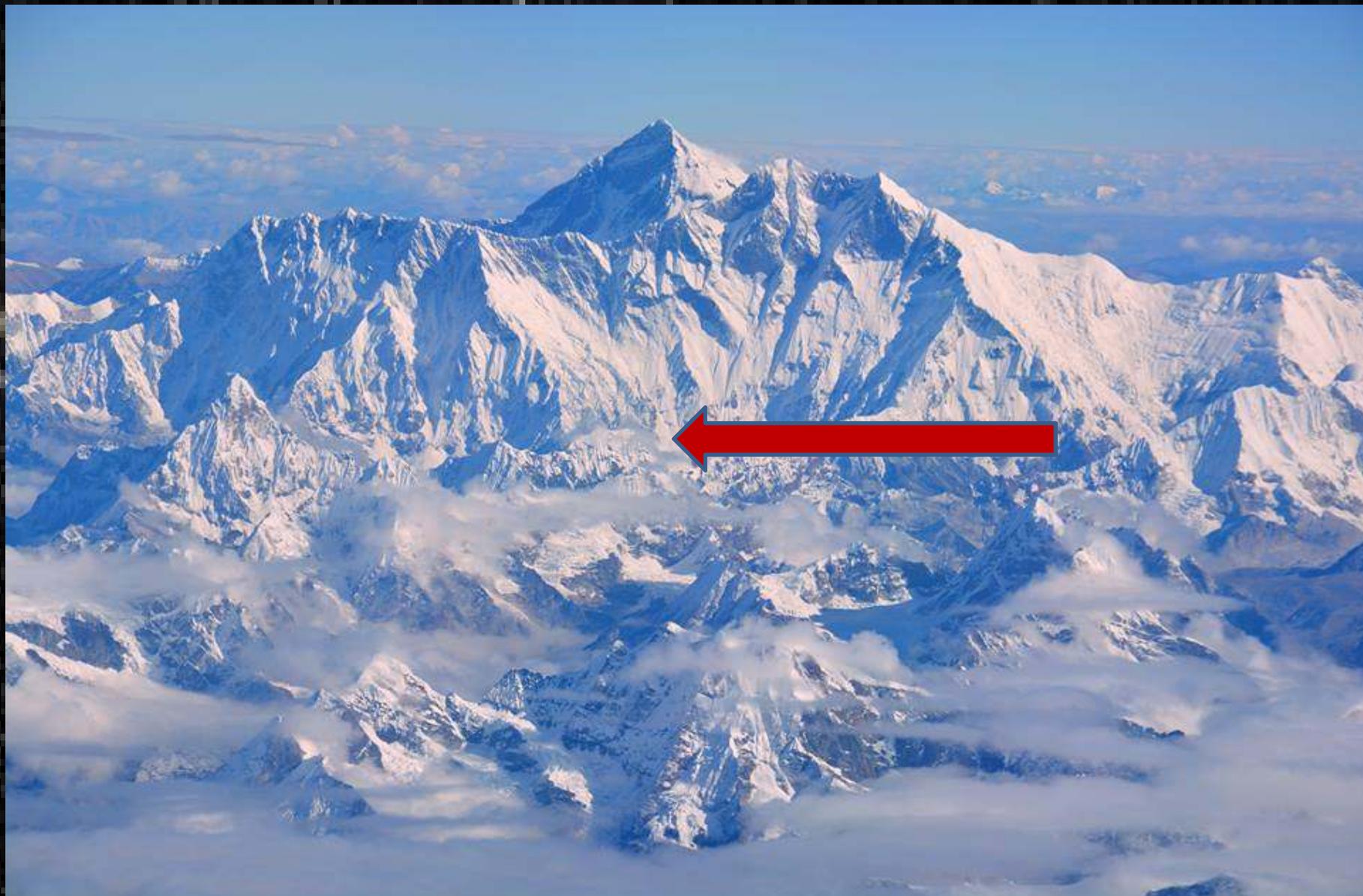
What is the Universe?

- “The universe is all of space and time and their contents, including planets, stars, galaxies, and all other forms of matter and energy.” (Wikipedia)
- From the Biblical perspective it is everything that is “heavens” (or not the earth) bound by the laws of God that govern matter, energy, space, and time.
 - It is a realm where human life cannot exist unaided, hostile to our existence.
 - It is incredibly vast, unreachable, and unconquerable by any means available to humankind.
 - It is not the Divine realm, but the Divine created, sustains, controls, and permeates it.
 - It is a realm that emphasizes our minute condition and our utter dependence on God for meaning and purpose.

Human Beings on the Lower Slope of Mount Everest



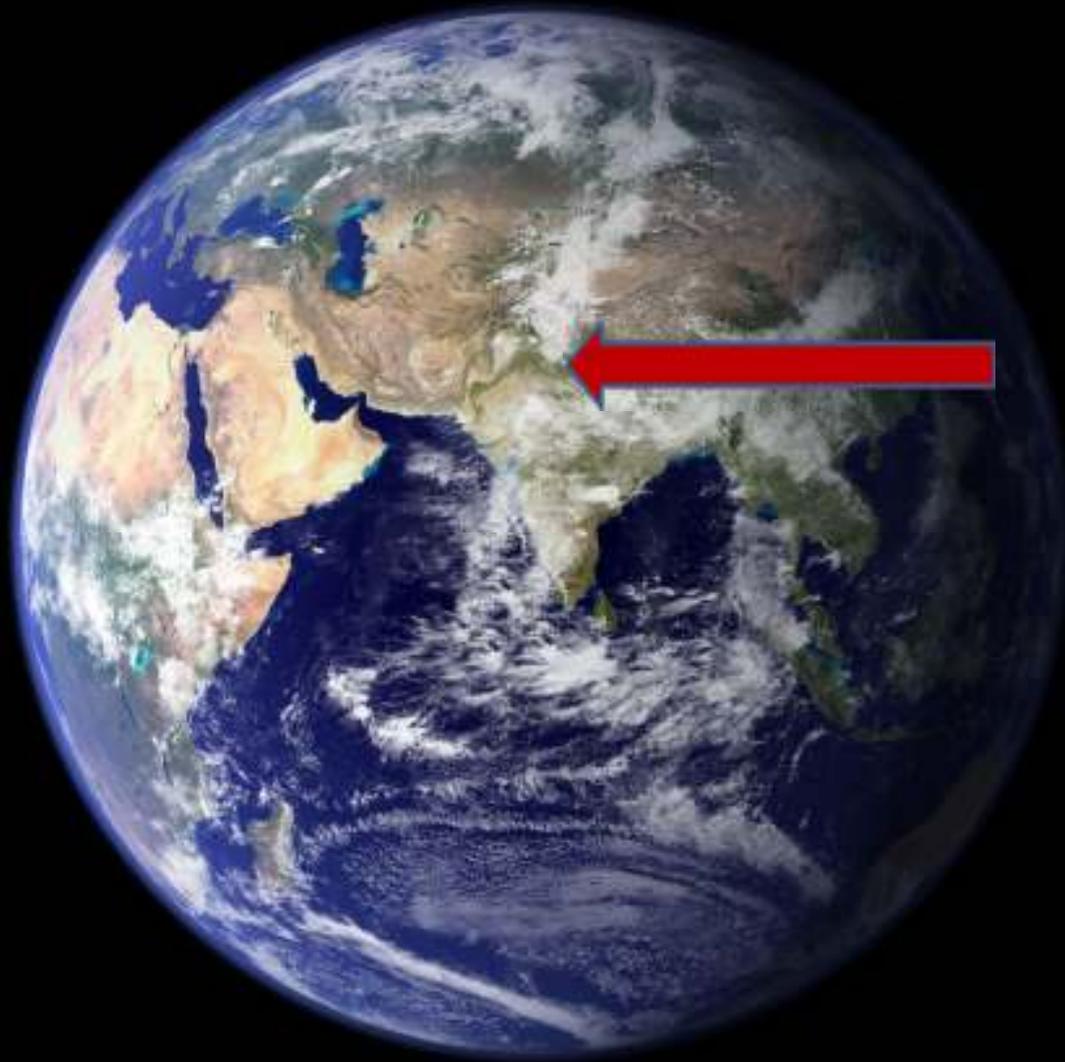
Mount Everest from the Air



Mount Everest from Space



Mount Everest from Outer Orbit

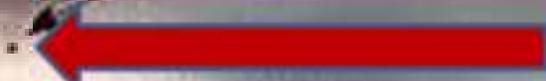


Earth Compared to the Sun

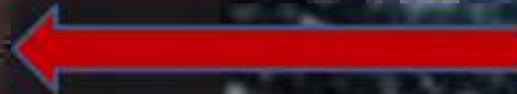
Sun

Jupiter

Earth



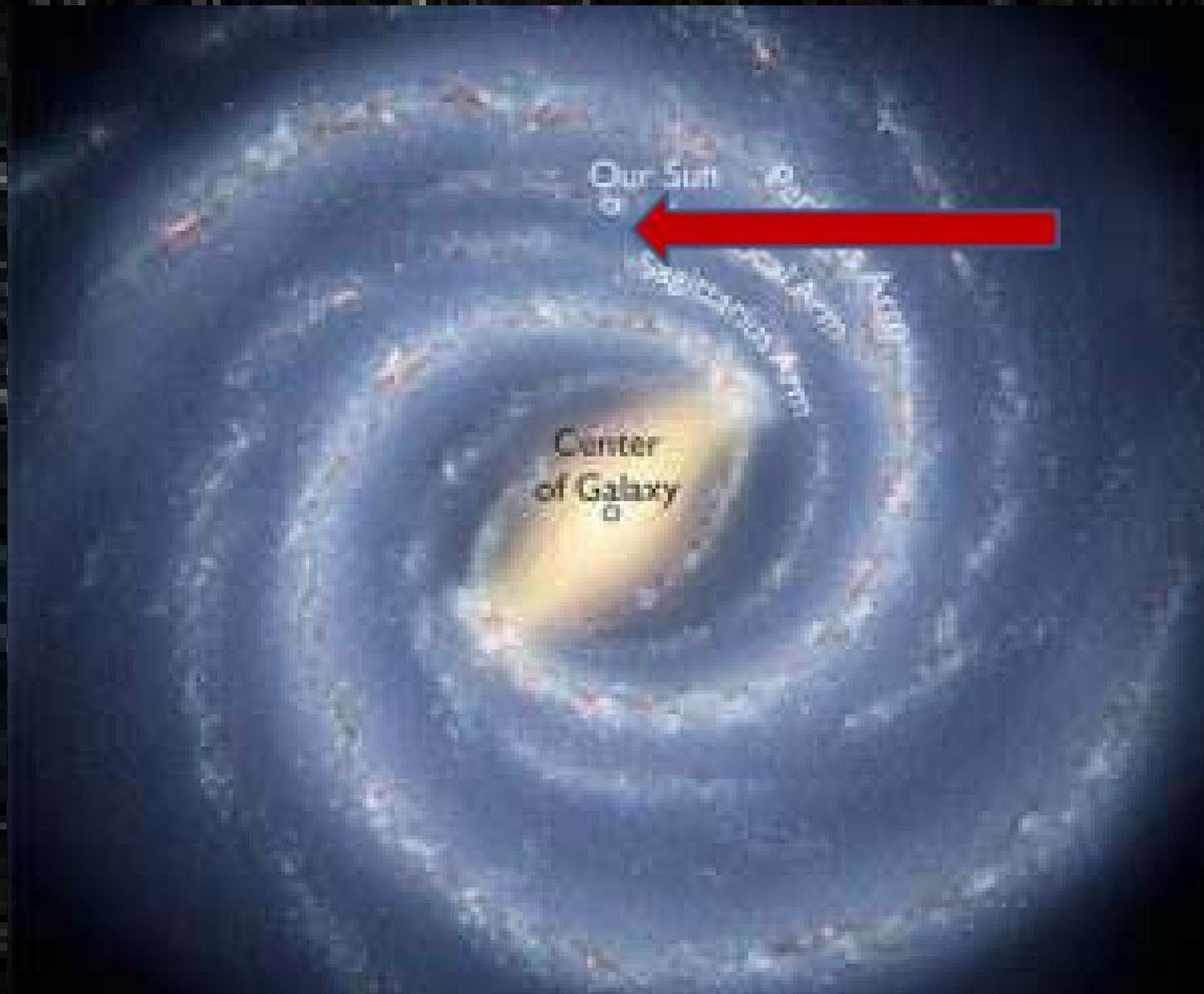
Earth From Pluto's Outer Orbit



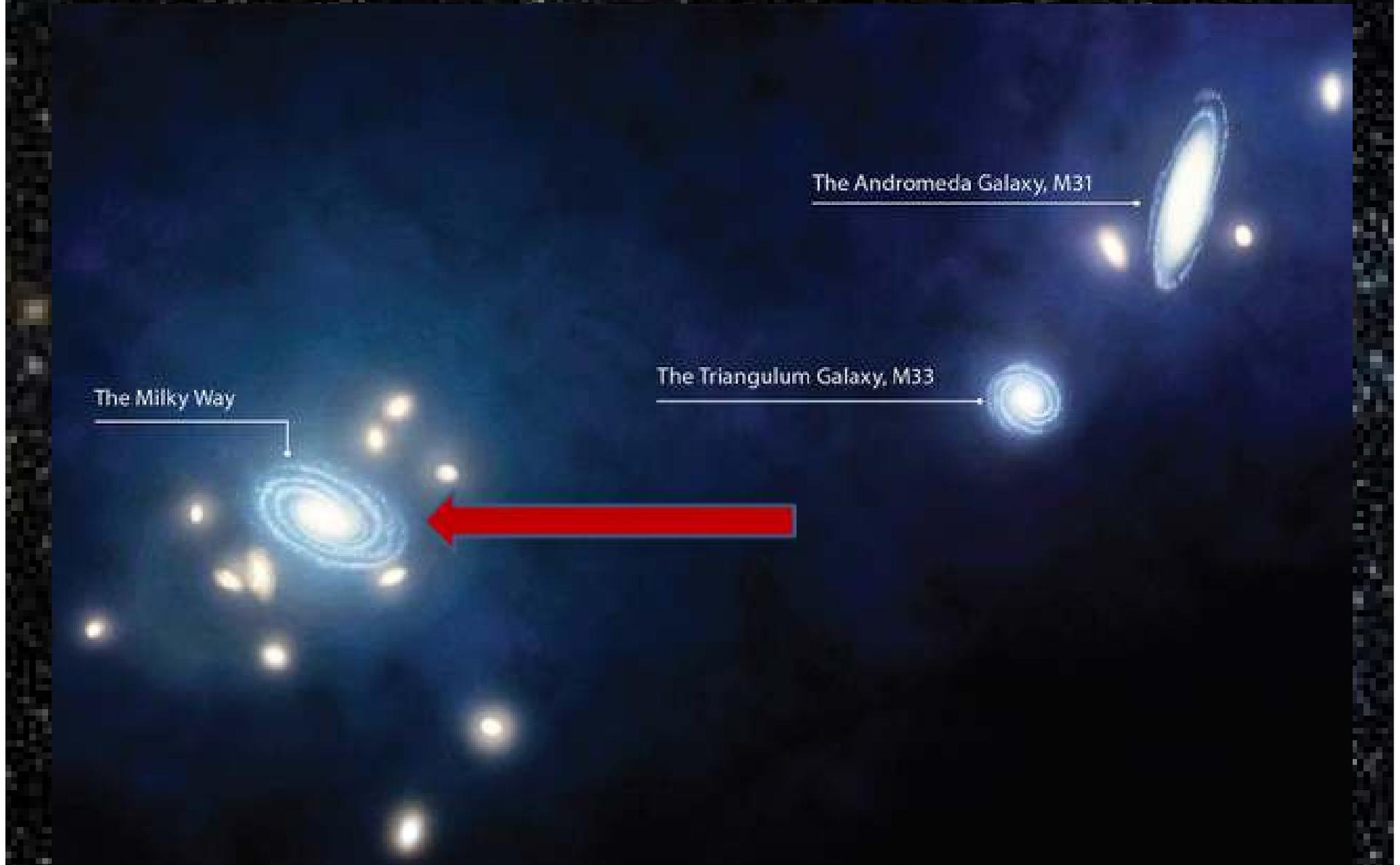
The Sun from Pluto's Outer Orbit



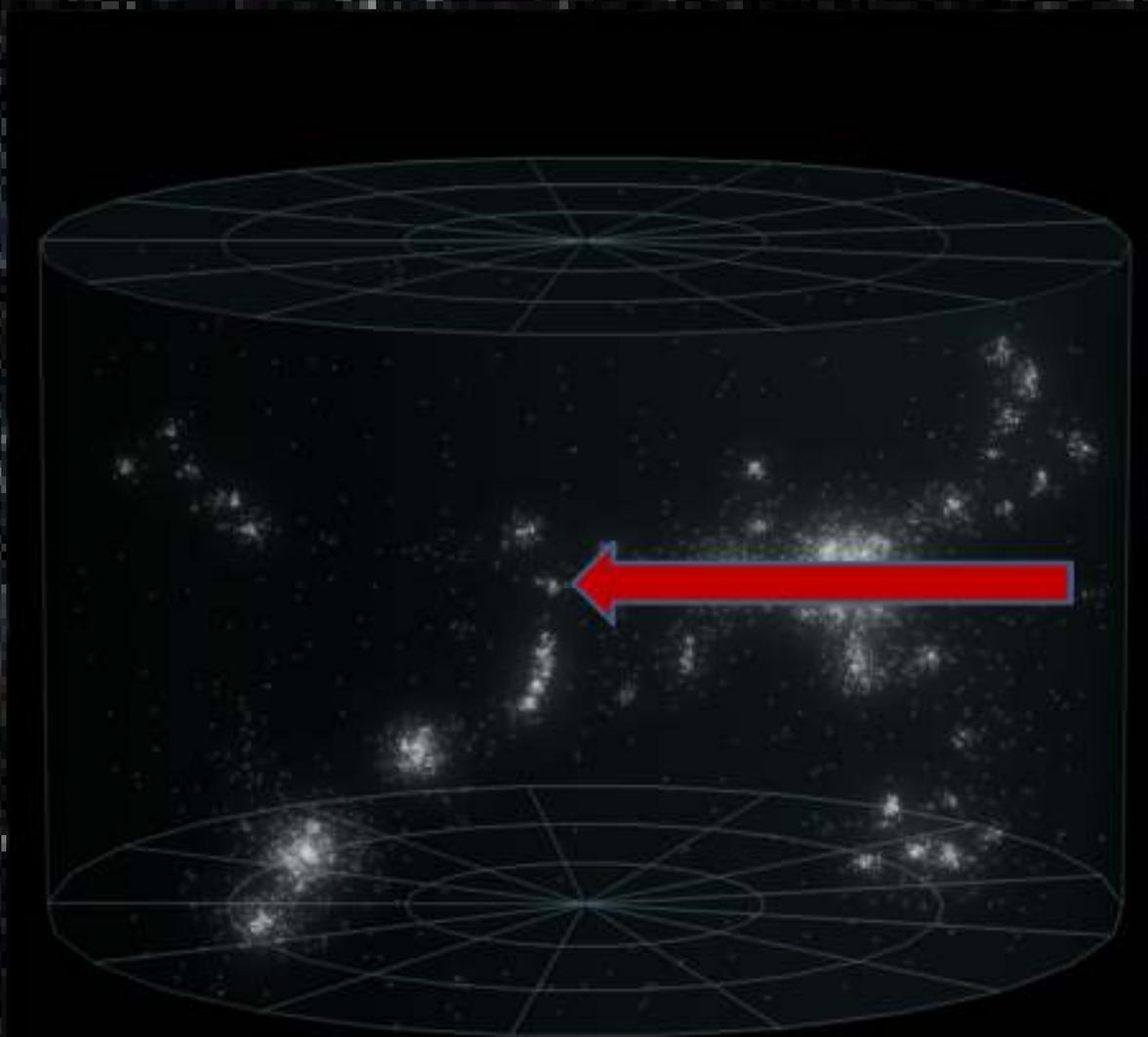
Sun in the Milky Way Galaxy



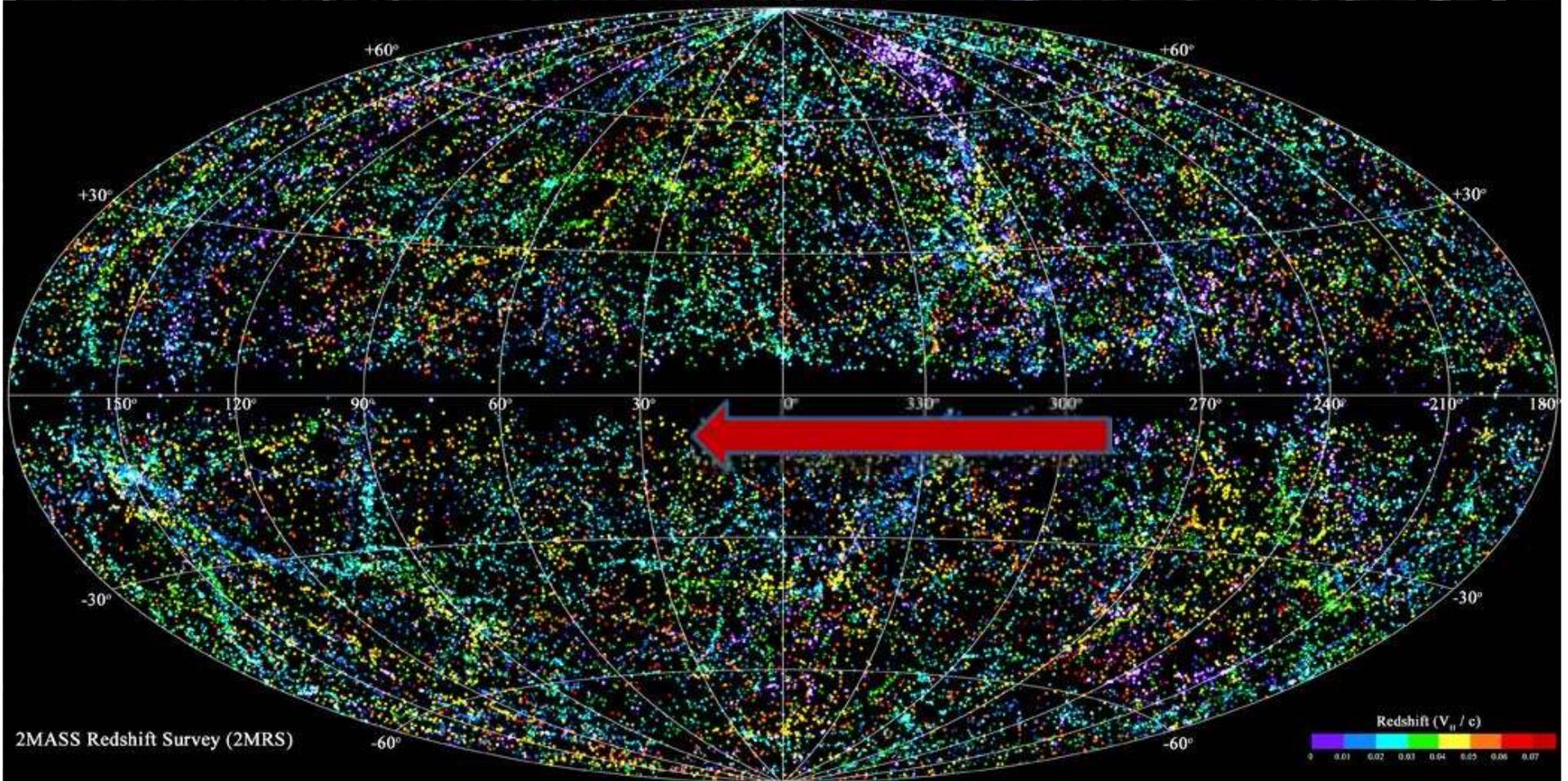
Our Galaxy in the Local Group



Our Local Group in the Virgo Supercluster



Virgo Supercluster in Visible Universe



How Big is the Universe?

- Distance from earth to the edge of the visible universe is 13,700,000,000 light years.
- Light travels 186,282 miles per second
- 5,878,625,370,000 miles per year
- It is 161,074,340,000,000,000,000,000 miles from one end of the visible universe to the other.
- If we could travel at the speed of light (impossible according to physics) it would take 27,400,000,000 years to make the trip.

How Big is God?

- Isa. 40:12 - “Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, Measured heaven with a span And calculated the dust of the earth in a measure? Weighed the mountains in scales And the hills in a balance?”
- Prov. 30:4 - “Who has ascended into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His Son's name, If you know?”

How Small We Are!

- Job 7:17 - “What is man, that You should exalt him, That You should set Your heart on him?”
- Psalm 144:3 - LORD, what is man, that You take knowledge of him? Or the son of man, that You are mindful of him? 4 Man is like a breath; His days are like a passing shadow.”
- Psalm 8:3-6 When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, 4 What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? 5 For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. 6 You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet”

Why Did God Make The Universe So Big?

- As a home for humankind it is immensely overbuilt and unimaginably large.
- It is hubris to believe that God made the universe for us.

Why Did God Make The Universe So Big?

- The Bible states that He made the earth for us.
 - Gen. 1:26-28 - “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”
 - Psalm 115:16 - “The heavens are the Lord's heavens, but the earth he has given to the children of man.”

Why Did God Make The Universe So Big?

- The universe was created to glorify God.
 - Gen. 1:1 - “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”
 - Psalm 19:1-4 - “The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. 2 Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge. 3 There is no speech nor language Where their voice is not heard. 4 Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their words to the end of the world.”
 - Psalm 147:4 - He determines the number of the stars; He gives to all of them their names.”
 - Isa. 40:26 - “Lift up your eyes on high, And see who has created these things, Who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, By the greatness of His might And the strength of His power; Not one is missing.”

Why Did God Make The Universe So Big?

- The universe was created to glorify God.
 - Heb. 1:3 (ESV) - “He upholds the universe by the word of his power.”
 - Heb. 11:3 - “By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.”
 - 2 Peter 3:7 - “By the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.”
 - Rom. 1:20 - “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse”

Why Did God Make The Universe So Big?

- Everywhere we look, the farther out we can see, there is a testimony of God.
 - Magnetars
 - The Pillars of Creation
 - The Vela Pulsar (12 miles in diameter and rotates 11 times per second)
 - Quasars (super massive black holes billions of times larger than our sun, consuming the entire energy output of four suns per minute)

Why Did God Make The Universe So Big?

- God created the universe as a testimony for Himself for the purpose of creating wonder and faith within humankind. He showed us His power in the heavens to move us to want to draw near Him and to be like Him.
 - Isa. 45:12 - “I made the earth and created man on it; it was my hands that stretched out the heavens, and I commanded all their host.”
 - Isa. 44:24 - “Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb: ‘I am the Lord, who made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself’”

Why Did God Make The Universe So Big?

- The universe testifies that since God has the power to create something that great and glorious, He can resolve any matter humankind must bear.
 - Isa. 42:5-8 - “Thus says God the LORD, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, Who gives breath to the people on it, And spirit to those who walk on it: 6 ‘I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles, 7 To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house. 8 I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another”

Why Did God Make The Universe So Big?

- Psalm 75:1-3 - “We give thanks to You, O God, we give thanks! For Your wondrous works declare that Your name is near. 2 ‘When I choose the proper time, I will judge uprightly. When the earth totters, and all its inhabitants, it is I who keep steady its pillars.’”

Why Did God Create The Universe?

- He created it for Himself
 - Prov. 16:4 - “The LORD has made all for Himself”
 - Rom 11:36 - “For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever.”

Why Did God Create The Universe?

- He created it as an act of His Own will
 - Rev. 4:11 - “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being”
 - Col. 1:16 - “For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.”

Why Did God Create The Universe?

- He created it so that we might know Him
 - Psalms 104:24-31 - “O LORD, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all. The earth is full of Your possessions- 25 This great and wide sea, In which are innumerable teeming things, Living things both small and great. 26 There the ships sail about; There is that Leviathan Which You have made to play there. 27 These all wait for You, That You may give them their food in due season. 28 What You give them they gather in; You open Your hand, they are filled with good. 29 You hide Your face, they are troubled; You take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. 30 You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; And You renew the face of the earth. 31 May the glory of the LORD endure forever; May the LORD rejoice in His works.”

Why Did God Create The Universe?

- Isa. 43:1-7 - “But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: ‘Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine. 2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you. 3 For I am the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place. 4 Since you were precious in My sight, You have been honored, And I have loved you; Therefore I will give men for you, And people for your life. 5 Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, And gather you from the west; 6 I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ And to the south, ‘Do not keep them back!’ Bring My sons from afar, And My daughters from the ends of the earth- 7 Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him.’”

What Is Our Place In This Universe?

- Carl Sagan, the American astronomer who rabidly opposed the Christian view of creation, was interviewed on the US TV program Dateline by Ted Koppel. That interview was only a few days before Sagan's death, though Sagan didn't know that he had less than a week to live. Koppel asked him if he had any closing remarks, any words of wisdom he would like to share with the people of the earth and this is what he said; "We live on a hunk of rock and metal that circles a humdrum star that is one of 400 billion other stars that make up the Milky Way galaxy which is one of billions of other galaxies which make up the universe which may be one of a very large number, perhaps an infinite number of other universes. That is a perspective on human life and our culture that is well worth pondering." In short:
 - We came from nowhere.
 - We are going nowhere.
 - There is no purpose in anything that we see around us.
 - Life is meaningless.
 - Humans are not special in any sense.

What Is Our Place In This Universe?

- How different is the perspective of Genesis 1.
 - There is a Creator.
 - Humankind has a Maker.
 - God designed the universe for Himself and the earth for humankind.
 - He especially made the earth unique amongst all the trillions of stars in the cosmos.
 - Humans are very special, made in His Image.
 - Our Maker is not silent but has spoken to us by His servants and His Son.

What Is Our Place In This Universe?

- God's creation of the universe testifies:
 - That we are made in His image; we are not insignificant.
 - That we have been given dominion and stewardship of the earth; we are not an evolutionary accident or a malignant force on this planet.
 - That God loves us so much that He:
 - 1) made this world for our dwelling,
 - 2) made this universe to tell us about Himself,
 - 3) gave us His word to guide our existence,
 - and 4) sent His Son to pay for our sins so that we can live with Him in His eternal realm.

Our God Is An Awesome God!

- Psalm 47:2 - “For the LORD Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the earth.”
- Psalm 99:3 - “Let them praise Your great and awesome name-He is holy.”
- Psalm 111:9 - “He has sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever: Holy and awesome is His name.”
- Psalm 145:5 - “I will meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty, And on Your wondrous works. 6 Men shall speak of the might of Your awesome acts, And I will declare Your greatness.”