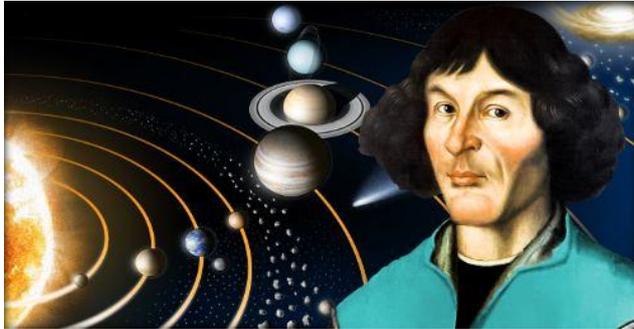


# Earth's uniqueness in the Universe

Dr Michael Jarvis

## Introduction



Before the dawn of our Scientific Age it was assumed that our Earth was the centre of the universe.

This view was encouraged by the prevailing interpretation of some Bible passages, such as, *In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion, like a champion rejoicing to run*

*his course. It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is hidden from its heat* (Psalm 19: 4-6 NIV translation)). There are other similar Bible passages that clearly are poetic or are descriptions of events as seen by people on earth.

However, the invention of telescopes enabled thinkers such as Copernicus to develop his theory, known as "Copernican heliocentrism".

Nicolaus Copernicus published this in 1543 and it suggested that the Sun was near the centre of the universe and was motionless, with the Earth and the other planets orbiting around it in circular paths.



Scientific discoveries built upon this Copernican understanding showing that even our Sun was only one of more than a billion other suns within a much larger galaxy that we now call the Milky Way.

The Milky Way galaxy is shaped something like the spiral shape shown here and our Sun is situated towards the outer edge.

Scientific discoveries expanded our knowledge further with the discoveries of other galaxies, now known to number at least a hundred billion, each containing a billion or more suns.

**It increasingly seemed that our Earth was just a minute speck in an awesomely great universe. It seemed that we had lost our uniqueness! It seemed that we had lost our claim to be the centre of the universe!**

2.

In recent years we have discovered many other planets circling around suns. This has led some scientists to suggest that life must be common in the universe. So even the existence of life on our planet no longer seemed to point to our uniqueness.

**However, it seems that our fortunes are about to change.**

### **Reclaiming the Earth's uniqueness**

Complex computer simulations have enabled a group of six scientists to examine the statistical probability that other planets exist with the same essential qualities as our Earth. These essential qualities are those needed for intelligent biological life to exist on a planet.

These scientists, who are all from leading institutions of physics and astronomy, have written a paper entitled '**Terrestrial planets across space and time**' (Astrophysical Journal 833.214 December 20. 2016).

They conclude that the chance of there being other intelligent life in our own 'Milky Way' galaxy seems to be very small, even though our galaxy contains more than a thousand million suns and many of these have orbiting planets.

This conclusion comes as a disappointment for scientists involved in the SETI programme that centres around the scientific 'Search for ExtraTerrestrial Intelligent Life'.

The authors comment; *"If the probability for the emergence of intelligent life is sufficiently small, we could well be the only advanced civilization in the Milky Way. If so, our only chance of detecting intelligent life elsewhere in the universe would be to extend the search radius"*.

Another comment in the paper says *'Extragalactic SETI would also seem the only way to gauge the prevalence of civilizations .....since the Milky Way does not appear to host such a super civilization.*

**In other words, if science is ever to detect other civilisations in the universe we will probably have to look beyond our own galaxy. This creates enormous problems since the other galaxies are situated millions or even billions of Light Years away. Since the information from other galaxies only reaches us at the speed of light, we are actually looking millions or billions of Earth years into the past!**

**It increasingly seems possible that our little Earth is more important and unique than we realised. At least within our own vast Milky Way galaxy we may be the only planet with intelligent biological life.**

**The Bible clearly states that there are other intelligent beings in the universe. It calls these other intelligent beings "Angels". Since they are recorded as appearing and disappearing, we may suggest that they operate in another dimension of reality not limited by time and space.**

### 3.

We get hints of that other dimension through our scientific studies of sub-atomic 'particles' of energy that behave as if they operate in a timeless dimension, showing instantaneous interactions over vast distances! These mysteries are being exposed through the scientific study of Quantum Physics.

If we look at this from a spiritual or biblical perspective then planet Earth does look more and more like the central arena for God's interactions with created mortal beings such as mankind. Maybe our Earth IS CENTRAL to God's future plans for the amazing Universe in which we are situated and central for his plans for eternity!!!

Maybe this earth is the testing and training ground for the promised future, revealed in various places in the Bible, including a vision given to the Apostle John, written in the Bible book of Revelation chapter 21: *Then I saw a new heaven and new earth, for the first heaven and first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea... And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. they will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away....*

*He said to me "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of water of life. He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son"*



Maybe we can better understand why Jesus said "God SO LOVED the World that he gave his one and only Son, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life"

**Bible: John 3:16 (NIV)**

At left: the Earth viewed from our moon.

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