



## THE FLAT EARTH MYTH-WHAT IS IT'S HISTORY AND MEANING?

**Flat Earth** (also known as the **Flat Earth myth**, **flat-earthism**, and less commonly **platygeism**) is the belief that the [Earth](#) — which the vast, vast majority of the population imagine in their heads as this big *spherical* thing (or *oblate spheroidal thing*, [pedants](#)) is actually *flat*. (Or, at least, cylindrical.)

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**Article I. Flatly wrong**

It is probably impossible for any single example to fully disprove flat-earthism, simply because there is *always* an [ad hoc](#) explanation for any given, apparently-contradictory phenomenon.<sup>[2]</sup> However, it's quite difficult for a flat-earthist to explain away *all* of the problems with flat-earthism and maintain a consistent theory, mostly because the "evidence" they provide is circumstantial, and generally [pulled out of their](#) butts. As such, to believe in a flat Earth is to assume that [NASA](#), the government and the entire scientific community are part of a major conspiracy to delude everyone, that the [Moon landings never happened](#), and that NASA spends most of its budget on fabricating evidence of other celestial objects rather than, you know, actually exploring space. Further still, even something as basic as [gravity](#) gets called into question when assuming a flat Earth model, which really shows how big your [tin-foil hat](#) has to be for you to assume this as fact.

***Section 1.01 The conspiracy theorist bluff***

The flat Earth theory can be falsified on any clear night an hour or two after sunset by observing satellites in the sky<sup>[3]</sup>, provided that one accepts either [Occam's razor](#) or [common sense](#) as valid stances. Plus sanity. Unless governments around the world are launching one-shot satellites every night to maintain the conspiracy, or using holograms to project satellites into the night sky (or something equally insipid), a flat Earth simply won't support a constellation of orbiting objects. They'll fall right over the edge, giving you nothing but [blurry images of a stack of turtles](#).

**Article II. Flat arguments**

***Section 2.01 Roads are flat!***

A common trope in flat-Earther literature is that roads, canals, etc. are built flat — not taking into account the curvature of the Earth.<sup>[4]</sup>

- Surveyors ignore curvature when surveying a project because the error from ignoring curvature is minuscule.
- For a 1 mile baseline the drop will be 8 inches. The length of the hypotenuse of a right triangle with one leg of 5280 feet and the other leg of 8 inches is 5280.00004209 feet. The error is 0.013 millimeters.
- This error is so small that if you built a road that went all the way around the Earth using one mile long baselines the total error in length would amount to 1.05 feet.

- Construction projects built underground that require a straight path do take into account the curvature of the Earth such as [Japan's Proton Accelerator Complex](#). <sup>[5][6]</sup>

## ***Section 2.02 Star trail photography proves that the Earth doesn't move!***

Although not strictly a geocentric argument (as one can technically still adopt a [heliocentric worldview](#) while holding to a belief in a flat Earth), flat earthers almost always fall into that camp.

One particular claim is that long-duration star trail photographs do not show any movement of the stars other than that caused by the [Earth's rotation](#), the flat earther's reasoning being that, if the Earth is moving so fast around the [Sun](#), the stars should appear smudged. This claim is symptomatic of all flat earthers' false assumptions about the distance between us and celestial objects, or their inability or lack of willingness to perform basic math.

- Assume a star trail photograph of the nearest star is taken for 12 hours on a 10,000 wide pixel camera. The Earth would travel about 1,287,000 km during that time. The nearest naked-eye visible star is Alpha Centauri, which is 4.34 light-years (41 trillion kilometers) away. The star would appear to move 0.018 pixels.


## ***Section 2.03 Where's the curvature?***

A lot of flat-earthers attempt to disprove the globe model by using pictures taken from high above the earth with a flat horizon, thereby "proving" that the Earth is flat: After all, if the earth is round you should see the curvature of the Earth. In actuality, no matter where you are and how high you are on the surface of the Earth, the horizon does indeed look like a flat line no matter where you look: A curvature should appear if the Earth were cylindrical instead. Indeed, the fact that there even **is** a horizon to begin with should prove the Earth to be round by itself, since if the Earth were truly flat, then a sufficiently advanced telescope ought to be able to see all the way to the edge of the earth. But don't get started on that track in a debate, otherwise you're going to spend your whole afternoon talking about perspective, light refracting from air, the [parallax](#) effect, mirages or GoPro cameras, or how even something as basic as a video of a ship disappearing bottom-first beneath the horizon is supposedly faked.

### **Article III. Flat history**

#### ***Section 3.01 Why the confusion?***



 This picture brought to you by Wikipedia. And Photoshop.



High Mediaeval illustration of a spherical Earth.

On certain length scales, the Earth certainly is flat — the ground on what we like to call [flatland](#) certainly doesn't look like it has any significant curvature in everyday life. In a mountainous region, the local geography is so variable that discerning a curve would be even more difficult. As a result of this, a [common sense](#) interpretation of a **flat Earth** can be reached pretty quickly.

### ***Section 3.02 Actual ancient history***

Very early [Egyptian](#) and other Middle-Eastern civilisations portrayed the Earth as flat land suspended in an ocean, and with a "roof" of some kind over it. This is particularly reflected in some of the prose that made its way into the Bible and has been used to justify flat-Earth beliefs today.

Ancient [Chinese](#) astronomy makes no mention of any roundness of the Earth; indeed some depictions made it square. In Siam, now [Thailand](#), the flat-earth idea was part of [Buddhist](#) scripture until the 1800s, as part of the *Traiphum cosmography*.<sup>[7]</sup> However, most religious scholars considered it as a metaphorical description. It's unlikely that this was ever taken painfully literally in Siam, even before King Mongkut (the one of *The King and I* fame) officially introduced more modern geography during his reforms and westernization of the country.

In Western science and theology, the notion that the entire world *really was flat* was discredited the moment it was properly considered and looked at, and had faded by the time of classical [Greek philosophy](#). Pythagoras suggested that the Earth was round, and [Aristotle](#) provided convincing evidence for it in Ancient Greece, although the main source to suggest that Greeks before Aristotle thought the world was flat is Aristotle himself. Around 240 BCE, Eratosthenes measured the circumference of the Earth to an impressive degree of accuracy. By the [Middle Ages](#), even the [Catholic Church](#)'s most beloved of scientific theologians, [Thomas Aquinas](#), was advancing the Earth's roundness as a fundamental of [logic](#).

### ***Section 3.03 Mythical ancient history***

The idea that *everyone* used to believe that the Earth was flat until only very recently, mostly due to the influence of religion, is essentially a complete [myth](#). A Greek Egyptian by the name of Eratosthenes not only

proved the world was round, but calculated its circumference with an error of less than 2%, and did it in the third century BCE — nearly two thousand years before [Christopher Columbus](#) had ever existed. This is often brought up as an example of how [secular enlightenment](#) has [triumphed over unfounded religious dogma](#); indeed, some theories state that this is the *reason* the myth is so popular.<sup>[8]</sup> Another possible reason for the myth may be the existence of various Flat Earth Societies in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In the Anglophone world, the myth is believed to originate with the novel *The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* by Washington Irving, which perpetuated the idea that Columbus sailed around the globe to prove that it was round. In reality, all that was at stake with Columbus' journey and those of his contemporaries was the *size* of the Earth — it was Columbus' egregious *underestimation* of the Earth's size that led him to theorize that reaching [Asia](#) from the west was feasible. The [Spanish](#) Court's reluctance to fund his voyage was based on an estimate of the Earth's circumference that much more closely agreed with modern measurements, but was substantially larger than the figure Columbus had come up with. In other words, it was the King and Queen who were right, and Columbus who was wrong. He just got lucky and found an entirely "New World" on the way; otherwise, he and his crew would have died of starvation. [Umberto Eco](#) paradoxically summarized this point in his essay "The Force of Falsity": because Columbus's critics were right, they were wrong, and because Columbus was wrong, he was right—but only thanks to the serendipity of America.

It was widely known that it would be physically possible to get to Asia by going west (disregarding the then unknown Americas), if you could carry sufficient supplies. What prevented anyone before Columbus from trying to go around the world was that the ships were not large enough or fast enough to get from Europe to Asia by travelling west before the food and fresh water supplies on board ran out. Of course 15<sup>th</sup> century Chinese explorers would have *had* the resources to sail to Europe by sailing East (disregarding the Americas once more) but that is neither here nor there.

### ***Section 3.04 Modern flat-earththers***

#### **(a) Flat Earth Society**



 Logo of the modern Flat Earth Society

Given this history, it should come as a surprise to anyone that any human being existing in the developed world right now should still consider the idea of a flat Earth probable. Since the mid-1800s, though, modern [pseudoscientists](#) have been trying to prove that the Earth is flat. As evidence continues to mount against the Flat Earth (such as the fact that we can now orbit the planet and view it from a distance or circumnavigate the globe ourselves in an aircraft), the idea is beginning to take a turn for the silly.<sup>[9][10]</sup>

**Q:** "Why do you guys believe the Earth is flat?"

**A:** Well, it looks that way up close.<sup>[note 1]</sup> Also, because [God](#) tells us!

**Q:** "What is underneath the Earth?"

A: This is unknown. Most FE proponents believe that it is generally composed of rocks.

Q: "Why aren't people falling off the edge of the Earth constantly?"

A: [Antarctica](#) forms the edge of the Earth, and at the very rim there is a giant, impenetrable wall of ice. [\[note 2\]](#)

Q: "If the Earth is flat, how can people travel all the way around the Earth in one direction and return to the same place?"

A: In the model currently accepted by Flat Earthers, the North Pole is located at the very center of the disc, and all cardinal directions are relative to it. Thus, circumnavigating the Earth simply means making a complete circle around the center of the disc.

Q: "If the Earth is flat, what about the Sun, the Moon and the stars in the sky? Or the sky itself?"

A: Flat Earthers generally assume the sky to be a dome that covers the entire Earth. Whether the Sun, the Moon or the stars are celestial objects in their own right or just projections on the dome is undetermined, but Flat Earthers do agree that the Sun is roughly six thousand miles above the surface of the Earth.

Q: "How are time zones possible on a flat Earth? Shouldn't the Sun be visible from every part of the world at all times?"

A: The Sun works like a spotlight, illuminating only some parts of the disc at one time, and rotates around the globe on the equator.

Q: "Doesn't our current understanding of gravity make a disc-shaped model of the Earth impossible?"

A: Flat Earthers generally either reject the idea of gravity as a scientific constant outright, or that gravity as we understand it is incorrect. Instead, the forces that keep people on the ground are either electromagnetic or g-forces. [\[note 3\]](#)

Q: "Isn't this an awful lot of mental hurdles to jump over just to insistently back up the idea of a disc-shaped Earth, when assuming a ball-shaped Earth answers all the above questions in a much simpler manner, and with much more scientific evidence to back it up?"

A: You tell me.

English inventor Samuel Rowbotham (1816–1884) published a 16-page pamphlet, which he later expanded into a 430-page book, *Earth Not a Globe*, expounding his views based on his [literal interpretation of several Biblical passages](#). Under the model proposed by this book, the Earth is a flat disc with the North Pole at its center and the south "pole" extending all the way around the outer edge. However, the alternate theory that the North [Arctic](#) is the surrounding ice wall is a similar idea. This outer edge is also guarded by a 150-foot-tall wall of ice. (Remember, at the time this was written, no expedition to Antarctica had yet reached the South Pole.) After his death, his followers founded the Universal [Zetetic](#) Society which published a magazine *Earth Not A Globe*; however, the society slowly declined after [World War I](#).

The Flat Earth Society (also known as the International Flat Earth Society or International Flat Earth Research Society) was founded by Englishman Samuel Shenton in 1956.<sup>[11]</sup> Shenton initially accepted the globe theory of the Earth, and indeed suggested his own innovation on how to make use of the [Earth's rotation](#).<sup>[12]</sup> This involved raising an airship into the sky and then holding it stationary. After a few hours of the Earth's rotation, the airship would be over America. It could then be lowered, making transatlantic transport extremely fast and cheap, in one direction at least. He went as far as to write to the British government, urging them to use this method. The inevitable ridicule and indifference that he received convinced him that the Earth could not be rotating and that there was a [conspiracy](#) (for no defined reason) that hid the fact of the Earth's flatness.

This conspiracy blossomed to include everyone in every government, civilian pilots (post-war) and/or GPS manufacturers (1960s), everyone in every telecommunications industry, everyone in the southern hemisphere (the difference between the currently-accepted globe and Flat Earth map are so massive below the equator that they would be difficult to ignore) and anyone using an odometer on a trip between any four landmarks. Also included in the conspiracy are thousands of supersoldiers keeping ordinary citizens from witnessing the Ice Wall, which surrounds the Flat Earth. As for what lies beyond the Ice Wall, the Flat Earth Society has this to say:

Beyond the 150 foot Ice Wall is anyone's guess. How far the ice extends; how it terminates; and what exists beyond it, are questions to which no present human experience can reply. All we at present know is, that snow and hail, howling winds, and indescribable storms and hurricanes prevail; and that in every direction "human ingress is barred by unsealed escarpments of perpetual ice," extending farther than eye or telescope can penetrate, and becoming lost in gloom and darkness. Some hold that the tundra of ice and snow stretches forever eternally."<sup>[13]</sup>

The FERS is now defunct, but was still active in 1980 under the leadership of (the now deceased) [Charles K. Johnson](#).<sup>[14]</sup> There is another modern Flat Earth Society with [Daniel Shenton](#) as its president, mainly notable for having its first member be synthpop musician Thomas Dolby, whose chief/only real qualification for such is that he made a rather good album called *The Flat Earth*. In fairness, unlike anything else one might provide to support the notion of a flat Earth, at least the album exists.

Current FES president Daniel Shenton on the other hand accepts modern science such as [evolution](#) and [global warming](#), yet somehow reconciles them with his flat earth beliefs.<sup>[15][16]</sup>

## (b) Fundamentalist



Map of the Square and Stationary Earth by Orlando Ferguson (1893).<sup>[17]</sup>

Motives for advocating a flat over a round earth despite evidence to the contrary vary. (Even typical [young-earth creationists](#) who think it's 6000 years old don't go so far as to say that it's not round.<sup>[18]</sup>). [Modern geocentrists](#) make a point of distancing themselves from the flat earth belief. Charles K. Johnson based his flat earth belief on a hyper-literal interpretation of the Bible (asserting that [Jesus'](#) ascent "up" into [Heaven](#) is proof of a flat earth, since a round earth would have no "up" or "down").

A flat earth movement also does exist within fundamentalist [Islam](#) based off of a literal interpretation of several Qur'anic verses.

### (c) Celebrities

The rapper [B.o.B.](#), who has had several hits including "Nothin' on You" and "Airplanes", outed himself as a flat-earther in 2016 and released a diss track called "Flatline" aimed at astronomer [Neil DeGrasse Tyson](#). Tyson's nephew, who is also a rapper, released a counter-diss track in response.

[Tila Tequila](#) has also endorsed flat-earth beliefs.<sup>[19]</sup>

## Article IV. **Religious views**

Many [Biblical literalists](#) claim the Bible disproves [evolution](#) and other scientific theories *prima facie*. Since there is no real debate about the shape of the Earth, these passages call Biblical literalism into question. The irony of Flat Earthers encouraging people to [stop blindly accepting what they've been taught and do their own research](#) has not gone unnoticed, considering that the primarily cited origin of flat earth theories is indeed the Bible.

In numerous passages, the Bible claims that the Earth is [flat](#) and/or rectangular, usually implicitly. Whether or not the Bible "really" says this is often debated — but if the Bible was written by people who lived in societies who were unaware that the Earth is a more-or-less spherical object which orbits the Sun, then we would expect this ignorance to be reflected in their writings.

Biblical flat-earthism is very rarely accepted. Wilbur Glenn Voliva even offered \$5000 as a prize for anyone who can prove that Earth is not flat. Of course, his predictions about Earth ending in 1923, 1927, 1930, and 1935 also failed.<sup>[20]</sup> Teaching about spherical Earth was banned in the schools of Zion, [Illinois](#), at that time.

Former President of the [United States Jimmy Carter](#) mentioned flat-earthers in passing (though he was actually speaking against mandatory teaching of [creation science](#)):<sup>[21]</sup>

“““

There can be no incompatibility between Christian faith and proven facts concerning geology, biology, and astronomy. There is no need to teach that stars can fall out of the sky and land on a flat Earth in order to defend our religious faith.

### **Section 4.01 Christianity**

#### (a) **The king seeing all the earth**

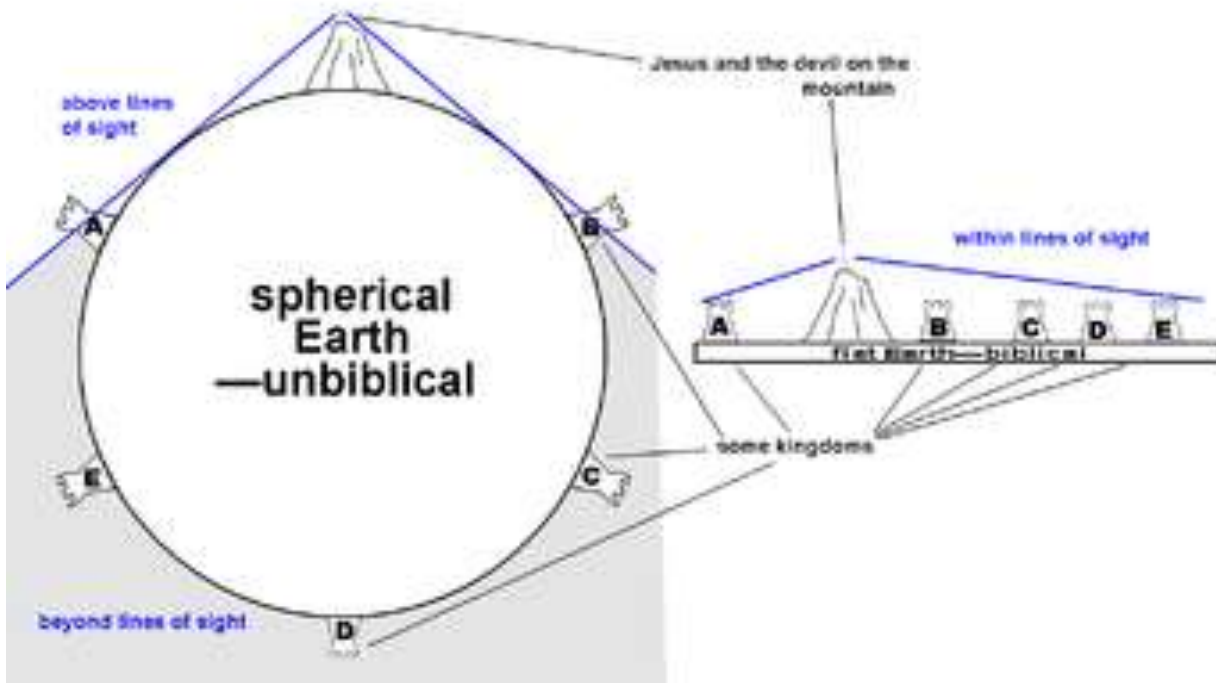
- "[Daniel 4:10-11](#). In Daniel, the king “saw a tree of great height at the centre of the earth... reaching with its top to the sky and visible to the earth's farthest bounds.” Only with a flat Earth could a tall tree be visible from "the Earth's farthest bounds" — this is impossible on a spherical earth.

**Theological rebuttal:** The strength of Daniel 4:10-11 as an argument for a flat Earth is considerably reduced by the fact that this part of the Book of Daniel recounts a dream experienced by the Persian king during a fit of madness. Thus, it does not necessarily refer to an actually existing tree or make any statements about real cosmology. This fact would seem to indicate that biblical literalists do not even know how to read the Bible properly.

#### (b) **Jesus seeing all the kingdoms**



Matthew 4:8: "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world"  
 Luke 4:5: "And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time."



Shows why you couldn't see all the kingdoms. To be fair, you can [suggest](#) that those outside of lines of sight are not kingdoms.

- [Matthew 4:8](#): "Again, the [devil](#) taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world"
- [Luke 4:5](#): "And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time."

**Theological rebuttal again:** The strength of using [Matthew](#) and [Luke](#) as flat Earth claims is reduced by the fact that "kingdom" is a human construct. If you classify all the places on Earth that you can't see from that particular location as "not kingdoms", such as barbaric tribes and non-monarchies, it can be fitted within that description. However, how the devil knows that those places are not ruled by kings (again, the concept of "king" is also a human concept) is not exactly clear.

(c) **The earth is a circle**

- [Isaiah 40:22](#): "He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in."

Jews and Christians use this quote to "prove" that the Bible implies that the Earth is spherical, although the word is "circular", and may refer to the perception of a 360 degree panoramic view. Some scholars point out that [Isaiah](#) never uses the Modern Hebrew word for sphere *Kadur*, anywhere.<sup>[22]</sup> It is not clear to Theists whether this is relevant, because the interpretation of the word *Kadur* in the Bible is disputed by Theists.<sup>[23]</sup>

(d) **"Four Corners"**

- [Isaiah 11:12](#) "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."
- [Revelation 7:1](#) "And after these things I saw four [angels](#) standing on **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."

As with the Daniel quote, modern Jews and Christians, who have been educated by Science, don't take this literally; to them: the events described in [Revelation](#) are a series of visions, rather than an accurate description of the world (which would indicate that you shouldn't take the Holy Bible literally). Another interpretation of this verse is that four corners of the earth don't refer to literal four corners but to cardinal directions, which is further supported by the description of the four winds which are commonly referenced by their cardinal direction. Also, considering that [Leviticus 19:27](#) refers to the "corners of the head", either the ancient Israelites looked like Minecraft characters or the Bible has no problem with using "corners" non-literally about round things.

## **Section 4.02 Islam**

Some [Islamic fundamentalists](#) possibly believe the earth is flat, using a literal interpretation of several [Qur'an](#) verses. [Iraqi](#) astronomer [Fadil Al-Sa'd](#) declared that the earth is flat, and that the Sun is much smaller than the Earth and revolves around it.<sup>[24]</sup> In 1966 the supreme religious authority of [Saudi Arabia](#), Sheik [Abdul-Aziz Ibn Baaz](#) is rumored to have declared "The earth is flat. Whoever claims it is round is an [atheist](#) deserving of punishment." However historians such as Robert Lacey believe that this quote was misinterpreted (and that Ibn Baaz was actually asserting that the [Earth doesn't orbit around the Sun](#) — but not that the Earth was flat).

Like all scriptural quotations, this is a combination of very vague readings and picking the right translation.

### **[Our'an 18:47](#)**

*And (remember) the Day We shall cause the mountains to pass away (like clouds of dust), and you will see the earth as a **levelled plain**, and we shall gather them all together so as to leave not one of them behind.*

The Muhsin Khan and Shakir translation seem to use "levelled plain", other translations, apart from Yusuf Ali, which says "level stretch" rather than "levelled plain", suggests this is just seeing the Earth prominently. Or something.

### **[Our'an 20:53](#)**

*Who has made earth for you **like a bed** (spread out); and has opened roads (ways and paths etc.) for you therein; and has sent down water (rain) from the sky. And We have brought forth with it various kinds of vegetation.*

Translations again disagree on this. Like a "carpet" and like a "cradle" are also popular.

### **[Our'an 43:10](#)**

*Who has made for you the earth **like a bed**, and has made for you roads therein, in order that you may find your way.*

Other translations of this "like a bed" indicate that it's metaphorical, with "resting place" being the most popular use. The Dr. Ghali translation still uses "cradle" in place of bed.

### [Our'an 43:38](#)

*Till, when (such a one) comes to Us, he says [to his Qarîn (Satan / devil companion)] "Would that between me and you were the distance of the two easts (or the **east and west**)" a worst (type of) companion (indeed)!*

One presumes that this is a tacit admission that there is an absolute point marked "east" and a point marked "west" which isn't possible on a globe because it wraps around. It's not entirely possible on a flat Earth, either as there is no fixed reference. In [Terry Pratchett's Discworld](#), set on a flat disc, they use radial co-ordinates of "hubward" (meaning toward the centre) "rimward" (towards the outside) and "turnwise" and "widdershins" for clockwise and anticlockwise respectively. Analogous with east and west on a globe, there are no fixed points on this reference frame.

### [Our'an 78:6](#)

*Have We not made the earth as a **bed**,*

Only Muhsin Khan says "bed". The rest are "expanse" or variations of it. Dr Ghali continues with "cradle". One has to ask, if the Earth is like a bed, one usually thinks of beds as small, warm, comfortable things you sleep in. Flat is usually quite far down the list of words associated with beds.

### [Our'an 79:30](#)

*And after that He **spread** the earth;*

Ironically, the flat Earthers would have been better off with Dr Ghali here, as he is less ambiguous about it: "*And the earth, after that He **flattened** it (for life).*"

#### **(a) Logical proof**

What follows is a more complicated logical proof that the Qu'ran claims that the Earth is flat. Unlike the above, this proof is independent of translation (provided that your translation is moderately literalist) because it is based on logic, not quotation.

Much of Surah 18 (The Cave) is dedicated to an account of a figure called Dhu'l-Qarneyn, which translates as "The Two-Horned Lord". Most scholars identify this figure as [Alexander the Great](#), although there is some debate over this, but the identity of the figure is not relevant to this discussion. Consider [Qur'an 18:83-86](#) and [Qur'an 18:89-90](#) (emphases mine):

*They will ask thee of Dhu'l-Qarneyn. Say: I shall recite unto you a remembrance of him. Lo! We made him strong in the land and gave him unto every thing a road. And he followed a road, Till, when he reached the setting-place of the sun, he found it setting in a muddy spring, and found a people thereabout. ...*

*Then he followed a road, Till, when he reached the rising-place of the sun, he found it rising on a people for whom We had appointed no shelter therefrom.*

This implies that:

- The Sun has concrete places where it sets and rises (rather than remaining suspended in space, with the earth moving around it).
- It is possible to reach the setting- and rising-places of the sun by travelling along a road (which could be some kind of cosmic space-road, but that seems unlikely, because...)

- There are people living at the setting- and rising-places of the sun, presumably implying that they are concrete locations upon the Earth.
- There is mud at the setting-place of the Sun, presumably implying that there is soil and water to make it, again implying that it is a concrete location upon the Earth.

Now try to create a cosmological system where these Qu'ranic pseudofacts remain consistent with the actual scientific facts regarding the Sun and the Earth. I'm pretty sure that Dhu'l-Qarneyn lived on a thoroughly flat Earth which was the centre of the universe.

## (b) Acceptance

Mohammed Yusuf, founder of terrorist group [Boko Haram](#), stated that the [Theory of Evolution](#) as well as spherical Earth teachings should be rejected because they are against [Islam](#).<sup>[25]</sup> In a 2007 TV debate, an [Iraqi Astronomer](#), Fadil Al-Sa'd, tried hard to push the ideas that the Earth is flat and **Qur'anic** verses also support that the Sun (also flat) is much smaller than Earth and [revolves around it](#).<sup>[26]</sup>

## Article V. **Relativity of wrong**

[Isaac Asimov](#) used the idea of a flat Earth in his essay *The Relativity of Wrong* to make a point about the progress of scientific knowledge. He pointed out that the notion of a flat Earth is wrong, but the idea of a *spherical* Earth is also wrong, as the shape of the Earth is better described as an oblate spheroid. Asimov went on to mention how these theories aren't equally wrong (and believing such a thing as a flat Earth is "[wronger than wrong](#)") but that they do have use. An architect working on a small building site would have no use for "Spherical Earth Theory" and would assume the ground is flat, a designer of novelty globes wouldn't need to compensate for the oblateness of the Earth, but those sending satellites into orbit do (in fact the distortion has quite a dramatic effect on inclined orbits).

## Article VI. **See also**

- [Flat Earth Society \(website\)](#)
- [Stars are Souls](#)
- [Bedford Level experiment](#)
- [Cellular cosmogony](#)
- [Fixedearth.com](#)
- [Hollow Earth Theory](#)
- [Geocentrism](#)
- [Science of Discworld](#)
- [Fun:Scientific Geoterrapinism](#)

## Article VII. **External links**

- [Zetetic Astronomy. Earth not a Globe](#) by Samuel Rowbotham, full text at the Internet Sacred Text Archive
- [The Flat Earth Society](#)
- [Flat Earth Society Forums](#)
- [The Flat Earth Wiki](#)
- [American Flat Earth Society](#)
- [The International Square Earth Society](#) (Note: This page is a deadpan parody)
- [Flat Texas](#)
- [The Flat-Earth Bible](#)
- [The Skeptical Review](#)

- [vsauce](#) does a piece on the subject

## [Is the Earth flat?](#)

### Article VIII. **Notes**

1. ↑ This is shamelessly quote mined, but the bit that follows isn't much better!
2. ↑ Please pay no attention to the fact that there are hundreds, if not thousands of pictures of a globular Earth, but not one photograph of this supposed ice wall.
3. ↑ This assumes that the disc-shaped Earth is hurdling directly upwards through the cosmos at incredible speeds, and the force of that movement is what keeps people on the ground. Yes, really.

### Article IX. **Footnotes**

1. ↑ ["Rapper B.o.B Is A Flat Earth Truther"](#), DListed 1.15.16.
2. ↑ [Vsauce provides a decent explanation of why.](#)
3. ↑ A handy way of knowing when and where to look for them is [Heavens Above](#) or any other website or software supporting satellite tracking.
4. ↑ <http://www.atlanteanconspiracy.com/2015/05/architects-engineers-for-flat-earth.html>
5. ↑ [Geodetic Survey Work on High Intensity Proton Accelerator Facility TU004 PPT.PDF](#)
6. ↑ [Geodetic Survey Work on High Intensity Proton Accelerator Facility 010.PDF](#)
7. ↑ [Thongchai Winichakul<sup>\[wp\]</sup>](#), *Siam mapped: a history of the geo-body of a nation* (1995), pp. 20-43
8. ↑ Stephen Jay Gould. [The Late Birth of a Flat Earth](#). In *Dinosaur in a Haystack: Reflections in Natural History*
9. ↑ [Flat Earth Society FAQ](#)
10. ↑ <http://www.giantbomb.com/forums/off-topic-31/people-still-think-the-earth-is-flat-506775/>
11. ↑ [SF Hub — The Flat Earth Society Archive Archive copy](#) at the [Wayback Machine](#)
12. ↑ Flat Earth — The History of an Infamous Idea, Christine Garwood, MacMillan (2007)
13. ↑ [http://wiki.tfes.org/index.php?title=The\\_Ice\\_Wall](http://wiki.tfes.org/index.php?title=The_Ice_Wall)
14. ↑ <http://www.lhup.edu/~dsimanek/fe-scidi.htm>
15. ↑ <http://www.theguardian.com/global/2010/feb/23/flat-earth-society>
16. ↑ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oc0trwHSRIA>
17. ↑ [Ingenious 'Flat Earth' Theory Revealed In Old Map](#) by Natalie Wolchover (June 23, 2011 02:59pm ET) *LiveScience*.
18. ↑ <http://www.lhup.edu/~dsimanek/fe-scidi.htm>
19. ↑ ["Neil DeGrasse Tyson Gets Into A Rap Battle With B.o.B Over Flat Earth Theory"](#). <http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2016/01/26/464474518/neil-degrasse-tyson-gets-into-a-rap-battle-with-b-o-b-over-flat-earth-theory>.
20. ↑ [Gardner, Martin](#) (1957). "Flat and Hollow". *Fads and Fallacies in the Name of Science* (Second Edition ed.).
21. ↑ [Carter slams Georgia's 'evolution' proposal](#)
22. ↑ *In His Name* by E. Christopher Reyes, p. 568
23. ↑ <http://he.wiktionary.org/wiki/%D7%9B%D7%93%D7%95%D7%A8>
24. ↑ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A15iuoHEnWQ>
25. ↑ [Nigeria's 'Taliban' enigma](#)
26. ↑ [Iraqi astronomer goes on TV to explain why Earth is flat](#)