

# How big is big?

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As a child in the time of the Space Age, I developed a fervent fascination with what goes on beyond the pale blue planet upon which we all reside. That thirst for knowledge about the universe has remained strong in my adult years.

When God spoke the universe into existence – possibly what secular scientists term the Big Bang – and all the elements and galaxies and constellations were formed by His hands, into what was the just-born universe expanding? What is beyond what we know? How many stars like our sun are in the galaxy in which we reside, called the Milky Way? (Best guess: 100 billion).

A light year is the distance light travels in one year, calculated by really smart people to be about six trillion miles. The nearest stars to earth are the binaries Alpha Centauri A and Alpha Centauri B, about 4.3 light years away. An interstellar traveler from earth would have to cover nearly 26 trillion miles at the speed of light to visit them, and another 26 trillion to return to earth.

The farthest-known star from earth is Icarus, about five billion light years from earth. The farthest-known object of any kind is a galaxy estimated to be 13.2 billion light years away. In miles that would be... well, never mind. Earth-bound calculators like mine simply won't go that high.

Scientists say because the time it takes the light from those distant objects to reach earth can be measured (please don't ask me how), seeing those faraway celestial bodies is like

peering back close to the time of the purported Big Bang – but that's only if you think 400 billion years after the Big Bang is close.

There's more. Scientists have just announced the discovery of the South Pole Wall, a structure that is 1.4 billion light years long and six billion light years deep. That's a lot of acreage. It's named the South Pole Wall because it is situated in the deep sky over the earth's South Pole.

There's more. An even larger structure called the Hercules-Corona Borealis Wall, believed to be 10 billion light years in length, has already been mapped.

Of course, there are other ideas about the beginning of the universe like Young Earth Creationism, and this commentary is not meant to endorse any one theory, but isn't your head about to explode?

Then there are the tiniest items presently known to exist. They're called quarks, about 43 billion-billionths of a centimeter, and leptons, thought by many physicists not to have any size at all. Got that?

This we know: the God of the universe who is capable of creating both the Hercules-Corona Borealis Wall and the lepton, also created us – each one of us, so individual that there is not a human being in the history of human beings that is an exact duplicate of any other human.

We are truly fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:13-16). When you next pray, it would be appropriate to acknowledge God's attention to detail when he created everything large and small, and praise Him for making a special place for us in His universe – and His heart.