

*article series*

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## Glossary for the Creationist

# Dark Matter / Dark Energy

Our current understanding of gravity does not explain why the universe is expanding at an accelerating rate, nor why galaxies orbit as they do. Dark energy and dark matter are simply names given to these mysteries. Most cosmologists think that less than 5% of the universe is normal matter, while the rest is dark matter and dark energy.<sup>1</sup> Whether dark matter and dark energy actually exist or not, either is in keeping with the Scriptural account of creation.

The universe seems to be expanding, and at an accelerating rate. Scientists have proposed ideas why, but as NASA reports, “Theorists still don’t know what the correct explanation is, but they have given the solution a name. It is called dark energy.”<sup>2</sup> An article in the current *Scientific American* explains dark matter. This quote mentions the “prejudices” of scientists against some conclusions, in this case, against changing Einstein’s General Theory of Relativity. Science changes. Its theories and laws are tentative, not final.

Scientists have long assumed that some invisible “dark matter” particles must accompany the normal matter in the universe to explain how stars orbit in galaxies and how galaxies orbit in clusters. An alternative idea that there is no extra matter and that our equations of gravity need updating has received much less attention. But numerous experiments have failed to find evidence for dark matter particles, and the possibility remains that gravity must be modified. Lately, in fact, some astrophysical evidence, such as recent observations of gravitation in galaxies, favors modified gravity theories over dark matter. It is time that physicists let go of their prejudices and reexamined this underdog idea.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> NASA, “Dark Energy, Dark Matter.” (accessed August 3, 2018) <https://science.nasa.gov/astrophysics/focus-areas/what-is-dark-energy>

<sup>2</sup> NASA.

<sup>3</sup> Sabine Hossenfelder and Stacy S. McGaugh, “Is Dark Matter Real?,” *Scientific American*, August 2018, 38.