

A Total Eclipse of the Sun: A 'Quirk of Fate' or 'the Glory of God'?

On Sunday 7th March 2010, a new series began on BBC 2 Television called '**Wonders of the Solar System**' (repeated again the following Tuesday). This was how this new series was described in the Daily Mail TV guide –

'New Series: The galaxy's role in creating some of Earth's most spectacular landscapes. It seems the BBC is in educational mode; no sooner has 'How Earth Made Us' come to an end, than a majestic new, five-part series slots into the science section of the curriculum. Pop star turned physicist Professor Brian Cox explains how the laws of nature have shaped the worlds beyond our planet, starting with the sun.'

It was fascinating to hear and see how this professor of physics referred to something that is uniquely observed from planet earth – **A Total Eclipse of the Sun**. At this point I invite you to watch how the **Total Eclipse** phenomenon was covered in the programme by watching this short video extract on this link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xasa5o2Kp3I>

In the full video of the programme, that no longer can be viewed online, it was quite 'mind-boggling' to hear **Professor Cox** explain, or rather 'pass off', how this unique phenomenon is able to occur. Quite correctly he explained that the diameter of the moon is 400 times smaller than the diameter of the sun, but, because the sun is 400 times further away from the earth than the moon, this why the moon, a much smaller body than the sun is able, on occasions, to totally eclipse the much larger body, the sun. Shortly I will quote the terminology of how **Professor Cox** referred to or 'passed off' these dimensions and alignments but let me first just quote a couple of other sources that refer to these facts.

On this link <http://www.icr.org/article/moon-faithful-witness-sky/> there is an article by Dr Donald B DeYoung Ph.D. called '**The Moon: A Faithful Witness in the Sky**' and in the article we read the following – '**The moon is 400 times smaller than the sun but it is likewise 400 times closer to the earth. Because of this purposeful situation, the moon is able to occasionally eclipse the sun exactly, providing a precise time record. Computer studies furthermore show that this perfect eclipse condition is unique among all the known moons of the solar system.**⁵ The significance of eclipse data for Biblical studies is great, for it provides confirmation that the chronological systems employed by Old Testament scribes were perfectly accurate'.

⁵ Mendillo, M., and R. Hart, "Resonances," *Physics Today*, 27:2 (February, 1974), 73.

On this link <http://evolutionoftruth.com/abennett/lunarevi.htm> we find the following written by a man called Alan Bennett – ‘Evidence of Divine Design of the Moon: While the material on this page is not part of Solar Geometry, the Earth's moon should also be considered as evidence that it is not of natural origin. Have you ever considered that our moon is a near perfect sphere, precisely distanced and aligned with the sun in a way that creates two identically sized spheres in the sky, 93 million miles apart, and capable of creating a total solar eclipse? This only happens because the moon is 1/400th the size of the sun and 1/400th the distance of the sun, and perfectly aligned on the same plane as the Earth and Sun. What are the odds of that happening "naturally?" **Cecil – this link no longer appears to be functional but was when I first gave this quote when my original article was penned in 2010**

Mr Bennett who was born in 1936 died in 2003 but in a tribute web site maintained by one of his friends on <http://solargeometry.com/Bennett.htm> we read - ‘It was his (Alan Bennett’s) passion and pleasure to bring this knowledge to you in hopes that it will bring us to a deeper understanding of our universe, and of our Creator, who **crafted it with such amazing perfection**’.

Finally, I would refer you to a video presentation on our YouTube site of a talk given by a former proponent of evolution, who is now a convinced Christian Creationist, Roger Oakland, who was my guest here back in 2004. If you click on the link to Roger’s talk [Part 1] and advance the ‘time bar’ below the screen to **19.33 minutes** you will hear over the next couple of minutes, Roger make reference to these moon/sun dimensions and alignments. The link to this video is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EL9KmDFiYeo>

In these 3 references, you will have seen and heard how the moon/sun dimensions and alignments were referred to as ‘purposeful’, ‘crafted with such amazing perfection’ and ‘the handiwork of an intelligent creator’.

In contrast to these comments by Dr Donald B DeYoung, Alan Bennett and Roger Oakland, how did the physicist, **Professor Brian Cox**, refer to these moon/sun dimensions and alignments? He referred to them as follows – as ‘a quirk of fate’, as ‘sheer coincidence’ and as an ‘accidental arrangement’.

This last expression, an ‘accidental arrangement’ was truly incredible, even unbelievable, when we consider the vast implications of the moon/sun dimensions and alignments that flow directly from their size and positioning, quite apart from any ‘total solar eclipse’ consideration. In his book, ‘The Battle for the Beginning’, Pastor John MacArthur writes –

‘First of all, the stars and heavenly bodies were given to separate day from night... There were two “great lights” – a greater light (the sun) to rule the day, and a lesser light (the moon) to rule the night. These two great heavenly luminaries were positioned above the earth to provide light and to govern the passing of day and night... The sun of course *radiates* light while the moon merely *reflects* light... The moon, like the sun, helps keep the perfect balance of earth’s life-sustaining environment. Ocean tides are caused by the moon’s gravitational pull. High tides align with the moon on both sides of the earth. The earth bulges slightly both toward and away from the moon and this affects the water level of the oceans.

As the earth rotates on its axis, those bulges move across the face of the earth. That is why there are two high and low tides each day... The sun's gravity also has an effect on earth's tidal ebb and flow. These tides are vital to the balance of earth's ecosystems...

Scripture gives a second reason why God created the sun, moon and stars. These heavenly bodies would not only mark the passing of days and nights, but they would also be permanent signposts: "Let them be for signs and seasons and for days and years" (Genesis 1:14) ... They were markers to indicate times and seasons... And in that way they regulate our lives. They set our calendars. They determine the length of a year. They divide the year into seasons. And they mark the passage of our days and nights. In that sense the whole pulse of human life is governed and regulated by the heavenly bodies. The sun determines our days. The moon determines the months. And the stars, sun and moon all determine our season and years...

even seasonal weather patterns are determined by the sun and moon. Because the earth is tilted on its axis, the sun's rays strike different parts of the earth at different angles throughout the year. That produces the seasons that are so critical for the rejuvenation of life, the growing of crops and the flourishing of the earth. It is all in perfect balance and works to bless humanity with a variety of climates and weather patterns. The perfection with which these all operate is one of the great proofs that they were designed by a wise and gracious Creator.

The length of our days and even our sleep patterns are set in perfect harmony with the amount of time it takes the earth to complete one full rotation... all life on earth is perfectly suited to a twenty-four-hour day, and according to Scripture, that is because the same Creator who made all living things also determined and fixed the length of our days... Think of it: The rotation of the earth on its axis is what determines a twenty-four-hour day. The moon's orbits around the earth determine our months. And the earth's revolutions around the sun determine our years...

The third and perhaps most obvious reason for the heavenly bodies is to provide permanent light fixtures that illuminate the earth "And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth" (Genesis 1:15) ... Almost every segment of the light spectrum is essential for sustaining life on earth... It ought to be the most natural thing in the world for us to gaze at the expanse of the heavens and echo what the psalmist wrote "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork" (Psalm 19:1). [pp 108-120]

John MacArthur wrote 'The perfection with which these all operate is one of the great proofs that they were designed by a wise and gracious Creator' but **Professor Cox** referred to this vast array of co-ordinated intricacies that are so essential for life itself here on earth as an '**accidental** [big bang] **arrangement**' as '**sheer** [big bang] **coincidence**' and as '**a quirk of** [big bang] **fate**'. [Reference to Professor Brian Cox and the 'big bang' can be found on [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brian_Cox_\(physicist\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brian_Cox_(physicist))]

The Psalmist wrote in **Psalm 8:1** "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is they name in all the earth, who has set thy glory above the heavens". Taking this verse with **Psalm 19:1** quoted earlier we learn what the supreme purpose of God was in creation – it was to display His glory. Scripture teaches that an understanding of this is actually to be found in every human heart – "that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shown it unto them. For the invisible things of him [God] from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made [us] even his eternal power and Godhead" (Romans 1:19-20).

Those who like **Professor Cox** reject that all this was divinely designed and teach that it is merely the product of [big bang] **'accident' 'coincidence' and 'fate'** – will they have a 'case to make' or 'have a leg to stand on' when they stand before their Creator and Judge – **verse 20 of Romans 1** that I have just quoted in part ends with these words **“so that they are without excuse”**. Those who gaze up to the heavens and refuse to acknowledge the obvious, glorious handiwork of a Creator God are as Paul wrote in **Romans 1:22** **“Professing themselves to be wise they became fools”**. In verse 25 Paul adds that they **“exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator who is blessed forever”**.

Professor Cox spoke of **'the laws of nature'** and of **'the laws of celestial mechanics'** – the Bible speaks in these terms **“Have ye not known? Have ye not heard? Hath it not been told you from the beginning? Have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he who sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are like grasshoppers; who stretcheth out the heavens like a curtain and spreadeth them out like a tent to dwell in... Lift up your eyes on high and behold who hath created these things”** (Isaiah 40:21-22 & 26).

In **Revelation 10:6** we read of **“him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, and the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things which are in it”**. Are all these things upheld and sustained by 'the laws of nature' and 'the laws of celestial mechanics' – in secular human understanding and terminology that is how they operate but God's Word tells us in **John 1:3** that **“All things were made by him [The Lord Jesus Christ] and without him was not anything made that was made”** and **Hebrews 1:3** refers to Christ **“upholding all things by the word of his power”**.

Professor Cox stated **'When the sun goes it will be the end of us all'** – in stark contrast God's Word teaches us that **when The Son comes again it will be the beginning of eternity for everyone (see Jude 14-15)**. The Lord Jesus Christ is coming again and He will **“judge the world in righteousness” (Acts 17:31)** – Christians who have died will experience the **“resurrection of life”** whilst non-Christians who have died will experience the **“resurrection of damnation” (see John 5:29)**.

Non-Christians have the fearful prospect of spending eternity in a place called hell where there is **“outer darkness... weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matthew 25:30)** whereas Christians can look forward to an eternity in God's new creation as we read in **Revelation 21:1 & 5** **“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away... And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new”**.

Will there be any **'total eclipses of the sun'** where Christians will spend eternity – it appears to be unlikely for we read firstly in **Revelation 21:23** **“And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it and the Lamb [Christ] is the light of it”**. Then secondly, we read in **Revelation 22:5** **“And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light”**.

In this first, present creation, the heavenly bodies that have illuminated planet earth and that were created by God and placed in the heavens, were put there not only to be functional but also to point to **'the glory of God'** but in the new creation to come, where **"God is with men and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God"** (Revelation 21:3) there will be no 'light-pointers' to God's glory but rather the very presence of His glory will light up the eternal dwelling place of His people.

That glorious and assured prospect will not be the result of any **'quirk of fate'**, or of any **'sheer coincidence'** or of any **'accidental arrangement'** but it will be the climax of the grand divine plan of redemption secured by the Lord Jesus Christ when He died on Calvary's Cross (see **Romans 8:18-25**) and it shall happen with the **"brightness of his coming"** (2nd Thessalonians 2:8) and nothing and no-one shall eclipse the Son's radiant return **"For as In Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father"** (1st Corinthians 15:22-24) **"Even so, come, Lord Jesus"** (Revelation 22:20).

Cecil Andrews – 'Take Heed' Ministries – 10th March 2010 - (Updated 3rd May 2017)