

THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God
IN CHRIST JESUS.*

(Philippians 3.13-14 NASB)

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The Eclipse & the Number 400

Hedonism: 1. In *philosophy*, the doctrine that pleasure is the principle good and should be the aim of actions, 2. in *psychology*, the theory that a person's actions always have pleasure as their purpose, 3. pleasure-seeking as a way of life. (*Webster's New World Dictionary*, The World Publishing Company, 1966)

In watching local news on the preparation people are taking leading up to the total solar eclipse that will sweep across the United States, the word *hedonism* came to mind. Why? Because it seems that a good number of people are treating this billed "once-in-a-lifetime" event as a time to party and, of course, to make money. An eclipse is coming, so it is party time. Many Americans have become hedonists, seekers of pleasure as a way of life.

Isn't it interesting that nearly all the ancients feared eclipses as if they were omens of what the gods might do to them? But where are we today? Yes, a technical understanding of eclipses is now available to all who care to study it, so there is no need to fear them as omens. OK, so we don't have to fear the so-called "gods." But what about fearing in the sense of having awe and reverence for the Creator God of eclipses? How about looking to the sky (with our special ISO-rated glasses) and observing the eclipse with a sense of how awesome is the Almighty Creator and a grateful heart for how unbelievably phenomenal the Earth, Moon, and Sun (EMS) truly are? The EMS work together in such a unique and amazing precision that makes life on earth not only possible but thriving. Minor fractions of differences in how the EMS interact would make earth as inhospitable as all the other planets we have been able to observe. Do you realize that many scientists now believe that our earth is truly a unique, if not one-of-a-kind, planet in all of the entire universe that could only have come from a creator God? Some have even theorized that earth is in a bubble that is the very center of the universe. Can you imagine that? Mind you; this does not even factor in a Christian-creationist worldview. Some of these scientists (and other types, such as research-authors) do not claim to be Christians or even come close to extolling Jesus as the One through whom God the Father created. Some continue to hold to evolution; but nevertheless, they see the hand of a creator, even if they cannot define or explain the creator.

Recently, I read a book that falls within this last category. (By the way, this should not cause us to run superstitiously from such literature, but cause us to consider it in light of our faith.) It is titled *God's Blueprint, Scientific Evidence that Earth was Created for Humans* (2015) by Christopher Knight. Quite a fascinating title. The author offers contrarian views/theories about some well-entrenched subjects that are considered mainstream science, cosmology, archeology, and other disciplines. But what really struck me was a fact about the relationship of the EMS in light of the solar eclipse. In particular, Mr. Knight titled a section of his book: *Is the Moon a Message?*

Did you know that a total eclipse like we are about to witness did not occur in the far-distant past before mankind, and that in the far-distant future there will be no more eclipses? The Moon is gradually slowing down as its orbit expands until in the mega-future it will move so far away from the Earth that it will appear among the stars. Of course, this might take mega-years, so we need not worry. But why do we see eclipses in our day? It is because the math lines up perfectly for such events. So perfectly, that it cannot be a coincidence. Here is the fact that struck me: Eclipses occur because the Moon is 1/400th the size of the Sun (or the Sun is 400 times larger than the Moon), and the Moon is 1/400th the distance from the Earth to the Sun (or the Sun is 400 times the distance of the Moon from the Earth). This is what allows us to see a total eclipse, which requires the Moon to completely fill the view of the Sun from Earth. The ratios are perfect for a perfect alignment of an eclipse. Of course, there is more to an eclipse than this, but biblically speaking, I see the hand of God in the number 400.

Let us start with the number 4. According to the Biblical meaning of numbers, **four signifies all that is created**. Thus, it stands for **the fullness of creation**. Given this, any factor of four could have some spiritual meaning in relation to creation or some part of it. Factoring it by 100 or 1,000 signifies **perfection of divine order** (of what is in view), **fullness, or completeness (all)**.

But what about the number 400? The last letter in the Hebrew language is *tav (tau)*, which has a numeric (gematria) value of 400. The literal meaning of this letter is **sign, cross**, and its symbolic meaning is **covenant, to seal**. This should be an immediate flag considering the number 400 in relation to the EMS. Is the Moon a Message? Is it a sign to be observed in the sky? Is the precision of a total solar eclipse a message to mankind? Is it a message from our Creator? I believe our answer is yes. There is a perfect divine order, a completeness, behind and within all that we see and call the *universe*, especially the EMS that makes life possible.

God has made a covenant with mankind, and to remind us, He has left us signs of His handiwork.

Now, there is one more number that we must consider, the number 4,000. The number 1,000 signifies the Glory of God in all His fullness. When 4 is factored by 1,000, we discover a number of completeness that refers to God's creation and identifies to mankind the source of all of creation. What happened 4,000 years from the creation of the first Adam from the soil of the Earth? Who showed up on the scene of the history of mankind? The last Adam or the Second Man, also known as Jesus, the Son of God and the Firstborn of all Creation in whom all things are created! In other words, the Creator Himself appeared as a Man on Earth through a natural birth at the appointed time of 4,000 years (by some reckoning). Some 30-33 years later, He gave us **the sign of the cross**, the salvation of mankind through His death and resurrection. He is the Firstborn from among the dead. Mankind's fate was *sealed* by the blood of its Creator, and a **new covenant** ushered in based on His life and His work of death on a cross.

Christ is the visible representation of the invisible God, the Firstborn and Lord of all creation. For in Him was created the universe of things in heaven and on earth, things seen and things unseen, thrones, dominions, principedoms, powers--all were created, and exist through and for Him. And HE IS before all things and in and through Him the universe is a harmonious whole. ... He is the Beginning, the Firstborn from among the dead, in order that He Himself may in all things occupy the foremost place. (Colossians 1.15-17, 18 WNT)

For more on this Man of Glory, you are encouraged to read my article #65, *Who Are You Lord?* March 2017. <http://www.kingdomandglory.com/art/art65.pdf>

Could the number 400 or the number 4,000 be coincidences? Hardly!

So, when you gaze into the sky through your specially-filtered glasses, consider the sign you are observing. There is a loving God who is the Creator of All who is after and will get the heart of His creation. This truly is the good news.

Before closing, I want to return to the hedonistic nature of America today. Eclipses were often seen as omens. Although an omen can be good or evil, often eclipses were seen as omens of bad things to come. If I have heard the Lord without being tainted with my own prejudice, I believe this particular solar eclipse of August 21st is a sign of judgment on America. It is no coincidence it is arching across the entire nation from coast to coast at this point in history. Deep darkness is coming into the very soul of America. God is removing our nation's lampstand that was a light to the world. How long will this last? As long as it takes to bring His people to repentance, back to Himself and away from all their religious, ministerial, and doctrinal props, and as long as it takes to bring the nation to know the God of Creation and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. This may take a while. Know this; God shall not be thwarted in bringing to fruition His ultimate purpose for His Creation, that He might be All in all. His love will do it!

And I saw another angel flying across the sky, carrying the Good News of the Ages to tell to every nation, tribe, language and people, among those who live on the earth. He said in a loud voice, "Fear God and give Him glory, because the time of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made sky and earth, the sea and the water-springs." (Revelation 14.6-7 WNT)