

The Anthropic Principle: How Come Earth Got All the Good Stuff?

Isaiah 45.18–19

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Scripture Reader and Reading: Bryan Rich – Isaiah 45.18–19

Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Larry Amberg – Creation, Creator

Prelude:

I. The September 27, 2008 issue of *New Scientist* magazine had a theme called:

“Unknown Earth: Our planet’s seven biggest mysteries.”

A. Seven articles attempted to explore Earth’s mysteries:

1. How come Earth got all the good stuff?
2. What happened during Earth’s dark ages?
3. Where did Earth’s life come from?
4. Why does Earth have plate tectonics?
5. What is at the centre of the Earth?
6. Why is Earth’s climate so stable?
7. Can we predict Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions?

B. I want to consider the first one,

1. which I believe is not so much a question of “how,” but
2. “*Why* did Earth get all the good stuff?”
 - a) The scientist who wrote the article
 - (1) seems perplexed by the thousands of things
 - (2) that came together to make life.
 - b) Not only does Earth have life, but
 - (1) its abundance and variety
 - (2) goes beyond the mind’s ability to fathom it all.
 - (a) Just too many things came together for us to be here,

- (b) that this writer wants to know why, or he says,
- (c) *how* did this happen.

II. I want you to understand

- A. that this article was not found in a Gospel magazine,
- B. written by a Bible-thumping, book-chapter-and-verse, barefoot-hillbilly preacher like me!
 - 1. It was written by Stuart Clark.
 - 2. Here is the first thing his web site says about him:

“Stuart Clark is a widely read astronomy journalist. His career is devoted to presenting the complex world of astronomy to the general public. Stuart holds a first class honours degree and a PhD in astrophysics. He is a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society and a former Vice Chair of the Association of British Science Writers. On 9 August 2000, UK daily newspaper The Independent placed him alongside Stephen Hawking and the Astronomer Royal, Professor Sir Martin Rees, as one of the ‘stars’ of British astrophysics teaching.”

- C. I did some reading on who he is and
 - 1. I found nothing that would indicate
 - 2. he is a Bible-believer, or
 - a) that he believes in God or
 - b) that he believes we are here by creation.
 - 3. A possible exception might be his book, *The Sensorium of God*,
 - a) which is a historical novel about several men of science,
 - b) such as Kepler, Galileo, Newton, and others.
 - (1) However, I read some reviews and
 - (2) no one said that he is building a case for biblical theism.

III. Therefore, in my mind, this makes his observations all the more significant.

Persuasion:

I. How Evolutionists Answer the Question

A. The first sentence says,

“Look around our solar system and you could be forgiven for thinking its eight planets drifted in from completely different parts of the cosmos.”

1. Poor Pluto had already been demoted
 - a) from being a planet
 - b) to dwarf planet
 - (1) when he wrote his article.
 - (2) Excuse me a moment as I mourn.
2. Stuart Clark, the writer, admits at the beginning
 - a) that Earth is not a little different from
 - b) the other planets in our solar system.
 - (1) The other planets in the Solar System
 - (a) do not even come close to having
 - (b) the characteristics of Earth.
 - (2) If a space traveler visited the Solar System,
 - (3) he would note that the Earth is very special.
3. Surely you have seen photos of our closest neighbor planets.
4. The grandness of the differences of the Earth
 - a) above all the other planets
 - b) moved Stuart Clark to write this article.

B. He believes

1. that understanding Earth’s early history
2. will reveal why Earth got all the good stuff:

“That’s the big picture, but the details of what happened in the early stages of Earth’s life remain a mystery. Solving it is fundamental to un-

derstanding why Earth is so suitable for life. We know that its distance from the sun provides the right amount of heat and light to make the planet habitable, but that alone is not enough. Without the unique mix of carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, phosphorus and sulphur that makes up living things, and without liquid water on the planet's surface, life as we know it could not have evolved. Chemically speaking, Earth is simply better set up for life than its neighbours. So how come we got all the good stuff?"

C. Knowing that water is essential for life, Stuart Clark then said this:

"Another big unknown is how Earth acquired its life-giving water supply. Being so close to the sun, it was probably too hot for water to simply condense out of the gas cloud as the planet formed, and any that did collect would have evaporated away during the titanic collision that formed the moon...The most popular explanation is that the water arrived later, in the form of icy comets from the outer solar system that rained down in the period known as the 'Late Heavy Bombardment'. As yet, though, there is no firm evidence to confirm this as the source of Earth's water."

D. He also said

1. that the European Herschel Space Telescope
2. will look deep into space
 - a) where he speculates that new stars and planets may be forming, and
 - b) "where brand new planets may be striking it as lucky as Earth did."
3. To him and his colleagues, Earth simply *got lucky*.
 - a) Christians say, "Good Luck," all the time, but
 - b) luck had nothing to do with Earth being hospitable to life.

E. How then does the evolutionist conclude that Earth got all the good stuff?

1. First, they admit that Earth is very unique.
 - a) Mars is unique, that is, no planet exists in the Solar System like it.
 - b) However, to say
 - (1) that Earth is unique as Mars is unique

- (2) understates the uniqueness of Earth.
 - (a) Earth is unique in more ways than
 - (b) I have seen anyone yet attempt to count.
 - i) The article in questions lists a couple, but
 - ii) that does not come close to all the reasons we know, and
 - (1) what about things that we have not yet discovered
 - (2) that make life possible on the Earth?
- 2. It remains a mystery.
 - a) However, they remain convinced
 - (1) that although it is a mystery,
 - (2) they know it was not *created* to support life.
 - b) Do not let anyone tell you that scientists, evolutionary or otherwise,
 - (1) do not have biases.
 - (2) They are just like the rest of us.
 - (a) They admit to ignorance in some areas, but
 - (b) claim absolute denial when acknowledging a Creator.

- 3. They believe it all condensed from an astronomical cloud:

“What we do know is that different elements would have condensed from the cloud at different temperatures, which would depend on their distance from the sun. We cannot know exactly what happened next, though, because Earth rocks have been compressed, melted and weathered too many times to retain any clues about how they formed. And, since most of the planets in the solar system are out of reach, meteorites are our best hope. They formed at the same time as the planets, and since then have remained largely undisturbed. But to study them, we have to wait for one to fall from space.”

- a) Interestingly, they believe meteorites may hold the clue, but
- b) meteorites do not have what Earth needed!

4. There is no evidence for how Earth acquired its water.
 - a) They speculate that icy comets brought it, but
 - (1) Stuart Clark said there is no evidence!
 - (2) Since he believes there is no Creator,
 - (a) to him, comets are the only possible solution.
 - (b) He cannot think of any other possibility.
 - b) Some estimate that there are 326 million trillion gallons of water on the Earth.

5. They believe Earth just got lucky!

- a) Stuart Clark said,

“Clearly we need new insights into how planets form.”

- b) Clearly!

- (1) However, why have they shut the door to creation?

- (2) They are like Thomas,

“Unless I see...I will not believe.”

– John 20.25

F. Does it not amaze you how little they know, but

1. that they know for sure
2. that some God had nothing to do with it?
 - a) Remember the words of Paul,

19 ...what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, 21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they

became fools...

– Romans 1.19–32

II. How Creationists Answer the Question

A. “How” is not always the total picture.

1. Sometimes we have to ask “why.”
2. For example, in Matthew 21,
 - a) Jesus cursed a fig tree and
 - b) it immediately withered.

(1) Listen to the question of the disciples,

18 Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry. And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, “Let no fruit grow on you ever again.” Immediately the fig tree withered away. And when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, “How did the fig tree wither away so soon?”

– Matthew 21.18–20

- (2) The miracle fascinated them and
- (3) they wanted to know *how* it happened.
- c) Perhaps they knew *one* of the “whys” of the event.
 - (1) They knew something about the timing of the appearance of figs,
 - (2) which we do not know and so
 - (a) we have to ask *why* Jesus cursed it.
 - (b) However, they may not have known the *spiritual* why.
 - i) Jesus most of the time did things for spiritual reasons.
 - ii) He was not angry at the fig tree, but
 - iii) used it to teach something.

d) Hear what He said in response to their question:

21 So Jesus answered and said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ it will be done. And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.”

– Matthew 21.21–22

(1) He did not explain to them

(a) the natural or even supernatural process

(b) that caused the fig tree to wither.

(2) He taught them of the power they also have through prayer.

3. However, we need to know a “why”

a) that the story assumes the disciples also knew.

(1) They understood something about the fig tree

(2) that caused Jesus to see something wrong with it.

b) The fruit trees we grow or have in our area,

(1) put out leaves,

(2) then the fruit.

(a) Fig trees put out the fruit,

(b) then the leaves.

(3) This tree, therefore, promised

(a) that it had something, but

(b) upon a closer look, it did not have what it promised.

i) Therefore, it no longer met its purpose and

ii) Jesus cursed it.

4. This is the problem we have to address with the evolutionists.

- a) They behold the result of a miracle,
 - (1) the existence of all the good stuff of the Earth, and
 - (2) of the existence of the Earth itself.
 - b) How did it get here?
 - c) How come Earth got all the good stuff?
 - (1) We want to show them “why” Earth got all the good stuff, and then
 - (2) they will know the “how.”
 - (a) Knowing the “why” will lead to the “how.”
 - (b) The “how” is the creative power of the one, true and living God.
 - i) We want them to see
 - ii) that Earth got all the good stuff, because
 - (1) it was intended that life, human life,
 - (2) be able to live here.
5. Who intended life to be here?
- a) That will lead to another “why” question.
 - b) Why did he intend for us to live here?
 - (1) That will lead to a “what” question.
 - (2) What else has he planned for us?
- B. First, let us answer the question,
- 1. using Paul’s approach in Acts 14 and 17, and Romans 1.
 - 2. Consider why Paul took the approach he did in those passages.
 - 3. Acts 14 shows again the “why”:

15 “Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, 16 who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. 17 Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from

heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.”

– Acts 14.15–17

- a) All the good stuff of Earth testifies to something.
 - b) The evolutionists of *New Scientist* magazine have the testimony, but
 - (1) they either do not know it or
 - (2) they do not know what to make of it.
4. Acts 17.22–32 shows Paul reasoning
- a) from what the Athenians knew or believed and
 - b) worked toward God.
5. In Romans 1.18–32, Paul started with what nature tells us.
- a) He also operated under the principle that a tree is known by its fruit.
 - b) Therefore, we want to show atheists and evolutionists the fruit of their way of thinking.
6. So then, how would you answer the question?
- a) Do we not want to work from the standpoint
 - b) that Earth receiving all the good stuff is more than coincidence?
- C. Second, let us answer the question using the Bible.

1. Isaiah 45.18–19

**18 For thus says the LORD,
 Who created the heavens,
 Who is God,
 Who formed the Earth and made it,
 Who has established it,
 Who did not create it in vain,
 Who formed it to be inhabited:
 “I am the LORD, and there is no other.**

**19 I have not spoken in secret,
 In a dark place of the Earth;
 I did not say to the seed of Jacob,
 “Seek Me in vain’;**

**I, the LORD, speak righteousness,
I declare things that are right.”**

– Isaiah 45.18–19

- a) While they may not like the truth of this passage initially,
 - (1) just like some of the Athenians mocked Paul, yet,
 - (2) some will think on what you have shown them from Isaiah 45.
 - b) Taking Isaiah 45, et al., and coupling it with
 - (1) the confusion of the *New Scientist* article I am quoting,
 - (2) there may come a time
 - (a) when these people will have to acknowledge
 - (b) an Intelligent Designer, but
 - i) some will still have problems confessing
 - ii) God, his Son Jesus Christ, and the truth of the Scriptures.
2. Some of them may then turn to idolatry or something else.
 3. It is not as though they want to reject the idea of “a God,” but
 - a) they reject belief in the true and living God *the Bible* reveals.
 - b) This was the problem of Anthony Flew.