

THE SOLAR SYSTEM – AN EXPRESSION OF REALITY OR AN ACCIDENT?

When we think of the solar system, we probably think of the sun at the centre and a few far flung pieces broken off from the sun at some stage, which we call planets, orbiting slowly around it. But we probably don't think much, if at all, about the space in-between and perhaps we don't give too much thought, either, about the relative position of our solar system to other systems. Yet if our own lives have any meaning or purpose, then the solar system, its planets and everything else about it must also have purpose. You cannot have a tremendous cosmic accident and then place a limited number of beings of limited intelligence and questionable motives on one microscopic planet to fathom out the meaning of life on behalf of the whole universe. Some people think that way but it really offends both logic and intelligence. [Please see earlier articles¹ which explore the question of intelligence underlying the whole universe.]

Our theme here, though, is not so much to look at whether the solar system has purpose and what that might be but more to explore the interesting question as to whether the *form* of the solar system was arrived at by accident, the result of chaos, or if it arrived in its present form (which of course is continuously changing) as an expression of inner or underlying intelligence. If it were the former, then we would need to go no further; we could just write everything off as an accident. But you and I are aware and we can think; in other words, we have both consciousness and intelligence. The humanist might think otherwise but consciousness and awareness are not physical attributes. In everyday parlance we may simply refer to our mental faculties as “mind” but however we describe them, there is a *cognitive* function – a capacity to know and to experience. A coincidence, a coming together, of physical material does not of itself produce a cognitive function. There is an inner something that, for want of a better expression, we might call Life.

You and I are expressions of Life, as is a tree, a bird, a flower or even a mountain.

¹ Engineering in the Cosmic Sense *May 2008*, The Illusory Atom *July 2008*

Life is not caused by physical structure; on the contrary, Life produces by the very nature of its being structures and other expressions. Although we cannot understand it, the universe is an expression or manifold expressions of life itself.

So if the solar system is an expression of Life, is it inanimate like a stone or is it more akin to a body of some sort? Although that might seem an odd question to pose, think for a moment about your own body. It has bones and nails which we might think of as fairly inanimate but actually they are changing and re-processing or growing all the time; all the time, that is, until our consciousness leaves the body for good. Then they stop growing. Isn't it extraordinary? When the body is no longer a vehicle for consciousness, it stops functioning and renewing itself. Now we don't normally think of the body as having its own individual thinking consciousness, separate from and independent of ourselves. When our consciousness finally leaves the body, the body doesn't say to itself, "Oh, I'd better go and find someone else to live inside me," because the body is a *functioning vehicle*; it is a physical structure formed for the purpose of allowing consciousness or life to express itself and experience through it. Once that purpose has been served, the body decomposes and eventually is no more. It literally dis-appears.

If we think of our planet for a moment in terms of being a body, isn't the hard structure of the Earth, the mineral kingdom, somewhat akin to our skeletal system? Like bones, it is essentially hard and appears fairly solid but it isn't lifeless. It has heat, conducts energy, has motion and provides a structure for life. If the planet were lifeless, it would be a corpse, the equivalent of a pile of bones. There would be no radiance from it, no electromagnetic fields, no heat, no volcanoes, no vegetation or animal life. And what of the other planets? Exploration by our scientists and astronomers is still very limited but we do know that in spite of atmospheres that would be very inhospitable to the forms of life we are familiar with, there are still huge energy changes taking place on them. We simply do not know what is going on on those other worlds and it is a bold and foolish person who says there is no other life in the solar system.

To return to our theme: if the solar system is an expression of Life, there must be some correlation between the nature and purpose of it and its size and composition. It is not very likely that a form for the expression of life would be left entirely to chance. Things can go wrong when a form for life comes into being – we know that from nature and indeed from the human race – but it doesn't mean when such things happen that there is no purpose or that the formation was entirely random. It simply means that something went awry in the process of the form coming together. In modern terms we could say that the production line wasn't flawless and the original design wasn't followed completely. That isn't chance – it's imperfection of process. Following that reasoning, our solar system is either exactly as it should be for supporting whatever purpose it has or it is as it should be but with some imperfections. Either way, there is purpose to its design, its size and its shape. That means, too, that each planet has its reason for being, for being where it is and for being composed as it is. So Earth's position in space and relative to the sun is absolutely right, as is that of Jupiter, Mars and all the other planets. Then we can think not only of our planet as being a functioning unit but the whole solar system as one huge functioning unit, in reality a type of massive organism that has, in relative terms, its own small part to play in the evolution of the universe.

A pictorial representation of the solar system shows more space than matter. In fact the planets are like small specks in space orbiting the ball of the sun. What we don't know is what all the space is. It isn't, as once thought, simply a void. Ancient philosophy sometimes described space as being filled with aether. Certainly we know that signals and radiation are transmitted through space and as any transmission has to go through something as a waveform, there must be something that is capable of forming into waves. Vast and sophisticated though the instruments of astronomers and astrophysicists are, they can only detect what lies within their range of frequency and all the time discoveries are being made as instruments – and understanding – become more subtle. At some point, perhaps, knowledge will come that at far more subtle levels of existence there are spheres or expressions of life within our solar system that are as yet beyond our range of

perception and detection. It is certain that if the solar system is an expression of intelligence and has purpose, then the space in-between the planets must also have purpose and, indeed, so must the relative position of the solar system to others.

Instead of thinking, if we think about it at all, of our solar system as simply being a collection of objects suspended and circling in space, we could at least entertain the possibility that in some unfathomable way it is an expression of life and that it has life *in* it as opposed to simply having a few life forms *on* it. Then perhaps we could open our minds to the possibility that there is some degree of consciousness – that instead of being dead or inanimate, it is very much alive and is a vehicle or collection of vehicles that allow consciousness to express itself and to experience. A short leap of the imagination may be required but if we regard *every* form that we can see or perceive, whether stone or star, as being alive and an expression of life, we then start to entertain the idea the possibility of an ultimate reality. That type of thinking is extraordinarily liberating.

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