



From the Desk of Pastor Meyer

I am writing this a day after the unique experience of seeing the sun partially blocked by the moon's travel. For the last couple of weeks, it seems all you've heard about is the eclipse, along with words like "totality," "shadow," and "solar glasses." If you were fortunate enough to be in a place where you could go outside around noon on Monday, and you either had the aforementioned solar sun glasses, a level 14 or better welder's mask, or a pinhole camera, you saw the shadow of the moon – the back-side of it, actually – as it passed between you (and a couple other million people) and the sun. From here in South Texas, we had only a partial eclipse – about two-thirds of the sun was blocked at the highest level, just a little after 1pm. I had the glasses so, risking life, limb, and already deteriorating vision by trusting that my glasses weren't poorly made counterfeits, I looked to the heavens and saw the shadow.

I've got to ask: Does that mean we'll have six more weeks of summer?

In all seriousness, it was a unique experience. Think about it: the moon is about 1/400 the size of the sun, but because of perspective –the moon being about 1/400th closer to the earth than the sun - the moon appeared to cover the sun up! In other words, it was an astronomical optical illusion. I hope I didn't just eclipse your experience from Monday.

Now, as I watch the weather and follow it on Facebook, there is a tropical disturbance that has traversed the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico and is entering the Gulf of Mexico. While the models are still all over the place, it looks like it's heading for Texas and, as of this moment, that we are close to the bulls-eye of where it's heading. The concern is over rainfall. We shall see what happens, but prayers ascend for safety and protection over the next few days. Lord, have mercy.

These are two very unique stories from nature, aren't they? The eclipse drew our eyes heavenward; the storm in the Gulf is turning our eyes outward. Astronomers help us understand the eclipse, and weather forecasters help us understand the storm. We thank God for both of these vocations because they both do important work of helping us understand how this incredible system of creation works.

You understand why these got so much air time on TV and radio. Events like these create a sense of fascination and wonder within us. We realize that we are part of a much bigger creation: it's bigger than our neighborhoods, county, and even larger than our world and solar system. As Harvey churns in the Gulf, it's size is tremendous and covers hundreds of square miles. There's also an element of surprise to stories like these, reminding us of the powerful forces that God put into action when He first said, "Let there be..." There is a natural curiosity of how these things work. And, for some, there might even be a sense of fear as these powerful

moments take place – moments that are outside our normal lives, outside our normal experiences, and outside our control.

As Christians, we provide a unique perspective that scientists may not offer. While they can speak of the vast distances involved in space between sun, moon and earth, while they can talk about millibars of barometric pressure, wind gusts and storm surge, what they cannot do is remind us of the God of Creation and His relationship with what He made.

Since it sounds like the weekend is going to be a wash-out (literally and figuratively), may I suggest spending some time with your Bible and look at what it says about creation. We always think of Genesis 1 and 2 as the narrative of creation – and it is – but there is much more than just the beginning. For example, read Psalm 19:1-2 and Job 42:1-6. How do both David and Job respond to these named parts of God’s creation? We think of God the Father as the Creator – and rightly so, based on the 1st Article of the Apostle’s Creed – but do you know that Jesus was also present and equally involved in creation? Read Colossians 1:15-20 and John 1:1-3. How was Jesus involved? Finally, do you know why God created everything? Think about it: He didn’t *have* to do it, so, why did He? Take a look at Psalm 135:6 and Romans 4:17. If your Bible has a concordance, look up other words you associate with creation – animals, plants, creation, stars, moon, night, sky, etc. – and see what the Bible says about these parts of creation.

The purpose of this is to open your eyes, ears, thoughts and mind to all that God has done for us in His creative power. See how all things around us are fearfully and wonderfully made. See how He continues to create and make all things new. It might also open your senses to how creation, too, experiences the fall into sin. Creation will suffer when this storm hits – wherever it might be. Parts of Montana are burning with out-of-control wildfires. Other parts of our country – Missouri and New Orleans – are flooding.

Conclude your reading with Psalm 8. Then, in your prayers, remember how creation, too, suffers. Pray that God shows His mercy to those areas that are struggling with fire, drought, flooding, and other forces of creation. Pray that life – human, animal, and plant - is spared. Pray for safety of those who are providing rescue and protection. Most of all, pray and give thanks to God for the gift He has given us in creation and the care He continues to demonstrate for us through His creation.

May the God of Creation open your eyes to the wonder of what He has made, that as you study the Scriptures you see the hand of God in all that He has made and you, too, declare, “It is good.”

Peace & joy,

Pastor Meyer