



ADVANCING
THE
GOSPEL

Colossians 4:2-18

Introduction

- Paul closes out the letter to the Colossians reminding them to continue in prayer for Paul and his ministry.
- While Paul asks for prayer, he exhorts the Colossians to continue living in a manner worthy of the Gospel, advancing the Gospel with every opportunity.
- Paul spends the majority of the last chapter updating the Colossians on several of his ministry partners.
- By this example, we see that Paul has multiplied himself and truly given himself the ministry of the Gospel.

Colossians 4:2-6

Prayer

- Paul begins to close his letter to the Colossians, and in these first five verses, he calls the Colossians to a life of prayer, but not just any prayer.
- Paul writes that the Colossians must be watchful in prayer.
- The verb Paul uses connotes the act of staying awake and keeping alert.
- There may be a parallel here to the behavior of the disciples in the garden, who, the night before Jesus' death, were unable to stay awake in prayer.

Prayer

- Paul urges prayer for the advancement of the Gospel.
- Now Paul needs the Church to pray for him and support his ministry efforts in preaching the Gospel elsewhere (verses 3–4).
- Paul asks for prayer for himself, but then in calling the Colossians to pray for his preaching of the Gospel, he exhorts them to be doing the same thing.
- In verse 5, he calls the Colossians to live wisely and use every opportunity they have to share the Gospel with those who have yet to hear.

Prayer

- The verb Paul uses in verse 5 for “making the best use of the time” literally means “buying up or buying out—to snap up every opportunity.”
- Christians are to do whatever they can to grab every opportunity and use it for Gospel witness.
- Paul knows the work of evangelism and how difficult it is.
- He calls the Colossians to be gracious and winsome with how they speak about the Gospel and how they dialogue with non-Christians (verse 6).

Colossians 4:7-14

Final Greetings

- Paul transitions in verse 7 to his final greetings. He uses this space to commend the work of his faithful workers and to remind the Colossians of these committed brothers. Paul mentions several co-laborers in verse 7–14.
- He opens with Tychicus, who was a long brother in the faith whom Paul is sending back to update the Colossians.
- Scholars believe that Tychicus was responsible for delivering both the letters of Colossians and Ephesians to their respective churches.

Final Greetings

- It's likely that Onesimus is the same Onesimus discussed in Philemon.
- The Colossians already know him and has since come to faith since leaving Colossae.
- Paul then mentions Aristarchus, Mark, and Jesus Justus (verses 10–11).
- Paul says these men were the only Jewish Christians who served with him. It's evident that Paul found great comfort in their partnership.
- It's possible that Aristarchus was also imprisoned just like Paul.

Final Greetings

- Paul mentions Epaphras in verse 12 who was the servant to actually bring the Gospel to Colossae and gave the word to Paul that a church had been planted there.
- Epaphras is still laboring in prayer for the Christians.
- Paul gives a brief mention of Luke and Demas in verse 14. Nothing much more than this is known about Demas.
- Just as Epaphras brought the Gospel to them, these other ministers continue to take the Gospel to those who have not yet heard.

Colossians 4:15-18

Partnership

- Paul sends his final greetings to the church in Laodicea, which was not far from Colossae.
- It is likely that it was in Nympha's house where the church gathered.
- Paul's exhortation here to read the letters isn't just about his authority over the church, but more importantly Christ's authority over their lives.
- Paul wants these brothers and sisters to remain faithful in the midst of false teaching.

Partnership

- Paul believes the Spirit empowered him with every word of every letter he wrote, and for that reason these letters must be used for the building up of the Church. Otherwise, Paul worked in vain.
- This church has been brought up in the fullness of Christ, and Paul wants their maturity to continue.
- His direct call to Archippus for faithfulness in ministry is his call to each member of each church body: fulfill the calling that you have received.

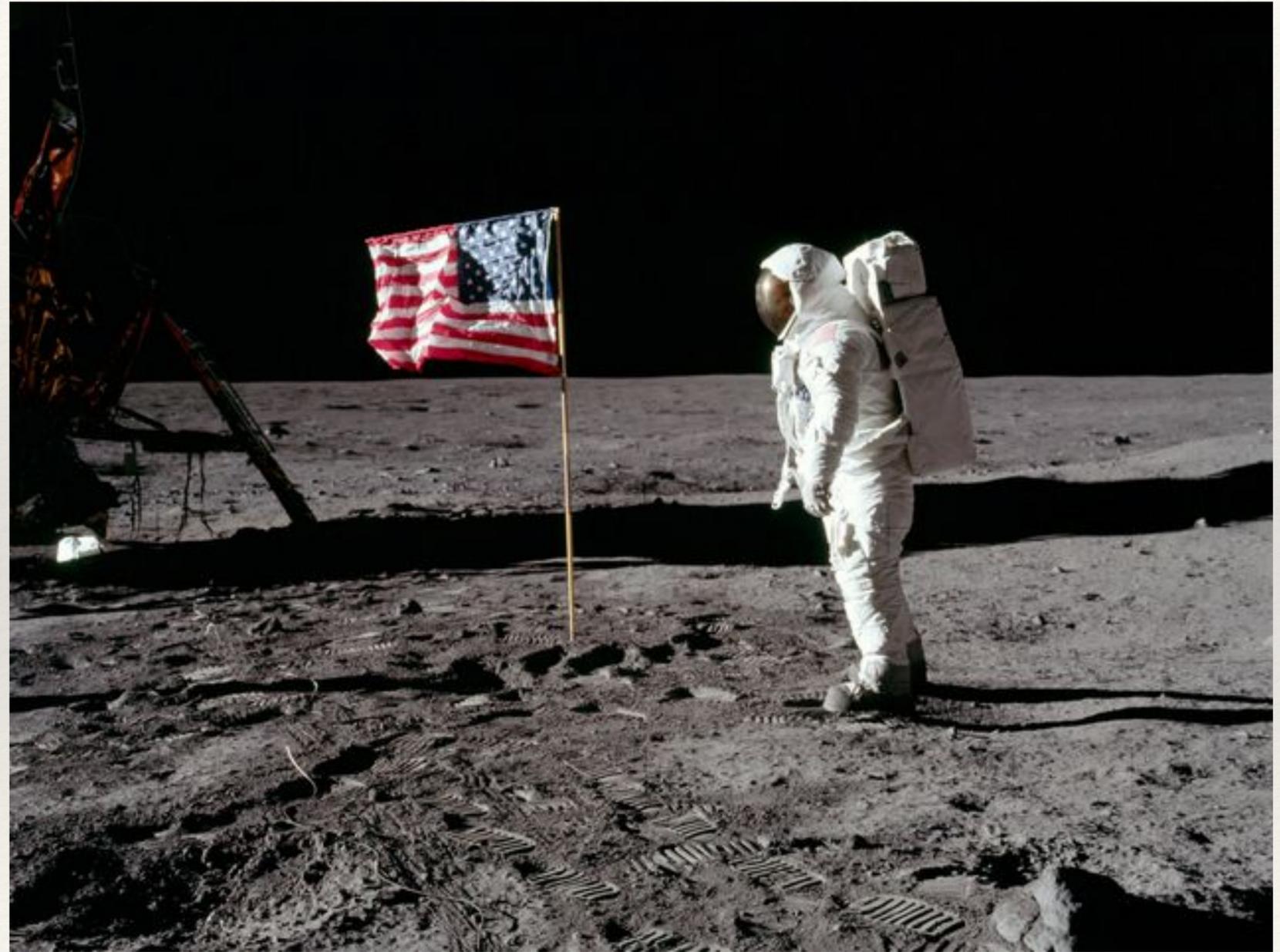
Partnership

- The call to remember his chains, in verse 18, is a call for prayer. Paul urges the continued partnership between him and the local churches, even if he is in prison.
- Paul's statement about writing with his own hand is a way of signing a letter in order to show his authorship and the letter's genuineness.
- The church must remember the suffering taking place for the sake of the Gospel and as it remembers, the body must continue in prayer and continue sending faithful ministers to take the Gospel to the world.

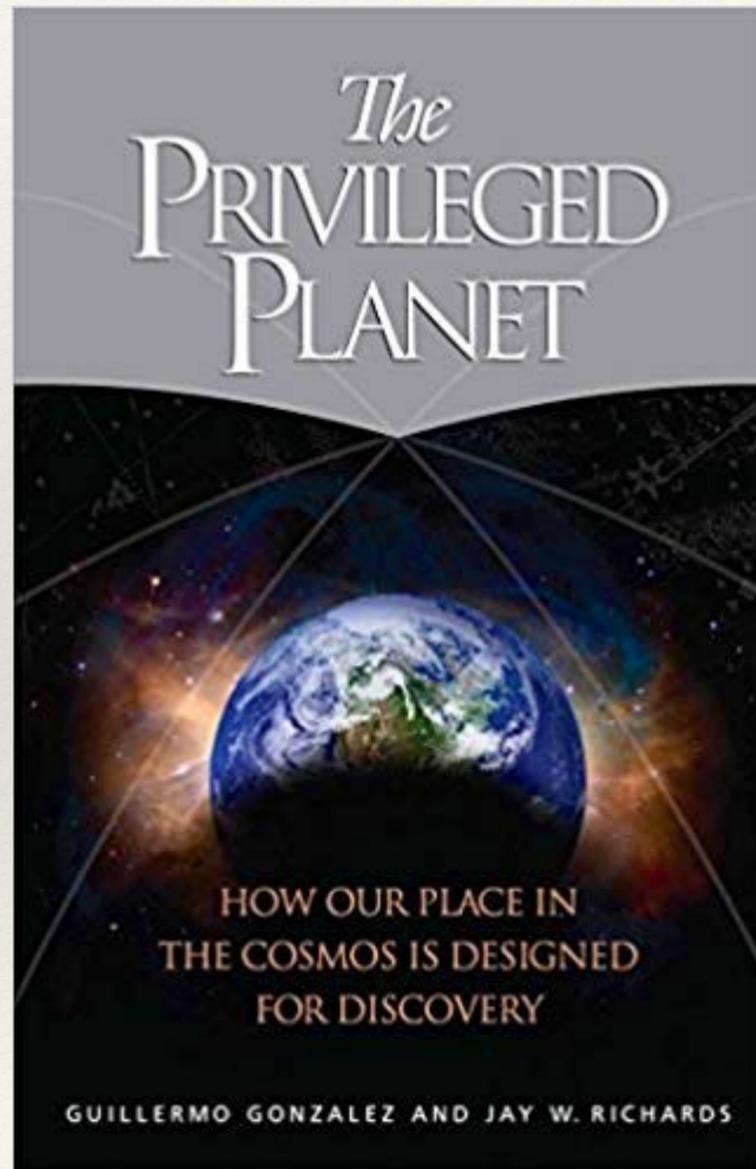
Current Issue

The Heavens Declare the Glory of God

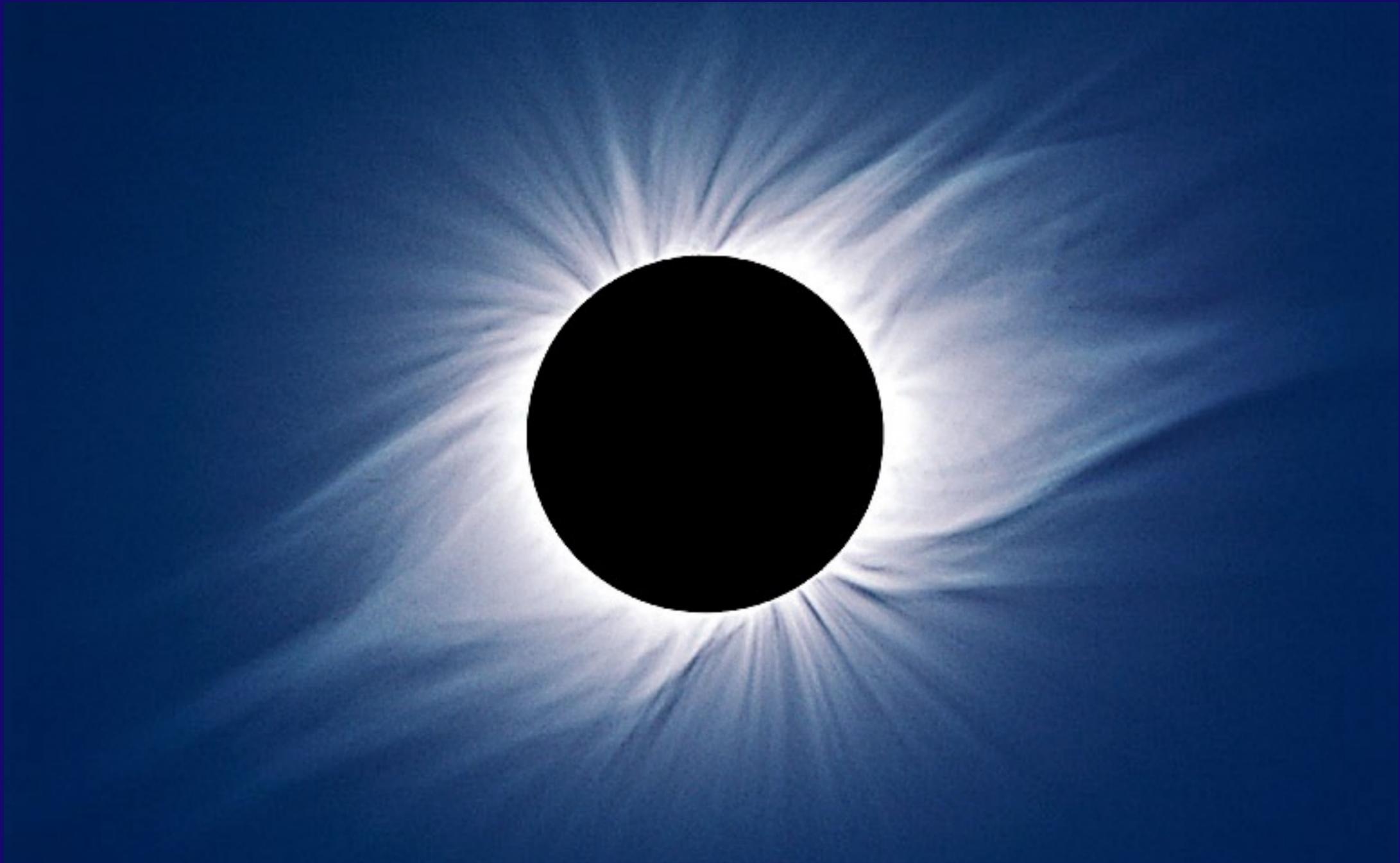
Anniversary of Apollo 11



The Privileged Planet

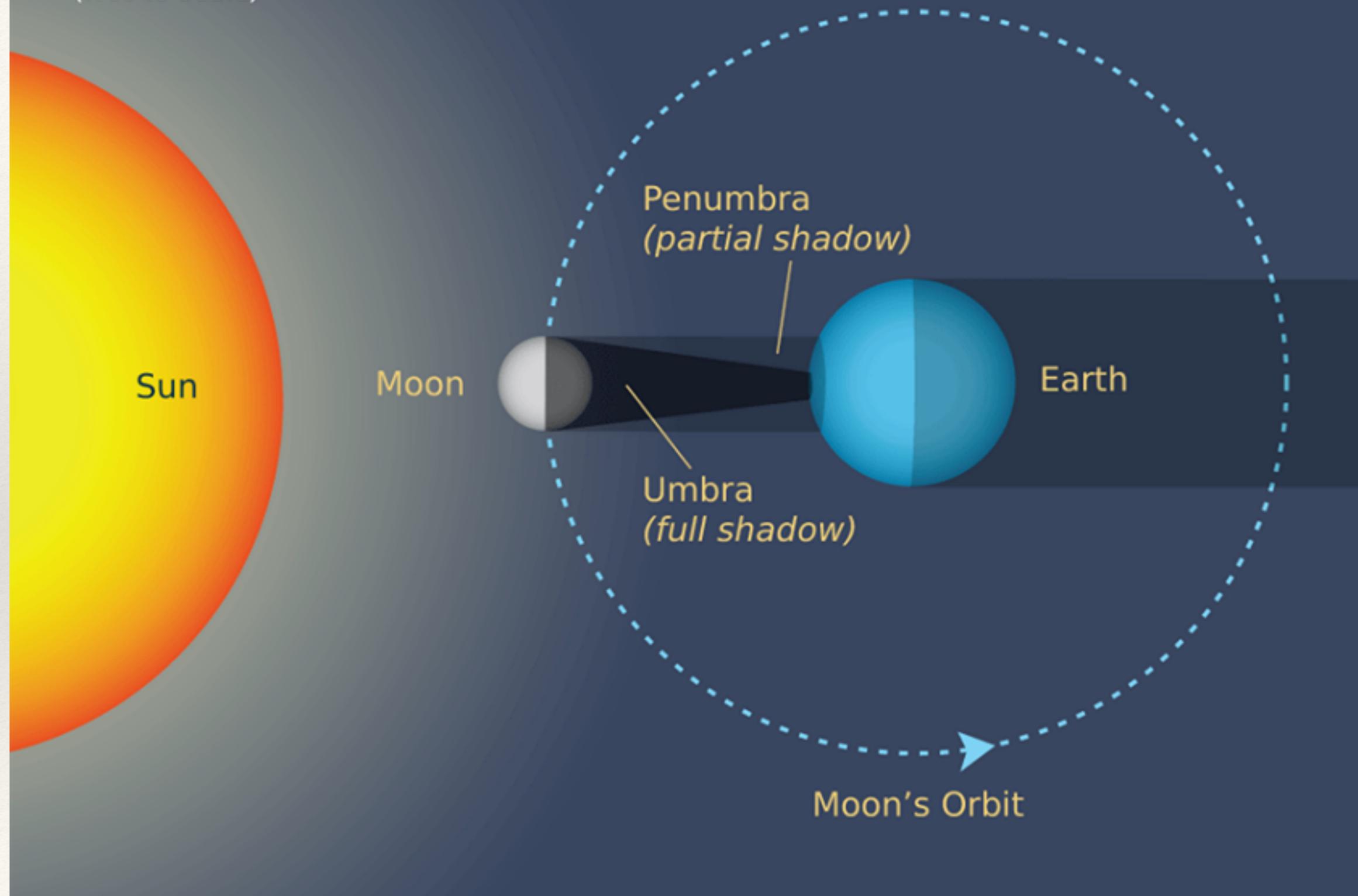


- The authors argue that Earth is not an insignificant planet in the universe. Earth is anything but average.
- Guillermo Gonzalez and Jay Richards document these two conclusions:
 - The earth is in the best place in the galaxy for complex life to exist.
 - The earth is also positioned in the best place for scientific discovery.



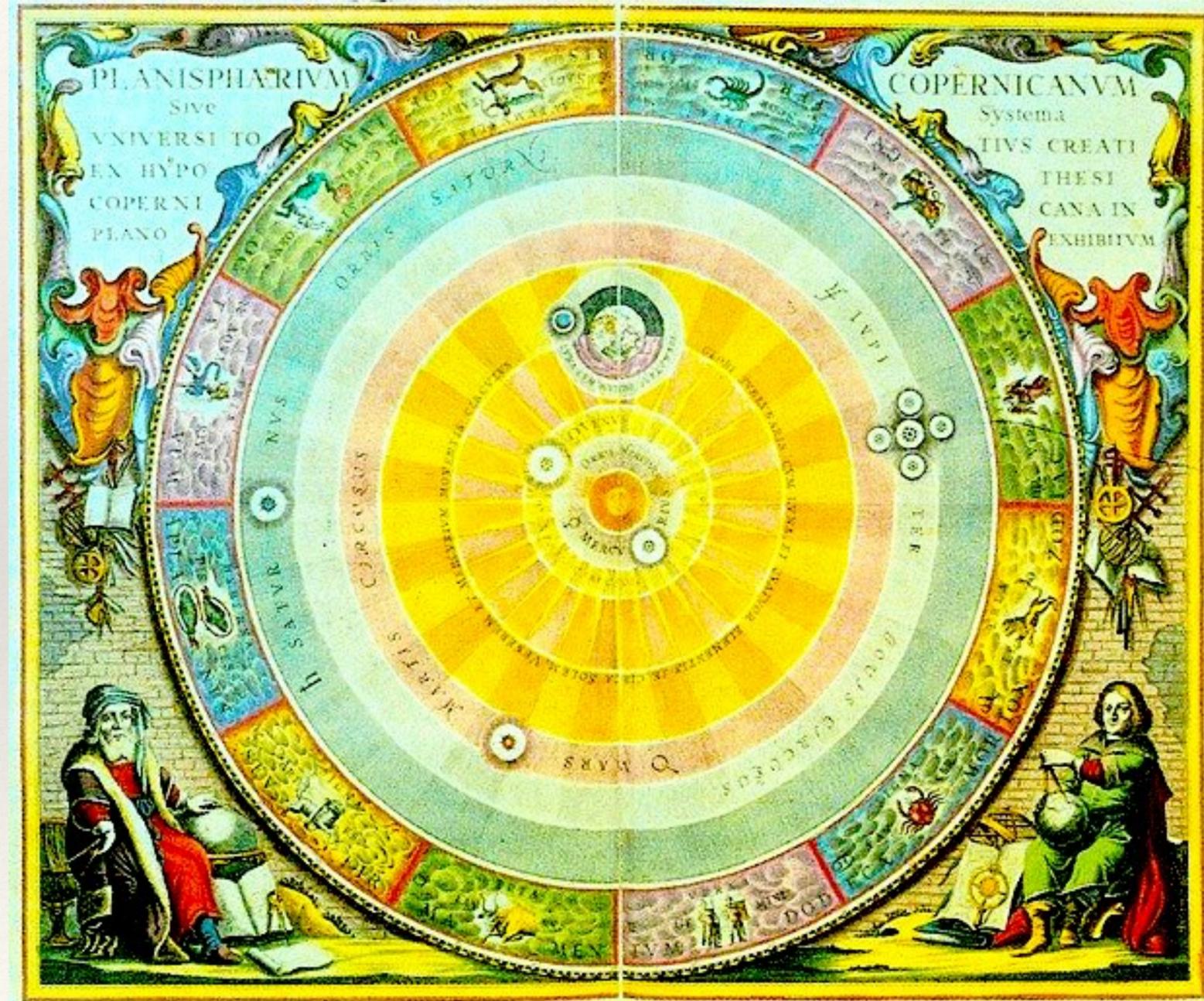
Anatomy of a Solar Eclipse

(Not to scale)

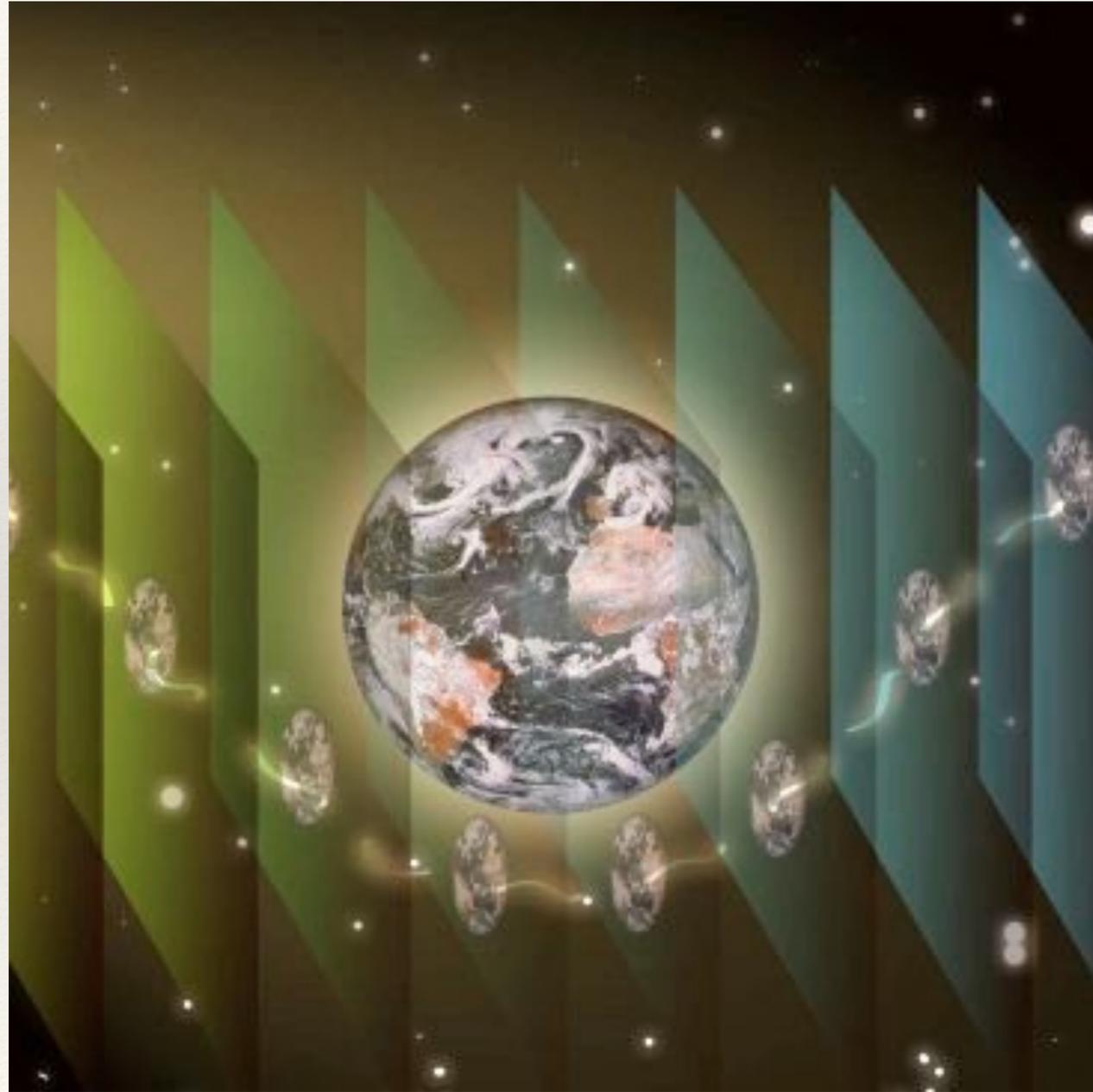


1 / 400th - 400x

Copernican Principle



Universe is Just Right





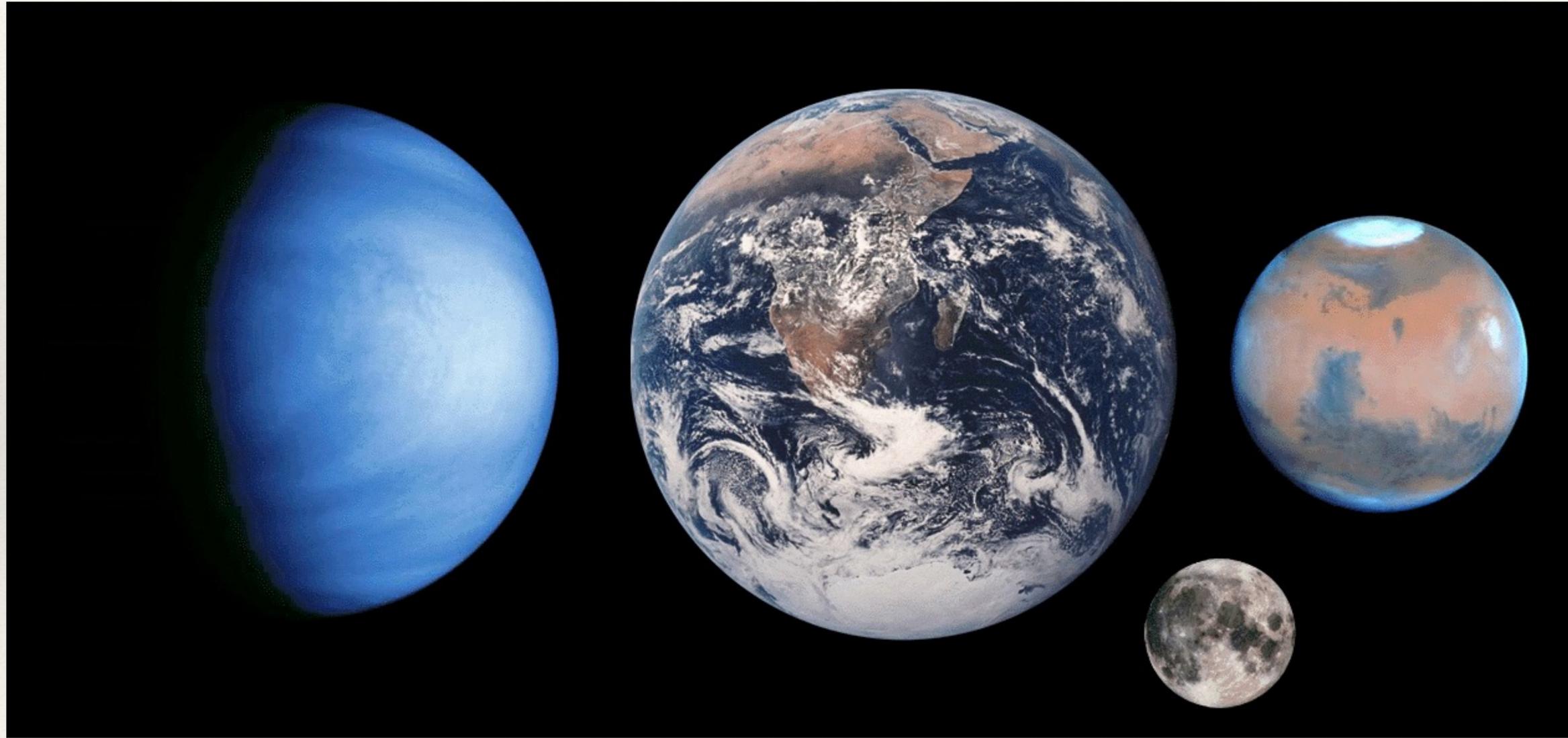
Fine Tuning - Atomic Forces

- If the strong nuclear force were slightly more powerful, then there would be NO hydrogen (an essential element of life). If it was slightly weaker, then hydrogen would be the ONLY element in existence.
- If the electromagnetic force were slightly stronger or weaker, atomic bonds, and thus complex molecules, could NOT form.
- If the gravitational constant were slightly larger, stars would become TOO hot and burn out TOO quickly. If it were smaller, stars would NEVER burn at all and heavy elements would NOT be produced.

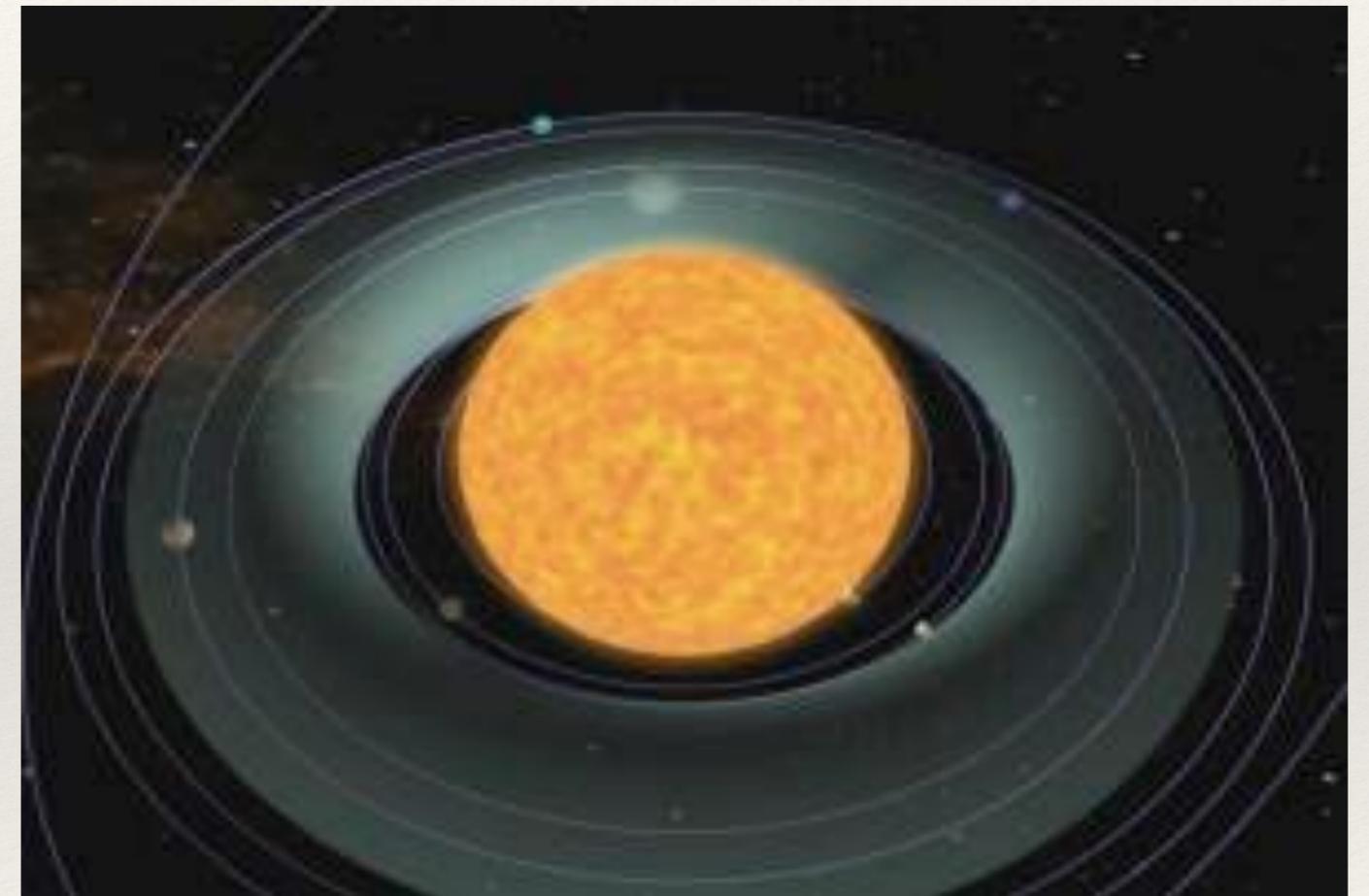
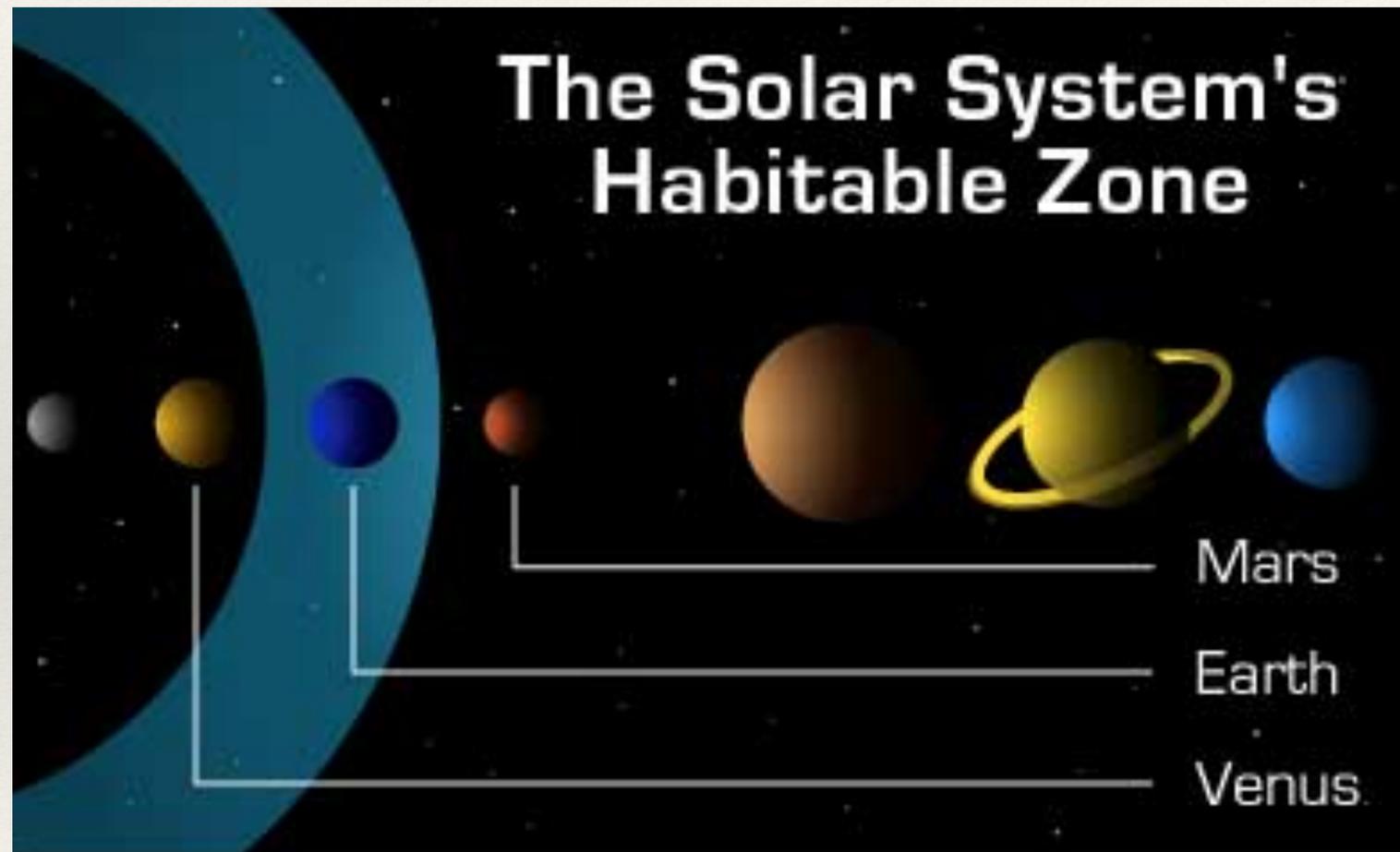
Fine Tuning - Earth and Solar System

- Earth's size
- Earth's distance from the sun
- Earth's axial tilt
- Size and location of the moon
- Earth's Large planets (Jupiter, Saturn)

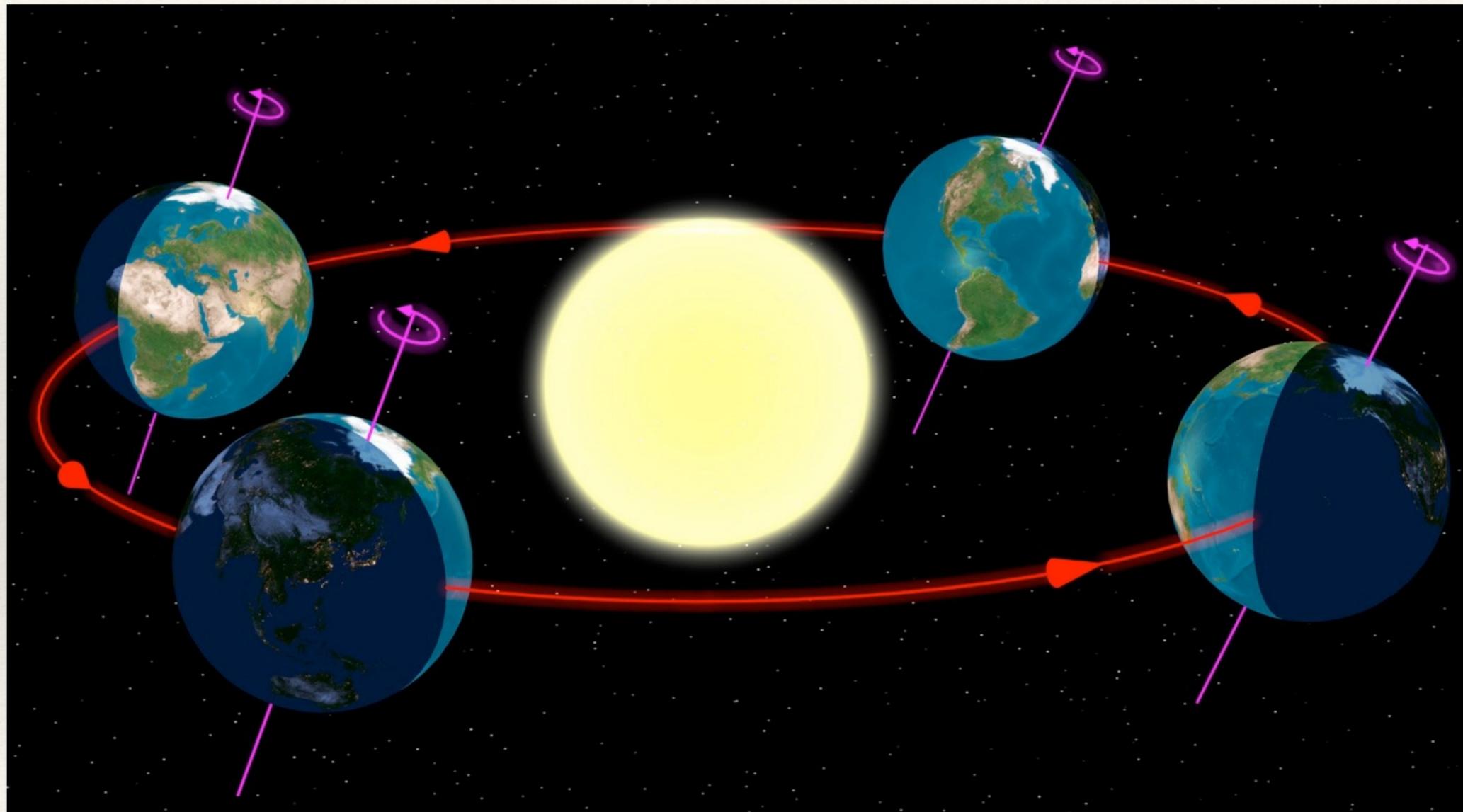
Earth's Size



Distance to the Sun



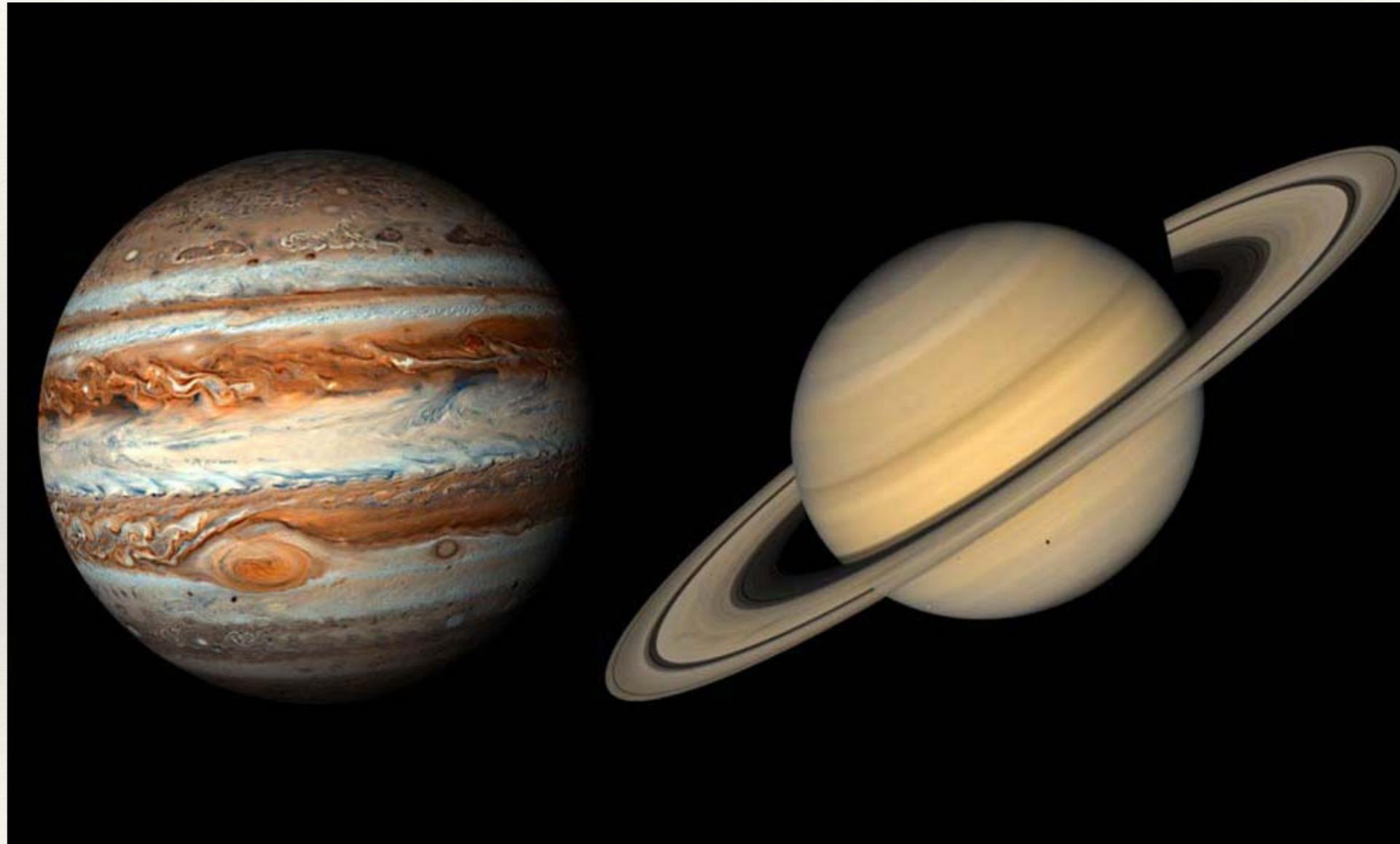
Earth's Axial Tilt



Earth's Moon

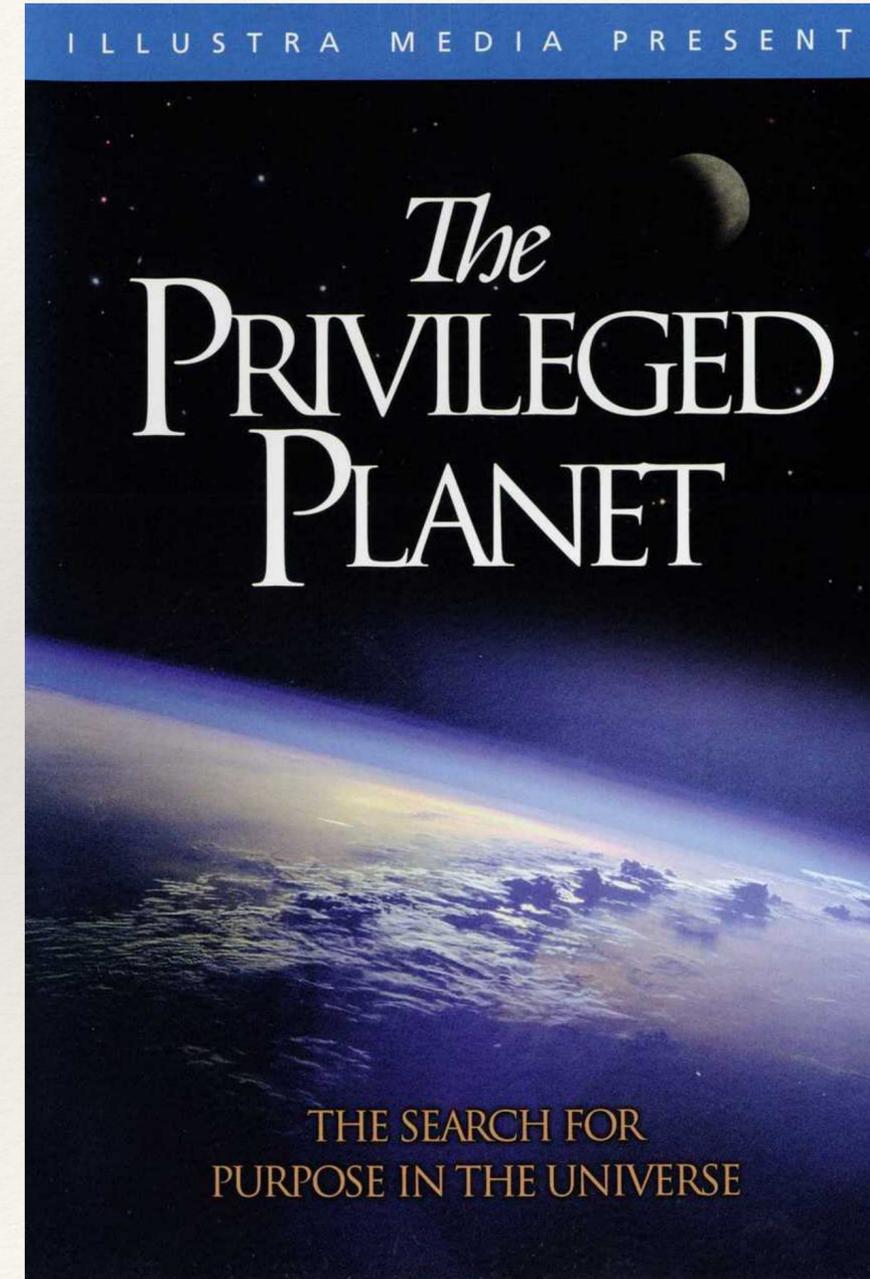
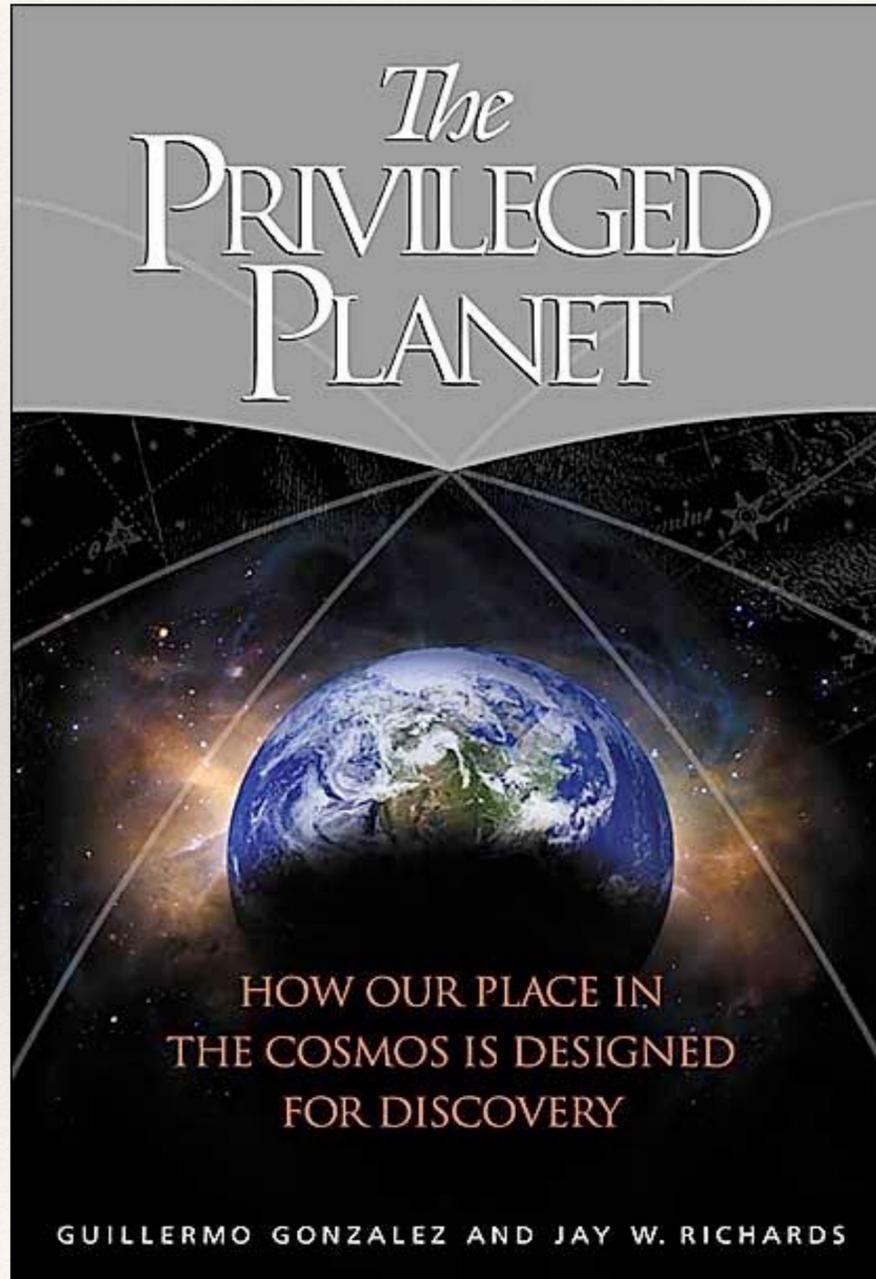


Jupiter and Saturn

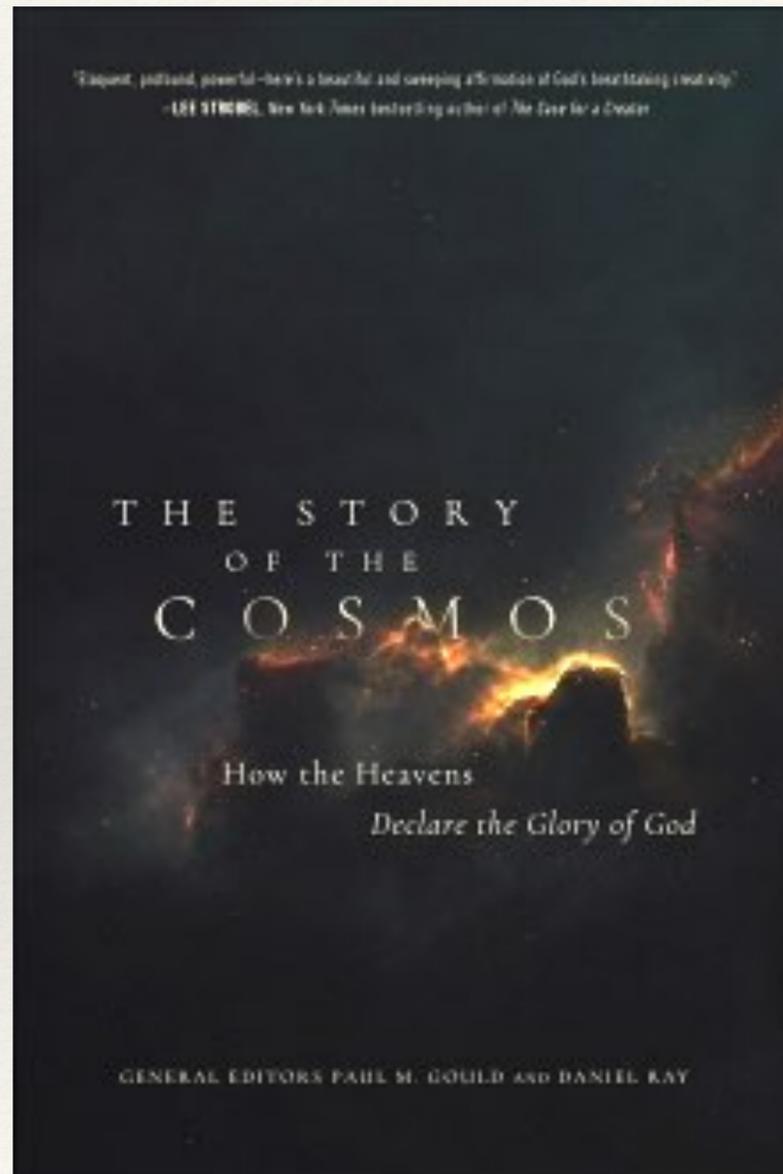




Resources



The Story of the Cosmos



- Modern scientists have popularized a view of the cosmos that suggests there is no need for God and denies any evidence of His existence.
- *The Story of the Cosmos* provides a different and fascinating perspective.
- The authors point to a God who makes Himself known in the wonder and beauty of His creation.

The Story of the Cosmos

- Exploration of the Cosmos
 - A Glorious Resonance: Nature and the *Imago Dei*
 - The Stones Cry Glory
 - Eschatology of Habitable Zones
 - The Glorious Dance of Binary Stars
 - God, Black Holes, and the End of the Universe

The Story of the Cosmos

- Expressions of the Cosmos in Art and Literature
 - Imagine There's No Heaven: C.S. Lewis on Making Space for Faith
 - Tolkien's Creation Narrative in *The Silmarillion*
- Evidence Pointing to the Creation of the Cosmos
 - Creation *Ex Nihilo*
 - The Cosmic Coincidences of Fine Tuning

The Cosmos

“We might picture the universe itself as a kind of regal ballroom, lovingly created and adorned by Christ himself, the grandest of stages for the most enigmatic and beautiful story every told.”

Daniel Ray

The Heavens Are Telling the Glory of God

The Cosmos

“Because God’s intellect is reflected, to a finite degree in his image-bearers, we are naturally inclined to detect signs of his intelligence in his workmanship.”

Melissa Cain Travis
A Glorious Resonance

The Cosmos

“The cosmos is not only designed for scientific discovery from Earth, but it is also designed for us to leave Earth and explore it.”

Guillermo Gonzalez

Eschatology of Habitable Zones

The Cosmos

“If you believe that God created the cosmos . . .
then science becomes an act of growing closer
to the Creator.”

Guy Consolmagno
The Stones Cry Glory

The Cosmos

“The world is a crazy place, and the way its organized is truly crazy. But, we have to be crazy enough to see what that way is if we’re going to understand this physical world. It’s not just a matter of nice, simple formulas.”

John Archibald Wheeler

Physicist who coined the term “black hole”

The Cosmos

“Given the metaphysical impossibility of the universe coming into being from nothing, belief in a supernatural Creator is eminently reasonable.”

William Lane Craig

Creation *Ex Nihilo*: Theology and Science



The heavens declare
the glory of God;
the skies proclaim
the work of his hands.

Psalm 19:1