not widely known and taken for granted as they are today.

If in truth the earth is not in any way special—and in particular if it does not occupy a special position, then it is reasonable to assume that the laws of science observed here will apply elsewhere in the universe. As soon as the earth is acknowledged to be in any way special that assumption loses reasonableness and it is no longer 'foolish to postulate that distance from the earth has anything to do with the intrinsic brightness of stars'.

Hartnett ends his *TJ* article with the significant remark

> 'It follows then that we must be located near the centre of the universe, which is consistent with the fact that we are at the centre of God's attention, both spiritually and physically.'

This possibility that we have a special place in the universe is an anathema to the humanist.

Campbell's review of Nottale's attempt to tackle the dilemma presented by *Pioneer* and its sister spacecraft shows how convoluted are the attempts of secular humanists to get away from this possibility. As spacecraft get further from us (in any direction) their behaviour appears to get further from that predicted by well-established Earth-based science. Scientists have spent several years searching for ways to reject the possibility that the observations could be telling us we need to re-examine our most basic of assumptions. Nottale presents a less than convincing explanation based on Einstein's dubious cosmological constant and admits that it is inadequate anyway.

Whatever the explanation offered, we have more reason than ever before to doubt secular humanist cosmology.

With all that the astronomers have been claiming based on at least this one probably incorrect assumption, perhaps we should look again at relevant statements of Scripture with an open mind. This seems particularly desirable in view of the number of articles in the *TJ* pointing out the bankruptcy of the popular big bang. Perhaps we could even consider the 'primitive anthropocentric' cosmology suggested by Genesis 1 and scorned by Shapley.

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Did Joseph use divination?

Samuel Hanna says:

> 'It is also clear from the Bible that Joseph practised witchcraft (Genesis 44:5), so he could well have been referred to as a magician.'[1]

Actually, what is clear is that Joseph would have rejected witchcraft. He was so careful to reject even tempting sins against God, e.g. with Potiphar's wife (Gen. 39:9). And when he interpreted the dreams of the Pharaoh and his butler and baker, Joseph made it clear that God was the One who gave him the answer (Gen. 41:16, 40:8).

Gen. 44:5 says:

> '*Is* not this *the one* from which my lord drinks, and with which he indeed practises divination? You have done evil in so doing.'

But context is vital. This was what Joseph told his house steward to say to Joseph's brothers after finding the planted cup in their possession. This was all part of his test of the brothers, so the 'divination' *was still playing the part of the Egyptian vizier the brothers thought he was.*

But the second part of Mr Hanna's quote could well be right. Word of Joseph's accomplishments could have easily spread without knowledge of the true God behind them. So it's plausible that Joseph was called a magician.

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Did God use gravitational decompression to trigger the Genesis Flood?

I read with interest the recent discussion between Wilson and Hartnett regarding pre-Fall cosmology,[1] which referenced Walt Brown's paper 'What triggered the Flood?'[2] I wish to discuss Brown's contention that '**the Flood was not inevitable**', in the light of scriptural revelation (Genesis 6:5–7:16, Matthew 24:36–39 and Hebrews 11:7) and astrophysical evidence.

Brown addresses some very important issues relating to the initiation of the Flood:

> 'God initiated the Flood as a result of man's sin. At the end of the Creation Week, all that God created was "**very good**" (Genesis 1:31), so **the Flood was not inevitable** at that time. … Nor was the universe created with killer comets, asteroids, or meteoroids aimed at the earth. Indeed, their presence at the end of the Creation Week would not have been "very good".' [Emphasis added]

This, I believe, is an accurate assessment of the condition of the newly created universe at the end of Creation Week. Brown's statement that '**the Flood was not inevitable**' is, I believe, a logical conclusion to be drawn from Genesis 1:31. However, I note that Hartnett, correctly in my opinion, points out that Brown's hypothesized means of initiation of the Flood (i.e. pressurization of the subterranean waters due to heating caused by moon tidal-forces operating '**For almost 2,000 years**'[3] since Creation Week) virtually makes

the Flood inevitable, at some point in time.

Brown's comments then beg the question: what did cause these '**very bad**' things that we now see in the solar system, and when and how did they occur?

I suggest that the revised gravitational decompression/recompression Flood tectonic (GDRT) model[4,5,6] offers a simple solution to the Flood initiation problem, and explains the origin of comets and asteroids, in a manner which is consistent with the scriptural account, and with observable astrophysical evidence.

In the revised GDRT model, I propose that the Genesis Flood was initiated by a sudden, temporary decompression of the earth, effected by a temporary increase in the value of the exponent of the distance parameter (d) in Newton's *Universal Gravitational Law* (figure 1).

I suggest that God, anticipating the future requirement for the Flood judgment, created the earth with a mantle at just below its melting temperature. Gravitational decompression would reduce the melting temperature of the earth's hot created mantle, without increasing its temperature, causing the mantle to melt, thereby creating the subcrustal 'magmasphere' (or 'magma ocean') hypothesized by several mantle petrologists.[7] Melting provided the reduced mantle viscosity which Baumgardner has perceived as necessary for large scale tectonic changes during the Flood.[8] Mantle differentiation produced the continental and oceanic crusts,[9,10] and much of the floodwaters (the fountains of the great deep).

Genesis 6:5–7:16 teaches that the Lord decided to bring the Flood judgment on the earth to destroy man and air-breathing creatures, because 'it repenteth me [God] that I have made them'. This indicates that the Flood judgment was a response from God to the results of choices made by mankind, and was not a necessary pre-determined outcome of any physical condition or process initiated at creation.

The Flood was initiated, not only as a result of man's sin, but also because of man's refusal to repent. The 'yet seven days and I will', of Genesis 7:4 indicates that the **initiation** of the Flood was, at the time those words were spoken to Noah, still seven days in the future. Presumably, if during those 'seven days' mankind had repented, perhaps in response to Noah's preaching and righteous life (Genesis 6:8–9), God would have withheld the Flood judgment.

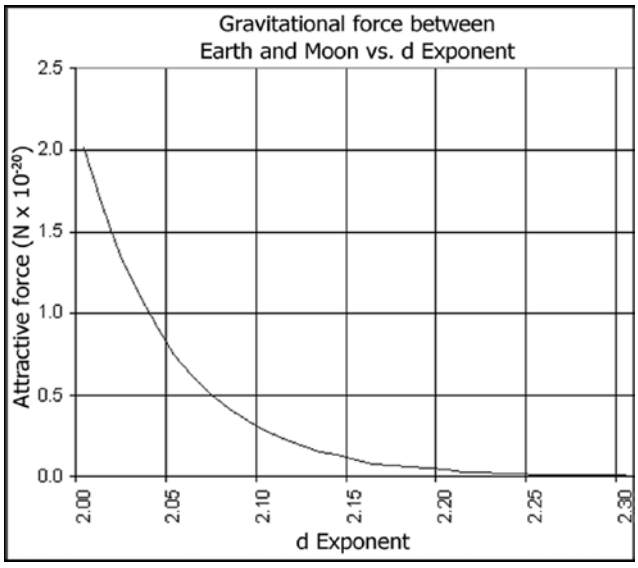

Figure 1. *Variation of gravitational attractive force as a function of the d exponent in Newton's Universal Gravitational Law*

The 'same day' of Genesis 7:11 indicates that the Flood was initiated suddenly, and Matthew 24:36–39 and Hebrews 11:7 seem to confirm that the pre-Flood populace had no physical indications of the impending event. If the Flood was initiated by internal processes such as radioactive-decay heating[11] or increase of water pressure,[12] we might expect a gradual build-up of effects, visible for some time on the earth's surface. But this is not supported by Scripture.

As noted by Brown, in a 'very good' created solar system, functioning according to the Newtonian 'laws of motion', impact or near-miss trajectories would presumably not exist. Such orbits, it is suggested, would have been potentially harmful to life on Earth, and would not have complied with the 'very good' description of Genesis 1:31. However, we see incontrovertible evidence of on-going impacts within the solar system.

This relatively minor disorder that we now see, in an otherwise ordered solar system, might, when viewed in the light of Genesis 1:31, be considered to constitute imperfection, which originated at some time in the solar system's history after Day 7 of creation. We might then question when, and how, such disorder in the solar system first occurred.

Impact trajectories, I suggest, could only occur if the created, non-impact trajectories of solar system bodies were altered at some point during the history of the cosmos. 2Peter 3:6 gives a strong indication that the entire creation (*kosmos*) was affected by the Flood: 'By these waters also the world [*kosmos*] of that time was deluged and destroyed'.

Hovis too discusses the effect of the Flood on the other planets asking: 'Did the Genesis Flood mechanisms affect other planets and the universe?'[13] And Whitcomb and Morris[14] consider the implications of 2 Peter 3:3–7 with regard to the extent of the effects of the Flood.

DeYoung notes, regarding the exponent of *d* in Newton's Inverse Square Law: '…if the exponent deviated just slightly from exactly 2, **the planet orbits** and the entire universe **would become unstable**.' [Emphasis added]'[15]

In the light of scriptural revelation, and the astrophysical evidence discussed here, we should give serious consideration to the possibility that the present disorder in the solar system, comprising primarily the asteroids and comets, and their impacting orbits, resulted from a temporary reduction of gravitational force, which God

occasioned to initiate the Flood. The asteroids, and probably the comets, could be the result of melting and explosive fragmentation of hot, created planets, caused by this decompression. Thus they would be a result of the Flood, rather than a cause.[16]

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New Ark landing place?

The question of where Noah's Ark finally came to rest after its ordeal on the high seas with its precious cargo has long fascinated many people, with numerous expeditions mounted over the decades to try and locate the vessel. As the Bible specifically mentions the 'mountains of Ararat' (Gen 8:4) as the Ark's landing site, it is understandable that researchers have been drawn to Mt Ararat in south-eastern Turkey for many years. But what other possible locations could we also consider?

After the floodwaters receded and the Ark found itself on a high and dry mountain, Noah built an altar to the Lord, after which the Bible then describes the genealogy of Noah's children and grandchildren. By the time we get to Genesis 11 we learn that all of humanity had one language and the people 'journeyed from the east' (Gen 11:2) and settled on the plains of Shinar. There they undertook a massive construction, an immense tower, and in doing so disobeyed God's command to fill the earth.

If we accept that the Tower of Babel is in Babylon, which is about 90 kilometres south of Baghdad in modern day Iraq, we must consider the possibility that the Ark came to rest somewhere in the Zagros Mountains of western Iran, which is due east from Babylon. Upon leaving the Ark Noah and his family 'journeyed from the east' (i.e. moved westwards) to arrive at the fertile lands between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers—the plains of Shinar.

If the Ark had come to rest on the Turkish Mt Ararat, then Noah and his family would have had to journey from the north, as Mt Ararat is due north of Babylon. That would be contrary to what the Bible tells us.

The Zagros Mountains are a rugged, and in some areas little explored, region with many very high peaks—for example, Zard Kūh, which rises 4,548 metres (14,921 ft).[1] Many of the peaks are permanently covered by snow. Another interesting point to consider is that there is a town in the Zagros Mountains called Arāk which is almost due east of Baghdad and Babylon. While the name has some similarity to the name Ararat it must be remembered that Arāk was only founded in 1808 and was originally called Sultanabad.[1] But there is the possibility that Arāk may recall the name Ararat, perhaps the region's original name, an area that once saw the arrival of an immense wooden vessel.

At this point in time no solid evidence has yet been unearthed from Mt Ararat in Turkey by the many earnest expeditions which have searched there for the Ark. Perhaps it is time researchers turned some of their attention to the Zagros Mountains of western Iran ...

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