

Mystery Force Pulls Old Space Probe Toward Sun
February 11, 2002

Note from Pastor Kevin: This mystery force, described in the following article, is not surprising to those who have carefully read Dr. Walt Brown's book, 'In the Beginning: Compelling Evidence for Creation and the Flood' (7th edition, 2001). For the last 30 years, Dr. Brown has been studying geophysics in an attempt to explain how the flood of Noah may have occurred, as the Bible describes it. His book can be viewed on the Internet at www.creationscience.com.

In the chapter on "The Origin of Comets," he explains that as the flood began, the "fountains of the great deep" (Genesis 7:11) launched muddy water into space where the water quickly froze. An interesting, and now well established, gravity phenomena pulled this muddy ice together to form comets. (Comets have been described for the last 30 years as "dirty snowballs.") Dr. Brown gives many other points of evidence that support this explanation for comets and refutes other explanations.

Dr. Brown acknowledges that in order for his theory to be correct, the solar system must be about 2/1,000 (two one-thousandths) "heavier" than previously thought. Currently, some comets which have near-parabolic orbits are assumed to require millions of years to complete one orbit. However, if this additional (and until now, unknown) mass is where Dr. Brown believes it is, those orbits would only take about 4,600 years. In other words, near-parabolic comets launched from earth 4,600 years ago (at the time of the flood) would now be falling back toward the sun, completing their first orbit.

On page 202 of Dr. Brown's book, he predicts, "The equivalent of Jupiter's mass is thinly distributed 40-600 AU from the Sun." An "AU" (Astronomical Unit) is the distance between the Earth and Sun. Pluto is 40 AU from the Sun. Dr. Brown makes this prediction because of the overwhelming evidence that comets came from the earth when the flood occurred about 4,600 years ago. (He gives other evidence for believing that the solar system is very slightly heavier than previously believed.)

The Pioneer spacecraft is now being tugged toward the Sun by a slight but unknown force. If the force is gravity, then it is because of a previously unknown mass. Currently, the force on Pioneer is much smaller than the force predicted by Dr. Brown. However, Pioneer is only starting to enter this belt of thinly distributed mass. Dr. Brown predicts that as Pioneer goes farther and farther into space, this force will gradually increase, which is the opposite of what evolutionary scientists are expecting. Time will tell who is right.

Robert Matthews LONDON SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

LONDON — A space probe launched 30 years ago has come under the influence of a force that has baffled scientists and could rewrite the laws of physics. Researchers say Pioneer 10, which took the

first close-up pictures of Jupiter before leaving our solar system in 1983, is being pulled back to the sun by an unknown force.

The effect shows no sign of weakening as the spacecraft travels deeper into space, and scientists are considering the potential that the probe has revealed a new force

of nature. Philip Laing, a member of the research team tracking the craft, said: "We have examined every mechanism and theory we can think of, and so far nothing works. "If the effect is real, it will have a big impact on cosmology and spacecraft navigation," said Mr. Laing, of the Aerospace Corp. of California.

Pioneer 10 was launched by NASA on March 2, 1972, and with Pioneer 11, its twin, revolutionized astronomy with detailed images of Jupiter and Saturn. In June 1983, Pioneer 10 passed Pluto, the most distant planet in our solar system. Both probes are traveling at 27,000 mph toward stars that they will encounter several million years from now.

Scientists are continuing to monitor signals from Pioneer 10, which is more than 7 billion miles from Earth. Research to be published shortly in a leading physics journal, however, will show that the speed of the two probes is being changed by about 6 mph per century — a barely perceptible effect about 10 billion times weaker than gravity.

Scientists initially suspected that gas escaping from tiny rocket motors aboard the probes or heat leaking from their nuclear power plants might be responsible. Both now have been ruled out. The team says no current theories explain why the force stays constant: All the most plausible forces, from gravity to the effect of solar radiation, decrease rapidly with distance. The bizarre behavior also has eliminated theories that the two probes are affected by the gravitational pull of unknown planets beyond the solar system.

Assertions by some scientists that the force is the result of a quirk in the Pioneer probes also have been discounted by the discovery that the effect seems to be affecting Galileo and Ulysses, two other space probes still in the solar system. Data from these two probes suggest the force is of the same strength as that found for the Pioneers.

Duncan Steel, a space scientist at Salford University in Manchester, England, says even such a weak force could have huge effects on a cosmic scale. "It might alter the number of comets that come toward us over millions of years, which would have consequences for life on Earth. It also raises the question of whether we know enough about the law of gravity."

Until 1988, Pioneer 10 was the most remote object made by man — a distinction now held by Voyager 1. Should Pioneer 10 make contact with alien life, it carries a gold-plated aluminum plaque on which the figures of a man and woman are shown to scale, along with a map showing its origin that NASA calls "the cosmic equivalent of a message in a bottle."