Significance of Eclipse in Islam

What is an Eclipse?

Scientific Interpretation: -   An interception of the light of the sun or moon by the intervention of some other body, either between it and the eye or between the luminous body and that illuminated by it.

Solar Eclipse: -   Caused by the moon coming between the eye and the sun

Lunar Eclipse: -   Caused by the earth coming between the moon and sun.

Islamic Interpretation: -   These are the signs that prove:
(i)   The existence of Allah
(ii)   His absolute control over each and every thing
(iii)   That the sun and/or moon are not God, instead they are obedient to God

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Some scientific data

1. The earliest partial eclipse observed and recorded was in Ninevah (IRAQ) on 15th June 763 B.C

2. The first evidence of a total eclipse stems from Chu-Fu (CHINA) observed on 17th July 709 B.C

3. The first solar eclipse in Britain is that of 15th February 538 A.D

4. The most recent occasion when a total eclipse was observed in Britain was on 29th June 1927

5. The next instance of such an eclipse in Britain will be at 11-10 am on 11th August 1999 with totality lasting for 2 min 2 sec.

6. The longest possible eclipse in Britain is 5 min 30 sec.

7. In recent times, that of 3rd May 1715 lasted 4 min 4 sec.

8. But that of 22nd July 2381 will last 5 min 10 sec.

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Solar Eclipse at the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him)

A   In the 10th year of HIJRAH a solar eclipse was observed in Madinah that has been reported in the books of Hadith by several Sahabah including:

Hazrat Ayesha	Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Abbas
Hazrat Abu Musa	Hazrat Jabir
Hazrat Samurah Ibn Jundub	Hazrat Ubay Ibn Kaab
Hazrat Numan Ibn Bashir	(Allah be pleased with them all)

B   The Hadith narrated by Abdullah Ibn Abbas provides a detailed account of what Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) did on this occasion. And it has been recorded in Bukhari and Muslim.

C   On the day of this solar eclipse Hazrat Ibrahim the son of the Prophet (peace be upon him) died at the age of 18 months.

D   At that time it was a popular belief that when an important person is born or dies, the eclipse occurs.

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What did the Prophet do at the time of Solar Eclipse?

Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Abbas says:

There was an eclipse of the sun at the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and he performed two rakaat of prayer along with his Sahabah. In each rakaat he stood up (QIYAM) for a long time (as long as anyone would be reciting Surah Al-Baqarah) and performed a long Ruku. By the time he concluded the prayer, the eclipse was over. After the prayer he said that verily the sun and moon are among the signs of Allah and are not eclipsed on the account of the life or death of any person, and when you see these (eclipses of sun and moon) remember Allah.

(BUKHARI AND MUSLIM)

Significance of Eclipse in Islam

Special Prayers at the time of Solar Eclipse

1. This special prayer is called SALAT-UL-KUSOOF.
2. It is Sunnah Al-Muwakkadah to offer this salah.
3. The minimum number of Rakah is two.
4. It is mustahab (commendable) to offer this prayer in congregation (JAMA'AT).
5. If offering individually, it may be offered at home or in the Masjid.
6. Azan and Iqamat is not required for this Salah.
7. There is no Khutbah after this Salah.
8. Qira't (recitation of Quran) during this Salah is not done loudly.
9. The Salah may be started any time after the eclipse has begun.
10. This Salah may not be offered after the eclipse is over.
11. Dua after this Salah is also Mustahab.
12. If the eclipse occurs at such a time when performing Salah is prohibited, then only Dua will have to be offered.
13. The Salah for Lunar eclipses (Salat-ul-khusoof) has to be performed individually.