

The Role of Jupiter

The more scientists learn about the solar system, the more we see God's hand in it.

Writing in the journal *Nature*, Benjamin Zuckerman, a professor of astronomy at the University of California at Los Angeles, says that one factor contributing to Earth's ability to sustain life is the size of the largest planet in our solar system, Jupiter. Jupiter, the next neighbor to Earth after Mars, is a giant gaseous planet, with a mass that is 318 times greater than that of Earth and thus a much greater gravitational force.

It is that gravitational force that benefits Planet Earth. When massive objects that could do great harm to our planet hurl through our solar system, Jupiter acts as a sort of vacuum cleaner, sucking comets and asteroids into itself or causing them to veer away from Earth. Without Jupiter, says Zuckerman, Earth would be a sitting duck.

What's more, Zuckerman says massive gaseous planets like Jupiter are rare in the universe.

Once again, God's design in creation is apparent. Having a planet like Jupiter nearby may be rare, but it is no coincidence.

--Beecher Hunter