

You owe it to yourself to experience a total solar eclipse

Ted Talk by David Baron

The story was about a solar partial eclipse that was set to cross the country in May of 1994. And an astronomer told David what was going to happen and how to view it. He emphasized how a solar eclipse is totally different. In a total eclipse, for all of two or three minutes, the moon completely blocks the face sun, creating what he described as the most awe-inspiring spectacle in all nature. The thing about total eclipses is, if you wait for one to come to you, you're going to be waiting a long time, any given point in the earth experiences a total eclipse about once every 400 years.

Now, a total eclipse is visible only along a narrow path ("path of totality"), about a hundred miles wide, and that's where the moon's shadow falls. David was wearing eclipse glasses with really dark lenses that enabled him to look at the sun safely. Before the 1998 total eclipse started, David realized weird things were happening in the sky, daylight looked odd and shadows looked bizarrely sharp. He looked at the sky when it was safe, then he was dumbstruck. He saw in the sky colours, a deep purple-grey up above, but orange on the horizon. And in the twilight, bright stars and planets (Jupiter, Mercury and Venus).

David said, that due to that spectacular show, he felt viscerally connected to the universe in all of its immensity, he felt that like a vision. After that experience, he thinks there is nothing truly more awesome than a total solar eclipse. Additionally, he thinks that a similar shared experience of awe would help heal humanity divisions and get us to treat each other just a bit more humanely.

Finally, he concludes saying that it is not about the time you spend in something, it's about it changes the years that come after.

Opinion

I would like to see the partial eclipse that is going to happen next Monday. It will be the first time I see one and I feel curious about how eclipses are. Some years ago, I saw a moon eclipse and it was cool, so I think, the solar eclipse could be better, and more after hearing how David described it. I half agree with the speaker, you can feel a special connection with the universe in those situations, but I have never feel that, that's why I don't completely agree, I guess I need to see the eclipse to give my final opinion. Additionally, I'm not sure if you really can see some planets from earth without an object that helps you, and I see some of them at the same time. Finally, I hope to see a total eclipse in the future, to experiment the colour changes in the sky.