This image of a clay tablet (10 cm x 12.5 cm) written in cuneiform script contains an accurate account of the occurrence of a total solar eclipse witnessed at Babylon in 158 BC. The narrowness of the belt of totally crossing Babylon fixes the rotational phase of the Earth at that epoch. This, and other extant records of eclipses – both solar and lunar – from ancient Babylon, China, Greece, the Arab Dominions and medieval Europe, are used to trace the history of the Earth’s rotation over the past two and a half millennia. (Image courtesy British Museum © The Trustees of the British Museum.) See F.R. Stephenson et al., Measurement of the Earth’s rotation: 720 BC to AD 2015.