

How Easter's Pink Moon Phenomenon Can Bring You Peace and Hope

Passover always takes place in connection to a full moon. The entire Jewish calendar is lunar instead of solar, meaning it is tied to the cycle of the moon, not the sun like the Gregorian calendar is.

Easter is determined each year by Easter falling on the first Sunday after the full moon that occurs on or after the spring equinox. This is known as the Pink Moon phenomenon or Paschal Moon (*Paschal* meaning "related to Easter").

When you think about the biblical timeline of events leading up to Christ's crucifixion, Jesus walked through the Kidron Valley after the Last Supper and prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane under the light of a full moon. We live beneath that same moon.

When I look at the moon, I marvel.

I marvel because it is so far away, and yet it shines so bright. I marvel because its brightness is not its own but belongs to another.

I feel the pull of the moon.

It speaks to me. Calls to me. Dares me to dream. Invites me to live fully.

When I look at the sky at night and see the moonlit wonder, the explosions of stars, I ask God, "How is it that You even notice me?"

Are its movements not somewhat hypnotic, as it shrinks to a sliver and then grows full size?

When I see it, I find myself calming down. I take a breath. You sent us a companion to always be with us, reflecting the light of our sun in the darkness of night.

When I am afraid, I will trust in you and take great comfort from the nightlight you left on for me.

When we lift our eyes and see the moon, we are connected to every human who has ever lived. Our lives look different than those who were before us. Yet when we look up to the moon in the night sky, we see exactly what they've seen.

Not just similar. The same.

There has only ever been one moon above our earth.

When I am stressed or scared, I like to look at the moon and remember those who have gone before me, and the fact that on many nights they probably looked up at the moon while they worried.

David's nauseous guilt over what he did to Uriah (2 Sam. 12:13); Peter's bitter sorrow over his denial of Christ (Matt. 26:75); the fear Esther felt as she prepared to step into the chamber of the king (Esth. 4:15–16).

Daniel's agony as he defied the order and chose to pray anyway (Dan. 6:10).

The problems they faced have come and gone, and the moon shines on. This is now your time to shine.

Long after you and I leave this world, the moon will rise in the sky and shine. David called the moon God's eternal, faithful witness in the sky (Ps. 89:37). Its predictable orbit and nightly glowing point to the One who spoke it, hung it and calls it out by name. He has a plan for you to shine in the midst of your struggles. Not someday when you sort out all your issues, or when you have a better job, or are out of school. Right now, in the middle of the suffocating smallness

of your situation—He wants you to shine.

I fear we think of the cross and resurrection too little and too lightly.

It comes up in the days leading up to Easter. At our best, we take a Lent journey or Passion Week trip in our minds in the same way we count down to Christmas.

Five golden rings.

Easter is the end of Holy Week. The payoff of Passion Week; the final seven days of Christ's earthly life.

Then we pack it all up and put it into the boxes in the garage, between Halloween scarecrows and Christmas lights, until next year.

We do this not only with decorations, but also in a deeper way within our hearts. When Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead, it wasn't the last chapter but the start of a whole new story. The beginning. Artemis. It wasn't the termination of something but the genesis of everything. Through it, He triggered the start of the reconciliation of all things.

Theologically, this is articulated as the already but not yet.

The first domino fell when Christ rose from the dead. The last domino will fall when all things are made new.

The moon and the cross cannot be separated.

The moon calls to lovers. Dreamers. Painters. Fiends.

The cross whispers to the broken, the needy, the dying.

Through them, God calls to sinners and to saints.

May all the godly flourish during His reign.

May there be abundant prosperity until the moon is no more.

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