



# MOON & PLANETS DEVOTIONAL

PSALM 148:3

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“Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars!”

## EXPERIENCE

On a clear fall evening my family went out for some stargazing in our front yard. This particular night the crescent moon, Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars were all visible. Seeing them all on one night was special! Seeing them all through a telescope with 400x magnification was breathtakingly awesome!!! We could see two of the bands that wrap around Jupiter and also three of its orbiting moons. We could distinctly see Saturn and the ring that encircles the planet. The red planet, Mars, was indeed markedly orangish-red in color. Looking through the telescope at the moon blew my mind. We could clearly see its surface and the numerous craters and perfectly smooth portions of the lunar surface. Though the moon's color is a bland gray, as I pulled my eye from the eyepiece of the telescope the sting of looking at something

so bright took a moment to shake off. I was reminded of just how powerfully the moon reflects the sun's light. Though the moon's color is gray, and I would say gray is not all that pretty, there was a tremendous beauty to the moonlight I saw that night.

## CONTEMPLATION

The moon does not generate light. While that is an obvious statement of truth to modern ears, the biblical authors were limited in what they knew. We moderns know that the moon and the planets reflect the light of the sun. They do their job gloriously. The moon and the planets glitter, shimmer, twinkle, and shine beautifully. As I ponder their reflecting the glory of the sun, I think about Christians' call to do the same thing to one degree or another. Each believer is distinctly different, yet uniquely capable of reflecting the light of God's truth, his love, and his glory. Just as the moon and each planet reflects varying degrees of light and beauty so does each believer vary in how they reflect God's light. How gloriously they shine or twinkle is dependent upon their position relative to the sun. So, it is with our own lives and how well we reflect God's truth, love, and glory.

On that night we were fortunate to observe Saturn from its most stunning angle. The planet and its ring were turned so we could see the space between the ball shaped planet and its ring. Far less glorious is when the planet is positioned at a perfect side angle such that the ring is less distinguishable from the planet except for two oblong bulges at either side. The planets are emblematic of believers and how they each uniquely reflect the light of God. I concur with Jonathan Edwards, who proposed that the moon is emblematic of the Church (see Edwards note below). The moon is the luminary in the night sky

that is the biggest and most faithful reflective witness of God's light. It shines brightest and most consistently from week to week, month to month, and year to year.

Application: These extraterrestrial emblems beg the question for believers as individuals and as the Church, do our lives shine? The Apostle Paul exhorts believers in Philippians 2:15 to "shine as lights in the world." As we see the moon and planets gloriously reflecting the sun's light it should evoke in us a deeper desire to reflect God's glory in truth and love to all those we come in contact with. Additionally, just as each planet was uniquely made to reflect light in varying degrees of glory to humanity, so we are each created to reflect God's glory to others both now and throughout all eternity. As Christ's righteousness shines through our words and deeds we trust and hope that our personal witness and the Church's witness might "turn many to righteousness." Daniel 12:2-3 says:

*"And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars [planets] forever and ever."*

After our resurrection, we will enjoy reflecting God's glory in worship back to him, even as our reflected light mutually spurs one another on in worship forever and ever.

## PRAYER

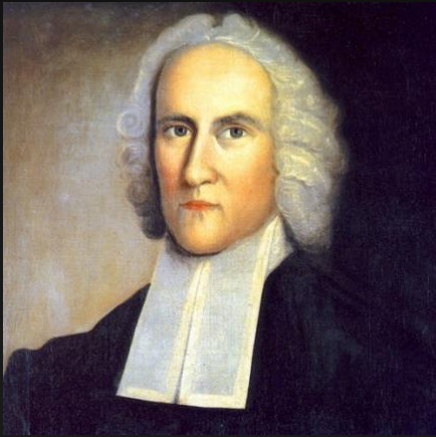
Heavenly Father, my heart yearns to reflect your light. I desire for my life to shine forth your truth, love, and glory, that others might see my

good deeds and glorify you (Matthew 5:16). Fill my mind and heart that they might overflow in benefit to all those I come in contact with today, that others might turn to righteousness because your grace is reflected in and through my life. I ask it in Christ's name. Amen.

## CONFIRMATION

The moon as an emblem for the church is not found explicitly in Scripture. Therefore, a believer might wonder if this emblem is Scriptural? The argument for the moon as an emblem relies upon the sun and its light as confirmed Scriptural emblems. The sun is a Scriptural emblem for God, and light is a Scriptural emblem for God's truth, love, and glory. The moon, as an element that reflects the sun's light, is emblematic of anything that reflects God's truth, love, and glory. The Church (i.e. God's people) reflects God's divine qualities to the world. So, by way of this Scriptural tautology, this emblematic interpretation of the moon is admissible. Unless an emblem is confirmed explicitly by Scripture or is Scriptural, then it must be said to be a speculative conclusion.

- The moon and planets are emblematic of the Church and God's people individually, who reflect the sun's light, signifying God's light. Light may mean (1) truth, (2) love, or (3) glory.



## Jonathan Edwards

### FROM *IMAGES OF DIVINE THINGS* [NO. 4](#) & [NO. 76](#)

*Image 4: "The heaven's being filled with glorious, luminous bodies, is to signify the glory and happiness of the heavenly inhabitants; and amongst these, the sun signifies Christ and the moon, the church."<sup>1</sup>*

*Image 76 Footnote: "The moon is a lively image of the church, [as] she borrows all her light from the sun, so doth the church receive light from Christ, the Sun of Righteousness. The old moon represents the church under the Old Testament, which looks to, depends upon, and receives light from Christ yet to come, and is drawing nearer and nearer to the time of Christ's coming, as the old moon [looks towards the sun] [and] receives light from it yet to come, whose conjunction with the moon is yet future. The new moon represents the church under the New Testament, which receives light from Christ already come and having already united himself to the human nature, as the new moon looks towards and receives light from the sun as having already been in conjunction with her. The conjunction of the sun and moon in the time of the change seems to represent the coming of Christ, whereby Christ actually united himself to the church by uniting himself to the human nature, the church's nature."<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Edwards, *Images of Divine Things*, [WJE 11:52](#).

<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Edwards, *Images of Divine Things*, [WJE 11:76](#).