

Thought for the Day 17th August - John Reed

Read Revelation 2:1-7

Apparently, we're losing the moon. Or, rather, it is slowly drifting away from us at a rate of 3.78 cm per year. And in just a few hundred million years from now, it will be distant enough that there will be no more solar eclipses.

How I do know this? Well, I read this fascinating article on it, called "How do you solve a Moon mystery? Fire a laser at it."¹ It may not be the catchiest heading ever invented, but it tells the story pretty accurately. Scientists measure the distance from the earth to the moon by firing a laser at light-reflecting panels, called "retroreflectors," that have been left there on the surface of the moon by Apollo astronauts and two Soviet robotic rovers. They measure the time it takes the beam to travel to the moon and reflect back to the earth. And apparently, the distance is getting greater at a rate of 3.78 cm per annum.

Which is a very small amount. But, over many years, it will add up to a great amount.

That made me think about our distance from God. In this letter to the church in Ephesus, God commends them for many things: their toil and patient endurance, their stand against false teaching. But he is saddened by the fact that they have abandoned the love they had at first (v. 4) and calls them remember from where they've fallen and repent (or turn back) (v. 5).

The impression I get is that they are not like the Galatians, to whom Paul says: "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel" (Galatians 1:6). They seem to have quickly turned away. The Ephesians here, by contrast seem to have slowly slipped away. Their passion has waned, and – like the moon - they have drifted slowly further away from God.

That can happen. And when it does, we need to turn back. James says: "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded." (James 4:8).

¹ <https://www.smh.com.au/world/north-america/how-do-you-solve-a-moon-mystery-fire-a-laser-at-it-20200816-p55m6v.html>