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**Mars Ring Hypothesis**

According to the article “Mars will become ringed planet after crushing its moon Phobos”, Mars will eventually be a ringed planet after crushing its moon. The moon orbits Mars with orbit radius of about 6,000 kilometers. But Phobos is getting closer to Mars, 1.82 centimeters per year, due to the gravitational pull of Mars. Two researchers from the University of California in Berkely, Benjamin Black and Tushar Mittal wrote about this in their journal. At this rate, they calculated that this process will take 20 to 40 million years. They also wrote, “The orbit of Phobos, the larger of Mars’s two moonlets, is gradually spiraling inwards towards Mars ... Eventually, Phobos will either break apart to form a ring or it will crash into Mars.” Moreover, Phobos breaking apart reinforced what NASA observed. NASA found “stretch marks” on Phobos which are signs of Phobos breaking apart. Scientists are planning to land on Phobos to confirm this. The research team suggests from this paper, Mars tearing down Phobos implies that the rings of other ringed planets in the solar system may have formed just the same way. Additionally, researchers predicted that Neptune’s moon Triton may experience the same thing, due to its unstable orbit.

**Works Cited**

[1] “Mars will become ringed planet after crushing its moon Phobos.” RT Question More. 23 November 2015. Web. 22 April 2017. <http://on.rt.com/6xdk>

[2] Black, Benjamin & Mittal, Tushar, “The demise of Phobos and development of a Martian ring system” *Nature Geoscience* **8**, 913 – 917 (2015)