2012: Is The Sky Really Falling?

Probe's former intern Dave Sterrett and Steve Lee of Prestonwood Christian Academy (Plano TX) planned to publish a book about the 2012 buzz. After interviewing a number of Ph.D.s who are experts in Maya studies, astronomy, astrobiology, theology and New Testament, they concluded that the hype is "much ado about nothing."

The ancient Mesoamerican culture of the Maya had a meticulous calendar that abruptly ends on December 21, 2012. Many so-called scholars and believers think that either the world is going to end, as the recently released movie *2012* depicts, or humanity will move into a new age of enlightenment that will elevate us into a higher state of being or consciousness. The prediction of this "end of the world" or "end of the age" phenomenon has morphed into a multifaceted issue ranging from Maya studies, astronomy, New Age, to biblical studies.

The Hype:

Lawrence E. Joseph, author of *Apocalypse 2012: An Investigation Into Civilization's End*, has stated that "The year 2012 will be pivotal, perhaps catastrophic, possibly revelatory, to a degree unmatched in human history." Many people have been concerned about the connection between the Maya prediction and astronomy. Some New Age advocates believe the 2012 event will bring about a higher level of consciousness. Sol Luckman, author of *Conscious Healing*, has written, "Are you aware that a Shift in human consciousness is occurring even as you read these words that employs celestial triggers such as supernovas and Earth's alignment with Galactic Center in the years leading up to 2012 to trigger the evolution of our species?"

The Reality:

We interviewed Dr. Robert Sitler, Director of the Latin American Studies program at Stetson University.

> *Steve and Dave: What is the Maya long calendar and what is its significance?*
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> *Dr. Sitler: The Long Count Calendar is multifaceted, It is primarily a way of establishing a specific day in lineal time, much like our own yearly calendar, The calendar surely had powerful symbolic dimensions but our current understanding of them is limited.*
>
> *S&D: Does the Maya Calendar give any indication of an apocalypse, end of the world, or a great transformation that could be cataclysmic?*
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> *Dr. Sitler: The calendar itself does not indicate such things, It tells you what day it is, There is only one reference to the Dec. 21, 2012 date in the ancient hieroglyphs, Monument 6 from Tortuguero, and unfortunately, the text says very little.*
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> *S&D: Why do you think many websites and books claim that Maya predicted the end of the earth?*
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> *Dr. Sitler: Very few of these websites have substantive ties to the Maya world, and as a result, they are often extremely misinformed.*
>
> *S&D: Do you see any detriment or loss to Maya studies because of the 2012 predictions?*
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> *Dr. Sitler: It's great for Maya studies in terms of drawing attention to the Maya themselves and hopefully more serious scholarship. The 2012 hype bases itself on extremes of misinformation.{1}*

The Hype:

While Maya scholars such as Dr. Sitler see no legitimacy to the end of the world scenarios coming from Maya culture or calendars, many doomsday predictions have turned to astronomical studies to confirm their prophecies of a coming apocalypse. Theories such as a pole shift are propounded as likely events that will bring earth to destruction. Patrick Geryl, co-author of *The Orion Prophecy: Will the World be Destroyed in 2012? Prophecies from the Maya and the Old Egyptians*, predicts that "In 2012 the next polar reversal will take place on earth. This means that the North Pole will be changed into the South Pole. Scientifically this can only be explained by the fact that the earth will start rotating in the opposite direction, together with a huge disaster of unknown proportions. In my books I reveal the immense cataclysm that is going to torment the earth in the near future."{2}

The Reality:

Again, we went to the experts in the fields of astronomy and astrophysics. The claim that doomsday advocates are making turns out to be a bait and switch. David Morrison, the senior scientist at the NASA Astrobiology Institute, clarifies, "A reversal in the rotation of Earth is impossible. It has never happened and never will."{3}

In reality there is one thing that can be predicted with great accuracy according to Dr. Gene Byrd, professor of astronomy and astrophysics at the University of Alabama. He told us, "The only thing that is predictable is that some folks will be predicting the end of the world a few years from now and making new predictions of the end after this date [i.e., 2012] has passed."

Notes

1. Interview on July 17, 2009.

2. Patrick Geryl, “Pole Shift & Pole Reversal in 2012” survive2012.com/index.php/geryl-pole-shift.html, accessed August 29, 2009.

3. astrobiology.nasa.gov/ask-an-astrobiologist/intro/nibiru-and-doomsday-2012-questions-and-answers, accessed September 6, 2009.

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See Also:
2012: Doomsday All Over Again