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Did The Mayans Get It Right?

by
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[Adapted from Helen Grey, "Mayan calendar doomsayers are stepping into high gear, as are the debunkers," *SouthCoasttoday.com*, December 18, 2011. <http://www.southcoasttoday.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20111218/LIFE07/112180312/-1/NEWSMAPJ>]

If some interpretations of the Mayan calendar are correct, we'll all be gone next year. Some people think that the Maya people knew something others didn't and that the world will indeed come to an end on Dec. 21, 2012.

A website, *december212012.com*, devoted to the prediction, says, "Although this date may not necessarily mark the end of the world, it is widely believed that it may indeed mark the end of the world as we know it. ...The signs and indicators of dramatic and possibly devastating change seem to be all around us. Both ancient and modern-day observers alike have foretold the possibilities of this date, and the coming events of our solar system seem to support their theories."

Speculation about the world ending in 2012 has a long pop-culture history, including the movie "2012,"

in which the character played by John Cusack tries to escape with his family from disasters that seem to signal the end of the world.

The notion that the Mayan calendar predicts the end of the world is complex, say many scholars. First, the Maya, who lived in southern Mexico and Central America, were highly developed in mathematics and astronomy. The Mayan calendar involves a cycle of about 5,000 years, and on Dec. 21, 2012, it starts again at zero. "Megacycles can be



recorded with the 'Long Count calendar,'" said Susan Milbrath, curator of Latin American art and archaeology at the Florida Museum of National History, University of Florida. The calendar records mythological events in Mayan history, "many dating to before the current cycle of the calendar," Milbrath said. "As to future dates, there were few, but one of interest is the Tortuguero Monument 6 date that does fall on the end of the current baktun cycle on Dec. 21, 2012, when the Maya calendaric 'odometer' literally flips over."

The baktun is one of the cycles or components of the Long Count calendar. It is a unit of 144,000 days. Anthony Aveni, professor of astronomy, anthropology and Native American studies at Colgate University, described "the grand odometer of Maya timekeeping, known as the Long Count, as "an accumulation of various smaller time cycles that will revert to zero, and a new cycle of 1,872,000 days (5,125.37 years) recorded with the 'Long Count calendar,'" said Susan Milbrath, curator of Latin American art and archaeology at the Florida Museum of National History, University of Florida. The calendar records mythological events in Mayan history, "many dating to before the current cycle of the calendar," Milbrath said. "As to future dates, there were few, but one of interest is the Tortuguero Monument 6 date that does fall on the end of the current baktun cycle on Dec. 21, 2012, when the Maya calendaric 'odometer' literally flips over."

He said the Long Count is an accounting system "consisting of 13 cycles corresponding to the levels of Maya heaven that make up a creation period of 5,127.37 seasonal years. At the end of one creation cycle, the count rolls over to the first day of the new cycle."

Aveni wrote that the Maya were "obsessed with sophisticated timekeeping systems" and that "their astronomers had the capacity to predict celestial events, such as eclipses, accurately, all without telescopes or any technical devices. "So it is no surprise that mystically minded people feel free to attribute to the ancient Maya the power to see far into the future." Aveni said the Maya are getting their turn on the stage.

Well, the end of the world is certainly something to consider! Yea, your home is going to be destroyed...your loved ones will perish...but what about the really *important* stuff...Your covers!

You need to plan ahead and safeguard your most cherished possessions. I'm willing to sacrifice my own time and resources towards that beautiful goal. I am building an International Phillumenic Vault, absolutely guaranteed to preserve your covers no matter what happens. Just send *all* your covers to me, and on December 21st, when you and yours pass from world, you can rest assured that the fruits of all your years of loving labor will still exist, to be cared for and appreciated by at least one caring soul....me!

Please, no C.O.D. mailings!

