

Breaking News – World to end in 2012

Much has been written and spoken about the year 2012 and, as that year approaches, much more will be. Modern day prophets have predicted the coming Apocalypse and based their suppositions upon ruminations regarding the end of the Mayan Calendar, cryptic passages from the writings of Michel de Nostredame, better known as Nostradamus, and an alleged celestial alignment of the galactic and solar planes in that year. Additionally, NASA scientists have indicated that a solar storm will reach Earth in 2012 with potentially devastating impact upon electrical power grids worldwide, and other researchers have theorized that a polar shift could occur at approximately that time. With so many potential catastrophes on the horizon, is it likely that 2012 will be the end?

Throughout documented history, seers, prophets, and ordinary people have concluded that the world was coming to an end in their lifetimes. Following the crucifixion of Jesus, his followers believed that his return and establishment of his Kingdom on earth was imminent. And, throughout the intervening centuries, many have perceived signs that led them to predict the coming end.

Some have calculated a specific date or time period for that end. In the U.S., one of the most famous instances of this phenomenon occurred in the 1800's. In approximately 1823, William Miller, a Baptist preacher and founder of what would become the Seventh Day Adventist Church, studied Biblical prophecy and concluded that Christ's Second Coming and the end of the world would occur sometime between March 21, 1843 and March 21, 1844. When the year between those dates came and went, his movement, that grew in the years leading up to his predicted end into a national campaign, modified their predictions - ultimately settling upon October 22, 1844 as the final day. That day would come to be known as the Millerites' "Great Disappointment," and William Miller would continue to await the world's end until his death in 1849.

Of course, end times prophecy did not end with William Miller. The approaching new millennium produced the perfect conditions for the revival of prognostication regarding the end of the world. With the 1970 publication of "The Late, Great Planet Earth," written by Hal Lindsey and Carole Carlson, predicting the world's end became an industry unto itself. Hal Lindsey has since written numerous other books on the same subject and is a fixture in cable television network produced documentaries about end times. Televangelists preach the world's end, the coming or present Tribulation, and Christ's imminent Return - all the while raking in huge contributions from their followers.

Setting aside the fact that the predictions of all end times prognosticators to date have been erroneous and considering that there are some reputable scientists who foresee impending disasters in the not too distant future, might not 2012 be the end? The real answer is that it doesn't matter. All of us will experience the end of our own worlds at the times of our deaths. If 2012 ends the worlds of everyone at once, there is nothing that anyone will be able to do about it.

Yet, if there is a growing belief that 2012 may indeed be the end, perhaps it may cause many to reevaluate their lives, to consider the things that are most important, to say the things they have always wanted to say, and to become the best expression of the people they have always wanted to be. Perhaps, people around the world collectively will come to an epiphany in the realization that our world is but an infinitesimal part of the universe and that the survival of any of us is intimately interconnected with that of all others. And, if enough of us are transformed in this way, maybe the Mayans had it right, and 2012 will end the old world and begin the new.

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