

The Mayan Calendar and Messy Messianics

I am going to go out on a limb here and say that I will still be alive on planet Earth on December 22, 2012. I have had so many people tell me of the Mayan calendar and how things are going to change because the Mayan calendar ran out of dates on Dec 21 of this year. I find it interesting when Hebrew Roots people get carried away with such ideas. It concerns me, and it depicts a serious problem in the way we think, form conclusions and assess information.

Whenever we find some information that we desire to incorporate into our understanding of God and what He is doing on this earth, we must consider many things. The source is one vital part of discerning whether the information is worth our attention. People are wanting to find out when God is going to wrap up His work on earth and usher in His kingdom. So we are looking for any clue that might give us that extra tidbit of information that will put the pieces of the puzzle together. The Mayan people were an Indian tribe in the Americas. They were polytheists and to some extent the worst kind. They practiced human sacrifice and the story as told in National Geographic was so graphic, that I could not read the complete article. I won't give details, but the numbers of human sacrifices from babies to adults found under one of their temples was astounding.

Messianics are so paganophobic that I could not imagine anyone caring two hoots about what some polytheistic, human sacrificing, heathen predicted. Well, I have listened to this for years and I can hardly believe my ears. If a Moslem had given a prophecy, Messianics would not give it a seconds thought even if it agreed totally with our understanding of end time events. They are monotheistic and claim to follow the God of Abraham. Their claims fall on deaf ears though and many Messianics call them moon worshipers. Then someone finds some calendar that has an ending date, and the date is a miscalculation of the winter solstice¹ which is probably an end to the year,² a date which has been demonized by many Messianics as a pagan date of worship and then people get all excited because it confirms their suspicions about the end times. If you have something about God that you desire to discover, and use heathen sources as a proof of your theory, you are way too determined to accept anything that validates your thesis. God certainly has not shared his hidden wisdom with the heathen when He has left His people with veiled messages and abstract imagery.

Sometimes I think God gave veiled messages just to test us and see who we will deem the enemy and who we will consider a friend or a wise instructor. Well if we have added ancient Mayan priests as our advisors and dismissed Christian theologians, I think we failed the test. So I am here to say, if you are fearful of the coming date of Dec 21, 2012 relax, God reveals His secrets to His people, not some Heathen, human sacrificing, idol worshiper. And when nothing happens on Dec 21, 2012, and someone finds another miscalculation which once again will change the date, don't be alarmed, the source is

¹ The winter solstice has moved to the 20th since the turn of the century because the year 2000 was not a leap year. This has moved the date one day forward until it slowly moves back to the 21st.

² The Mayan year consists of 18 months of 20 days each with a five day intermediate period. This equaled 365 days. It seems the new year began after the winter solstice.

The Mayan Calendar and Messy Messianics

the same. The source is vital to consider when reviewing ancient documents. If we do not consider the source, we are likely to be deceived.

The Talmud is a vital source -- but for what? It certainly explains what a sect of the Jews did in the centuries after Messiah. It has little to do with representing the original practices of Judaism during the time of Messiah. They were one sect, but only one and hardly represented the whole. Everything recorded in the Talmud has certain biases. They have the bias that Yehoshua was not messiah, the bias that the Pharisees should have been the dominant sect when they were merely one of many. The Talmud exhibits the bias that all Pharisee practices were the proper practice and any alternative was an anathema. If we can understand all the reasons we should not use it as a source, I suppose it is a good source for some things. Admittedly, I use it often, but it should be reserved for purposes that do not include determining Messianic halakah. It does expose certain historical events, give context to arguments of the day and show what many Christian doctrines were combating. Using the Talmud for much more than these few things is dangerous.

I have seen a Jewish encyclopedia cited to prove a certain doctrine on the Sabbath. Too many Messianics think that if it is Jewish, it must be a good source. This Jewish Encyclopedia was compiled by atheists who desired to rid themselves of fictitious notions of the Jewish religion. With a bias like that, it is no wonder that they cite the Egyptians as source of the Sabbath. People of similar ilk can also be found showing YHWH as the Sumerian god of war even though the Sumerian writings are in Cuneiform and are not phonetic,³ so four of their letters could never be used to designate four Hebrew consonants. Therefore any source they use to prove this is suspect.

Source and bias are not the only things one must consider when looking through ancient documents. Linguistics is of utmost importance. Understanding several things about the source language is very important. One must know a lot about languages in general before he can catch little errors that may arise from knowing only English. Even knowing several languages may not afford one with the knowledge needed to properly discern between good linguistics and native tongue bias. Linguistics is a scientific analysis of languages which when applied correctly will enable the student to better study Scripture gaining clearer insights.

Too often people misunderstand a second language to have a word meaning exactly the same as their native language. Usually the concepts associated with a particular word will differ greatly between languages meaning that we often try to limit the meaning of the word or expand its meaning to fit our native language. We often read the word cattle in the Bible and most English speakers immediately visualize a herd of animals including bulls, cows, and calves. This is limiting the meaning of the Hebrew word *בהמה* *beheimah*. *Beheimah* is the word used in the original text but its meaning is not exactly the pictures we conjure up when thinking of cattle. While it is almost always translated as cattle, it includes sheep, goats, camels, deer, antelope, as well as those

³ Cuniform later became more phonetic, but during the suggested time period was not.

The Mayan Calendar and Messy Messianics

animals in our English concept of cattle. *Beheimah* are mostly domesticated farm animals plus some non-domesticated herd animals. This is one example, but most Hebrew words have a similar different assembly of concepts from their English equivalent. A good study of linguistics will prepare one for further study of Scripture allowing us to use the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek languages as valuable resources in our study. Without the science, we may think we are learning a lot when we are only approaching the text with an English bias.

A historical analysis also needs to be scientific. There are rules in every discipline that enable one to form better conclusions. Tying events together that span millennium is at least anachronistic and possibly blatantly ignorant. I know of several Messianic teachers who jump languages, centuries of time, cultures and people groups to form some conclusion that is really nothing more than non-sense. It is important to keep something in the same general time period in order to make associations. The similar sound of two words in different languages may have no direct connection. This is especially so if the languages come from dramatically different time periods and had no linguistic family connection. In order for there to be good historical associations between events we must find the trail of connections that span the appropriate time to consider them related. Anything less is a false association.

In conclusion, we will be less likely to run off on fruitless tangents, scare people about ancient heathen calendars, divide over silly doctrines and generally follow after false teaching if we learn how to use the scientific methods of study and properly reason out the value of other relevant texts. Keep on studying, but also learn how to study.

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