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Mathematical Reason vs. Spiritual Belief

In the year 1999, the world experienced frightening times. The Y2K scare was nearing its climax and there was a genuine fear that the end of the world, or *rapture*, would happen on the first of January at the turn of the millennium. This, along with two thousand year old beliefs that the concept of Armageddon was known fact and for nearly a decade had been prophesied to be taking place in the year 2000, made for a very tumultuous time period full of skeptics-turned believers, those who believed in the first place, and the fears that they and/or their loved ones wouldn't make it into the celestial kingdom come the ever-nearing judgment day. It didn't take long for these fears to turn to panic and crime rates rose significantly across the U.S. and many other nations between 1999 and 2000. (andromeda). It seems fitting to approach this issue for analysis during another such year of supposed end-times. Of course, the current Armageddon scare isn't nearly as strong as the last one – quite possibly because the last one is still fresh in the minds of most people. But it's detrimental to the progress of society, to say the least.

This is where one might approach the question of “What happened to the end of the world?” Well, it didn't happen in 2000 even though we had the Y2K scare. It didn't happen in 1988 even though there was a book entitled *88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be in 1988*. (Whisenant) It didn't happen when William Miller predicted it would on October 22, 1844. In fact, over the years there have been hundreds of projected doomsdays that have failed to come. A

great many of these have been “calculated” using numerology and in falsely utilizing biblical “evidence” for one's own personal gain. One might remember Harold Camping's *two* apocalypse predictions and the furor they caused throughout the world. This is half of my main point in writing this paper. As such, my thesis may read: *The importance of mathematical equations in parallel with common spiritual belief systems and how they show that proof is not available within these realms and that it all must be taken on faith, which is contrary to many things said by recruiting factions in modern times. I will also focus on how these fallacies alter our society and our global situation for the worse.*

In searching for a “doomsday calculation” I came across a particular algorithm that has been in the common knowledge for decades. It has literally been coined as the “doomsday algorithm”, suggesting its ability to detect the particular date at which my soul might burn for all of eternity. In fact, I believe the term is used with a rather amusing irony as the basic function of the formula is to predict the exact day of the week that a particular ominous date will take place, i.e. 4/4 (April 4th), 6/6 (June 6th), etc. Once the calculation proves to be accurate, it is awe-inspiring and many people feel as if divine power is playing a part in their lives at that very moment. This is what causes one to sell everything they own and prepare for the end of the world. Of course, this type of calculation is only amazing to somebody who doesn't care to find out how it's done. It is most definitely amazing that the formula has been figured out from human intellect, but like a magic trick, it's much more spine-tingling before you look behind the curtain. In all actuality, the algorithm – seemingly complex at first glance – is very simple. One chooses an anchor date, say December 12, 2006. If you know the day of the week that fell on, then you're set. You then count up from there and use a base seven system (say, the days of the week

maybe?) and in counting two of those week systems minus one day, you can determine that Christmas Day 2006 was on the day before your anchor date, e.g. Anchor=Wednesday, therefore doomsday + 13=Tuesday. That's because 13 can also be thought of as 14 minus 1, or 2×7 (days in a week) minus one day (simply because two *full* weeks takes you to the day after Christmas of that year). When put that way, the system is incredibly simple. Many readers might even unconsciously use a similar system to determine much closer dates, say 11 days from today, etc. One more important tidbit is the fact that calculating the “doomsday” is relatively simple, too. Beginning at 4/4, that day of the week will be the same day of the week as 6/6, 8/8, and so on. So December 12 – being that it is 12/12 – is very easy to figure out if you know *any* days of the week given your current year. This should illustrate just how easy it is to take a set of numbers, biblical or otherwise, and mock up some calculations that “prove” your “theories”.

Of course, one of the biggest disappointments in this department is the aforementioned “Great Disappointment” of William Miller in 1844. His system of calculations is derived from the Book of Daniel in the Christian Bible. For one, to disregard every single translation, re-write, etc. and take anything as definitive as a number away from the text denotes a person who is pathetically unacquainted with any kind of logic whatsoever. That's similar to stating that your math homework exactly reflects the calculations performed before mathematics were even defined as such even though you've completed your work in today's world after the entire field of mathematics has undergone drastic changes to prove and disprove theories that weren't in existence during the time period you are trying to emulate. If one stops to think about that previous statement, doing such a thing would not make a bit of sense. But after determining *which* numbers to follow from the Book of Daniel (which was also chosen by Miller, creating

another variable in the process), he then rearranged the calendar we currently use today to further prove that the number system he'd chosen works perfectly, just as those who compiled The Bible rearranged, added, and subtracted books in order to prove Judaic prophecies alluding to a son of God to be true ("The Book of Enoch"). Quite possibly in an egotistical moment, he "calculated" the exact date at which the end of the world would come to be (October 22nd, 1844). He gained many followers and the United States saw a great wave of Armageddon-fearing activities. People committed suicide at midnight on the projected date, people sold their property and gave all their money to Miller and other Christian denominations, being left penniless the day after when business as usual was apparent, and people demonstrated a complete lack of morality as they looted, raped, set fire to, etc. all that was in their sight the night before the supposed rapture. As the rapture of 1844 turned into the Great Disappointment, we then saw the ramifications of such nonsensical garbage as was spouted by William Miller. For some people, it was a self-fulfilling prophecy as the actions of many (including themselves) ended their world as they knew it. But I think it's safe to say that Millerism was a complete hoax. That said, people continue to believe many things he preached, and as such, have split off from his system to form their own, most notably the Seventh Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses. So since we can say that Millerism is fraudulent, then anything added to it is as well. Simply put, if $2+2=5$ is incorrect, adding more to it isn't going to give you the numbers you project, i.e. $2+2+5=10$ based upon the original equation, whereas it actually equals nine.

Now that we know how to disenfranchise ourselves from apocalypse preachers, we can move on to apologetic mathematics which aim to use biblical foundations to prove and disprove the idea of God and Jesus Christ as the savior. Quite possibly the most frustrating of all the

apologists are the fundamental group, who teach that the world was created only just over five-thousand years ago. If we can all agree that due to the vast array of scientific evidence that disproves this “theory”, I think we can move on from that pointless point. Many apologists don't even try to explain their “findings” and how they got there. A great number will simply say that it's been proven mathematically. Well until you are given some kind of evidence, you should be wary, to say the least. One such example is the article “Mathematics Bombshell: God Confirmed In The Bible” on WND.com. There is not one bit of mathematical calculation used within this bit of writing. It's simply put out into the world to further the publisher's own cause of gaining a larger audience (and bonus if it's an audience who lacks the normal human amount of skepticism to question this type of article in the first place). But those who do try to explain their findings use fallacious logic at best. To give the benefit of the doubt, they're not trying to dupe the public with nonsense, they've just made some mistakes in their calculations. It happens every day. But this is where the importance of mathematics comes in. You can't say something's true without being able to back it up in the mathematical world. It's not the same as philosophy. In truth, $2+2=4$ and that is true from all sides of the equation: $2+2=4$, 2×2 (which is $2+2$)= 4 , $4-2=2$ and $4/2=2$. So proper quantitative reasoning is crucial to calculating things if you are going to state that they apply to the physical world. And as such, the public needs to be far more educated on the subject so that they can defend against such false claims.

But since we have established the real world mathematics of the situation, we can now delve into a more abstract realm. That is to say, we can move further back in time to the East-West Schism or the time when the Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox church split off from each other and moved out on their own. Basically, as they were the only real Christian

denominations of the time, one of the two had to be right in order for God and Jesus to be true. That said, one of them also had to be wrong for this to be the case. Now I could go off on a rant about Schrodinger's Cat and how if both were possibly true then both were just that. But I'd prefer not to as it's not proper reasoning when put in basic form, and more importantly it doesn't apply to this situation. If two opposing ideologies exist, one must be wrong for the other to be right, and in this situation, since their gods are the same, one must be right in order for their gods to be true. Since they are the only two Christian denominations of the time, if they're both wrong, there is no Christian God and his son couldn't have existed either. ("The 37 Proofs of the Deity of Jesus") Anything that came after these two religions built upon their groundwork and thus has at least a fifty percent chance of being completely false. In going back further, we can come to the emergence of Islam. Islam accepts that Jesus Christ was a great prophet, but that he was *not* the last prophet and was not the son of God. The honor of last prophet goes to Muhammed, Islam's most revered figure. As this one opposes *all* of Christianity, it now adds another figure to the equation. For Islam to be true, Christianity as a whole must be false, and vice versa.

Christianity can be quantified as $(x+y)=z$, where x is Catholicism, y is Eastern Orthodoxy, and z is a true variable such that it lies on the real number line, i.e. 2,3,4,5, etc. For Islam, it can be illustrated as thus: $-(x+y)=z$. This is because $(-x)$ is the opposite of x just as -1 is the opposite of 1 . They stand at opposite positions to each other around zero on the number line. $-2, -1, 0, 1, 2$, etc. So Islam, being that it is opposite to Christianity is the opposite of the $(x+y)$ equation of Christianity, or can be shown as $-(x+y)$. The z , however, cannot be both. That's like saying that $3+2=5$, which is true, but $(-3)+(-2)$ does **not** equal 5. It equals -5 . If we want to define this argument as being in terms of absolute value, that's fine, except for the fact that spiritual belief

doesn't apply to absolute values. We can say that the “absolute value” of a person's spirituality holds that particular value to them and therefore does not need to be positive or negative, but it doesn't apply to the proverbial bigger picture. In the bigger picture, one must be false for the other to be true. But we've now discovered that for Islam to be true, Christianity is false, otherwise Jesus Christ would be the son of God and Christianity would be true where Islam would be false. By now the difficulty with using mathematical equations in reference to scriptures should be quite apparent. Nobody in either of these religions will accept what I have said, but it stands true. If one is true, the other is false. The two contradict each other, so it cannot be that *both* are true. If we wanted to jump even further back, we can talk about how the Bible itself was written centuries after the death of Jesus Christ, and that it was compiled in such a way to be as effective as possible, adding events and leaving others out, making it one of the least reliable texts in all of history, not to mention all of the unprovable miracles that happen within its pages. It has since been translated and changed many times to fit the needs of the populace to be converted at the time. In short, it is very unlikely that the bible is true, and thus that any subsequent sect of Christianity is, either. But that doesn't make Islam true. As Islam also believes in Jesus Christ, it cannot be true if it turns out that Jesus Christ mythology isn't. So it's incredibly unlikely that Islam is true, either. In removing the myth of Jesus Christ, we can then go on to say that Judaism is false, as well. Judaism's biggest role in the birth of Christianity is all of the prophecy it claimed. Since that prophecy never happened in our discoveries (and indeed in Judaism's own beliefs against Christianity), it has nothing else to play on aside from it's evolution from ancient Babylonian sacrifice rituals. That brings us to all of the ancient religions that nobody follows anymore, i.e. Greek gods, Norse gods, Babylonian Gods, etc. Since we can

declare those to be false and we've already established that they birthed all subsequent belief structures, we can say that everything that comes after the point when Abraham spoke to "God" is myth. Therefore, not one bit of it is true.

We've discussed the apologist argument for this issue now. This brings me back to the beginning of my thesis and directs us to the acts people commit due to these belief systems. We've also already discussed the Miller events and Y2K. Therefore we've explored the doomsday prophecy side of things. If we even get the chance to have another Armageddon scare, it could quite possibly be the real thing due to differing religious factions arguing about who is right and who is wrong. The entire situation could come to a head as a nuclear war. Then, the only option is to wait and see if there is an afterlife or not. If not, it was all a waste. If so, then religious texts praise those who brought about the deaths of the followers to opposing religions. That means anybody who isn't an extremist gets to stay in either limbo or eternal hellfire while those that are destined to end our world will be showered with praise in the kingdom of light, whichever religion it may belong to.

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