

A blue planet, likely Jupiter, is shown in the foreground on the right side of the frame. The background is a dark space filled with numerous small, bright stars of various colors, including white, blue, and yellow. The planet's surface shows some cloud patterns.

Beyond 2012: Why the World Won't End

A Discussion with Dr. David Morrison
Senior Scientist, NASA Ames Research Center

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:12,870
(Music)

2
00:00:12,890 --> 00:00:14,310
Dr. David Morrison: The widespread rumors that

3
00:00:14,330 --> 00:00:17,350
there will be a catastrophe or even a doomsday

4
00:00:17,370 --> 00:00:19,960
on December 21st are wrong.

5
00:00:19,980 --> 00:00:22,220
This is, simply, a big hoax.

6
00:00:22,240 --> 00:00:25,960
It will be a day just like any other.

7
00:00:25,980 --> 00:00:32,070
(Music)

8
00:00:32,090 --> 00:00:34,600
Dr. David Morrison: NASA has received thousands of

9
00:00:34,620 --> 00:00:37,250
emails and calls from members of the public

10
00:00:37,270 --> 00:00:40,300
who are concerned, especially young people.

11
00:00:40,320 --> 00:00:43,370
So it seems only right that NASA scientists should help

12
00:00:43,390 --> 00:00:46,520
to dispel these rumors of doomsday.

13
00:00:46,540 --> 00:00:52,860

(Music)

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00:00:52,880 --> 00:00:54,580

Dr. David Morrison: There are many different threads

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00:00:54,600 --> 00:00:57,270

that come together on this doomsday hoax

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00:00:57,290 --> 00:00:59,050

for December 21st.

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00:00:59,070 --> 00:01:01,200

They come from a variety of sources.

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00:01:01,220 --> 00:01:03,230

The only thing they have in common is

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00:01:03,250 --> 00:01:06,270

that one date of the 21st.

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00:01:06,290 --> 00:01:12,340

(Music)

21

00:01:12,360 --> 00:01:13,730

Dr. David Morrison: Some people think that the

22

00:01:13,750 --> 00:01:16,970

Maya calendar, from the ancient Maya civilization,

23

00:01:16,990 --> 00:01:19,500

comes to an end on December 21st.

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00:01:19,520 --> 00:01:23,530

Or even that the Maya predicted some sort of catastrophe.

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00:01:23,550 --> 00:01:26,800

That's simply not true.

That's a modern rumor.

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00:01:26,820 --> 00:01:29,320

It has nothing to do with the real Maya.

27

00:01:29,340 --> 00:01:35,490

(Music)

28

00:01:35,510 --> 00:01:37,830

Dr. David Morrison: One doomsday rumor has a

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00:01:37,850 --> 00:01:41,470

planet, a rogue planet named Niburu or Planet X,

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00:01:41,490 --> 00:01:45,000

coming into the solar system and crashing into Earth.

31

00:01:45,020 --> 00:01:45,950

This is silly.

32

00:01:45,970 --> 00:01:48,680

If there were such an object, anybody could see it.

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00:01:48,700 --> 00:01:52,260

It would be one of the brightest things in the sky.

34

00:01:52,280 --> 00:01:58,510

(Music)

35

00:01:58,530 --> 00:01:59,840

Dr. David Morrison: There are claims that the

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00:01:59,860 --> 00:02:02,830

Earth's rotation will change or that the poles

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00:02:02,850 --> 00:02:05,560

will flip, causing terrible damage.

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00:02:05,580 --> 00:02:07,460

Well, this just can't happen.

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00:02:07,480 --> 00:02:11,580

There is no way that we can have a pole flip on the Earth.

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00:02:11,600 --> 00:02:17,140

(Music)

41

00:02:17,160 --> 00:02:18,980

Dr. David Morrison: Part of the doomsday rumor is

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00:02:19,000 --> 00:02:21,640

that there will be a planetary alignment and that

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00:02:21,660 --> 00:02:23,600

this will somehow damage the Earth.

44

00:02:23,620 --> 00:02:25,600

Well, they couldn't pick a worse time.

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00:02:25,620 --> 00:02:27,800

On December 21st, there's no alignment,

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00:02:27,820 --> 00:02:30,750

the planets are scattered all over the sky.

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00:02:30,770 --> 00:02:37,290

(Music)

48

00:02:37,310 --> 00:02:39,150

Dr. David Morrison: There is a giant black hole at

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00:02:39,170 --> 00:02:42,690

the center of our galaxy, 30,000 light years away.

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00:02:42,710 --> 00:02:45,000

Some people think it's going to suck us in and

51

00:02:45,020 --> 00:02:46,420
destroy the Earth.

52

00:02:46,440 --> 00:02:49,280
But astronomers know that's impossible.

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00:02:49,300 --> 00:02:55,600
(Music)

54

00:02:55,620 --> 00:02:57,240
Dr. David Morrison: The Earth's rotation axis

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00:02:57,260 --> 00:03:01,070
wobbles slowly with a 26,000-year period and some

56

00:03:01,090 --> 00:03:04,210
people say this period is about to end.

57

00:03:04,230 --> 00:03:08,550
But it never ends.
It just keeps on going.

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00:03:08,570 --> 00:03:14,410
(Music)

59

00:03:14,430 --> 00:03:15,970
Dr. David Morrison: We have all seen frequent news

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00:03:15,990 --> 00:03:19,780
reports of volcanoes and earthquakes and some

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00:03:19,800 --> 00:03:21,530
people think there are more of them.

62

00:03:21,550 --> 00:03:22,840
But there aren't.

63
00:03:22,860 --> 00:03:25,130
The frequency of earthquakes and volcanic

64
00:03:25,150 --> 00:03:27,140
eruptions is no greater now

65
00:03:27,160 --> 00:03:29,660
than any time in the past.

66
00:03:29,680 --> 00:03:35,940
(Music)

67
00:03:35,960 --> 00:03:37,260
Dr. David Morrison: There's a recent internet

68
00:03:37,280 --> 00:03:40,210
rumor that NASA has confirmed that there will be

69
00:03:40,230 --> 00:03:42,850
three days of total darkness on the Earth,

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00:03:42,870 --> 00:03:45,040
starting December 22nd.

71
00:03:45,060 --> 00:03:47,750
Well, NASA didn't say that.
Nobody said it.

72
00:03:47,770 --> 00:03:50,970
It's just one more crazy idea.

73
00:03:50,990 --> 00:03:56,840
(Music)

74
00:03:56,860 --> 00:03:58,800
Dr. David Morrison: The Earth is always subject

75

00:03:58,820 --> 00:04:01,360
to meteors or even small asteroids

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00:04:01,380 --> 00:04:03,010
striking the atmosphere.

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00:04:03,030 --> 00:04:05,520
Astronomers keep track of these objects and

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00:04:05,540 --> 00:04:08,190
predict any impacts that will take place.

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00:04:08,210 --> 00:04:11,480
None are going to take place this month.