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*The End Is Coming – The Hindu Version*

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Evangelical Christianity has long taught that the "End of the World" is coming. This teaching, called "Premillennialism," is often accompanied by detailed descriptions of apocalyptic events leading up to a cataclysmic finale. Of all the world's religions, Hinduism may have the most similar views of the end-of-time, even though Christianity believes in one God and Hinduism envisions many.

Premillennial Christianity starts with the belief that God created the universe in a perfect form, but two events soon marred it -- the sin of Adam and Eve and the rebellion of the angel Satan. These two events caused creation to begin a gradual deterioration. Year after year, human morality and nature's harmony have been getting worse. This will continue until matters are so bad that God will have to destroy creation. After this, God will make a new universe.

Surprisingly, Hinduism closely follows the three key features of this scheme. First, the universe was created perfect -- the best it can be. Second, this is followed by gradual moral and natural deterioration. Third, things will finally get so bad that creation will be destroyed, and then rebuilt in a perfect form.

Despite this general parallelism, Premillennialism and Hinduism differ on a key component -- the time-frame. Premillennialism views time on a biblical scale, with the time from creation to the end being approximately six thousand years. Hinduism designed its scheme in millions of years, 4.32 million to be exact. Hinduism imagines the existence of the universe as one day in the life of the god Brahma. That day is divided into four yugas, each of which lasts a multiple of 432,000 years.

At the beginning of the day, at creation, Brahma awakes and all creation is bright and lively. People, gods and nature live in moral and religious harmony. As Brahma's day moves from yuga to yuga, he starts getting tired, and morality and natural harmony deteriorate. Now, humankind is in the last yuga, the Kali Yuga, the period of absolute depravity and the reign of wickedness. This yuga is the shortest; it lasts only 432,000 years. When it ends, Brahma will fall asleep and the universe will disappear -- to be reborn when he reawakens.

When will the Kali Yuga end? According to modern calculations, the Kali Yuga began in 3102 B.C. So this year, humanity will have lived through only 5101 years of the yuga. There are 426,899 years to go! While Hinduism's scheme may share the overall shape of Premillennialism, its view of the end lies far in the future.