

Count Down  
to  
Columbus Day **2**



# Christopher Columbus **DESTROYS THE MOON!**

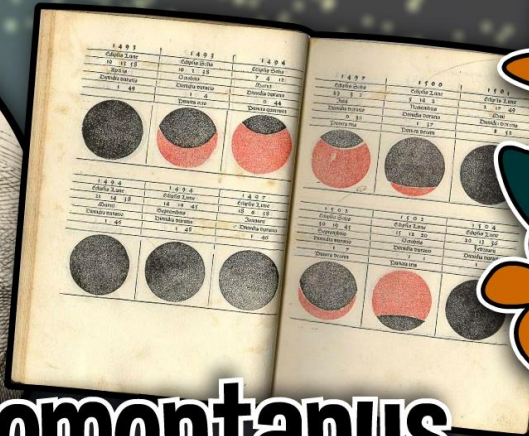
COLUMBUS'S FOURTH EXPEDITION DID NOT GO WELL. SHIPWORMS INFESTED THE HULLS OF ALL FOUR BOATS. HE HAD TO ABANDON TWO OF HIS SHIPS AND THE REMAINING TWO HAD TO BE BEACHED ON THE ISLAND OF JAMAICA. COLUMBUS AND HIS CREW WERE MAROONED.



AT FIRST THE NATIVE ARAWAK INDIANS WELCOMED COLUMBUS AND HIS MEN, PROVIDING THEM WITH FOOD AND SHELTER. THEY TRADED CORN, FISH AND CASSAVA FOR CHEAP TRINKETS LIKE METAL WHISTLES AND LITTLE BELLS FROM EUROPE.

AFTER SIX LONG MONTHS OF BEING STRANDED, THE CREW MUTINIED AGAINST COLUMBUS. THEY ROBBED AND KILLED SOME OF THE NATIVES. OF COURSE, THE WHOLE TRADING DEAL WAS OFF, AND COLUMBUS NOW FACED STARVATION. BUT HE HAD AN IDEA. SCIENCE WOULD COME TO HIS RESCUE.





# Regiomontanus

THERE WAS A TOOL OF NAVIGATION THAT MOST EUROPEAN SAILORS OF THIS TIME USED. IT WAS AN ALMANAC WRITTEN BY A MAN CALLED REGIOMONTANUS - A TALENTED ASTRONOMER AND MATHEMATICIAN. HIS ALMANAC WAS A BOOK THAT MAPPED OUT THE FUTURE POSITIONS OF THE PLANETS, SUN AND MOON FOR SEVERAL YEARS. IT EVEN PREDICTED ECLIPSES. SAILORS USED IT FOR NAVIGATION, BUT NOW COLUMBUS WOULD USE IT TO SAVE HIMSELF AND HIS CREW FROM STARVATION.



THE ALMANAC SHOWED THAT ON FEBRUARY 29, 1502 A TOTAL LUNAR ECLIPSE WOULD TAKE PLACE. THREE DAYS BEFORE THIS DATE COLUMBUS MET WITH THE ARAWAK CHIEF. HE TOLD THE NATIVE LEADER THAT THE CHRISTIAN GOD WAS ANGRY THAT THEY WERE NO LONGER SUPPLYING FOOD TO THE SPANISH SAILORS. SO GOD WOULD DESTROY THE MOON IN THREE DAYS -- MAKING IT APPEAR "INFLAMED WITH WRATH". THIS WOULD BE A SIGN OF MORE TERRIBLE THINGS TO COME.

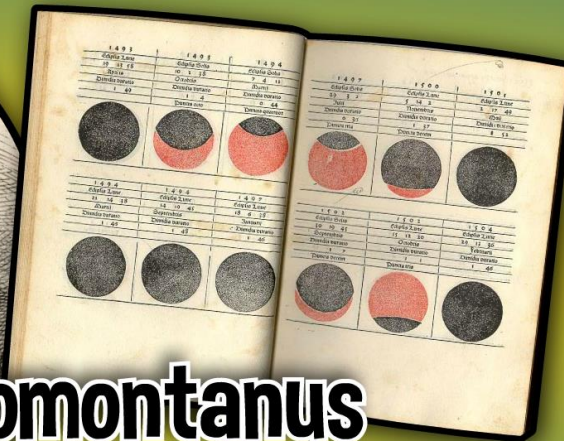


THE ARAWAK INDIANS, WHO LACKED THE SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE TO KNOW BETTER, BELIEVED THAT THIS WAS AN ACT OF THE CHRISTIAN GOD. THEY BROUGHT A LOT OF FOOD OUT TO THE SPANISH AND PROMISED TO BRING MORE AS THEY NEEDED IT.

JUST BEFORE THE ECLIPSE WAS SCHEDULED TO END, COLUMBUS STOOD BEFORE THEM AND SAID THAT HIS GOD HAD FORGIVEN THEM AND WOULD RESTORE THE MOON. AND, OF COURSE, THE ECLIPSE ENDED RIGHT ON CUE.



SCIENTIFIC ADVANCES LIKE REGIOMONTANUS'S ALMANAC OFTEN MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR HUMANS TO GO PLACES OR DO THINGS THEY HAVE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO DO BEFORE. THINK OF AN INVENTION, NEW IDEA OR OTHER SCIENTIFIC ADVANCE AND EXPLAIN HOW IT HAS CHANGED THE LIVES OF PEOPLE. SEE HOW MANY BIG AND SMALL WAYS THE SCIENTIFIC ADVANCE HAS CHANGED THINGS AND INCLUDE THEM IN YOUR EXPLANATION.



**Regiomontanus**