

Hachäkyum destroys the world with a flood
Hachäkyum u xulik tan yetel bulul

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- 1 Päytan tu ya'aläh Hachäkyum,
"Xen, ah meentik chem."
Äk'inchob tu nukah "Bay."
Seeb tu mentah.
- 5 Pachil bāk' Äk'inchob tu läh
taalsah yok'ol chem.
Tu läh taalsah kan, balum,
yuk. . . läh bāk' tu wolol.
Bähe' tu ya'aläh Hachäkyum,
"Xen ah mākik tu wolol winik
yok'ol chem."
- 10 Äk'inchob tu nukah, "Bay."
Seeb tu mākah.
Bähe' tu ya'aläh Hachäkyum,
"Xen, ah läh ch'a'eh ah mākik
u wich che'."
- 15 U nukik Äk'inchob, "Bay."
Seeb tu mākah.
Tu läh mākah tu yatoch
Äk'inchob.
- 20 Päytan, Chäk-Ik'-al tal-ih.⁴
Ni' che' k'in kah tal-ih
Chäk-Ik'-al.
- Tu l_hho'kah che'.
Bähe', Äk'inchob tu mākah
yok'ol chem.
- 25 Mas chumuk che' k'in,
ha'.
Kah tal-ih ha', u manen aak'ä.
aak'ä.
K'as s'asi he',
tan chumuk che'.
- 30 Kah bin k'in,
tak nak ka'an.
Maak ku p'atal yok'ol lu'um,
seeb tu käxtah u chem.
- 35 K'uchi to'an u chem,
tu yilah m_xchem... ayim.
- Lati'-o' läh kimiho' yetel bulul.
Humbuk'äb ya'ax k'in
humpe'l ya'ax k'in
tan u yemen.
- 40 Taham u na' k'äb ya'ax k'in,
emi ha'.
Ka'buk'äb ya'ax k'in, saphi.
Saphi ha', ma' chich lu'um.
- In the beginning, Hachäkyum said [to Äk'inchob].
"Go and make a dugout canoe."
Äk'inchob answered "Good."
Quickly he made it.
Later, Äk'inchob brought all the
animals to the dugout canoe.
He brought all the snakes, jaguars,
deer. . . all the animals from everywhere
Then Hachäkyum said,
"Go cover all the people
in the dugout canoe."
Äk'inchob answered, "Good."
Quickly he covered them.
Then Hachäkyum said,
"Go, take and gather all the
seeds of the trees."
Äk'inchob answered, "Good."
Quickly he covered them.
Äk'inchob [also] covered all of the
houses.
[Then] In the beginning, Chäk-Ik'-al the Red
Wind Lord of the east] came.
[When] The Sun reached the nose of the
tree [this phrase refers to early
morning when the sun cleared the tops
of the trees] the Red Wind Lord came.
He pulled all the trees [out of the ground].
Then Äk'inchob covered those
in the canoe.
When the sun passed the base of the trees,
water. [This phrase refers to twilight, when the
sun is below the treeline.]
The water came and the night passed.
[It rained all night.]
At sunrise, [the water had risen]
halfway up the trees.
When the sun left [at sunset the water was]
almost to the edge of the sky.
Those who had been left on the earth,
quickly searched for their dugout canoes.
Arriving where they [had left] their canoes
they saw no dugout canoes. . . alligators.
[Their canoes had been transformed into
alligators.]
Thus all were killed in the flood.
Five years
and one year
it was descending [It rained for six years].
Six years the water descended.
[For] Ten years [the water] receded.
The water receded [but] there was no hard earth.

- 45 Mäka'an yok'ol chem,
hun-ts'it äkna' hok'ih.
Päytan hok'ih u ximbal te lu'um.
Tu yilah ma'tsoy lu'um.
Bähe' läh manih u y-el-el k'ak'.
- 50 Läh el-ih.
Tal-i Äk'inchob.
u halik winik yok'ol chem.
Tu ya'aläh Äk'inchob,
"Ti'an tu yatoch.
Läh xeneex ta watoch."
- 55 Hok'i K'in Chob,
tu läh pulah u wich che'
tu wolol k'ax. Hok'i che'.
- 60 Humbuk'äb k'in hok'ih u wich che'.
Hok'i tu wolol loobil.
Ka'ts'it äkna', tu wolol k'ax.
Humbuk'äb äkna',
yan u wich che'.
Bäk' yan u yo'och.
Yan u yaal bäk'.
- 65 Winik, tuun yan-hih u ti'al.
Yan u ti'al winik.
Seeb ku pin-tal.
- 70 Hump'el ya'ax k'in yan u lak'.
Humbuk'äb äkna', yan yuk u yaal.
Yan u chi'ik balum.
Huntulil u chi'ik äh yuk,
yan humbuk'äb k'in u chi'ik.
Humbuk'äb k'in u xupil u chi'ik.
- 75 K'an, u chukik äh ch'o'.
K'an, äh ch'o' yo'och.
Huntul ku chukik u chi'ik.
yan humbuk'äb k'in u chi'ik.
K'uchi ka'buk'äb k'in,
tu chi'ah ka'tulo' ah cho'.
- 80 Yan yo'och. Äk'inchob, ne tsoy
u yol.
Ne tsoy u yol Hachäkyum.
Lati' u ya'alik Hachäkyum.
"Känänte tu wolol,
tumen ma' u kimin. . .
u yih näh-il."
- 85 "Bay," u nuk-ik Äk'inchob.
Hach Winik känänteh. Ma' u
kimin.
- Those who were in the canoe,
after one month emerged.
First they emerged and walked on the earth.
They saw the earth was not good.
Then all was passed through burning fire.
All [was] burned.
Äk'inchob came,
he pulled the people from the canoe.
Äk'inchob said,
"Here are your houses.
Everyone go to your houses."
Äk'inchob emerged,
he threw seeds of all the trees
all over the forest. The trees emerged [The
trees grew from the ground.]
In five days emerged the fruit trees.
[Next] all the shrubs and weeds emerged.
In two months all the forest [had regrown].
After five months,
there was fruit on the trees.
There was food for the animals.
There were young animals [animals had offspring].
People then had offspring.
There were children of the people.
Quickly they came. [The people reproduced
rapidly.
In one year they had spouses.
In five months deer had offspring.
They were food for the jaguars.
One [jaguar] that ate deer,
ate [the deer] for five days.
[It took] five days for him to finish eating [the
deer].
Snakes, they hunted mice.
Mice are the food of snakes.
One [snake] hunted and ate,
for five days it ate.
In ten days,
it ate two mice.
There was food. Äk'inchob was very happy.
Hachäkyum was very happy.
Then Hachäkyum said,
"Guard everything,
so that nothing dies. . .
they are ripening [they are maturing]."
"Good," Äk'inchob answered.
He guarded the Lacandon. They did not die.

Discussion

The Lacandon tale is related as a dialogue between Hachäkyum and Äk'inchob. In the myth, Hachäkyum decides to destroy the world and instructs Äk'inchob to build a dugout canoe in which animals, plants, and some human beings will be

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sheltered during this dangerous period. Subsequently, Hachyum's agent of destruction (Chäk Ik' Al, the Red Wind Lord) arrives from the east in the form of a terrible wind, torrential rain that uproots trees from the ground and floods the earth "almost to the sky." This wind is not just any wind, it is the Red Wind Lord. Traditionally, the Maya associated rain god with colors and the four cardinal directions. For example, the pre-Hispanic Yucatecan Maya worshipped the god of rain, Yum Chac, who had four aspects each symbolizing a different color and direction. Landa in his *Relación de Cosas de Yucatán* described them as Säk Xib Chac, "White Man Chac", the north wind; Kan Xib Chac, "Yellow Man Chac", the south wind; Ek Xib Chac, "Black Man Chac", the west wind; and most importantly for the discussion here, Chac Xib Chac, "Red Man Chac", the east wind (Tozzer, 1978:137-138). Lacandon have retained this same color-directional symbolism in their religious beliefs. The Yucatecan Mayan god Chäk Ik' Al, "Red Wind Lord", who significantly, is called bul-ha'-kil-u-tal-k'in which literally translated means "flood water from the east." The names of these deities accurately describe the meteorological situation of the peninsula during the hurricane season when hurricanes strike the Mayan area from the east or northeast, off the Caribbean Ocean or the Gulf of Mexico. Therefore, it is not surprising that the god who brings strong winds and heavy rains (and flooding) in Mayan mythology is the Red Wind Lord, the god of the east, the direction from which hurricanes come.

Hurricanes are a common phenomenon to the Lowland Maya and have struck the peninsular Mayan area with surprising frequency. Quintana Roo alone has been struck by hurricanes or tropical storms in the last 64 years, and virtually all storms which strike in the Gulf Coast region of Mexico have a peripheral impact on the Yucatan Peninsula before entering the Gulf of Mexico (Dunn and Miller:1960 quoted in Konrath 1985:324).

Given the frequency of these storms, it is not surprising that many references to them can be found in Mayan Indian literature. Assuming the Lacandon story is an account of a hurricane, then aboriginal descriptions of hurricanes should be similar to the meteorological event described in the Lacandon myth. This is exactly what one finds when examining Mayan hurricane descriptions. One of the most compelling pieces of evidence in support of this hurricane hypothesis is found in Edmonson's (1982) translation of the Chilam Balam of Tizim