

The Destruction of Ancient Records **Compiled by Glen W. Chapman- September 2002**

The general destruction of Greek and Roman manuscripts through the barbarian invasions, a great deal of classical literature was systematically destroyed, sometimes by the very people who inherited it. Pope Gregory, for example, ordered classical literature destroyed "lest it distract the faithful" Amru, the Moslem conqueror of Alexandria, where the greatest library of antiquity, more than a million volumes, was located, used the classical book rolls as a six month's supply of fuel to heat the city's 4,000 public baths on the grounds that if the ancient books contained information which was in the Koran, it was of no use to true believers. No one knows what references may have gone into heating bath water for the Arab conquerors, as Alexandria Egypt was a scientific as well as a literary center.

The Spanish conquerors of the new world continued this destruction of ancient records when Bishop Landa destroyed all the Mayan writings he could find in Yucatan with the exception of about six now in European museums. The Maya, with their direct reference to their origin and surprising scientific knowledge, might have provided valuable information, and still may, if new records are discovered. (From *The Mystery of Atlantis*, By Charles Berlitz, 1969, Avon Books, N.Y., N.Y.)

Seventy years after the conquest and the burning of the books, a Spaniard still spoke of seeing "books" painted in color "giving the count of their years, the wars, epidemics, hurricanes, inundations, famines and other events." And as late as 1697 an isolated Itza chieftain knew all about the history of Yucatan because "he had read it in his books." It has been stated that "their hieroglyphic literature seems to have covered nearly every branch of Maya science." But there are no examples of it. That they regarded their books as most sacred is shown by Landa's remark, " the most important possession that the nobles who abandoned Mayapan took to their own province was the books of their sciences"

Diego de Landa a prominent Spanish missionary in Yucatan writing in about 1556 says that according to the Mayas, "...the world was destroyed by a deluge."

Landa also stated:

"Some of the older people of Yucatan say that they have heard from their ancestors that this land was occupied by a race of people who came from the East and whom God had delivered. If this were true, it necessarily follows that all the inhabitants of the Indies are descendants of the Jews."

Diego do Landa, the first Catholic bishop who labored among the Itza Mayas of Yucatan following the Spanish conquest, claimed that these Indians were practicing baptism at the time of the arrival of the Europeans. He described the baptismal rite which he had seen performed many times by them. T. A. Willard, in his book, *Lost Empires*, wrote:

"According to illustrations in the hieroglyphic books, coupled with the statements of: Bishop Landa. the ancient Itza Mayas practiced baptism for their word *Capulcihil* means *to be born again*. Landa remarks that Yucatan was the only place in the Indies where the rite of baptism was observed prior to the arrival of the Spaniards."

Bishop Diego de Landa, who arrived in Yucatan shortly after Cortez, included in his writings that he was surprised to learn that the ancient Americans of pre-Columbian times practiced

baptism. He wrote:

"We have not been able to find its origin, more than it is a custom that has always existed." (Landa, *Yucatan 1549-79*, pp. 42-43.)

But the Maya books covered fields other than those of the extant codices. We will never know, because the Spanish friars destroyed them. Say's Diego de Landa flatly, "...we burned them all ..."

It was decreed that idolatry must be stamped out. Diego de Landa himself signed the decree in 1562. As part of the Spanish religious program, all Maya books were seized and brought to the town of Mani. "We found a large number of books," wrote Landa, "...and they contained nothing in which there was not to be seen superstition and lies of the devil, so we burned them all, which they regretted to an amazing degree and which caused them much affliction." This is confirmed by a historian writing 1633. "In Mani, Landa collected the books and commanded them burned. They burned historical books of ancient Yucatan which told of its beginnings and history, which were of so much value."

Diego De Landa carried out this work thoroughly enough; of the hundreds of books, only three somehow escaped this holocaust.

Destroyed Writings

"One of the most interesting accounts relating to Jewish scriptures and apocrypha is that found in 2 Esdras 14. According to the narrative, the holy writings had been destroyed by fire and Ezra prayed for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit so that he could restore the texts of the scriptures. Through five scribes he wrote some ninety-four books, twenty-four for public instruction and seventy to be reserved for edification within the community of believers. The bulk of the latter group likely consisted of revelatory, or apocalyptic, books which would have been understood by those initiated into the believing community. By ancient standards, they would have been the Apocrypha for the ancient believers. In 2 Esdras the work of Ezra and the five scribes, which took forty days to complete, was the restoration of scripture, and it is within that designation that one includes the seventy apocryphal and apocalyptic books that were hidden from the world and kept within the community of believers (2 Esdras 14:37-48)."

C Wilford Griggs Origin and Formation of The Corpus of Apocryphal Literature

2 Esdras 14:1-48

1. AND it came to pass upon the third day, I sat under an oak, and, behold, there came a voice out of a bush over against me and said, Esdras Esdras
2. And I said, Here am I, Lord And I stood up upon my feet.
3. Then said he unto me, In the bush I did manifestly reveal myself unto Moses, and talked with him, when my people served in Egypt:
4. And I sent him, and led my people out of Egypt, and brought him up to the mount of Sinai where I held him by me a long season,
5. And told him many wondrous things, and shewed him the secrets of the times, and the end; and commanded him, saying,
6. These words shalt thou declare, and these shalt thou hide
7. And now I say unto thee
- 8 That thou lay up in thy heart the signs that I have shewed and the dreams that thou hast seen, and the interpretations which thou hast heard:
20. Behold, Lord, I will go, as thou hast commanded me, and reprove the people which are present: but they that shall be born afterward, who shall admonish them? thus the world is set in darkness, and they that dwell therein without light.
21. For thy law is burnt, therefore no man knoweth the things that are done of thee or the works that shall begin.
22. But if I have found grace before thee, send the Holy Ghost into me, and I shall write all that hath been done in the world since the beginning, which were written in thy law, that men may find thy path,

and that they which will live in the latter days may live.

26 And when thou hast done, some things shalt thou publish, and some things shalt thou shew secretly to the wise: tomorrow this hour shalt thou begin to write.

42. The Highest gave understanding unto the five men and they wrote the wonderful visions of the night that were told, which they knew not: and they sat forty days, and they wrote in the day, and at night they ate bread.

43. As for me, I spake in the day, and I held not my tongue by night.

44. In forty days they wrote two hundred and four books

45. And It came to pass, when the forty days were fulfilled, that the Highest spake, saying, The first that thou hast written publish openly, that the worthy and unworthy may read it:

46. But keep the seventy last, that thou mayest deliver them only to such as be wise among the people:

47. For in them (the last books) is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the stream of knowledge.

48. And I did so.

Such is the office of Enoch: "Bring out the books from my store house," says God to his angels, "and a reed of quick-writing [shorthand], and give it to Enoch, and deliver to him the choice books out of my hand." (2 Enoch 22:12.)

"The Lord said to the angel take a book from the deposit and give a pen to Enoch and explain to him and dictate the books to him, so the Angel taught Enoch all the works of Heaven and the earth and the sea and all elements and all time periods and commandments and instructions. So he wrote the 360 books of creation " 2 Enoch 10

"Take thou the books which thou hast written thyself . . . and go down to earth and tell thy sons all that I have told thee.... And give them the books of thy handwriting, and they will read them and will know me the creator of all . . . and let them distribute the books of thy handwriting children to children, generation to generation, nation to nations.... Thy handwriting and the handwriting of thy fathers Adam and Seth shall not be destroyed till the end of time, as I have commanded my angels . . . that it be preserved, and that the handwriting of thy fathers. . . perish not." (2 Enoch 12.)

"Observe, Enoch, these heavenly tablets," says the angel, "and read what is written thereon.... And I observed the heavenly tablets, and read everything . . . and understood everything, and read the book of all the deeds of mankind . . . to the remotest generations." (1 Enoch 81:1, 2)

"I Enoch will declare unto you, my sons, according to that which appeared to me in the heavenly vision, and which I have known through the word of the holy angels, and have learnt from the heavenly tablets. And Enoch began to recount from the books." (1 Enoch 93:2-3.)

"After . . . Enoch gave me the teachings of all the secrets in the book and in the Parables which had been given to him, he . . . put them together for me in the words of the Book of Parables." (1 Enoch 68:1)

1 Enoch 82:1—"preserve, my son Methuselah, the books from thy father's hand."

2 Enoch 47:2; 48:8—"Take these books of your father's [Enoch's] handwriting"

2 Enoch—"I know the wickedness of men, but I shall leave over one just man with all his house . . . ; and that race shall reveal the books of thy handwriting, and of thy fathers, . . . among the children of men; the guardians of the earth shall show them that race. "

1 Enoch 93:2. " I Enoch, will declare . . . according to that which appeared to me in the heavenly vision . . . and have learnt from the heavenly tablets. 3. And Enoch began to recount from the books."

Jub. 4:17. "And [Enoch] was the first among men that are born upon the earth who learnt writing and knowledge and wisdom and who wrote down the signs of heaven. [The Greek adds: "and arithmetic and geometry, and all the Sophian".]

"And he [Enoch] was the first among men that are born on earth who learnt writing and knowledge and wisdom and who wrote down the signs of heaven according to the order of their months in a book, that men might know the seasons of the years according to the order of their separate months. And he was the first to write a testimony . . . of what he saw in a vision as it will happen to the children of men throughout their generations until the day of judgment; he saw and understood everything, and wrote his testimony, and placed the testimony on earth, for all children of men and for their generations"

Jubilees 4:19

"When Noah grew up and saw how mankind was sinning before the Lord, he withdrew himself from their association and sought to serve his master in order that he would not be led astray. He was especially diligent in the study of the book of Adam and the Book of Enoch" Zohar 1: 58

"Enoch also had a book, which came from the same place as the book of the generations of Adam." When Enoch found the Book of Adam and read it, "he knew that the human race would not be able to receive it. So he hid it again, and it remained until Noah"

Bin Gorion, Sagen 2:270

"The Lord has showed me and informed me, and I have read . . . in the heavenly tablets, and I saw written on them that generation upon generation shall transgress" (Enoch 106:19, 107:1)

"an angel descended from heaven with seven tablets in his hands . . . he read them and knew all that. . . would befall him and his sons . . . and he showed them all that was written on the tablets" Jubilees 32:21.

Next, Moses yielded up to an angel "the Tablets of the Divisions of the years . . . from the day of the creation to the time when the heavens and the earth shall be renewed." Jubilees 1:29

As he was praying, an "angel . . . appeared to Adam, . . . saying, . . . "Thy prayers have been heard and I am come to bring thee words of purity and much wisdom. I will make thee wise through the words of this holy book, from which you will learn whatever shall befall.... Whoever, even to the last generation makes use of this book, must be pure and faithfully observe what is written in it,"

Bin Gorion Sagen 1:261-62

"My grandfather Enoch," says Noah, "gave me the teaching of all the secrets in the book . . . which had been given to him" (1 Enoch 68:1)

"Take thou the books which thou hast written thyself . . . and go down to earth and tell thy sons all that I have told thee. . . . And give them the books of thy handwriting, and they will read them and will know me the creator of all . . . and let them distribute the books of thy handwriting—children to children, generation to generation, nation to nations.... thy handwriting and the handwriting of thy fathers Adam and Seth shall not be destroyed till the end of time, as I have commanded my angels . . . that it be preserved, and that the handwriting of thy fathers. . . perish not" (2 Enoch 12:)

