

# **FROM DISTANT DAYS**

## **MYTHS, TALES, AND POETRY OF ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA**

Benjamin R. Foster

CDL Press  
Bethesda, Maryland

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Foster, Benjamin R. (Benjamin Read)

From distant days : myths, tales, and poetry of ancient  
Mesopotamia / Benjamin R. Foster

p. cm.

ISBN 1-883053-09-9

1. Assyro-Babylonian literature — Translations into English.

I. Title.

PJ3953.F67 1995

892'.1—dc20

94-48817  
CIP

The preparation of the contents of this volume was made possible  
by a grant from the Translations Program of the National Endow-  
ment for the Humanities, an independent Federal agency.

Copyright © 1995 by Benjamin R. Foster. All rights reserved.  
This book may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, in any  
form (beyond that copying permitted by Sections 107 and 108 of  
the U. S. Copyright Law and except by reviewers for the public  
press), without written permission from the publisher, CDL Press,  
P.O. Box 34454, Bethesda, MD 20827.

Designed by Karen Polinger Foster and Elizabeth Lyons.

Cover: Akkadian literary tablets from the Yale Babylonian  
Collection, reproduced by permission. Cover photo by Daniel  
Lopez, Yale Audio Visual Center.

ISBN 1-883053-09-9

## Contents

Preface	vii
Introduction	I

### I. GODS AND THEIR DEEDS

Epic of Creation	9
Story of the Flood	52
When Ishtar Went to the Netherworld	78
How Nergal Became King of the Netherworld	85
How Adapa Lost Immortality	97
Etana, the King without an Heir	102
Anzu, the Bird Who Stole Destiny	115
How Erra Wrecked the World	132

### II. KINGS AND THEIR DEEDS

Legends of Sargon of Akkad	165
Legend of Naram-Sin	171
Tukulti-Ninurta Epic	178
Nebuchadnezzar and Marduk	197
Tiglath-Pileser and the Beasts	206
The King of Justice	208

### III. DIVINE SPEECH

Prophecies	213
Letters from Gods	214
Marduk Prophecy	215
Oracles to Assyrian Kings	218

Readers who approach these works as they would modern fiction, seeking dramatic development of a story, character growth, a sense of time and place, probability and verisimilitude, ending with resolution of a conflict, are therefore urged to discard their familiar arsenal of expectations. Readers who seek these texts in terms closer to the intentions of those who composed them will discover the pleasure and uncertainty of venturing into a wholly different world of artistic expression.

## I GODS AND THEIR DEEDS

### Epic of Creation

The Epic of Creation celebrates the exaltation of the Babylonian god Marduk to supreme deity of the Mesopotamian pantheon after he had saved the gods from attack by Tiamat, the ocean. The poem ascribes to Marduk reorganization of the universe, with Babylon at the center of it, and inspiration for the creation of mankind in order to sustain the gods. It offers an explanation of various names it assigns to Marduk. This poem should not be considered "the" Mesopotamian creation story; rather, it is the individual work of a poet who viewed Babylon as the center of the universe, and Marduk, god of Babylon, as head of the pantheon. This message was not lost on contemporary readers, for, in some Assyrian versions of the poem, Assur was substituted for Marduk. Therefore this poem can be read as a document of Babylonian nationalism. It may be a product of Babylonian nationalistic revival at the time of Nebuchadnezzar I (twelfth century B.C.), though there is no firm evidence for its date of composition. To judge from its language and content, the poem dates to the latter part of the second millennium B.C.

Some modern scholars have used this text as a Babylonian explanation for the necessity of absolute rule. According to them, it portrays an evolution of political authority from an assembly of equals working out policy to an absolute monarch proclaiming policy. In their view, the text can be read as a metaphor for the evolution of Mesopotamian political institutions from a reconstructed local assembly of elders to absolute kingship claiming divine sanction on a regional or international scale. The catalyst for this change is portrayed as outside threat calling for a resolute war leader. The leader demanded, as his terms for leadership, absolute obedience, even when the threat of war was removed.

As the poet portrays this, the gods willingly surrender their power in return for perpetual safety and maintenance. For the latter purpose mankind is created. The rebellious human spirit, as seen in the Story of the Flood, has no place in this poem, where the highest good for man is to discover and understand his place in the divinely ordered universe.

The poem is a work of great complexity and abounds with conceptual and philological problems. There are still many obscure passages and words. A predilection for certain types of words and constructions, together with the over-

arching scheme of the poem, suggests the work of a single author. Though naturally there are variants in the manuscript tradition, there is no reason to suppose that the fundamental content of the work has been altered by successive generations, as has sometimes been suggested, just as there is no reason to elevate this composition to a greater authority than it deserves. It was esteemed highly in the first half of the first millennium B.C, as witnessed by the numerous copies that have turned up in both Assyria and Babylonia, by the preparation of an ancient commentary to the names of Marduk (Tablet VII), and by the ritual use of the composition in the Babylonian new year's festival as stated in late sources. It was quoted or referred to in other texts about Marduk.

The least accessible part of the text for the modern reader will be the passage dealing with the names of Marduk, as it exemplifies techniques of Mesopotamian explanatory philology. The names are explained or translated, where their etymology seemed transparent, and then expounded in other ways through assigning further significance to elements within the name.

The poem begins and ends with concepts of naming. The poet evidently considers naming both an act of creation and an explanation of something already brought into being. For the poet, the name, properly understood, discloses the significance of the created thing. Semantic and phonological analysis of names could lead to understanding of the things named. Names, for this poet, are a text to be read by the informed, and bear the same intimate and revealing relationship to what they signify as this text does to the events it narrates. In a remarkable passage at the end, the poet presents his text as the capstone of creation in that it was bearer of creation's significance to mankind.

The poetry of the Epic of Creation shows command of a wide range of traditional poetic techniques and profound learning. A contrast between speech and action is drawn in the first four tablets, in that speech, characteristic of the old order of the gods, can run to considerable length and repetition. A hint of circularity is provided by the concentrically arranged rehearsals of the narrative; by the climax of Tablet III speech occurs within speech within speech within speech. This device is favored in traditional tale-telling as a narrative frame and as a demonstration of virtuosity, but it is seldom developed to such an extent in Akkadian literature (though compare Anzu, the Bird Who Stole Destiny, on which the Epic of Creation may have been modeled). By contrast, the speech and action characteristic of the new order of the gods under Marduk are narrated rapidly, with a minimum of repetition. The last part of the poem is one continuing speech, explaining and celebrating Marduk's fifty names.

## Tablet I

*(Before anything was, mother ocean [Tiamat] and fresh water(?) [Apsu] mingled to produce the first of a series of pairs of gods. The descendants, with their boisterous behavior, stir Tiamat and Apsu. Although Tiamat bears it in good part, Apsu wishes to kill the offspring. The father is urged on by his counsellor. Apsu's intentions are foiled by Ea, who kills him and restrains his counsellor. He founds his home in Apsu, the watery domain represented by the slain primeval father, and dwells there with his wife.)*

When on high no name was given to heaven, (1)  
Nor below was the netherworld called by name,  
Primeval Apsu was their progenitor,  
And matrix-Tiamat<sup>1</sup> was she who bore them all,  
They were mingling their waters together, (5)  
No cane brake was intertwined nor thicket matted close.<sup>2</sup>  
When no gods at all had been brought forth,  
None called by names, none destinies ordained,  
Then were the gods formed within the(se two).  
Lahmu and Lahamu<sup>3</sup> were brought forth,  
were called by name. (10)  
When they had waxed great, had grown up tall,  
Anshar and Kishar<sup>4</sup> were formed, greater than they,  
They grew lengthy of days, added years to years.  
Anu their firstborn was like his forebears,  
Anshar made Anu, his offspring, his equal. (15)  
Then Anu begot in his image Nudimmud,<sup>5</sup>  
Nudimmud was he who dominated(?) his forebears:  
Profound in wisdom, acute of sense, he was massively strong,  
Much mightier than his grandfather Anshar,  
No rival had he among the gods his brethren. (20)  
The divine brethren banded together,  
Confusing Tiamat as they moved about in their stir,

1. Tiamat is the name of the ocean; Apsu is generally taken to refer to fresh water.

2. That is, nothing divided or covered the waters.

3. Primeval deities.

4. Anshar and Kishar are the circle or horizon of heaven and earth. Anshar was later used by Assyrian scholars as a way of referring to Assur, thus giving him primacy over Marduk.

5. Another name for Ea, god of wisdom.

Roiling the vitals of Tiamat,  
 By their uproar distressing the interior of the Divine Abode.<sup>1</sup>  
 Apsu could not reduce their clamor, (25)  
 But Tiamat was silent before them.  
 Their actions were noisome to her,  
 Their behavior was offensive, (but) she was indulgent.  
 Thereupon Apsu, begetter of the great gods,  
 Summoned Mummu<sup>2</sup> his vizier, saying to him, (30)  
 "Mummu, vizier who contents me,  
 "Come, let us go to Tiamat."  
 They went, took their places facing Tiamat,  
 They took counsel concerning the gods their offspring.  
 Apsu made ready to speak, (35)  
 Saying to her, Tiamat, in a loud voice,  
 "Their behavior is noisome to me!  
 "By day I have no rest, at night I do not sleep!  
 "I wish to put an end to their behavior, to do away with it!  
 "Let silence reign that we may sleep." (40)  
 When Tiamat had heard this,  
 She grew angry and cried out to her spouse,  
 She cried out bitterly, outraged that she stood alone,  
 (For) he had urged evil upon her,  
 "What? Shall we put an end to what we formed? (45)  
 "Their behavior may be most noisome,  
     but we should bear it in good part."  
 It was Mummu who answered, counselling Apsu,  
 The vizier was not receptive to the counsel of his creatrix,<sup>3</sup>  
 "Put an end here and now, father, to their troublesome ways!  
 "By day you should have rest, at night you should sleep." (50)  
 Apsu was delighted with him, he beamed.  
 On account of the evils he plotted against the gods his children,  
 He embraced Mummu, around his neck,

He sat on his knees so he could kiss him.<sup>1</sup>  
 Whatever they plotted between them, (55)  
 Was repeated to the gods their offspring.  
 The gods heard it as they stirred about,  
 They were stunned, they sat down in silence.  
 Surpassing in wisdom, ingenious, resourceful,  
 Ea was aware of all, discerned their stratagem. (60)  
 He fashioned it, he established it, a master plan,  
 He made it artful, his superb magic spell.  
 He recited it and brought (him) to rest in the waters,<sup>2</sup>  
 He put him in deep slumber, he was fast asleep,  
 He made Apsu sleep, he was drenched with slumber, (65)  
 Mummu the advisor was drowsy with languor.  
 He untied his sash, he stripped off his tiara,  
 He took away his aura, he himself put it on.  
 He tied up Apsu, he killed him,  
 Mummu he bound, he locked him securely. (70)  
 He founded his dwelling upon Apsu,  
 He secured Mummu, held (him) firm by a leadrope.  
 After Ea had captured and vanquished his foes,  
 Had won the victory over his opponents,  
 In his chamber, in profound quiet, he rested. (75)  
 He called it "Apsu," which he assigned sanctuaries.  
 He established therein his chamber,  
 Ea and Damkina his wife dwelt there in splendor.

*(Birth and childhood of the hero Marduk, who is born with full strength. He is given the four winds by his grandfather.)*

In the cella of destinies, the abode of designs,  
 The most capable, the sage of the gods, the Lord was begotten, (80)  
 In the midst of Apsu Marduk was formed,  
 In the midst of holy Apsu was Marduk formed!  
 Ea his father begot him,  
 Damkina his mother was confined with him.

1. Andurna, a cosmic locality, perhaps an abode of the gods.

2. Mummu is used in line 4 as a common noun referring to Tiamat ("matrix"), preparing for the wordplay in line 48.

3. Play on words between Mummu-Tiamat and Mummu the vizier.

1. As interpreted here, Apsu bends down to kiss Mummu, so is presumably taller.

2. Variant: "on the waters."

He suckled at the breasts of goddesses, (85)  
 The attendant who raised him endowed him well with glories.  
 His body was magnificent, fiery his glance,  
 He was a hero at birth, he was a mighty one from the beginning!  
 When Anu his grandfather saw him,  
 He was happy, he beamed, his heart was filled with joy. (90)  
 He perfected him, so that his divinity was strange,  
 He was much greater, he surpassed them in every way.  
 His members were fashioned with cunning  
 beyond comprehension,  
 Impossible to conceive, too difficult to visualize:  
 Fourfold his vision, fourfold his hearing, (95)  
 When he moved his lips a fire broke out.  
 Formidable<sup>1</sup> his fourfold perception,  
 And his eyes, in like number, saw in every direction.  
 He was tallest of the gods, surpassing in form,  
 His limbs enormous, he was surpassing at birth. (100)  
 "The son Utu, the son Utu,<sup>2</sup>  
 "The son, the sun, the sunlight of the gods!"  
 He wore (on his body) the auras of ten gods,  
 had (them) wrapped around his head too,  
 Fifty glories<sup>3</sup> were heaped upon him.  
 Anu formed and produced the four winds, (105)  
 He put them in his hand, "Let my son play!"<sup>4</sup>  
 He fashioned dust, he made a storm bear it up,  
 He caused a wave and it roiled Tiamat,  
 Tiamat was roiled, churning day and night,  
 The gods, finding no rest, bore the brunt of each wind. (110)

(Tiamat is stirred to action by the angry gods.)

They plotted evil in their hearts,  
 They said to Tiamat their mother,  
 "When he killed Apsu your husband,  
 "You did nothing to save him but sat by, silent.  
 "Now he has made four terrible winds, (115)  
 "They are roiling your vitals so we cannot sleep.  
 "You had no care for Apsu your husband,  
 "As for Mummu, who was captured, you remained aloof.  
 "You are [no mo]ther, you churn back and forth, confused.  
 "As for us, who cannot lie down to rest,  
 you do not love us! (120)  
 "Our ... [ ], our eyes are pinched,  
 "Lift this unremitting yoke, let us sleep!  
 "[Rai]se a [storm], give them what they deserve,  
 "[Ma]ke a [tempest], turn them into nothingness."  
 When Tiamat [heard] these words, they pleased her, (125)  
 "[As y]ou have counselled, we will make a tempest,<sup>1</sup>  
 "[We will ] the gods within it,  
 "(For) they have been adopting [wicked ways]  
 against the gods [thei]r parents."  
 [They clo]sed ranks and drew up at Tiamat's side,  
 Angry, scheming, never lying down night and day, (130)  
 [Ma]king warfare, rumbling, raging,  
 Convening in assembly, that they might start hostilities.  
 Mother Hubur<sup>2</sup> who can form everything,  
 Added countless invincible weapons,  
 gave birth to monster serpents,  
 Pointed of fang, with merciless incisors(?), (135)  
 She filled their bodies with venom for blood.  
 Fierce dragons she clad with glories,  
 Causing them to bear auras like gods, (saying)  
 "Whoever sees them shall collapse from weakness!"

1. "Formidable" is an attempt to render a pun in the original between *rabi* "great" and *erbu* "four."  
 2. A series of interlingual puns on son and sun, only one level of which can be rendered in English. The cuneiform signs used to write the name Marduk, AMAR.UD, are here construed as *māru* "son" and Utu "sun."  
 3. Marduk has fifty names in this text. In a late god list, Marduk was assigned the number 50. Perhaps this was done so that Marduk could replace Enlil (also number 50) as head of the pantheon.  
 4. Or: "My son, let them whirl."

1. Or: "monsters," but this would leave the reference in line 127 unclear.  
 2. Another epithet of Mummu-Tiamat.

"Wherever their bodies make onslaught,  
they shall not turn back!" (140)

She deployed serpents, dragons, and hairy hero-men,  
Lion monsters, lion men, scorpion men,  
Mighty demons, fish men, bull men,  
Bearing unsparing arms, fearing no battle.

Her commands were absolute, no one opposed them, (145)  
Eleven indeed on this wise she crea[ted].<sup>1</sup>

From among the gods her offspring,  
who composed her assembly,  
She raised up Qingu<sup>2</sup> from among them,  
it was he she made greatest!

Leadership of the army, command of the assembly, (150)  
Arming, contact, advance of the melee,

Wardenship of the (spoils?) of battle,  
(All) she entrusted to him, made him sit on the dais.

"I cast your spell. I make you the greatest in the assembly  
of the gods,

"Kingship of all the gods I put in your power. (155)  
"You are the greatest, my husband, you are illustrious,

"Your command shall always be greatest,  
over all the Anunna-gods."

She gave him the tablet of destinies,<sup>3</sup>  
had him hold it to his chest, (saying)

"As for you, your command will not be changed,  
your utterance will be eternal.

"Now that Qingu is the highest and has taken [supremacy], (160)  
"And has [ordained] destinies for his divine children,

"Whatever you (gods) say shall cause fire to [subside],<sup>4</sup>  
"Your concentrated venom shall make the mighty one yield."

1. This number was reached by adding the "monster serpents" of 134, the "fierce dragons" of 137, and the nine creatures of 141-143.

2. A male deity about whom little otherwise is known.

3. The tablet of destinies, though not a clearly defined concept in Mesopotamian tradition, was sometimes considered to be in the netherworld and was presumably inscribed with a person's destiny and day of death. In the Anzu story, on which this episode is based, the tablet gave the power to control divine spheres of responsibility and thus universal authority.

4. Contrast Tablet I line 96.

## Tablet II

*(Tiamat's preparations are known to Ea, who, in apparent despair, goes to Anshar, king of the gods. The relevant passages of Tablet I are repeated verbatim. Anshar is horror-stricken; he blames Ea for what has occurred. Since Ea started the trouble, he must find a solution to it. This accords well with Ea's plans for his son.)*

Tiamat assembled her creatures, (1)

Drew up for battle against the gods her brood.

Thereafter Tiamat, more than(?) Apsu, was become an evildoer.<sup>1</sup>

She informed Ea that she was ready for battle.

When Ea heard this, (5)

He was struck dumb with horror and sat stock still.

After he had thought and his distress had calmed,

He made straight his way to Anshar his grandfather.

He came in before his grandfather, Anshar, (10)

All that Tiamat plotted he recounted to him,

"My father, Tiamat our mother has grown angry with us,

"She has convened an assembly, furious with rage.

"All the gods rallied around her,

"Even those you created are going over to her side,

"They are massing around her, ready at Tiamat's side. (15)

"Angry, scheming, never lying down night and day,

"Making warfare, rumbling, raging,

"Convening in assembly, that they might start hostilities.

"Mother Hubur, who can form everything,

"Added countless invincible weapons, (20)

gave birth to monster serpents,

"Pointed of fang, with merciless incisors(?),

"She filled their bodies with venom for blood.

"Fierce dragons she clad with glories,

"Causing them to bear auras like gods, (saying)

'Whoever sees them shall collapse from weakness! (25)

'Wherever their bodies make onslaught,

they shall not turn back!'

1. One could also understand "on account of Apsu" or "against Apsu" (in that case now the domain of Ea).

"She deployed serpents, dragons, and hairy hero-men,  
 "Lion monsters, lion men, scorpion men,  
 "Mighty demons, fish men, bull men,  
 "Bearing unsparing arms, fearing no battle. (30)  
 "Her commands were absolute, no one opposed them,  
 "Eleven indeed on this wise she created.  
 "From among the gods her offspring,  
     who composed her assembly,  
 "She raised up Qingu from among them,  
     it was he she made greatest!  
 "Leadership of the army, command of the assembly, (35)  
 "Arming, contact, advance of the melee,  
 "Wardenship of the (spoils?) of battle,  
 "(All) she entrusted to him, made him sit on the dais.  
     'I cast your spell. I make you the greatest in the assembly  
        of the gods,  
     'Kingship of all the gods I put in your power. (40)  
     'You are the greatest, my husband, you are illustrious.  
     'Your command shall always be greatest,  
        over all the Anunna-gods.'  
 "She gave him the tablet of destinies,  
     had him hold it to his chest, (saying)  
     'As for you, your command will not be changed, your  
        utterance will be eternal.  
     'Now that Qingu is the highest  
        and has taken [supremacy], (45)  
     'And has [ordained] destinies for his divine children,  
     'Whatever you (gods) say shall cause fire to [subside],  
     'Your concentrated venom shall make the mighty one yield.'"

*(Anshar flies into a passion at Ea, blaming him for what has transpired. Ea defends himself by pointing out the necessity for Apsu's murder. Anshar thereupon orders Ea to subdue Tiamat. Ea is unable to do so, so Anshar sends out Anu, who is likewise unable. This situation was no doubt anticipated by Ea, who is waiting to produce his favorite son from the wings. This provides the opportunity for Marduk to take his place and to make his great demand.)*

[When Anshar heard] the speech, he was deeply distressed,  
 He cried out "Woe!"; he bit his lips, (50)  
 His spirits were angry, his mind was uneasy,  
 His cries to Ea his offspring grew choked,  
 "My son, you yourself were instigator of battle!  
 "Do you bear the consequences of your own handiwork!  
 "You went forth and killed Apsu, (55)  
 "So Tiamat, whom you have enraged,  
     where is one who can face her?"  
 The sage counsellor, wise prince,  
 Producer of wisdom, divine Nudimmud,  
 Answered his father Anshar gently,  
 With soothing words, calming speech, (60)  
 "My father, inscrutable, ordainer of destinies,  
 "Who has power to create and destroy,  
 "O Anshar, inscrutable, ordainer of destinies,  
 "Who has power to create and destroy,  
 "I will declare my thoughts to you, relent for a moment, (65)  
 "Recall in your heart that I made a good plan.  
 "Before I undertook to kill Apsu,  
 "Who had foreseen what is happening now?  
 "Ere I was the one who moved quickly to snuff out his life,  
 "I indeed, for it was I who destroyed him, [wh]at was there? (70)  
 When Anshar heard this, it pleased him,  
 He calmed down, saying to Ea,  
 "Your deeds are worthy of a god,  
 "You can(?) [ ] a fierce, irresistible stroke,  
 "Ea, your deeds are worthy of a god, (75)  
 "You can(?) [ ] a fierce, irresistible stroke,  
 "Go then to Tiamat, sub[due] her onslaught,  
 "May her anger [be pacified] by [your] magic spell."  
 When he heard the command [of his father] A[nshar],  
 He set off, making straight his way, (80)  
 Ea went to seek out Tiamat's stratagem.  
 He stopped, horror-stricken, then turned back.  
 He came before Anshar the sovereign,  
 He beseeched him with entreaties, saying,



“[My father], Tiamat has carried her actions beyond me, (85)  
 “I sought out her course, but my spell cannot counter it.  
 “Her strength is enormous, she is utterly terrifying,  
 “She is reinforced with a host, none can come out against her.  
 “Her challenge was in no way reduced but overwhelmed me,  
 “I became afraid at her clamor, I turned back. (90)  
 “My father, do not despair, send another to her,  
 “A woman’s force may be very great, but it cannot match a man’s.  
 “Do you scatter her ranks, thwart her intentions,     )   
 “Before she lays her hands on all of us.”  
 Anshar was shouting, in a passion, (95)  
 To Anu his son he said these words,  
 “Stalwart son, valiant warrior,  
 “Whose strength is enormous, whose onslaught is irresistible,  
 “Hurry, take a stand before Tiamat,  
 “Soothe her feelings, let her heart be eased. (100)  
 “If she will not listen to what you say,  
 “Say something by way of entreaty to her, so that she be pacified.”  
 When he heard what his father Anshar said,  
 He set off, [made str]aight his way,  
 Anu went to seek out Tiamat’s stratagem. (105)  
 He stopped, horror-stricken, then turned back.  
 He came before [Ansha]r, [his father who begot him],  
 He beseeched him with entreaties, s[aying],  
 “My father, Tiamat has carried her actions beyond me,  
 “I sought out her course, but my s[pell cannot counter it]. (110)  
 “Her strength is enormous, she is utterly terrifying,  
 “She is reinforced with a host, none can [come out against] her.  
 “Her challenge was in no way reduced, but overwhelmed me.  
 “I became afraid at her clamor, I turned back.  
 “My father, do not despair, send another to her, (115)  
 “A woman’s strength may be very great,  
     but it cannot match a man’s.  
 “Do you scatter her ranks, thwart her intentions,  
 “Before she lays her hands on all of us.”  
 Anshar fell silent, gazing at the ground,  
 Nodding towards Ea, he shook his head. (120)

The Igigi-gods and Anunna-gods were all assembled,  
 With lips closed tight, they sat in silence.  
 Would no god go out [at his] command?  
 Against Tiamat would none go as [he] ordered?  
 Then Anshar, father of the great gods, (125)  
 His heart was angry, he [would not summon] anyone!

*(Ea summons Marduk privately and informs him that his hour is now come. He enjoins him to present himself respectfully before his great-grandfather as a volunteer in time of crisis. Ea does not explicitly advise Marduk what price to set on his services, as the poet makes that come from the heart of Marduk himself. Marduk is warmly received by the elder gods and his offer to be champion is willingly accepted. Now Marduk offers his terms: if he is to save all the gods, he is to become their supreme, unquestioned leader, always.)*

The mighty firstborn, champion of his father,  
 Hastener to battle, the warrior Marduk  
 Did Ea summon to his secret place,  
 Told him his secret words,<sup>1</sup> (130)  
 “O Marduk, think, heed your father,  
 “You are my son who can relieve his heart!  
 “Draw nigh, approach Anshar,  
 “Make ready to speak. He was angry,  
     seeing you he will be calm.”  
 The Lord was delighted at his father’s words, (135)  
 He drew near and waited upon Anshar.  
 When Anshar saw him, his heart was filled with joyful feelings,  
 He kissed his lips, he banished his gloom.  
 “My father, let not your lips be silent but speak,  
 “Let me go, let me accomplish your heart’s desire. (140)  
 “[O Anshar], let not your lips be silent but speak,  
 “Let me go, let me accomplish your heart’s desire!  
 “What man is it who has sent forth his battle against you?”  
 “[My son], Tiamat, a woman,  
     comes out against you to arms.”  
 “[My father], creator, rejoice and be glad, (145)

1. Uncertain. While this could be a reference to magic words, it could as well refer to Marduk’s demand, 155-162.

"Soon you will trample the neck of Tiamat.  
 "[Anshar], creator, rejoice and be glad,  
 "Soon you will trample [the neck] of Tiamat!"  
 "[Go], son, knower of all wisdom,  
 "Bring Tiamat to rest with your sacral spell. (150)  
 "Make straight, quickly, with the storm chariot,  
 "Let it not veer from its [course], turn (it) back!"  
 The Lord was delighted at his grandfather's words,  
 His heart was overjoyed as he said to his grandfather,  
 "Lord of the gods, of the destiny of the great gods, (155)  
 "If indeed I am to champion you,  
 "Subdue Tiamat and save your lives,  
 "Convene the assembly, nominate me for supreme destiny!  
 "Take your places in the Assembly Place of the Gods,<sup>1</sup>  
 all of you, in joyful mood.  
 "When I speak, let me ordain destinies instead of you. (160)  
 "Let nothing that I shall bring about be altered,  
 "Nor what I say be revoked or changed."

## Tablet III

*(Anshar convokes the gods for this purpose, commissioning his vizier, Gaga, to wait upon Lahmu and Lahamu to tell them the story of Tiamat's threat and Marduk's offer. Lahmu and Lahamu are terrified. They and the other gods convene, eat and drink liberally, and in the festive mood of a reunion, they surrender their authority to Marduk.)*

Anshar made ready to speak, (1)  
 Saying to Gaga his vizier these words,  
 "Gaga, vizier who contents me,  
 "Let it be you that I send off towards Lahmu and Lahamu.  
 "You know how [to find a way], you can make a fine speech. (5)  
 "Send over to my presence the gods my ancestors,  
 "Let them bring all the gods before me.  
 "Let them converse, sit down at a feast,  
 "On produce of the field let them feed, imbibe of the vine.

"Let them ordain destiny for Marduk, their champion. (10)  
 "Be off, Gaga, wait upon them,  
 "All that I tell you, repeat to them:  
 'It is Anshar your son who has ordered me to come,  
 'He has bade me speak in full the command of his heart,  
 'To wit: (15)  
 "Tiamat our mother has grown angry with us,  
 "She has convened an assembly, furious with rage.  
 "All the gods rallied around her,  
 "Even those you created are going over to her side.  
 "They are massing around her, ready at Tiamat's side. (20)  
 "Angry, scheming, never lying down night and day,  
 "Making warfare, rumbling, raging,  
 "Convening in assembly, that they might start hostilities.  
 "Mother Hubur, who can form everything,  
 "Added countless invincible weapons,  
 gave birth to monster serpents, (25)  
 "Pointed of fang, with merciless incisors(?),  
 "She filled their bodies with venom for blood.  
 "Fierce dragons she clad with glories,  
 "Causing them to bear auras like gods, (saying)  
 'Whoever sees them shall collapse from weakness! (30)  
 'Wherever their bodies make onslaught,  
 they shall not turn back.'  
 "She deployed serpents, dragons, and hairy hero-men,  
 "Lion monsters, lion men, scorpion men,  
 "Mighty demons, fish men, bull men,  
 "Bearing unsparing arms, fearing no battle. (35)  
 "Her commands were absolute, no one opposed them.  
 "Eleven indeed on this wise she created.  
 "From among the gods her offspring,  
 who composed her assembly,  
 "She raised up Qingu from among them,  
 it was he she made greatest!  
 "Leadership of the army, command of the assembly, (40)  
 "Arming, contact, advance of the melee,

1. Ubshu-ukkenna, a cosmic locality, called "abode of counsel."

"Wardenship of the (spoils?) of battle:  
 "All she entrusted to him, made him sit on the dais.  
     'I cast your spell, I make you the greatest  
     in the assembly of the gods,  
     'Kingship of all the gods I put in your power. (45)  
     'You are greatest, my husband, you are illustrious,  
     'Your command shall always be greatest,  
     over all the Anunna-gods.'  
 "She gave him the tablet of destinies,  
     had him hold it to his chest, (saying)  
     'As for you, your command will not be changed,  
     your utterance will be eternal.  
     'Now that Qingu is the highest and has  
     taken over [supremacy], (50)  
     'And has [ordained] destinies for his divine children,  
     'Whatever you (gods) say shall cause fire to [subside],  
     'Your concentrated venom shall make  
     the mighty one yield.'  
 "I sent Anu, he could not confront her,  
 "Nudimmud was afraid and turned back. (55)  
 "Marduk came forward,  
     the sage of the gods, your son,  
 "He has resolved to go against Tiamat.  
 "When he spoke, he said to me,  
     'If indeed I am to champion you,  
     'Subdue Tiamat and save your lives, (60)  
     'Convene the assembly,  
     nominate me for supreme destiny!  
     'Take your places in the Assembly Place  
     of the Gods, all of you, in joyful mood,  
     'When I speak, let me ordain destinies instead of you.  
     'Let nothing that I shall bring about be altered,  
     'Nor what I say be revoked or changed.' (65)  
 "Come quickly to me,  
     straightaway ordain him your destinies,

"Let him go and confront your powerful enemy."  
 Gaga went and made straight his way  
 Towards Lahmu and Lahamu the gods his ancestors.  
 He prostrated, kissed the ground before them. (70)  
 He stood up straight and said to them,  
 "It is Anshar your son who has ordered me to come,  
 "He has bade me speak in full the command of his heart:  
     'Tiamat our mother has grown angry with us,  
     'She has convened an assembly, furious with rage. (75)  
     'All the gods rallied around her,  
     'Even those you created are going over to her side.  
     'They are massing around her, ready at Tiamat's side.  
     'Angry, scheming, never lying down night and day,  
     'Making warfare, rumbling, raging, (80)  
     'Convening in assembly, that they might start hostilities.  
     'Mother Hubur, who can form everything,  
     'Added countless invincible weapons,  
     gave birth to monster serpents,  
     'Pointed of fang, with merciless incisors(?),  
     'She filled their bodies with venom for blood. (85)  
     'Fierce dragons she clad with glories,  
     'Causing them to bear auras like gods, (saying)  
     "Whoever sees them shall collapse from weakness!  
     "Wherever their bodies make onslaught  
     they shall not turn back!"  
     'She deployed serpents, dragons, and hairy hero-men, (90)  
     'Lion monsters, lion men, scorpion men,  
     'Mighty demons, fish men, bull men,  
     'Bearing unsparing arms, fearing no battle.  
     'Her commands were absolute, no one opposed them.  
     'Eleven indeed on this wise she created! (95)  
     'From among the gods her offspring  
     who composed her assembly,  
     'She raised up Qingu from among them,  
     it was he she made greatest!  
     'Leadership of the army, command of the assembly,

'Arming, contact, advance of the melee,  
 'Division of the (spoils?) of battle: (100)  
 '(All) she entrusted to him, made him sit on the dais.  
     'I cast your spell and make you the greatest  
       in the assembly of the gods,  
     'Kingship of all the gods I put in your power.  
     'You shall be the greatest, you are my only spouse,  
     'Your name shall always be greatest,  
       over all the Anunna-gods." (105)  
 'She gave him the tablet of destinies, had him  
   hold it to his chest, (saying)  
     'As for you, your command will not be changed,  
       your utterance will be eternal.  
     'Now that Qingu is the highest  
       and has taken over [supremacy],  
     'And has [ordained] destinies for his divine children,  
     'Whatever you (gods) say  
       shall cause fire to [subside], (110)  
     'Your concentrated venom will make  
       the mighty one yield."  
 'I sent Anu, he could not confront her,  
 'Nudimmud was afraid and turned back.  
 'Marduk came forward, the sage of the gods, your son,  
 'He has resolved to go against Tiamat. (115)  
 'When he spoke, he said to me,  
     'If indeed I am to champion you,  
     'Subdue Tiamat and save your lives,  
     'Convene the assembly,  
       nominate me for supreme destiny!  
     'In the Assembly Place of the Gods  
       take your places, all of you, in joyful mood. (120)  
     'When I speak, let me ordain destinies instead of you.  
     'Let nothing that I shall bring about be altered,  
     'Nor what I say be revoked or changed."  
 'Hurry to me, straightaway ordain him your destinies,

'Let him go and confront your powerful enemy.'" (125)  
 When Lahmu and Lahamu heard, they cried aloud,  
 All of the Igigi-gods wailed bitterly,  
 "What (is our) hostility,  
     that she has taken a[ct]ion (against) us?"<sup>1</sup>  
 "We scarcely know what Tiamat might do!"  
 They swarmed together and came. (130)  
 All the great gods, ordainers of [destinies],  
 Came before Anshar and were filled with [joy].  
 One kissed the other in the assembly [ ],  
 They conversed, sat down at a feast,  
 On produce of the field they fed, imbibed of the vine, (135)  
 With sweet liquor they made their gullets run,  
 They felt good from drinking the beer.  
 Most carefree, their spirits rose,  
 To Marduk their champion they ordained destiny.

## Tablet IV

*(Marduk takes the throne and is hailed by all the gods in a coronation ceremony. Proof is administered of his supremacy. He is hailed as king, is given the trappings of royalty, chooses his weapons, and sets forth on his quest.)*

They set out for him a princely dais, (1)  
 He took his place before his fathers for sovereignty.  
 "You are the most important among the great gods,  
 "Your destiny is unrivalled, your command is supreme.  
 "O Marduk, you are the most important among the great gods, (5)  
 "Your destiny is unrivalled, your command is supreme!  
 "Henceforth your command cannot be changed,  
 "To raise high, to bring low, this shall be your power.  
 "Your command shall be truth, your word shall not be wrong.  
 "Not one of the gods shall go beyond the limits you set. (10)  
 "Support is wanted for the gods' sanctuaries,  
 "Wherever their shrines shall be, your own shall be established.

1. Or, "Why be opposed?" The second half of the line is problematic.

"O Marduk, you are our champion,  
 "We bestow upon you kingship of all and everything.  
 "Take your place in the assembly, your word shall be supreme. (15)  
 "May your weapon never strike wide but dispatch your foes.  
 "O Lord, spare his life who trusts in you,  
 "But the god who has taken up evil, snuff out his life!"  
 They set up among them a certain constellation,  
 To Marduk their firstborn said they (these words), (20)  
 "Your destiny, O Lord, shall be foremost of the gods',  
 "Command destruction or creation, they shall take place.  
 "At your word the constellation shall be destroyed,  
 "Command again, the constellation shall be intact."  
 He commanded and at his word the constellation was destroyed, (25)  
 He commanded again and the constellation was created anew.  
 When the gods his fathers saw what he had commanded,  
 Joyfully they hailed, "Marduk is king!"  
 They bestowed in full measure scepter, throne, and staff,  
 They gave him unopposable weaponry that vanquishes enemies. (30)  
 "Go, cut off the life of Tiamat,  
 "Let the winds bear her blood away as glad tidings!"  
 The gods, his fathers, ordained the Lord's destiny,  
 On the path to success and authority did they set him marching.  
 He made the bow, appointed it his weapon, (35)  
 He mounted the arrow, set it on the string.  
 He took up the mace, held it in his right hand,  
 Bow and quiver he slung on his arm.  
 Thunderbolts he set before his face,  
 With raging fire he covered his body. (40)  
 Then he made a net to enclose Tiamat within,  
 He deployed the four winds that none of her might escape:  
 South Wind, North Wind, East Wind, West Wind,  
 Gift of his grandfather Anu;<sup>1</sup> he fastened the net at his side.  
 He made ill wind, whirlwind, cyclone, (45)

Four-ways wind, seven-ways wind, destructive wind,  
 irresistible wind:  
 He released the winds which he had made, the seven of them,  
 Mounting in readiness behind him to roil inside Tiamat.  
 Then the Lord raised the Deluge, his great weapon.  
 He mounted the terrible chariot,  
 the unopposable Storm Demon, (50)  
 He hitched to it the four-steed team, he tied them at his side:<sup>1</sup>  
 "Slaughterer," "Merciless," "Overwhelmer," "Soaring."  
 Their lips are curled back, their teeth bear venom,  
 They know not fatigue, they are trained to trample down.  
 He stationed at his right gruesome battle and strife, (55)  
 At his left the fray that overthrows all formations.  
 He was garbed in a ghastly armored garment,  
 On his head he was covered with terrifying auras.  
 The Lord made straight and pursued his way,  
 Toward raging Tiamat he set his face. (60)  
 He was holding a spell ready upon his lips,  
 A plant, antidote to venom, he was grasping in his hand.  
 At that moment the gods were stirring, stirring about him,  
 The gods his fathers were stirring about him,  
 the gods stirring about him.

*(Marduk approaches for battle while the gods hover fearfully near him. He is temporarily discomfited by the sight of the enemy. Tiamat intimates that Marduk's support is disloyal. Ignoring Qingu, he challenges her to single combat and indicts her for the contemplated murder of her own children. Stung to a fury, Tiamat herself advances for battle. Marduk kills her, destroys her forces, takes the tablet of destinies, and puts it on himself.)*

The Lord drew near, to find out the intent(?) of Tiamat, (65)  
 He was looking for the stratagem of Qingu her spouse.  
 As he looked, his tactic turned to confusion,  
 His reason was overthrown, his actions panicky,  
 And as for the gods his allies, who went at his side,

1. The gift refers to the four winds (see Tablet I lines 105-106), not the net. The original has an elaborate poetic structure that cannot be reproduced clearly in translation. "At his side" could also mean "on his arm."

1. Apparently the ends of the reins, normally held by an attendant, are here strapped to him, to keep both hands free for fighting. Balancing in a chariot with weapons in both hands and guiding a four-steed team by the belt is, of course, a heroic feat of the first order.

When they saw the valiant vanguard, their sight failed them. (70)  
 Tiamat cast her spell pointblank,  
 Falsehood, lies she held ready on her lips.  
 "... lord, the gods rise against you,  
 "They assembled [where] they are, (but) are they on your side?"<sup>1</sup>  
 The Lord [raised] the Deluge, his great weapon, (75)  
 To Tiamat, who acted conciliatory,<sup>2</sup> sent he (this word),  
 "Why outwardly do you assume a friendly attitude,  
 "While your heart is plotting to open attack?  
 "Children cried out as their parents were deceitful,  
 "And you, their own mother, spurned all natural feeling.<sup>3</sup> (80)  
 "You named Qingu to be spouse for you,  
 "Though he had no right to be, you set him up for chief god.  
 "You attempted wicked deeds against Anshar,  
     sovereign of the gods,  
 "And you have perpetrated your evil against the gods my fathers.  
 "Though main force is drawn up,  
     though these your weapons are in array, (85)  
 "Come within range, let us duel, you and I!"  
 When Tiamat heard this,  
 She was beside herself, she turned into a maniac.  
 Tiamat shrieked loud, in a passion,  
 Her frame shook all over, down to the ground. (90)  
 He was reciting the incantation, casting his spell,  
 While the gods of battle were whetting their blades.  
 Tiamat and Marduk, sage of the gods, drew close for battle,  
 They locked in single combat, joining for the fray.  
 The Lord spread out his net, encircled her, (95)  
 The ill wind he had held behind him he released in her face.  
 Tiamat opened her mouth to swallow,  
 He thrust in the ill wind so she could not close her lips.

1. Uncertain. Tiamat evidently tells Marduk that the gods he is championing are actually disloyal to him.

2. Or: "who was furious."

3. The precise significance of Marduk's remarks is not clear. While he may refer to Tiamat's natural goodwill towards her children (Tablet I lines 28, 46), it seems more likely that he refers to her insinuation that he had best beware the loyalty of those he championed.

The raging winds bloated her belly,  
 Her insides were stopped up, she gaped her mouth wide. (100)  
 He shot off the arrow, it broke open her belly,  
 It cut to her innards, it pierced the heart.  
 He subdued her and snuffed out her life,  
 He flung down her carcass, he took his stand upon it.  
 After the vanguard had slain Tiamat, (105)  
 He scattered her forces, he dispersed her host.  
 As for the gods her allies, who had come to her aid,  
 They trembled, terrified, they ran in all directions,  
 They tried to make a way out(?) to save their<sup>1</sup> lives,  
 There was no escaping the grasp that held (them)! (110)  
 He drew them in and smashed their weapons.  
 They were cast in the net and sat in a heap,  
 They were heaped up in the corners, full of woe,  
 They were bearing his punishment, to prison confined.  
 As for the eleven creatures, the ones adorned with glories, (115)  
 And the demonic horde(?), which all went at her side,  
 He put on lead ropes, he bound their arms.  
 He trampled them under, together with their belligerence.  
 As for Qingu, who was trying to be great among them,  
 He captured him and reckoned him among the doomed. (120)  
 He took away from him the tablet of destinies  
     that he had no right to,  
 He sealed it with a seal and affixed it to his chest.

*(Splitting Tiamat's corpse in half, Marduk uses one piece to create the heavens. Her blood is borne off by the wind as evidence of her death. Marduk makes Esharra, an abode in heaven, as a counterpart of Apsu.)*

Having captured his enemies and triumphed,  
 Having shown the mighty(?) foe subservient(?),<sup>2</sup>  
 Having fully achieved Anshar's victory over his enemies, (125)  
 Valiant Marduk having attained what Nudimmud desired,  
 He made firm his hold over the captured gods,

1. Text has "his life."

2. This may refer to a triumphal parade.

Then turned back to Tiamat whom he had captured.  
 The Lord trampled upon the frame of Tiamat,  
 With his merciless mace he crushed her skull. (130)  
 He cut open the arteries of her blood,  
 He let the North Wind bear (it) away as glad tidings.  
 When his fathers saw, they rejoiced and were glad,  
 They brought him gifts and presents.  
 He calmed down. Then the Lord was inspecting her carcass, (135)  
 That he might divide(?) the monstrous lump  
 and fashion artful things.  
 He split her in two, like a fish for drying,  
 Half of her he set up and made as a cover, (like) heaven.<sup>1</sup>  
 He stretched out the hide and assigned watchmen,  
 And ordered them not to let her waters escape. (140)  
 He crossed heaven and inspected (its) sacred places,<sup>2</sup>  
 He made a counterpart of Apsu,  
 the dwelling of Nudimmud.  
 The Lord measured the construction of Apsu,  
 The Great Sanctuary, its likeness, he founded, Esharra.<sup>3</sup>  
 The Great Sanctuary, Esharra, which he built, (is) heaven,<sup>4</sup> (145)  
 He made Ea, Enlil, and Anu dwell in their holy places.

## Tablet V

*(Marduk organizes the stars and planets and marks off years. He establishes his own planet, called Nebiru, as a marker for all the others in their motion. He regulates the moon, sun, weather, and subterranean waters. He links the various parts of the cosmos.)*

He made the position(s) for the great gods, (1)  
 He established (in) constellations the stars, their counterparts.  
 He marked the year, described its boundaries,<sup>5</sup>

1. That is, he made a cover to the watery deep that served as a "sky" for it.

2. Marduk models his new home after Apsu, the domain of Ea.

3. Esharra means "The House of Totality," the domain of Enlil. See Tablet IV line 145, V line 120, VI line 66.

4. Or, perhaps, "(is in) heaven."

5. That is, laid out the ecliptic?

He set up twelve months of three stars each.<sup>1</sup>  
 After he had patterned the days of the year, (5)  
 He fixed the position of Nebiru to mark the (stars') relationships.<sup>2</sup>  
 Lest any make an error or go astray,  
 He established the position(s) of Enlil and Ea in relation to it.<sup>3</sup>  
 He opened up gates on both (sides of her) ribs,  
 He made strong bolts to left and right. (10)  
 In her liver he established the zenith.  
 He made the moon appear, entrusted (to him) the night.  
 He assigned to him the crown jewel of nighttime  
 to mark the day (of the month):  
 "Every month, without ceasing, start off with the (crescent) disk.  
 "At the beginning of the month, waxing over the land, (15)  
 "You shine with horns to mark six days,  
 "At the seventh day, the disk as [ha]lf.  
 "At the fifteenth day, you shall be in opposition,  
 at the midpoint of each [month].  
 "When the sun f[ac]es you from the horizon of heaven,  
 "Wane at the same pace and form in reverse. (20)  
 "At the day of di[sappear]ance, approach the sun's course,  
 "On the [ ] of the thirtieth day, you shall be in conjunction  
 with the sun a second time.  
 "I d[efined?] the celestial signs, proceed on their path,  
 "[ ] approach each other and render (oracular) judgment.  
 "The sun shall [ ] ..., killing, oppression (25)  
 "[ ] me."  
 W[hen he [ ]  
 The val[jiant [ ]  
 The sun [ ]  
 In [ ] (30)  
 "Let [ ]  
 "[ ]  
 "Let there arise no [ ]

1. Babylonian astrolabes assign three stars to each month; here Marduk is portrayed as creating this pattern.

2. Refers to the daily rotation of the stars.

3. "It" refers to Nebiru, apparently in relation to the equator.

"Let there be [ ]  
 "In [ ] (35)  
 "Da[ily ]"  
 After [he had ]  
 [ ]  
 He ma[de ]  
 One year [ ] (40)  
 At New Year [ ]  
 (Another) year [ ]  
 "Let [ ]  
 "The doorbolt of sunrise [ ]."  
 After he had as[signed ], (45)  
 [And fixed] the watches of night and day,  
 [ ] the foam of Tiamat,  
 Marduk created [ ]  
 He compacted (the foam) into c[louds] and made (them) billow.  
 To raise the wind, to cause rainfall, (50)  
 To make mists steam, to pile up her spittle (as snow?),  
 He assigned to himself, put under his control.  
 He set down her head and piled [ ]<sup>1</sup> upon it,  
 He opened underground springs, a flood was let flow(?).  
 From her eyes he undammed the Euphr[ates] and Tigris, (55)  
 He stopped up her nostrils, he left ...  
 He heaped up high-peaked mo[unt]ains from(?) her dug.  
 He drilled through her waterholes to carry off the catchwater.  
 He coiled up her tail and tied it as(?) "The Great Bond."<sup>2</sup>  
 [ ] Apsu beneath, at his feet. (60)  
 He set her crotch as the brace of heaven,  
 He set [half of] her as a roof, he established the netherworld.  
 [ ]ask, he caused the oceans to surge within her.  
 [He spre]ad his net, let all (within) escape,  
 He formed the ... [ ] of heaven and netherworld, (65)  
 Tightening their bond [ ] ...

1. On the basis of Tablet VII line 70 one may restore "mountain" here, but this is not assured.  
 2. That is, the link that holds heaven and the world below together.

(Marduk distributes trophies, parades his defeated enemies, and is celebrated as a returning hero.)

After he had designed his prerogatives  
 and devised his responsibilities,  
 He founded (their) [sanc]tuaries, entrusted (those) to Ea.  
 [The tablet] of destinies, which he took from Qingu  
 and brought away,  
 As the foremost gift he took away, he presented (it) to Anu. (70)  
 The [ ] of battle,  
 which dangled and fluttered about (in the net),  
 [ ] he led before his fathers.  
 [And as for] the eleven creatures which Tiamat created ...  
 He smashed their [wea]pons, he tied them to his feet.  
 He made images [of them] and set them up  
 at the [Gate of] Apsu: (75)  
 "Lest ever after they be forgotten, let this be the sign."  
 When [the gods] saw, they rejoiced and were glad,  
 Lahmu, Lahamu, and all his fathers.  
 Anshar [embra]ced him,  
 proclaimed (his) salutation (to be) "king."  
 [A]nu, Enlil, and Ea gave him gifts, (80)  
 [ ] Damkina his mother made cries of joy over him,  
 She(?) made his face glow with (cries of) "Good ...!"<sup>1</sup>  
 To Usmu,<sup>2</sup> who brought (Damkina's) gift at the glad tidings,  
 [He en]trusted the ministry of Apsu and care of the sanctuaries.  
 All the Igigi-gods together prostrated before him, (85)  
 [And] the Anunna-gods, all there are, were doing him homage,  
 The whole of them joined together to pay him reverence,  
 [Before him] they stood, they prostrated, "This is the king!"

(Marduk cleans himself and dons his insignia. The gods swear allegiance to him; he undertakes to maintain them.)

[After] his fathers had celebrated him in due measure,

1. This is evidently a congratulatory exclamation, with a play on Damkina and *dumqu* ("good").  
 2. Advisor or messenger god to Ea, a Janus-like figure with a double head.



[ ] covered with the dust of battle. (90)  
 [ ] ...  
 With cedar [oil] and [ ] he anoi[n]ted his body,  
 He clothed himself in [his] princely [gar]ment,  
 The kingly aura, the awe-inspiring tiara.  
 He picked up the mace, he held it in his right hand, (95)  
 [ ] he held in his left hand.  
 [ ]  
 [ ] he made firm at his feet.  
 He set over [ ]  
 The staff of success and authority [he hung] at his side. (100)  
 After he [had put on] the aura of [his kingship],  
 His netted sack, the Apsu [ ] awesomeness.  
 He was seated like [ ]  
 In [his] throne room [ ]  
 In his cella [ ] (105)  
 The gods, all there are, [ ]  
 Lahmu and Lahamu [ ]  
 Made ready to speak and [said to] the Igigi-gods,  
 "Formerly [Mar]duk was 'our beloved son',  
 "Now he is your king, pay heed to his command." (110)  
 Next all of them spoke and said,  
 "'Lugaldimmerankia' is his name, trust in him!"  
 When they had given kingship over to Marduk,  
 They said to him expressions of good will and obedience,  
 "Henceforth you shall be provider for our sanctuaries, (115)  
 "Whatever you shall command, we will do."

*(Marduk creates Babylon as the terrestrial counterpart of Esharra, abode of the gods in heaven. The gods are to repose there during their earthly sojourns.)*

Marduk made ready to speak and said  
 (These) words to the gods his fathers,  
 "Above Apsu, the azure dwelling,  
 "Opposite Esharra, which I built above you, (120)  
 "Below the sacred places, whose grounding I made firm,  
 "A house I shall build, my favorite abode.

"Within it I shall establish its holy place,  
 "I shall appoint my (holy) chambers,  
 I shall establish my kingship.  
 "When you go up from Apsu to assembly, (125)  
 "Let your stopping places be there to receive you.<sup>1</sup>  
 "When you come down from heaven to [assembly],  
 "Let your stopping places be there to receive all of you.  
 "I shall call [its] name [Babylon], Abode of the Great Gods,  
 "We shall all hold fe[stival]s with[in] it." (130)  
 When the gods his fathers heard what he commanded,  
 They ... [ ]  
 "Over all things which your hands have created,  
 "Who has [authority, save for you]?  
 "Over the earth that you have created, (135)  
 "Who has [authority, save for] you?  
 "Babylon, to which you have given name,  
 "Make our [stopping place] there forever.  
 "Let them<sup>2</sup> bring us our daily portions,  
 "[ ] our [ ]." (140)  
 "Whosoever shall [ ] our task which we [ ],  
 "In his place [ ] his toil [ ]."  
 [Marduk] rejoiced [ ]  
 The gods [ ] ... them.  
 ... [ ] them li[ght]. (145)  
 He opened [ ] ... [ ]

*(two lines fragmentary)*

The gods prostrated before him, saying,  
 To Lugaldimmeran[ki]a, their lord, they [said], (150)  
 "Formerly [we called you] 'The Lord, [our beloved] son',  
 "Now 'Our King' ... [shall be your name],  
 "He whose [sacral] sp[ell] saved [our lives],  
 "[ au]ra, ma[ce], and ne[t],

1. That is, when the gods or their cult images travel in Babylonia, they can find accommodation in specific chambers of the Babylonian temples.

2. Who "they" refers to is disputed. It may refer to the defeated gods, it may be impersonal, or it may refer proleptically to the Babylonians.

"[Ea? ev]ery [sk]ill. (155)  
 "Let him make the plans, we ... [ ]."

## Tablet VI

*(The rebellious gods are offered a general pardon if they will produce their leader. They produce Qingu, claiming that he started the war. He is sacrificed, and his blood is used to make a human being; compare Story of the Flood Tablet I lines 218ff.)*

When [Mar]duk heard the speech of the gods, (1)  
 He was resolving to make artful things:  
 He would tell his idea<sup>1</sup> to Ea,  
 What he thought of in his heart he proposes,  
 "I shall compact blood, I shall cause bones to be, (5)  
 "I shall make stand a human being, let "Man" be its name.  
 "I shall create humankind,  
 "They shall bear the gods' burden that those may rest.<sup>2</sup>  
 "I shall artfully double the ways of the gods:  
 "Let them be honored as one but divided in twain."<sup>3</sup> (10)  
 Ea answered him, saying these words,  
 He told him a plan to let the gods rest,<sup>4</sup>  
 "Let one, their brother, be given to me,  
 "Let him be destroyed so that people can be fashioned.  
 "Let the great gods convene in assembly, (15)  
 "Let the guilty one be given up that they may abide."  
 Marduk convened the great gods in assembly,  
 He spoke to them magnanimously as he gave the command,  
 The gods heeded his utterance,  
 As the king spoke to the Anunna-gods (these) words, (20)

"Let your first reply be the truth!  
 "Do you speak with me truthful words!  
 "Who was it that made war,  
 "Suborned Tiamat and drew up for battle?  
 "Let him be given over to me, the one who made war, (25)  
 "I shall make him bear his punishment, you shall be released."  
 The Igigi, the great gods answered him,  
 To Lugaldimmerankia, sovereign of all the gods, their lord,  
 "It was Qingu who made war, (30)  
 "Suborned Tiamat and drew up for battle."  
 They bound and held him before Ea,  
 They imposed the punishment on him and shed his blood.  
 From his blood he made mankind,  
 He imposed the burden of the gods and exempted the gods.  
 After Ea the wise had made mankind, (35)  
 They imposed the burden of the gods on them!  
 That deed is beyond comprehension,  
 By the artifices of Marduk did Nudimmud create!

*(Marduk divides the gods of heaven and netherworld. The gods build Esagila, Marduk's temple in Babylon.)*

Marduk the king divided the gods,  
 The Anunna-gods, all of them, above and below, (40)  
 He assigned to Anu for duty at his command.  
 He set three hundred in heaven for (their) duty,  
 A like number he designated for the ways of the netherworld:  
 He made six hundred dwell in heaven and netherworld.  
 After he had given all the commands, (45)  
 And had divided the shares of the Anunna-gods  
 of heaven and netherworld,  
 The Anunna-gods made ready to speak,  
 To Marduk their lord they said,  
 "Now, Lord, you who have liberated us,  
 "What courtesy may we do you? (50)  
 "We will make a shrine, which is to be called by name

1. Literally: "his utterance," but to judge from the context, the utterance is so far purely internal.

2. From the necessity of providing for themselves.

3. A reference to two main divisions of the Mesopotamian pantheon, Anunna-gods and Igigi-gods, or to the supernal and infernal deities (compare Tablet VI lines 39ff.).

4. The text assigns Marduk primacy in the creation of man by giving him the "idea," since Mesopotamian tradition, established centuries before this text was written, agreed that Ea/Enki had been the actual creator, along with the Mother Goddess.

“Chamber that shall be Our Stopping Place’,  
 we shall find rest therein.  
 “We shall lay out the shrine, let us set up its emplacement,  
 “When we come thither (to visit you), we shall find rest therein.”  
 When Marduk heard this, (55)

His features glowed brightly, like the day,  
 “Then make Babylon the task that you requested,  
 “Let its brickwork be formed, build high the shrine.”  
 The Anunna-gods set to with hoes,  
 One (full) year they made its bricks. (60)

When the second year came,  
 They raised up Esagila, the counterpart of Apsu,  
 They built the high ziggurat of (counterpart-)Apsu,  
 For Anu-Enlil-Ea<sup>1</sup> they founded his house and dwelling.  
 Majestically he took his seat before them, (65)  
 Its pinnacles were facing toward the base of Esharra.  
 After they had done the work of Esagila,  
 All the Anunna-gods devised their own shrines.

*(The gods come to the new temple for a celebration. After a feast, they take  
 their places to ordain destinies.)*

The three hundred Igigi-gods of heaven  
 and the six hundred of Apsu all convened.  
 The Lord, in the Highest Shrine,  
 which they built as his dwelling, (70)

Seated the gods his fathers for a banquet,  
 “This is Babylon, your place of dwelling.  
 “Take your pleasure there, seat yourselves in its delights!”  
 The great gods sat down,  
 They set out cups, they sat down at the feast. (75)  
 After they had taken their enjoyment inside it,  
 And in awe-inspiring Esagila had conducted the offering,  
 All the orders and designs had been made permanent,

All the gods had divided the stations  
 of heaven and netherworld,  
 The fifty great gods took their thrones, (80)  
 The seven gods of destinies were confirmed forever  
 for rendering judgment.

*(Marduk's bow becomes a constellation.)*

The Lord took the bow, his weapon, and set it before them,  
 The gods his fathers looked upon the net he had made.  
 They saw how artfully the bow was fashioned,  
 His fathers were praising what he had brought to pass. (85)  
 Anu raised (it), speaking to the assembly of the gods,  
 He kissed the bow, “This be my daughter!”  
 He named the bow, these are its names:  
 “‘Longwood’ shall be the first, ‘Conqueror’ shall be the second.”  
 The third name, ‘Bow Star’, he made visible in heaven, (90)  
 He established its position with respect to the gods his brethren.

*(Marduk is made supreme god. Anshar gives him a second name, Asalluhi. Anshar  
 explains Marduk's role among gods and men with respect to this second name.)*

After Anu had ordained the destinies of the bow,  
 He set out the royal throne  
 which stood highest among the gods,  
 Anu had him sit there, in the assembly of the gods.  
 Then the great gods convened, (95)  
 They made Marduk's destiny highest, they prostrated themselves.  
 They laid upon themselves a curse (if they broke the oath),  
 With water and oil they swore, they touched their throats.<sup>1</sup>  
 They granted him exercise of kingship over the gods,  
 They established him forever for  
 lordship of heaven and netherworld. (100)  
 Anshar gave him an additional name, Asalluhi,  
 “When he speaks, we shall all do obeisance,  
 “At his command the gods shall pay heed.  
 “His word shall be supreme above and below,

1. The three divine names together may here be taken as a syncretism for Marduk; compare Tablet VII lines 136, 140.

1. A symbolic slashing gesture meaning that they may die if they break the oath.

"The son, our champion, shall be the highest. (105)  
 "His lordship shall be supreme, he shall have no rival,  
 "He shall be the shepherd of the black-headed folk,<sup>1</sup> his creatures.  
 "They shall tell of his ways, without forgetting, in the future.  
 "He shall establish for his fathers great food offerings,  
 "He shall provide for them,  
     he shall take care of their sanctuaries. (110)  
 "He shall cause incense burners to be savored,  
     he shall make their chambers rejoice.  
 "He shall make on earth the counterpart  
     of what he brought to pass in heaven,  
 "He shall appoint the black-headed folk to serve him.  
 "Let the subject peoples be mindful  
     that their gods should be invoked,  
 "At his command let them heed their goddess(es). (115)  
 "Let their gods, their goddesses be brought food offerings,  
 "Let (these) not be forgotten, let them sustain their gods.  
 "Let their holy places be apparent(?),  
     let them build their sanctuaries.<sup>2</sup>  
 "Let the black-headed folk be divided as to gods,  
 "(But) by whatever name we call him, let him be our god.<sup>3</sup> (120)

*(Beginning of the explanation of Marduk's fifty names. Names 1-9 are those borne by Marduk prior to this point in the narrative. Each of them is correlated with crucial points in the narrative as follows: (1) his birth, (2-3) his creation of the human race to provide for the gods, (4) his terrible anger but his willingness to spare the rebellious gods, (5) his proclamation by the gods as supreme among them, (6) his organization of the cosmos, (7) his saving the gods from danger, (8) his sparing the gods who fought on the side of Tiamat, but his killing of Tiamat and Qingu, and (9) his enabling the gods to proceed with the rest of what is narrated.)*

"Let us pronounce his fifty names,  
 "That his ways shall be (thereby) manifest, his deeds likewise(?):  
     (1) MARDUK!  
 "Who, from his birth, was named by his forefather Anu,  
 "Establisher of pasture and watering place,  
     who enriches (their) stables,  
 "Who by his Deluge weapon subdued the stealthy ones, (125)  
 "Who saved the gods his forefathers from danger.  
 "He is indeed the Son, the Sun, the most radiant of the gods,  
 "They shall walk in his brilliant light forever.  
 "On the people whom he made,  
     creatures with the breath of life,  
 "He imposed the gods' burden, that those be released. (130)  
 "Creation, destruction, absolution, punishment:  
 "Each shall be at his command, these shall gaze upon him.  
 "(2) MARUKKA shall he be,  
     the god who created them (mankind),  
 "Who granted (thereby) the Anunna-gods contentment,  
     who let the Igigi-gods rest.  
 "(3) MARUTUKKU shall be the trust of his land,  
     city and people, (135)  
 "The people shall praise him forever.  
 "(4) MERSHAKUSHU, angry but deliberative,  
     furious but relenting,  
 "Deep is his heart, all encompassing his feelings.  
 "(5) LUGALDIMMERANKIA is his name  
     which we all pronounced,  
 "Whose commands we exalted above those  
     of the gods his fathers. (140)  
 "He shall be 'Lord of All the Gods of Heaven and Netherworld',  
 The king at whose revelations the gods above and below  
     stand in dread.  
 "(6) NADE-LUGALDIMMERANKIA  
     is the name we invoked, instructor of all the gods,  
 "Who founded for us dwellings out of danger  
     in heaven and netherworld,  
 "And who divided the stations for the Igigi and Anunna-gods. (145)

1. The Mesopotamians.

2. The holy places show forth their own qualities of holiness so that mankind builds shrines there.

3. That is, Marduk is to be the one god of all the gods, no matter how many gods mankind may serve.

"At his name the gods shall tremble and quake  
 in (their) dwellings.  
 "(7) ASALLUHI is that name of his which Anu,  
 his father, pronounced.  
 "He is the light of the gods, the mighty leader,  
 "Who, according to his name, is protective spirit  
 of god and land,  
 "And who in mighty single combat  
 saved our dwellings from harm. (150)  
 "Asalluhi they named secondly (8) NAMTILA,  
 god who maintains life,  
 "Who, according to his nature, repaired the shattered gods,  
 "The lord who revived the moribund gods by his sacral spell,  
 "Let us praise the destroyer of the wayward foes!  
 "Asalluhi, whose name was called thirdly (9) NAMRU, (155)  
 "The pure god who purifies our ways."  
 Anshar, Lahmu, and Lahamu named three each of his names,  
 They said to the gods their sons,  
 "We have named three each of his names,  
 "Do you, as we have, invoke his names." (160)  
 Joyfully the gods heeded their command,  
 As they took counsel in the Assembly Place of the Gods,  
 "The valiant son, our champion,  
 "Our provider, we will exalt his name!"  
 They sat down in their assembly to name (his) destinies, (165)  
 In all their rites they invoked of him a name.

## Tablet VII

*(Deals with Marduk's three Asaru-names [10-12], his five Tutu-names [13-17], his six Shazu-names [18-23], his four Enbilulu-names [24-27], his two Sirsir-names [28-29]. Some of these reflect Marduk's role as a vegetation deity.)*

"(10) ASARI, bestower of cultivation, who established surveys, (1)  
 "Creator of grain and fibrous plants,  
 who causes vegetation to sprout,

"(11) ASARALIM, who is honored in the house of counsel,  
 whose counsel excels,  
 "Whom the gods heed, without fear,  
 "(12) ASARALIMNUNNA, the honored one,  
 light of the father who begot [him], (5)  
 "Who implements the decrees of Anu, Enlil, Ea, and Ninshiku.  
 "He is their provider who assigns their portions,  
 "Who increases abundance of the field for the land.  
 "(13) TUTU is [he] who effected their restoration,  
 "He shall purify their shrines that they may be at rest, (10)  
 "He shall devise the spell that the gods may be calm.  
 "Should they rise in anger, they shall turn [back].  
 "He shall be supreme in the assembly of the gods his [fathers],  
 "No one among the gods shall [make himself equal] to him.  
 "Tutu is (14) ZIUKKENNA, life of [his] masses, (15)  
 "Who established the holy heavens for the gods,  
 "Who took control of where they went, assigned their stations,  
 "He shall not be forgotten by teeming mankind,  
 [let them hold fast to] his [deeds].  
 "Tutu they called thirdly (15) ZIKU, who maintains purity,  
 "God of the fair breeze,  
 lord who hears and accedes (to prayers), (20)  
 "Producer of riches and wealth, who establishes abundance,  
 "Who turned all our want to plenty,  
 "Whose fair breeze we caught whiff of in our great danger,  
 "Let them ever speak of his exaltation, let them sing his praises!  
 "Tutu let teeming mankind magnify fourthly as (16) AGAKU, (25)  
 "Lord of the sacral spell, reviver of the moribund,  
 "Who had mercy on the vanquished gods,  
 "Who removed the yoke imposed on the gods, his enemies,  
 "Who, to free them, created mankind,  
 "The merciful, whose power is to revive. (30)  
 "Word of him shall endure, not to be forgotten,  
 "In the mouth of the black-headed folk,  
 whom his hands have created.  
 "Tutu, fifthly, is (17) TUKU,  
 his sacral spell shall ever be on their lips,

"Who with his sacral spell uprooted all the evil ones.  
 "(18) SHAZU, who knows the heart of the gods,  
     who was examining the inside, (35)  
 "Lest he allow evildoers to escape from him,  
 "Who established the assembly of the gods,  
     who contented them,  
 "Who subdued the unsubmissive,  
     their (the gods') broad [pro]tection,  
 "Who administers justice, uproots twisted testimony,  
 "In whose place falsehood and truth are distinguished. (40)  
 "Shazu they shall praise secondly as (19) ZISI,  
     who silenced those who rose (against him),  
 "Who banished paralyzing fear from the body  
     of the gods his fathers,  
 "Shazu is, thirdly, (20) SUHRIM,  
     who uprooted all enemies with the weapon,  
 "Who thwarted their plots, turned them into nothingness,  
 "Who snuffed out all wicked ones,  
     as many as came against him. (45)  
 "The gods shall ever be joyful in the assembly!  
 "Shazu is, fourthly, (21) SUHGURIM,  
     who ensured obedience for the gods his fathers,  
 "Who uprooted the enemy, destroyed their offspring,  
 "Who thwarted their maneuvers, excepting none of them.  
 "His name shall be invoked and spoken in the land! (50)  
 "Shazu later generations shall tradite fifthly as (22) ZAHHRIM,  
 "Who destroyed all adversaries, all the disobedient,  
 "Who brought all the fugitive gods into their sanctuaries.  
 "This his name shall be the truth!  
 "To Shazu, moreover, they shall render all honor sixthly as  
     (23) ZAHGURIM, (55)  
 "He it is who destroyed all foes in battle.  
 "(24) ENBILULU, lord who made them flourish, is he,  
 "The mighty one named by them, who instituted offerings,  
 "Who established grazing and watering places for the land,  
 "Who opened channels, apportioned abundant waters. (60)

"Enbilulu they shall [invoke] secondly as (25) EPADUN,  
     lord of open country and flood(?),  
 "Irrigator of heaven and earth, former of furrows,  
     who formed the sacred(?) plowland in the steppe,  
 "Who regulated dike and ditch,  
     who delimited the plowed land.  
 "Enbilulu they shall praise thirdly as (26) ENBILULU-GUGAL,  
     irrigator of the watercourses of the gods,  
 "Lord of abundance, plenty, high yields, (65)  
 "Producer of wealth, enricher of all the inhabited world,  
 "Bestower of grain, who causes barley to appear.  
 "Enbilulu is (27) HEGAL,  
     who heaps up abundance for the ... peoples,  
 "Who rains prosperity over the wide earth,  
     who makes vegetation flourish.  
 "(28) SIRSIR, who heaped up the mountain(s) above Tiamat, (70)  
 "Who ravaged the corpse of Ocean with [his] weapon,  
 "Ruler of the land, their faithful shepherd,  
 "To whom have been granted the cultivated field,  
     the subsistence field, the furrow,  
 "Who crossed vast Tiamat back and forth in his wrath,  
 "Spanning her like a bridge at the place of single combat.<sup>1</sup> (75)  
 "Sirsir they named secondly (29) MALAH, let it remain so,  
 "Tiamat is his vessel and he the boatman.

*(The remaining names are treated singly or in groups, beginning with the defeat of Tiamat and ascending to his proclamation as lord of the universe. Whereas his earlier names referred to his innate nature, his later ones commemorate his roles, accomplishments, and their outcome. Names 30-50 ascend in scope from earth to heaven.)*

"(30) GIL, who stores up grain in massive mounds,  
 "Who brings forth barley and flocks,  
     grantor of the land's seed.

1. This passage may contain mythological material about a little-known deity, Sirsir, that is here worked into the Marduk story by association and syncretism. Sirsir, made into a name of Marduk, evidently figured in a tradition in which he slew the ocean in single combat.

- “(31) GILIMMA, who established the bond of the gods,  
creator of enduring things, (80)  
“The bridle(?) that curbed them,  
provider of good things.  
“(32) AGILIMMA, the lofty one, uprooter of flood waves(?),  
who controls the sn[ow],  
“Creator of the earth above the waters,  
establisher of things on high.  
“(33) ZULUM, who assigned fields,  
measured off tracts(?) for the gods,  
“Grantor of portions and food offerings,  
tender of sanctuaries. (85)  
“(34) MUMMU, creator of heaven and netherworld,  
who administers (their) offices,  
“Divine purifier of heaven and netherworld,  
is, secondly, (35) ZULUMMU,  
“To whom no other among the gods was equal in strength.  
“(35) GISHNUMUNAB, creator of all people,  
who made the world regions,  
“Destroyer of the gods of Tiamat,  
who made mankind from parts of them. (90)  
“(36) LUGALABDUBUR, the king who thwarted  
the maneuvers of Tiamat, uprooted [her] weapons,  
“Whose support was firm in front and rear.  
“(37) PAGALGUENNA, foremost of all lords,  
whose strength was supreme,  
“Who was greatest of the gods his brethren, lord of them all.  
“(38) LUGALDURMAH, king of the juncture of the gods,  
lord of the great bond, (95)  
“Who was greatest in the abode of kingship,  
most exalted among the gods.  
“(39) ARANUNNA, counsellor of Ea,  
fairest of the gods [his] fathers,  
“Whose noble ways no god whatever could equal.  
“(40) DUMUDUKU, whose pure dwelling  
is renewed in holy hill,

- “Son of holy hill, without whom the lord of holy hill  
makes no decision. (100)  
“(41) LUGALSHUANNA, king whose strength  
was outstanding among the gods,  
“Lord, strength of Anu, who became supreme  
at(?) the nomination(?) of Anshar.  
“(42) IRUGGA, who ravaged all of them amidst Tiamat,  
“Who gathered all wisdom to himself, profound in perception.  
“(43) IRQINGU, ravager of Qingu, ... of battle, (105)  
“Who took charge of all commands, established lordship.  
“(44) KINMA, leader of all the gods, grantor of counsel,  
“At whose name the gods quake for fear like a whirlwind.  
“(45) ESIZKUR shall dwell aloft in the house of prayer,  
“The gods shall bring in their presents before him, (110)  
“While they receive their due.<sup>1</sup>  
“None besides him can create artful things,  
“The four black-headed folk are his creatures,<sup>2</sup>  
“No god but he knows how long they will live.  
“(46) GIBIL, who maintained the ... of the weapon, (115)  
“Who because of the battle with Tiamat  
can create artful things,  
“Profound of wisdom, ingenious in perception,  
“Whose heart is so deep  
that none of the gods can comprehend it.  
“(47) ADDU shall be his name, the whole sky he shall cover,  
“His beneficent roar shall thunder over the earth, (120)  
“As he rumbles, he shall reduce the burden of the clouds,  
Below, for the people, he shall grant sustenance.  
“(48) ASHARU, who, according to his name,  
mustered the gods of destinies,  
“He has taken all peoples in his charge.  
“(49) NEBIRU shall hold the passage of heaven and earth,  
“So they shall not cross above and below  
without heeding him, (125)

1. The gods bring gifts and receive their income, with chiasmic wordplay on “before him/ receive” and “bring in/income (‘due’).”

2. That is, the people of the four points of the compass.

"Nebiru is his star which he made visible in the skies.  
 "It shall hold the point of turning around,  
     they shall look upon him,  
 "Saying, 'He who crossed back and forth,  
     without resting, in the midst of Tiamat,  
 'Nebiru ("Crossing") shall be his name,  
     who holds the position in its midst'.  
 "He shall maintain the motions of the stars of heaven, (130)  
 "He shall herd all the gods like sheep.  
 "He shall keep Tiamat subdued, he shall keep her life cut short,  
 "In the future of mankind, with the passing of time,  
 "She shall always be far off, she shall be distant forever."  
 Because he created "places" and fashioned the netherworld, (135)  
 Father Enlil has pronounced his name (50) Lord of the World,  
 The Igigi-gods pronounced all the names.  
 When Ea heard (them), he was joyful of heart,  
 He said, "He whose name his fathers have glorified,  
 "His name, like mine, shall be 'Ea'.<sup>1</sup> (140)  
 "He shall provide the procedures for all my offices,  
 "He shall take charge of all my commands."  
 With the name "Fifty" the great gods  
 Pronounced his fifty names, they made his way supreme.<sup>2</sup>

*(Composition and purpose of this text, its approval by Marduk.)*

They must be grasped: the "first one" should reveal (them), (145)  
 The wise and knowledgeable should ponder (them) together,  
 The master should repeat, and make the pupil understand.  
 The "shepherd," the "herdsman" should pay attention,<sup>3</sup>  
 He must not neglect the Enlil of the gods, Marduk,  
 So his land may prosper and he himself be safe. (150)  
 His word is truth, what he says is not changed,  
 Not one god has annulled his utterance.

If he frowns, he will not relent,  
 If he is angry, no god can face his rage.  
 His heart is deep, his feelings all encompassing, (155)  
 He before whom crime and sin must appear for judgment.  
 The revelation (of the names) which the "first one"  
     discoursed before him (Marduk),  
 He wrote down and preserved for the future to hear,  
 The [wo]rd of Marduk who created the Igigi-gods,  
 [His/Its ] let them [ ], his name let them invoke. (160)  
 Let them sound abroad the song of Marduk,  
 How he defeated Tiamat and took kingship.

1. Marduk is now made god of wisdom and magic.

2. Marduk is here assigned the number fifty. In Mesopotamian scribal practice, the number 50 was used to write the name of Enlil, so herewith Marduk has replaced Enlil as supreme deity.

3. Kings and other rulers.