

ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN RELIGIONS

The Epic of Gilgamesh

The Mesopotamian epic of the king of Uruk's quest for immortality after the death of his companion Enkidu, including a Babylonian flood narrative that parallels the biblical story of Noah. Presents R. Campbell Thompson's 1928 translation across all twelve tablets.

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The First Tablet: Of the Tyranny of Gilgamish, and the Creation of Enkidu

¹ Column I.

² (The Argument).

³ He who (the heart of) all matters hath proven let him [teach] the nation,

⁴ [He who all] knowledge possesseth, therein shall he [school] all the people,

⁵ [He shall his wisdom impart (?)] and (so) shall they]share it] together.

⁶ [Gilgamish(?)] —he was the [Master] of wisdom, with [knowledge of all things,

⁷ He 'twas discovered the secret concealed

⁸ (Aye), handed down the tradition relating to (things) prediluvian,

⁹ Went on a journey afar, (all) aweary and [worn with his toiling(?)],

¹⁰ [Graved] on a table of stone all the travail.

¹¹ Of Erech, the high-wall'd,

¹² He (it was) built up the ramparts; (and) he (it was) clamp'd the foundation,

¹³ Like unto brass, of [E]-Anna , the sacred, the treasury hallow'd,

¹⁴ [Strengthen'd] its base to grant wayleave to no [one]

¹⁵ the threshold which from [of old (?)]

¹⁶ [E]-Anna

¹⁷ to grant wayleave [to no one (?)]

¹⁸ (About thirty lines wanting. The description of Gilgamish runs on to the beginning of the next Column).

¹⁹ Column II.

²⁰ Two-thirds of him are divine, and [one-third of him human,] . . .

²¹ The form of his body

²² He hath forced to take

²³ (Gap of about three lines).

²⁴ (The Complaint of Erech(?) to the gods against the tyrant Gilgamish)

²⁵ ". of Erech 'tis he who hath [taken],

²⁶ (while) tow'reth [his] crest like an aurochs,

²⁷ Ne'er hath the shock of [his] weapons (its) [peer]; are driven [his] fellows

²⁸ Into the toils , while cow'd are the heroes of Erech un-

²⁹ Gilgamish leaveth no son to [his] father, [his] arrogance swelling

³⁰ (Each) day and [night]; [aye, he] is the shepherd of Erech, the high-[wall'd],

³¹ He is [our(?)] shepherd . . . [masterful, dominant, subtle] . . .

32 [Gilgamish] leaveth no [maid to her mother, nor] daughter to [hero],
 33 [(Nay), nor a spouse to a husband]"
 34 (And so), to (th' appeal of) their wailing
 35 [Gave ear th' Immortals]: the gods of high heaven address'd the god Anu],
 36 (Him who was) Seigneur of Erech: "'Tis thou a son hast begotten,
 37 (Aye, in sooth, all) tyrannous, [while tow'reth his crest like an aurochs],
 38 Ne'er hath [the shock of his weapons] (its) peer; are driven [his fellows]
 39 Into the toils, awhile cow'd are the heroes of Erech un- . . .] .
 40 Gilgamish leaveth no son to his father, [his arrogance swelling]
 41 (Each) day and night; aye, he is the shepherd of Erech, [the high-wall'd],
 42 He is their shepherd . . . masterful, dominant, subtle . . .
 43 Gilgamish leaveth no maid to [her mother], nor daughter to hero,
 44 (Nay), nor a spouse to a [husband]."
 45 (And so), to (th' appeal of) their wailing
 46 30. [Anu] gave ear, call'd the lady Aruru : "'Twas thou, O Aruru,
 47 Madest [(primeval seed of) mankind(?)] : do now make its fellow,
 48 So that he [happen on Gilgamish], yea, on the day of his pleasure,
 49 So that they strive with each other, and he unto Erech give [surcease]."
 50 (The Creation of Enkidu).
 51 So when the goddess Aruru heard this, in her mind she imagined
 52 (Straightway, this) Concept of Anu, and, washing her hands, (then) Aruru
 53 Finger'd some clay, on the desert she moulded (it): [(thus) on the desert]
 54 Enkidu made she, a warrior, (as he were) born (and) begotten,
 55 (Yea), of Ninurta the double, [and put forth] the whole of his body
 56 Hair: in the way of a woman he snooded his locks (in a fillet);
 57 Sprouted luxuriant growth of his hair-like (the awns of) the barley,
 58 Nor knew he people nor land; he was clad in a garb like Sumuqan .
 59 E'en with gazelles did he pasture on herbage, along with the cattle
 60 Drank he his fill, with the beasts did his heart delight at the water.
 61 (The Encounter of Enkidu with the Hunter).
 62 (Then) did a hunter, a trapper, come face to face with this (fellow),
 63 Came on him [one], two, three days, at the place where (the beasts) drank (their) water ;
 64 (Sooth), when the hunter espied him, his face o'ermantled with terror,
 65 He and his cattle went unto his steading, [dismay'd] (and) affrighted,
 66 Crying aloud, [distress'd in, his heart, and) his face overclouded,
 67 woe in his belly

⁶⁸ (Aye, and) his face was the same as of one [who hath gone] a far [journey].
⁶⁹ Column III.
⁷⁰ Open'd [his mouth (then)] the hunter, and spake, addressing [his father]:
⁷¹ "Father, there is [a] great fellow come [forth from out of the mountains],
⁷² (O, but) [his] strength is the greatest [(the length and breadth) of the country],
⁷³ [Like to a double] of Anu's own self [his strength] is enormous,
⁷⁴ Ever (?) [he rangeth at large] o'er the mountains, [(and) ever] with cattle
⁷⁵ [Grazeth on herbage (and) ever he setteth] his foot to the water,
⁷⁶ [So that I fear] to approach him. The pits which I [myself] hollow'd
⁷⁷ [(With mine own hands) hath he fill'd in (again)], (and) the traps of my [setting]
⁷⁸ [Torn up, (and) out of my clutches hath holpen escape] (all) the cattle,
⁷⁹ Beasts of the desert: to work at my fieldcraft [he will not allow] me."
⁸⁰ [Open'd his mouth (then) his father, and spake], addressing the hunter:
⁸¹ "Gilgamish [dwelleth] in Erech, [my son, whom no one] hath vanquish'd,
⁸² [(Nay, but) 'tis his strength is greatest (the length and breadth) of the country]
⁸³ [Like to a double of Anu's own self], his strength is [enormous],
⁸⁴ [Go, set] thy face [towards Erech: and when he hears of] a monster,
⁸⁵ [He will say 'Go, O hunter, a courtesan-girl, a hetaera]
⁸⁶ Take [with thee] like a strong one;
⁸⁷ [When he the cattle shall gather again] to the place of (their) drinking,
⁸⁸ [So shall she put off] her [mantle] (the charm of) her beauty [revealing];
⁸⁹ [(Then) shall he spy her, and (sooth) will embrace her, (and thenceforth)
⁹⁰ his cattle,
⁹¹ [Which in] his very own deserts [were rear'd], will (straightway) deny him."
⁹² (How Gilgamish first heard of Enkidu).
⁹³ Unto the rede of his father the hunter [hath hearken'd, (and straightway)]
⁹⁴ He will away [unto Gilgamish] .
⁹⁵ Taking the road towards Erech
⁹⁶ Turn'd he [his steps, and to] Gilgamish [came, his speech thus addressing]:
⁹⁷ (Saying): "There is a great fellow [come forth from out of the mountains],
⁹⁸ [(O, but) his strength] is the greatest, (the length and breadth) of the country,
⁹⁹ Like to a double of Anu's own self [his strength] is enormous,
¹⁰⁰ [Ever (?)] he rangeth at large o'er the mountains, (and) ever with cattle
¹⁰¹ [Grazeth on herbage, (and)] ever [he setteth] his foot to the water,
¹⁰² So that I fear to approach [him] . The pits which I [myself] hollow'd
¹⁰³ (With mine own hands) hath he fill'd in (again, and) the traps of my [setting]

104 Torn up, (and) out of my clutches hath holpen escape (all) the cattle,
 105 Beasts [of the desert]: to work at my fieldcraft he will not allow me."
 106 Gilgamesh unto him, unto the hunter made answer (in this wise):
 107 "Go, (good) my hunter, take with thee a courtesan-girl, a hetaera,
 108 When he the cattle shall [gather] again to the place of (their) drinking,
 109 So shall she put off her mantle, (the charm of her) beauty [revealing],
 110 (Then) shall he spy her, and (sooth) will embrace her, (and thenceforth) his cattle
 111 Which in his very own deserts were rear'd will (straightway) deny him. "
 112 (The Seduction of Enkidu).
 113 Forth went the hunter, took with him a courtesan-girl, a hetaera,
 114 (So) did they start on their travels, went forth on their journey (together),
 115 (Aye), at the term of three days arrived at the pleasaunce appointed.
 116 Sate they down in their ambush (?), the hunter and the hetaera,
 117 One day, two days they sat by the place where (the beasts) drank (their) water.
 118 (Then) at last came the cattle to take their fill in their drinking.
 119 Column IV.
 120 Thither the animals came that their hearts might delight in the water,
 121 (Aye), there was Enkidu also, he whom the mountains had gender'd,
 122 E'en with gazelles did he pasture on herbage, along with the cattle
 123 Drank he his fill , with the beasts did his heart delight at the water,
 124 So beheld him the courtesan-girl, the lusty great fellow,
 125 (O but) a monster (all) savage from out of the depths of the desert!
 126 "'Tis he, O girl! O, discover thy beauty, thy comeliness shew (him),
 127 So that thy loveliness he may possess—(O), in no wise be bashful,
 128 Ravish the soul of him—(certes), as soon as his eye on thee falleth,
 129 He, forsooth, will approach thee, and thou—O, loosen thy mantle,
 130 So that he clasp thee, and (then) with the wiles of a woman shalt ply him;
 131 (Wherefore) his animals, bred in his desert, will (straightway) deny him,
 132 (Since) to his breast he hath held thee."
 133 The girl, displaying her bosom,
 134 Shew'd him her comeliness, (yea) so that he of her beauty possess'd him,
 135 Bashful she was not, (but) ravish'd the soul of him, loosing her mantle,
 136 So that he clasp'd her, (and then) with the wiles of a woman she plied him,
 137 Holding her unto his breast.
 138 ('Twas thus that) Enkidu dallied
 139 Six days, (aye) seven nights, with the courtesan-girl in his mating.

140 (How Enkidu was inveigled into Erech to fight with Gilgamish).
 141 Sated at length with her charms, he turn'd his face to his cattle,
 142 O the gazelles, (how) they scamper'd away, as soon as they saw him!
 143 Him, yea, Enkidu,—fled from his presence the beasts of the desert!
 144 Enkidu losing his innocence —so, when the cattle fled from him,
 145 Failed his knees, and he slack'd in his running, (not) as aforetime:
 146 Natheless he (thus) hath attain'd his full growth and hath broaden'd (his) wisdom.
 147 Sat he again at the feet of the woman, the woman his features
 148 Scanning, and, while she was speaking, his ears heard (the words) she was saying:
 149 "Comely thou art, e'en like to a god, O Enkidu, shalt be,
 150 Why with the beasts (of the field) dost thou (ever) range over the desert?
 151 Up! for I'll lead thee to Erech, the high-wall'd—(in sooth), to the Temple
 152 Sacred, the dwelling of Anu and Ishtar, where, highest in power,
 153 Gilgamish is, and prevaieth o'er men like an aurochs."
 154 Her counsel
 155 E'en as she spake it found favour, (for) conscious he was of his longing
 156 Some companion to seek; so unto the courtesan spake he :
 157 "Up, then, O girl, to the Temple, the holy (and) sacred, invite me,
 158 45. Me, to the dwelling of Anu and Ishtar, where, highest in power,
 159 Gilgamish is, and prevaieth o'er men like an aurochs—for I, too,
 160 Column V.
 161 I, I will summon him, challenging boldly (and) crying through Erech,
 162 'I too, am mighty!' Nay, I, forsooth [I], will (e'en) destiny alter—
 163 (Truly), 'tis he who is born in the desert whose vigour [is greatest!]
 164 I will [please] thee,
 165 [whatever] there be, that would I know."
 166 "Enkidu, come (then) to [Erech], the high-wall'd, [where] people [array] them
 167 [Gorgeous] in festal attire, (and) each day the day is a revel,
 168 [Eunuch]-priests [clashing] (their) cymbals, and [dancing]-girls
 169 . . . flown with their wantoning, gleeful, and keeping the nobles
 170 Out of their beds ! (Nay), Enkidu, [joy] in thy life (to its fullest)
 171 [Thou shalt] taste—(forsooth) will I shew thee a man who is happy,
 172 Gilgamish! View him, O look on his face, (how) comely his manhood!
 173 Dower'd with lustiness is he, the whole of his body with power
 174 Brimming, [his] vigour is stronger than thine, (all) day and night restless!
 175 Enkidu, temper thine arrogance—Gilgamish, loveth him Shamash,

176 Anu, (and) Enlil , and Ea have dower'd his wisdom with largesse.
 177 (How Gilgamish dreamt of Enkidu).
 178 (Sooth), or ever from out of thy mountains thou camest, in Erech
 179 25. Gilgamish thee had beheld in a dream; so, Gilgamish coming
 180 Spake to his mother, the dream to reveal.
 181 'O my mother, a vision
 182 Which I beheld in my night-time. (Behold), there were stars of the heavens,
 183 When something like unto Anu's own self fell down on my shoulders,
 184 30. (Ah, though) I heaved him, he was o'erstrong for me, (and though) his grapple
 185 Loosed I, I was unable to shake him (from off me): (and now, all the meanwhile),
 186 People from Erech were standing about [him , the] artisans [pressing].
 187 On [him behind], (while) throng'd him [the heroes]; my (very) companions
 188 Kissing [his] feet; [I, I to my breast] like a woman did hold him,
 189 (Then) [I] presented him low at [thy] feet, [that] as mine own equal.
 190 [Thou] might'st account him.'
 191 [She] who knoweth all wisdom (thus) to her Seigneur she answer'd,
 192 [She] who knoweth all wisdom, to Gilgamish (thus) did she answer:
 193 '(Lo), by the stars of the heavens are represented thy [comrades],
 194 [That which was like unto] Anu's [own self], which fell on thy shoulders,
 195 [Which thou didst heave, but he was, o'erstrong for thee, [(aye), though his grapple
 196 Thou didst unloose], but to shake him from off thee thou wert [un] able,
 197 [So didst present] him low at my feet, [that] as thine own equal
 198 [I might] account him—[and thou to thy breast like a woman] didst hold him:
 199 Column VI.
 200 [This is a stoutheart, a] friend, one ready to stand by [a comrade],
 201 One whose strength [is the greatest, (the length and breadth) of the country],
 202 [Like to a double of Anu's own self his] strength is enormous.
 203 [(Now), since thou] to thy breast didst hold him [the way of a woman],
 204 [This is a sign that] thou art the one he will [never] abandon:
 205 [This] of thy dream is the [meaning].'
 206 [Again he spake] to his mother,
 207 '[Mother], a second dream [did I] see: [Into Erech, the high-wall'd],
 208 Hurtled an axe, and they gather'd about it: [the meanwhile, from Erech]
 209 [People] were standing about it, [the people] (all) thronging before it,
 210 [Artisans pressing] behind it, [while] I at thy feet did present it,
 211 [I], like a woman I held it to me [that] thou might'st account it,

²¹² As mine own equal.'
²¹³ [She the [all]-wise, who knoweth all wisdom, (thus) answer'd her offspring,
²¹⁴ [She the all-wise] who knoweth all wisdom, to Gilgamish answer'd:
²¹⁵ '(Lo, that) [Axe] thou didst see (is) a Man; like a woman didst hold him,
²¹⁶ Unto thy breast, [that] as thine own equal I might account him,
²¹⁷ [This] is a stoutheart, a friend, one ready to stand by a comrade,
²¹⁸ One whose strength is the [greatest (the length and breadth) of the country],
²¹⁹ (Like to a double of) Anu's [own self], his strength is enormous.'
²²⁰ [Gilgamish open'd his mouth, and] addressing his mother, (thus spake he):
²²¹ '[Though] great [danger (?)] befall, [a friend (?)] shall I have . . . '"
²²² (The Assyrian Edition of the seventh century has three more lines on the First Tablet, which correspond with Column II, l. 3 of the Second Tablet of the Old Babylonian Edition. This latter has already begun with the episode of the two dreams, approximately Column V, l. 24 of the Assyrian First Tablet, and the text is so similar in both that I have not repeated it here. The Old Babylonian Edition here takes up the story, repeating one or two details).

The Second Tablet: Of the Meeting of Gilgamish and Enkidu

¹ Column II.
² While Gilgamish (thus) is the vision revealing
³ Enkidu sitteth before the hetaera, and she [displaying her] bosom,
⁴ Shewing [her beauty (?)], the place of his birth he forgetteth.
⁵ (So) Enkidu dallied
⁶ (Thus) for six days, seven nights, with the courtesan-girl in his mating.
⁷ Broke into [speech] then, the nymph, and (thus) unto Enkidu spake she:
⁸ "(Yea, as) I view thee, (e'en) like a god, O Enkidu, shalt be,
⁹ Why with the beasts (of the field) dost thou (ever) range over the desert?
¹⁰ Up, for I'll lead thee to [Erech] broad-marketed, (aye), to the Temple
¹¹ Sacred, the dwelling of Anu—O Enkidu, come, that I guide thee,
¹² Unto E-Anna, the dwelling of Anu, where [Gilgamish] (liveth),
¹³ (He), the supreme of creation; and thou, aye, thou wilt [embrace him]
¹⁴ Like [to a woman], (and e'en) [as] thyself thou shalt [love him].
¹⁵ O, rouse thee
¹⁶ Up from the ground—'tis a shepherd's bed (only)."
¹⁷ Her utterance heard he,
¹⁸ Welcomed her rede: the advice of the woman struck home in his bosom.
¹⁹ She one garment took off wherewith she might clothe him: the other

20 She herself wore, (and so) taking her hand like a brother she led him
 21 (Thus) to the booths(?) of the shepherds, the place of the sheepfolds. The shepherds
 22 Gather]d at sight of him
 23 (Gap of four or five lines.)
 24 Column III.
 25 (How the Hetaera schooled Enkidu).
 26 He (in the past) of the milk of the wild things to suck was accustom'd!
 27 Bread which she set before him he broke, but he gazed and he stared:
 28 Enkidu bread did not know how to eat, nor had he the knowledge
 29 Mead how to quaff!
 30 10. (Then) the woman made answer, to Enkidu speaking,
 31 "Enkidu, taste of the bread, (for) of life 'tis; (forsooth), the essential,
 32 Drink thou, (too), of the mead, 'tis the wonted use of the country."
 33 Enkidu ate of the bread, (aye, ate) until he was gorged,
 34 Drank of the mead seven bumpers; his spirits rose, (and), exultant,
 35 Glad was his heart, and cheerful his face: [himself(?)] was he rubbing,
 36 Oil on the hair of his body anointed: and (thus) became human.
 37 Donn'd he a garment to be like a man , (and) taking his weapon,
 38 Hunted the lions, which harried the shepherds o' nights: and the jackals
 39 Caught he. (So) he, having mastered the lions, the shepherds slept soundly .
 40 Enkidu—(he) was their warden—(becometh) a man of full vigour.
 41 (Now) is one of the heroes speaking to [Gilgamish(?)]
 42 (About thirteen lines are missing, a gap in which a sinister figure has evidently appeared, sent
 evidently by Gilgamish to learn the meaning of the arrival of the strangers in Erech. Enkidu sees him
 and speaks).
 43 Column IV.
 44 (Then while) he pleased, he lifted his eyes, (and), observing the fellow,
 45 Spake he unto the woman: "O doxy, bring me (this) fellow,
 46 Why hath he come? I would know his intention."
 47 The woman the fellow
 48 Call'd that he come to him, that he might see him: "O, why art thou seeking,
 49 Sir? (Pray), which is the way to thy rest-house?"
 50 The man spake, addressing
 51 Enkidu: "You to the House of Community [Gilgamish calleth],
 52 (This is) the custom of men, and a homage (too) to the great ones:
 53 Come, then, and heap up the offerings such as are due to the city,

54 Come, on behalf of the common weal bring in the food of the city.
 55 ('Tis) for the king of broad-marketed Erech to look on thy greeting,
 56 Gilgamish, king of broad-marketed Erech to look on thy greeting;
 57 First doth he mate with the woman allotted by fate, and then after
 58 Speak by the counsel of god, and so from the shape of the omens
 59 (Utter the rede of) his destiny."
 60 (So) at the words of the fellow
 61 Went they before him.
 62 (Gap of about nine lines).
 63 Column V.
 64 (The Entry of Enkidu into Erech).
 65 [Enkidu] going [in front], with the courtesan coming behind him,
 66 Enter'd broad-marketed Erech; the populace gather'd behind him,
 67 (Then), as he stopp'd in the street of broad-marketed Erech, the people
 68 Thronging, behind him exclaim'd "Of a truth, like to Gilgamish is he,
 69 Shorter in stature a trifle, [his] composition is stronger.
 70 [(once)] like a [weakling] baby he suck'd the milk of the wild things!
 71 Ever the bread-cakes in Erech give glorious (climax) to manhood!
 72 He a (mere) savage becometh a hero of proper appearance,
 73 (Now) unto Gilgamish, god-like, his composition is equal."
 74 (How Enkidu fought with Gilgamish for the Hetaera).
 75 Strewn is the couch for the love-rites, and Gilgamish (now) in the night-time
 76 Cometh to sleep, to delight in the woman : (but) [Enkidu], coming
 77 (There) in the highway, doth block up the passage to Gilgamish, [threat'ning]
 78 He with his strength
 79 (Gap of seven or eight lines).
 80 Column VI.
 81 Gilgamish . . . behind him
 82 Burgeon'd [his rage], (and) he rush'd to [attack] him: they met in the highway.
 83 Enkidu barr'd up the door with his foot, (and) to Gilgamish entry—
 84 Would not concede: they grappled and snorted(?) like bulls, (and) the threshold
 85 Shatter'd: the (very) wall quiver'd as Gilgamish , Enkidu grappled,
 86 Snorting(?) like bulls, (and) the threshold they shatter'd, the (very) wall quiver'd.
 87 (The Birth of Friendship).
 88 Gilgamish bent his leg to the ground: (so) his fury abated,
 89 (Aye, and) his ardour was quell'd: so soon as was quelled his ardour,

- ⁹⁰ Enkidu (thus) unto Gilgamish spake: "(Of a truth), did thy mother
⁹¹ Bear thee as one, and one only: (that choicest) cow of the steer-folds,
⁹² Nin-sun exalted thy head above heroes, and Enlil hath dower'd
⁹³ Thee with the kingship o'er men."

The Third Tablet: The Expedition to the Forest of Cedars against Humbaba

¹ (About a column and a half of the beginning of the Old Babylonian version on the Yale tablet are so broken that almost all the text is lost. Gilgamish and Enkidu have now become devoted friends, thus strangely stultifying the purpose for which Enkidu was created, and now is set afoot the great expedition against the famous Cedar Forest guarded by the Ogre Humbaba. The courtesan has now for a brief space left the scene, having deserted Enkidu, much to his sorrow. The mutilated Assyrian Version gives a hint that the mother of Gilgamish is now describing the fight to one of her ladies(?) Rishat-Nin . . . and where her recital becomes connected the story runs thus).

² Column II.

³ (The Tale of the Fight).

⁴ "He lifted up [his foot, to the door

⁵ (?) They raged furiously

⁶ Enkidu hath not [his equal] . . . unkempt is the hair . . .

⁷ (Aye) he was born in the desert, and [no] one [his presence can equal]."

⁸ (Enkidu's sorrow at the loss of his Love).

⁹ Enkidu (there) as he stood gave ear [to his utterance (?)], grieving

¹⁰ Sitting [in sorrow]: his eyes fill'd [with tears], and his arms lost their power,

¹¹ [Slack'd was his bodily vigour]. Each clasp'd [the hand of] the other.

¹² [Holding] like [brothers] their grip . . . [(and) to Gilgamish] Enkidu answer'd:

¹³ "Friend, 'tis my darling hath circled (her arms) round my neck (to farewell me) ,

¹⁴ (Wherefore) my arms lose their power, my bodily vigour is slacken'd."

¹⁵ (The Ambition of Gilgamish).

¹⁶ Gilgamish open'd his mouth, and to Enkidu spake he (in this wise):

¹⁷ Column III.

¹⁸ (Gap of about two lines)

¹⁹ "[I, O my friend, am determined to go to the Forest of Cedars],

²⁰ [(Aye) and] Humbaba the Fierce [will] o'ercome and destroy [what is evil]

²¹ [(Then) will I cut down] the Cedar"

²² Enkidu open'd his mouth, and to Gilgamish spake he (in this wise),

²³ "Know, then, my friend, what time I was roaming with kine in the mountains

²⁴ I for a distance of two hours' march from the skirts of the Forest
²⁵ Into its depths would go down. Humbaba—his roar was a whirlwind,
²⁶ Flame (in) his jaws, and his very breath Death! O, why hast desired
²⁷ This to accomplish? To meet(?) with Humbaba were conflict unequal'd."
²⁸ Gilgamish open'd his mouth and to Enkidu spake he (in this wise):
²⁹ "[Tis that I need] the rich yield of its mountains [I go to the Forest]"
³⁰ (Seven mutilated lines continuing the speech of Gilgamish, and mentioning "the dwelling [of the gods?]" (of the beginning of the Fifth Tablet), and "the axe," for cutting down the Cedars).
³¹ Enkidu open'd his mouth [and] to Gilgamish spake he (in this wise):
³² "(But) when we go to the Forest [of Cedars] . . . its guard is a [Fighter],
³³ Strong, never [sleeping], O Gilgamish
³⁴ (Three mutilated lines, apparently explaining the powers which Shamash (?), the Sun-god, and Adad, the Storm-god, have bestow'd on Humbaba).
³⁵ Column IV.
³⁶ So that he safeguard the Forest of Cedars a terror to mortals
³⁷ Him hath Enlil appointed—Humbaba, his roar is a whirlwind,
³⁸ Flame (in) his jaws, and his very breath Death! (Aye), if he in the Forest.
³⁹ Hear (but) a tread(?) on the road—'Who is this come down to his Forest?'
⁴⁰ So that he safeguard the Forest of Cedars, a terror to mortals,
⁴¹ Him hath Enlil appointed, and fell hap will seize him who cometh
⁴² Down to his Forest."
⁴³ Gilgamish open'd his mouth and to Enkidu spake he (in this wise):
⁴⁴ "Who, O my friend, is unconquer'd by [death]? A divinity, certes,
⁴⁵ Liveth for aye in the daylight, but mortals—their days are (all) number'd,
⁴⁶ All that they do is (but) wind—But to thee, now death thou art dreading,
⁴⁷ Proffereth nothing of substance thy courage—I, I'll be thy va ward!
⁴⁸ 'Tis thine own mouth shall tell thou didst fear the onslaught (of battle),
⁴⁹ (I, forsooth), if I should fall, my name will have stablish'd (for ever).
⁵⁰ Gilgamish 'twas, who fought with Humbaba, the Fierce!
⁵¹ (In the future),
⁵² After my children are born to my house, and climb up thee, (saying):
⁵³ 'Tell to us all that thou knowest'
⁵⁴ (Four lines mutilated).
⁵⁵ [(Yea), when thou] speakest [in this wise], thou grieveest my heart (for) the Cedar
⁵⁶ [I am] determined [to fell], that I may gain [fame] everlasting.
⁵⁷ (The Weapons are cast for the Expedition).

58 (Now), O my friend, [my charge] to the craftsmen I fain would deliver,
 59 So that they cast in our presence [our weapons]."
 60 [The charge] they deliver'd
 61 Unto the craftsmen: the mould (?) did the workmen prepare, and the axes
 62 Monstrous they cast: (yea), the celts did they cast, each (weighing) three talents;
 63 Glaives, (too,) monstrous they cast, with hilts each (weighing) two talents,
 64 Blades, thirty manas to each, corresponding to fit them: [the inlay(?)],
 65 Gold thirty manas (each) sword: (so) were Gilgamish , Enkidu laden
 66 Each with ten talents.
 67 (Gilgamish takes counsel with the Elders).
 68 (And now) [in] the Seven Bolt [Portal of Erech]
 69 Hearing [the bruit(?)] did the artisans gather, [assembled the people(?)] ,
 70 (There) in the streets of broad-marketed Erech, [in] Gilgamish' honour(?)] ,
 71 [So did the Elders of Erech] broad-marketed take seat before him.
 72 [Gilgamish] spake [thus: "O Elders of Erech] broad-marketed, [hear me!]
 73 [I go against Humbaba, the Fierce, who shall say, when he heareth] ,
 74 Column V.
 75 '(Ah), let me look on (this) Gilgamish, he of whom (people) are speaking,
 76 He with whose fame the countries are fill'd'—'Tis I will o'erwhelm him,
 77 (There) in the Forest of Cedars—I'll make the land hear (it)
 78 (How) like a giant the Scion of Erech is—(yea, for) the Cedars
 79 I am determined to fell, that I may gain fame everlasting."
 80 Gilgamish (thus) did the Elders of Erech broad-marketed answer:
 81 "Gilgamish, 'tis thou art young, that thy valour (o'ermuch) doth uplift thee,
 82 Nor dost thou know to the full what thou dost seek to accomplish.
 83 Unto our ears hath it come of Humbaba, his likeness is twofold.
 84 Who (of free will) then would [seek to] oppose [in encounter] his weapons?
 85 Who for a distance of two hours' march from the skirts of the Forest
 86 Unto its depths would [go] down? Humbaba, his roar is a whirlwind,
 87 Flame (in) his jaws, and his very breath Death! (O), why hast desired.
 88 This to accomplish? To meet(?) with Humbaba were conflict unequall'd."
 89 Gilgamish unto the rede of his counsellors hearken'd and ponder'd,
 90 Cried to [his] friend: "Now, indeed, O [my] friend, [will I] thus [voice opinion].
 91 I (forsooth) dread him, and (yet) to [(the depths of the) Forest] I'll take [me] . ."
 92 (About seven lines mutilated or missing in which the Elders bless Gilgamish in farewell).
 93 " may thy god (so) [protect] thee,

⁹⁴ Bringing thee back [(safe and)] sound to the walls of [broad-marketed] Erech."
⁹⁵ Gilgamish knelt [before Shamash] a word [in his presence] to utter:
⁹⁶ "Here I present myself, Shamash, [to lift up] my hands (in entreaty),
⁹⁷ O that hereafter my life may be spared, to the ramparts of [Erech]
⁹⁸ Bring me again: spread thine aegis [upon me] ."
⁹⁹ And Shamash made answer,
¹⁰⁰ [Speaking] his oracle
¹⁰¹ (About six lines mutilated or missing).
¹⁰² Column VI.
¹⁰³ Tears adown Gilgamish' [cheeks were (now)] streaming: "A road I have never
¹⁰⁴ Traversed [I go, on a passage(?)] I know not, (but if) I be spared
¹⁰⁵ (So) in content [will I] come [and will pay thee(?)] due meed (?) of thy homage."
¹⁰⁶ (Two mutilated lines with the words "on seats" and "his equipment.")
¹⁰⁷ Monstrous [the axes they brought(?)], they deliver'd [the bow] and the quiver
¹⁰⁸ [Into] (his) hand; (so) taking a celt, [he slung on (?)] his quiver,
¹⁰⁹ [Grasping] another [celt(?) he fasten'd his glaive] to his baldrick.
¹¹⁰ [But, or ever the twain] had set forth on their journey, they offer'd
¹¹¹ [Gifts] to the Sun-god, that home he might bring them to Erech (in safety).
¹¹² (The Departure of the two Heroes).
¹¹³ (Now) do the [Elders] farewell him with blessings, to Gilgamish giving
¹¹⁴ Counsel [concerning] the road: "O Gilgamish, to thine own power
¹¹⁵ Trust not (alone); (but at least) let thy [road] be traversed [before] thee,
¹¹⁶ Guard thou thy person; let Enkidu go before thee (as vaward).
¹¹⁷ (Aye, for) 'twas he hath discover'd the [way], the road he hath travell'd.
¹¹⁸ (Sooth), of the Forest the passes are all under sway (?) [of] Humbaba,
¹¹⁹ [(Yea), he who goeth] as vaward is (able) to safeguard a comrade,
¹²⁰ O that the Sun-god [may grant] thee [success to attain] thine [ambition],
¹²¹ O that he grant that thine eyes see (consummate) the words of thy utterance
¹²² O that he level the path that is block'd, cleave a road for thy treading,
¹²³ Cleave, too, the berg for thy foot! May the god Lugal-banda
¹²⁴ Bring in thy night-time a message to thee, with which shalt be gladden'd,
¹²⁵ So that it help thine ambition , (for), like a boy thine ambition
¹²⁶ On the o'erthrow of Humbaba thou fixest, as thou hast settled.
¹²⁷ Wash, (then), thy feet : when thou haltest , shalt hollow a pool, so that ever
¹²⁸ Pure be the water within thy skin-bottle, (aye), cool be the water
¹²⁹ Unto the Sun-god thou pourest, (and thus) shalt remind Lugal-banda."

130 Enkidu open'd his mouth, and spake unto Gilgamish, (saying):
 131 "[Gilgamish], art (?) thou (in truth) full equal to making (this) foray?
 132 Let [not] thy heart be afraid; trust me."
 133 On (his) shoulder his mantle
 134 [Drew] he, (and now) [on the road] to Humbaba they set forth (together).
 135 (Five lines mutilated; the two heroes meet a man who sets them on their way).
 136 " . . . they went with me . . . [tell] you . . in joy of heart."
 137 [So when he heard this his word, the man on his way did [direct him]:
 138 "Gilgamish, go, . . . let thy brother (?) precede [thee] . . . [(and) in thine ambition].
 139 [O that the Sun-god (?) may shew [thee] success!"
 140 (The Old Babylonian Version breaks off after three more fragmentary lines. The following is the Assyrian Version of Column VI, l. 21, and onwards of the preceding text. It marks the beginning of the Third Tablet in the Assyrian Version, opening with the episode of the conclave of the Elders).
 141 "Gilgamish, put not thy faith in the strength of thine own person (solely),
 142 Quench'd be thy wishes to trusting(? (o'ermuch) in thy (shrewdness in) smiting.
 143 (Sooth), he who goeth as vaward is able to safeguard a comrade,
 144 He who doth know how to guide hath guarded his friend; (so) before thee,
 145 Do thou let Enkidu go, (for 'tis) he to the Forest of Cedars
 146 Knoweth the road: 'tis he lusteth for battle, and threateneth combat.
 147 Enkidu—he would watch over a friend, would safeguard a comrade,
 148 (Aye, such an one) would deliver his person from out of the pitfalls.
 149 We, O King, in our conclave have paid deep heed to thy welfare,
 150 Thou, O King, in return with an (equal) heed shalt requite us."
 151 Gilgamish open'd his mouth, and spake unto Enkidu, saying:
 152 "Unto the Palace of Splendour, O friend, come, let us betake us,
 153 Unto the presence of Nin-sun, the glorious Queen, (aye) to Nin-sun,
 154 Wisest of (all) clever women, all-knowing; a well-devised pathway
 155 She will prescribe for our feet."
 156 Clasp'd they their hands, each to each, and went to the Palace of Splendour,
 157 Gilgamish , Enkidu. Unto the glorious Queen, (aye) to Nin-sun
 158 Gilgamish came, and he enter'd in unto [the presence of Nin-sun]:
 159 "Nin-sun, O fain would I tell thee [how] I a far journey [am going],
 160 (Unto) the home [of Humbaba to counter a] warfare I know not,
 161 [Follow a road] which I [know] not, [(aye) from the time of my starting],
 162 [Till my return, until I arrive at the Forest of Cedars,]
 163 [Till I o'erthrow Humbaba, the Fierce, and destroy from the country.]

164 [All that the Sun-god abhorreth of evil]"

165 (The rest of the speech of Gilgamish is lost until the end of the Column, where we find him still addressing his mother, and apparently asking that she shall garb herself in festal attire to beg a favour of the Sun-god).

166 " . . . garb thyself; . . . in thy presence.

167 (So) to her offspring, to Gilgamish [Nin-sun] gave ear . . . -ly,

168 Column II.

169 Enter'd [her chamber] . . . [and deck'd herself] with the flowers of Tulal(?),

170 [Put on] the festal garb of her body

171 [Put on] the festal garb of her bosom . . . , her head [with a circlet]

172 Crown'd, and . . . the ground ipirani .

173 Climb'd [she the stairway], ascended the roof, and [the parapet(?)] mounted,

174 Offer'd her incense to Shamash, (her) sacrifice offer'd [to Shamash],

175 (Then) towards Shamash her hands she uplifted (in orison saying):

176 "Why didst thou give (this) restlessness of spirit

177 With which didst dower Gilgamish, [my] son?

178 That now thou touchest him, and (straight) he starteth

179 A journey far to where Humbaba (dwelleth),

180 To counter warfare which he knoweth not,

181 Follow a pathway which he knoweth not,

182 (Aye), from the very day on which he starteth,

183 Till he return, till to the Cedar Forest

184 He reach; till he o'erthrow the fierce Humbaba,

185 And from the land destroy all evil things

186 Which thou abhor'st; the day which [thou hast set]

187 As term, of (that) strong man (who) feareth thee,

188 May Aa , (thy) bride, be [thy] remembrancer.

189 He the night-watches"

190 (Columns III, IV, and V are much mutilated. There is the remnant of a passage in Assyrian, corresponding to the Third Tablet of the Old Babylonian Version, Column III, 15, which gives Enkidu's speech about "the mountains," "the cattle of the field," and how "he waited": then follows another fragment with a mention of the "corpse" [of Humbaba] and of the Anunnaki (the Spirits of Heaven), and a repetition of the line "that strong man (who) feareth [thee] ." Then a reference to "the journey" until [Gilgamish shall have overthrown the fierce Humbaba], be it after an interval of days, months, or years; and another fragment probably part of the previous text, where someone "heaps up incense" [to a god], and Enkidu again speaks with someone, but the mutilated text does not allow us much light on its connection, and although there is another fragment, the connection again is not obvious. The last column is a repetition of what the Elders said to Gilgamish):

- ¹⁹¹ "(Aye, such an one) [would deliver his person] from out of the pitfalls.
¹⁹² [We, O King], in our conclave [have paid deep heed to thy welfare],
¹⁹³ (Now), O King, in thy turn with an (equal) heed] shalt requite us."
¹⁹⁴ Enkidu [open'd] his mouth [and spake unto Gilgamish, saying]:
¹⁹⁵ "Turn, O my friend a road not"

The Fourth Tablet: The Arrival at the Gate of the Forest

- ¹ (Of Column I about ll. 1-36 are mutilated or missing, there being actually the beginnings of only sixteen lines. When the text becomes connected the heroes have reached the Gate of the Forest).
² Column I.
³ (Enkidu addresses the Gate).
⁴ Enkidu lifted [his eyes] . . . and spake with the Gate as ['t were human(?)]:
⁵ "O thou Gate of the Forest without understanding(? . . .
⁶ Sentience which thou hast not,
⁷ I for (full) forty leagues have admired thy [wonderful] timber,
⁸ (Aye), till I sighted the towering Cedar
⁹ (O but) thy wood hath no peer (in the country) . . .
¹⁰ Six gar thy height, and two gar thy breadth . . .
¹¹ (Sooth, but) thy stanchion (?), thy socket (?), thy pivot (?), thy lock (?), and thy shutter (?),
¹² [(All of them) must have been fashion'd for thee] in the City of Nippur!
¹³ O, if I had but known, O Gate, that this was [thy grandeur],
¹⁴ This, too, the grace [of thy structure], then either an axe had I lifted
¹⁵ Or I had . . . or bound together"
¹⁶ (Of the next Column remains a fragment, and that only presumed to belong to one of the above fragments from its appearance, which speaks of terror, a dream, and sorrow: "let me pray the gods may thy? god be . . . the father of the gods." Again, of the third Column there is only a small portion left of the right half (this fragment, too, being also presumed to belong to the same tablet as that above-mentioned), speaking of Gilgamish, the Forest, and Enkidu. The fourth Column is entirely lost. Of Column V the latter part survives, in this case without any uncertainty. After a few broken lines it runs as follows, the first speaker being probably Enkidu, and the scene the Gate of the Forest):
¹⁷ ". . . [O, haste] thee, withstand him, he will not [pursue(?) thee],
¹⁸ [We will] go on down into the wood not daunted, together (?)].
¹⁹ . . . Thou shall put on seven garments ..
²⁰ . . . putting on, and six . . . (?) . . . "
²¹ He like a mighty wild bull . . .

22 Flung he the Portal afar, and [his] mouth was fill'd (with his challenge),
 23 Cried to the Guard of the Forest: "Up (?) . . . !
 24 ['Tis I will challenge] Humbaba like to a . . ."
 25 (A small gap.)
 26 Column VI.
 27 (Enkidu is speaking)
 28 "Trouble (?) [I foresee(?)] wherever I go
 29 O my friend, I have [seen] a dream which un-"
 30 The day of the dream he had seen fulfilled
 31 (Enkidu is stricken with fear at thought of the combat).
 32 Enkidu lay for a day, [yea, a second]—for Enkidu [lying]
 33 (Prone) on his couch, was a third and a fourth day . . . , a fifth, sixth and seventh,
 34 Eighth, ninth, [and tenth]. While Enkidu [lay in his] sickness . . . , th' eleventh,
 35 (Aye, till) the twelfth . . . on [his] couch was Enkidu [lying].
 36 Call'd he to Gilgamish,
 37 "(O but), my comrade, . . . hateth me . . because within Erech
 38 I was afraid of the combat, and . . . My friend, who in battle . . ."
 39 (A small gap in which Gilgamish has answered. Enkidu replies):
 40 [Enkidu open'd] his [mouth] and spake [unto Gilgamish, saying]:
 41 ("Nay, but), [my friend, let us no wise] go down [to the depths of the Forest],
 42 (For) 'tis my hands [have grown weak], and [my arms] are stricken with palsy."
 43 _____
 44 Gilgamish open'd his mouth and spake [unto Enkidu], saying:
 45 "Shall we, O friend, [play] the coward?
 46 thou shalt surpass them all(?)
 47 [Thou, O] my friend, art cunning in warfare, art [shrewd(?)] in the battle,
 48 (So) shalt thou touch the . . . and of [death] have no terror,
 49 (Two difficult and mutilated lines).
 50 [So that] the palsy (now striking) thine arms [may] depart, and the weakness
 51 Pass [from thy hands]! [Be brave(?)] and resist! O my comrade, together
 52 We will go down—let the combat [in no wise diminish(?)] thy courage!
 53 O forget death, and be fearful(?) of nothing(?) . . (for he who is) [valiant(?)],
 54 Cautious (and) careful, by leading [the way] hath his own body guarded,
 55 (He 'tis) will safeguard a comrade."
 56 A name by their [valour(?)] . .
 57 They will establish. (And now) they together arrive at the barrier(?),

⁵⁸ [Still'd into silence(?)] their speech, and they themselves (suddenly) stopping.

The Fifth Tablet: Of the Fight with Humbaba

¹ Column I.

² (The Wonders of the Forest).

³ Stood they and stared at the Forest, they gazed at the height of the Cedars,

⁴ Scanning the avenue into the Forest: (and there) where Humbaba

⁵ Stalk'd, was a path, (and) straight were his tracks, and good was the passage.

⁶ (Eke) they beheld the Mount of the Cedar, the home of th' Immortals,

⁷ Shrine [of Irnini, the Cedar uplifting its pride 'gainst the mountain,

⁸ Fair was its shade, (all) full of delight, with bushes (there) spreading,

⁹ Spread, too, the . . . the Cedar the incense . . .

¹⁰ (After a few mutilated lines the Column breaks: the upper part of Column II contains about twenty lines badly mutilated; then the lower part is more complete, beginning with visions granted to the hero).

¹¹ Column II.

¹² (Gilgamish relates his dreams).

¹³ "[Then came another dream to me, comrade, and this second] vision

¹⁴ [Pleasant, indeed], which I saw, (for) we (?) [twain were standing together]

¹⁵ [High on (?) a] peak of the mountains, [and then did the mountain peak] topple,

¹⁶ [Leaving us twain (?)] to be like . . . (?) which are born in the desert."

¹⁷ Enkidu spake to his comrade the dream (?) [to interpret], (thus saying):

¹⁸ "Comrade, (in sooth, this) vision [of thine unto us] good fortune (forbodeth),

¹⁹ (Aye), 'tis a dream of great gain [thou didst see], (for, bethink you), O comrade,

²⁰ (Surely) the mountain which thou hast beholden [must needs be Humbaba(?)].

²¹ (Thus doth it mean) we shall capture Humbaba, (and) [throw down his] carcase,

²² [Leaving] his corpse in abasement—to-morrow 's (outcome) will I [shew thee]".

²³ _____

²⁴ (Now) at the fortieth league did they break their fast [with a morsel],

²⁵ (Now) at the sixtieth rested, and hollow'd a pit in the sunshine . . .

²⁶ Gilgamish mounted above [it] . . . (and) pour'd out his meal [for the mountain]:

²⁷ "Mountain, a dream do thou grant . . . breathe on him . . ."

²⁸ Column III.

²⁹ Granted [the mountain] a dream . . . it breathed on him . . .

³⁰ Then a chill wind-blast [up]-sprang (and) [a gust] passing over . . .

- 31 [Made] him to cower, and . . . [thereat he sway'd] like the corn of the mountains . . .
- 32 Gilgamish, [squatting] bent-kneed, supported his haunches, (and straightway)
- 33 Sleep (such as) floweth on man descended upon him: [at] midnight
- 34 Ending his slumber (all sudden), he hied him to speak to his comrade:
- 35 "Didst thou not call me, O friend? (O), why am I waken'd (from slumber)?
- 36 Didst thou not touch me—(for), why am I fearful(?), (or) hath not some spirit
- 37 Pass'd (me)? (Or,) why is my flesh (all) a-quiver?
- 38 (The dream of the volcano, which probably represents Humbaba).
- 39 A third dream, O comrade,
- 40 I have beheld: but all awesome (this) dream which I have beholden:
- 41 (Loud) did the firmament roar, (and) earth (with the echo) resounded,
- 42 Sombre the day, with darkness uprising, (and) levin bolts flashing,
- 43 Kindled were flames, [and there, too, was Pestilence (?)] fill'd to o'erflowing,
- 44 Gorgéd was Death! (Then) [faded] the glare, (then) faded the fires,
- 45 Falling, [the brands] turn'd to ashes—[Come, let us go] down to the desert,
- 46 That we may counsel together."
- 47 Enkidu (now) to interpret his dream unto Gilgamish speaketh:
- 48 (Remainder of Column III broken away).
- 49 (A variant version is found on one of the Semitic tablets from Boghaz Keui . Where the sense becomes connected it briefly describes how the heroes halt for the night and at midnight sleep departs from the hero who tells his dream to Enkidu, after asking much in the same way why he is frightened at waking from his dream. "Besides my first dream a second . . . In my dream, O friend, a mountain . . . he cast me down, seized my feet . . . The brilliance increased: a man . . ., most comely of all the land was his beauty . . . Beneath the mountain he drew me, and . . . water he gave me to drink, and my desire [was assuaged]; to earth he set [my] feet . . . Enkidu unto this god . . . unto Gilgamish
- 50 spake: "My friend, we will go . . . whatever is hostile . . . Not the mountain . . . Come, lay aside fear . . . " The rest after about mutilated seven lines is lost).
- 51 (Column IV is all lost, and hardly anything of Column V remains. Column VI once contained the story of the great fight, but except for a few broken lines at the end it is all lost. But we can fortunately replace it from the Hittite version from Boghaz Keui)
- 52 Column VI.
- 53 (The Fight with Humbaba).
- 54 In the following manner . . . the Sun-god in heaven . . . the trees:
- 55 He saw [Gilgamish]: of the Sun-god in heaven in . . .
- 56 And [shew'd him] the dam on the ditches.
- 57 Gilgamish [spake] then [in orison] unto the Sun-god in heaven;
- 58 "Lo, on that day to the city . . . which is in the city:

⁵⁹ I in sooth [pray] to the Sun-god in heaven: I on a road have now started,
⁶⁰"
⁶¹ Unto th' entreaty of Gilgamish hearken'd the Sun-god in heaven,
⁶² Wherefore against Humbaba he raised mighty winds: (yea), a great wind,
⁶³ Wind from the North, (aye), [a wind from the South], yea [a tempest] (and) storm wind,
⁶⁴ Chill wind, (and) whirlwind, a wind of (all) evil: 'twas eight winds he raiséd,
⁶⁵ Seizing [Humbaba] before and behind, so that nor to go forwards,
⁶⁶ Nor to go back was he able: and then Humbaba surrender'd.
⁶⁷ Wherefore to Gilgamish spake (thus) Humbaba: "O Gilgamish, (pr'y thee),
⁶⁸ Stay, (now, thy hand): be [thou] now my [master], and I'll be thy henchman:
⁶⁹ [O disregard] (all) [the words which I spake [(so) boastfull against thee,
⁷⁰ Weighty . . . I would lay me down . . . and the Palace.
⁷¹ Thereat to [Gilgamish] Enkidu [spake]: "[Of the rede which] Humbaba
⁷² [Maketh to thee] thou darest in nowise offer acceptance.
⁷³ (Aye, for) Humbaba [must] not [remain alive] . . ."
⁷⁴ (The Hittite Version here breaks off. The Assyrian Version ends with six badly mutilated lines of which the last tells the successful issue of the expedition).
⁷⁵ . . . [they cut off] the head of Humbaba.

The Sixth Tablet: Of the Goddess Ishtar, Who Fell In Love With the Hero After His Exploit Against Humbaba

¹ Column I.
² (Gilgamish is removing the stains of combat).
³ (Now) is he washing his stains, (and) is cleansing his garments in tatters,
⁴ Braiding (?) (the locks of) his hair (to descend loose) over his shoulders,
⁵ Laying aside his garments besmirchen, (and) donning his clean ones,
⁶ Putting on armlets (?), and girding his body about with a baldric,
⁷ Gilgamish bindeth his fillet, and girdeth himself with a baldric.
⁸ (Ishtar sees him and seeks to wed him).
⁹ (Now) Lady Ishtar espieth the beauty of Gilgamish: (saith she),
¹⁰ "Gilgamish, come, be a bridegroom, to me of the fruit (of thy body)
¹¹ Grant me largesse: (for) my husband shalt be and I'll be thy consort.
¹² O, but I'll furnish a chariot for thee, (all) azure and golden,
¹³ Golden its wheel, and its yoke precious stones, each day to be harness'd
¹⁴ Unto great mules: (O), enter our house with the fragrance of cedar.

15 (So) when thou enterest into our house shall threshold and dais
 16 Kiss thy feet, (and) beneath thee do homage kings, princes, and rulers,
 17 Bringing thee yield of the mountains and plains as a tribute: thy she-goats
 18 Bring forth in plenty, thy ewes shall bear twins, thy asses attaining
 19 (Each) to the size of a mule, (and) thy steeds in thy chariot winning
 20 Fame for their gallop: [thy mules] in the yoke shall ne'er have a rival."
 21 _____
 22 [Gilgamish] open'd his mouth in reply, Lady Ishtar [to answer]:
 23 "Aye, but what must I give] thee, (if (??)) I should take thee in marriage?
 24 [I must provide thee with oil] for (thy) body, and clothing: (aye, also)
 25 [Give thee (thy)] bread and (thy) victual: (sooth), must be sustenance [ample]
 26 Meet for divinity—[I, (too), must give thee (thy) drink] fit for royalty.
 27 I shall be bound, . . . let us amass (?), . . . clothe with a garment.
 28 [What, then, will be my advantage, supposing) I take thee in marriage?
 29 [Thou'rt but a ruin which giveth no shelter (?) to man] from the weather,
 30 Thou'rt but a back door [not] giving resistance to blast or to windstorm,
 31 Thou'rt but a palace which dasheth the heroes [within it to pieces],
 32 Thou'rt but a pitfall (which letteth) its covering [give way (all treach'rous)],
 33 Thou art but pitch which [defileth] the man who doth carry it with him,
 34 Thou'rt but a bottle which [leaketh] on him who doth carry it with him,
 35 Thou art but limestone which [letteth] stone ramparts [fall crumbling in ruin].
 36 Thou'rt but chalcedony [failing to guard (?) in an enemy's country,
 37 Thou'rt but a sandal which causeth its owner [to trip (by the wayside)].
 38 Who was ever [thy] husband [thou faithfully lovedst] for all time?
 39 Who hath been ever thy lord who hath gain'd [over thee the advantage?
 40 Come, and I will unfold thee [the endless tale] of thy husbands.
 41 _____
 42 (Sooth), thou shalt vouch (?) for the truth (?) of (this) list—Thy maidenhood's consort,
 43 Tammuz, each year dost make him the cause of Wailing , (then cometh
 44 Next) the bird Roller gay-feather'd thou lovedst, and (yet) thou didst smite him
 45 Breaking his wing: in the grove doth he stand, crying kappi 'my wing!'
 46 Lovedst thou also a Lion, in (all) the full strength of (his) vigour,
 47 (Yet) thou didst dig for him seven and seven (deep) pits (to entrap him).
 48 Lovedst thou also a Stallion, magnificent he in the battle,
 49 Thou wert the cause of a bridle, a spur, and a whip to him: (also)
 50 Thou wert the cause of his fifty miles galloping; thou wert the cause, too,

51 (Eke), of exhaustion and sweating (?); (thereafter), 'twas thou who didst (also)
 52 Unto his mother Silili give cause for (her deep) lamentation.
 53 Lovedst thou also a Shepherd, a neatherd, for thee without ceasing
 54 Each day to sacrifice yeanlings for thee would heap thee his charcoal,
 55 (Yet) thou didst smite him, transforming him into a jackal: his herd boy
 56 Yea, his own herd boy drove him away, and his dogs tore his buttocks.
 57 Lovedst thou, too, Ishullanu, the gardener he of thy sire,
 58 Bringing delights (?) to thee ceaseless, while daily he garnish'd thy platter;
 59 'Twas for thee only to cast thine eyes on him, and with him be smitten .
 60 'O Ishullanu of mine, come, let me taste of thy vigour,
 61 Put forth thy hand, too, '
 62 But he, Ishullanu,
 63 Said to thee 'What dost thou ask me? Save only my mother hath baked (it),
 64 Nought have I eaten—(and) what I should eat would be bread of transgression,
 65 (Aye) and iniquity! (Further), the reeds are a cloak against winter. '
 66 Thou this [his answer] didst hear, didst smite him and make him a spider(?) ,
 67 Making him lodge midway up a [dwelling(?)] —not to move upwards
 68 Lest there be drainage ; nor down, lest a crushing [o'erwhelm him].
 69 So, too, me in my turn thou wouldst love and (then) [reckon] me like them."
 70 _____
 71 [Heard] this (then) Ishtar: she burst into rage and [went up] to Heaven,
 72 Hied her (thus) Ishtar to Anu, [her father], to Antu, her mother,
 73 Came she [to tell (them)]: "O father, doth Gilgamish load me with insult,
 74 Gilgamish tale of my sins, my sins and iniquities telleth."
 75 _____
 76 Anu made answer, (thus) speaking, and said unto Ishtar the Lady:
 77 "Nay, thou didst ask him [to grant thee largesse of the fruit of his body],
 78 (Hence) he the tale of thy sins, thy sins and iniquities telleth."
 79 (The Creation of the Divine Bull which is to destroy the heroes).
 80 Ishtar made answer (thus) speaking, and said unto [Anu, her father]:
 81 "Father, O make (me) a Heavenly Bull, which shall Gilgamish [vanquish],
 82 Filling [its body] with flame
 83 But if thou'lt [not] make [this Bull], then
 84 I'll smite , I'll put , I'll
 85 More than the . . . will be the
 86 _____

⁸⁷ Anu [made answer, (thus) speaking, and said unto] Ishtar, the Lady:
⁸⁸ "[If I the Heavenly Bull shall create, for which] thou dost ask me,
⁸⁹ (Then) seven years of (leer) husks [must needs follow after his onslaught (?)].
⁹⁰ Wilt thou [for man] gather [corn (?)], and increase [for the cattle(?)] the fodder (?)."
⁹¹ [Ishtar made answer, (thus) speaking [and said unto] Anu, her father:
⁹² "[Corn for mankind] have I hoarded, have grown [for the cattle the fodder],
⁹³ [If seven] years of (leer) husks [must needs follow after his onslaught (?)]
⁹⁴ [I will for man] gather [corn and increase for the cattle] the fodder."
⁹⁵ (Perhaps a small gap.)
⁹⁶ (About seven lines are so badly mutilated that little can be gleaned from them except that the fight with the Heavenly Bull is about to take place in Erech. After these [a hundred men] descend [upon the Bull], but with his (fiery) breath [he annihilates them]. Then come two hundred with the same result, and then three hundred more, again to be overcome).
⁹⁷ Enkidu girded (?) his middle; (and straightway) Enkidu, leaping,
⁹⁸ Seized on the Heavenly Bull by [his] horns, and (headlong) before him
⁹⁹ Cast down the Heavenly Bull his full length,
¹⁰⁰ (Aye), by the thick of his tail.
¹⁰¹ (Gap of thirteen mutilated lines.)
¹⁰² Chased him did Enkidu, . . . the Heavenly Bull . . .
¹⁰³ Seized him and by [the thick] of his tail
¹⁰⁴ (Gap of about fourteen mutilated lines in which the Bull is slain.)
¹⁰⁵ (So), what time they the Bull of the Heavens had kill'd, its heart they removéd,
¹⁰⁶ Unto the Sun-god they offer'd in sacrifice; when the libation
¹⁰⁷ Unto the Sun they had voided, they sate them down, the two brothers.
¹⁰⁸ _____
¹⁰⁹ (The Frenzy of Ishtar).
¹¹⁰ (Then) mounted Ishtar (the crest of) the ramparts of Erech, the high-wall'd,
¹¹¹ (So) to the roof-top ascended, (and there) gave voice to her wailing;
¹¹² "Woe unto Gilgamish—he who by killing the Bull of the Heavens,
¹¹³ Made me lament." When Enkidu heard this, the shrieking of Ishtar,
¹¹⁴ Wrenching the member from out of the Bull, he toss'd (it) before her;
¹¹⁵ "If I could only have reach'd thee, i'faith, I'd ha' served thee the same way,
¹¹⁶ I'd ha' let dangle his guts on thy flanks (as a girdle about thee)."
¹¹⁷ Ishtar assembled the girl-devotees, the hetaerae and harlots,
¹¹⁸ Over the member (torn out) from the Bull she led the lamenting.
¹¹⁹ (The Triumph of Gilgamish).

¹²⁰ Gilgamish call'd to the masters of craft, the artists, (yea), all of them,
¹²¹ That at the size of its horns (all) the guilds of the crafts speak their praises
¹²² Each had of azure in weight thirty minas to be as their setting,
¹²³ Two fingers their
¹²⁴ Both of them held six measures of oil; to his god Lugal-banda
¹²⁵ He for (his) unguent devoting, brought in, and (thus) let them hang (there),
¹²⁶ (There) in the shrine of his forbears.
¹²⁷ (And now) in the River Euphrates
¹²⁸ Washing their hands, they start (on their progress) and come (to the city);
¹²⁹ (Now) are they striding the highway of Erech, the heroes of Erech
¹³⁰ Thronging (about them) to see them. (Then) Gilgamish utter'd a riddle
¹³¹ Unto the notables (?):
¹³² Who, pr'ythee, is most splendid of heroes,
¹³³ Who, pr'ythee, is most famous of giants?
¹³⁴ Gilgamish—he is most splendid of heroes,
¹³⁵ [Enkidu—he is most] famous of giants.
¹³⁶ (Three mutilated lines follow.)
¹³⁷ _____
¹³⁸ So in his palace did Gilgamish hold high revel: (thereafter),
¹³⁹ (While all) the heroes asleep, on their nightly couches were lying
¹⁴⁰ Enkidu, too, was asleep, and a vision beheld, and (so) coming
¹⁴¹ Enkidu (now) his dream to reveal: (thus) spake he unto his comrade.

The Seventh Tablet: The Death of Enkidu

¹ Column I.
² (Enkidu's dream).
³ "Why, O my friend, do the great gods (now) take counsel together?"
⁴ (The remainder of the Column is lost in the Assyrian, but it can be partially supplied from the Hittite Version: " . . . Then came the day . . . [Enkidu] answered Gilgamish: '[Gilgamish, hear the] dream which I [saw] in the night: [Now Enlil], Ea, and the Sun-god of heaven . . . [the Sun-god (?)] Enlil spake in
⁵ return: "[These who the heavenly] Bull have kill'd [and Humbaba have smitten]:. . . which help'd at the cedar . . . [Enlil hath said (?)] 'Enkidu shall die: [but Gilgamish] shall not die.'" Then answer'd Enlil boldly '[O Sun-god], at thy behest did they slay the Heavenly Bull and Humbaba. But now shall Enkidu die.' But Enlil turn'd angrily to the Sun-god: 'What dost thou them as befitting . . . ? With his comrade thou settest out daily. "' But Enkidu laid himself down to rest before Gilgamish, and by the

dam . . . him the ditch: 'My brother, of (great) worth is my [dream].'" It breaks off after a few mutilated lines more).

⁶ (Column II entirely lost. From the Hittite it is clear that Enkidu has dreamt that the gods have taken counsel together, that Enkidu is to die, but Gilgamesh remain alive. It would appear from the succeeding material that Enkidu, stricken presumably by fever, attributes all his misfortunes to the hetaera whom he loads with curses. The first part of the next fragment begins "destroy his power, weaken his strength," probably referring to Enkidu. Then says Enkidu, after three broken lines: ". . . the hetaera . . . who has brought (?) a curse, 'O hetaera, I will decree (thy) [fate(?)] for thee—thy woes(?) . . . shall never end for all eternity. [Come], I will curse thee with a bitter curse, . . . with desolation shall its curse come on thee: [may there never be] satisfaction of thy desire' —and then follow the broken ends of six lines and then—" "[May . . .] fall on thy house, may the . . . of the street be thy dwelling, [may the shade of the wall be thy] abode, . . . for thy feet, [may scorching heat and thirsty smite thy strength]" The rest of the curse is badly broken, but it is exceeding probable that the following are the fragments which should be assigned here).

⁷ (The End of Enkidu's curse on the Hetaera).

⁸ "Of want . . . since me it is that . . . hath . . .

⁹ And me the fever [hath laid] on my back."

¹⁰ _____

¹¹ (The Answer of Shamash).

¹² Heard him the Sun-god, and open'd his mouth, and from out of the heavens

¹³ (Straightway) he call'd him: "O Enkidu, why dost thou curse the hetaera?

¹⁴ She 'twas who made thee eat bread, for divinity proper: (aye), wine (too),

¹⁵ She made thee drink, ('twas) for royalty proper: a generous mantle

¹⁶ Put on thee, (aye), and for comrade did give to thee Gilgamesh splendid.

¹⁷ Now on a couch of great size will he, (thy) friend (and) thy brother

¹⁸ Gilgamesh, grant thee to lie, on a handsome couch will he grant thee

¹⁹ Rest, and to sit on a throne of great ease, a throne at (his) left hand,

²⁰ So that the princes of Hades may kiss thy feet (in their homage);

²¹ He, too, will make (all) the people of Erech lament in thy (honour),

²² Making them mourn thee, (and) damsels (and) heroes constrain to thy service,

²³ [While he himself for thy sake will cause his body to carry

²⁴ Stains, [(and) will put on] the skin of a lion, and range o'er the desert."

²⁵ _____

²⁶ Enkidu [(then) giving ear] to the words of the valiant Shamash

²⁷ Speaking his wrath was appeased.

²⁸ (One or two lines missing).

²⁹ Column IV.

³⁰ (Enkidu, relenting, regrets his curse, and blesses the Hetaera).

31 " may . . . restore to thy place!
 32 [(So, too), may monarchs and princes] and chiefs be with love [for thee] smitten;
 33 [None smite (?)] his breech [in disgust (?); against thee; and for thee may the hero]
 34 Comb out his locks; . . . who would embrace [thee],
 35 Let him his girdle unloose . . . and thy [bed] be azure and golden;
 36 May . . . entreat thee kindly (?), . . . are heap'd his ishshikku
 37 May the gods make thee enter
 38 [Mayst thou] be left as the mother of seven brides . . ."
 39 (Enkidu, sorrowful at his approaching end, sleeps alone and dreams).
 40 [Enkidu] . . . woe in his belly . . . sleeping alone,
 41 [Came] in the night [to discover] his heaviness unto his comrade:
 42 "[Friend], (O) a dream I have seen in my night-time: the firmament [roaring],
 43 Echo'd the earth, and I [by myself was standing(?)] . . .
 44 [When perceived I a man (?)], (all) dark was his face, [and] was liken 'd
 45 [Unto] . . .his face, . . . [and] his nails like claws of a lion.
 46 Me did he overcome . . . climbing up . . . press'd me down,
 47 Upon me . . . my (?) body
 48 (Here follows a gap of perhaps three lines, until what is still presumably the dream is again taken
 up by the other half of the Column at l. 31 (?) with a description of the Underworld which is being
 shewn to Enkidu in premonition of his death).
 49 like birds my hands: (and) he seized (?) me,
 50 Me did he lead to the Dwelling of Darkness, the home of Irkalla,
 51 Unto the Dwelling from which he who entereth cometh forth never!
 52 (Aye), by the road on the passage whereof there can be no returning,
 53 Unto the Dwelling whose tenants are (ever) bereft of the daylight,
 54 Where for their food is the dust, and the mud is their sustenance: bird-like
 55 Wear they a garment of feathers: and, sitting (there) in the darkness,
 56 Never the light will they see. On the Gate when I enter'd
 57 On the house (?) was humbled the crown,
 58 For . . . those who (wore) crowns, who of old ruled over the country,
 59 of Anu and Enlil 'twas they set the bakemeats,
 60 Set . . . , cool was the water they served from the skins. When I enter'd
 61 Into (this) House of the Dust, were High Priest and acolyte sitting,
 62 Seer and magician , the priest who the Sea of the great gods anointed ,
 63 (Here) sat Etana , Sumuqan; the Queen of the Underworld (also),
 64 Ereshkigal , in whose presence doth bow the Recorder of Hades,

- ⁶⁵ [Belit]-seri, and readeth before her; [she lifted] her head (and) beheld me,
⁶⁶ . . . and took this
⁶⁷ (The text here breaks off).

The Eighth Tablet: Of the Mourning of Gilgamish, and What Came of It

- ¹ (The first Column is badly mutilated, and all we can glean from it is that "as soon as something of morning has dawned," Gilgamish addressing Enkidu, compares him to a gazelle, and promises to glorify him. Then follows apparently a recital by Gilgamish of their exploits together, "mountains [we ascended,
² we reach'd] the Forest of Cedars, [travelling] night and day . . . [with wild beasts (?)] drawing nigh after us." Enkidu is lying dying or dead, and Column II begins with Gilgamish keening over his dead friend before the Elders of Erech):
³ "Unto me hearken, O Elders, to me, aye, me [shall ye listen],
⁴ 'Tis that I weep for my [comrade] Enkidu, bitterly crying
⁵ Like to a wailing woman: my grip is [slack'd] on the curtleaxe
⁶ (Slung at) my thigh, (and) the brand at my belt from my sight [is removed].
⁷ (Aye, and) my festal attire [lends nought of its aid for] my pleasure,
⁸ Me, me hath [sorrow] assailed, and [cast] me [down in affliction].
⁹ _____
¹⁰ Comrade (and) henchman, who chased the wild ass , the pard of the desert,
¹¹ Comrade (and) henchman, who chased the wild ass , the pard of the desert,
¹² Enkidu—we who all [haps] overcame, ascending [the mountains].
¹³ Captured the Heavenly Bull, and [destroy'd (him)]: we o'erthrew Humbaba,
¹⁴ He who [abode] in the Forest [of Cedars —O, what is this slumber
¹⁵ Now hath o'ercome [thee], (for now) art thou dark, nor art able to hear [me]?"
¹⁶ Natheless he raised not [his eyes, and] his heart, (when Gilgamish) felt (it),
¹⁷ Made no beat.
¹⁸ Then he veil'd (his) friend like a bride ..
¹⁹ Lifted his voice like a lion
²⁰ [Roar'd] like a lioness robb'd of [her] whelps. In front of his [comrade]
²¹ Paced he backwards and forwards, tearing and casting his ringlets(?),
²² Plucking and casting away (all) the grace of his
²³ _____
²⁴ Then when something of morning had dawn'd, did Gilgamish

²⁵ (Column II here breaks off. Column III begins with Gilgamish still mourning, telling his dead friend all he will do for him in the words of Shamash in the preceding tablet, so that we may supply the last two (?) lines of Column II as follow):

²⁶ Column II.

²⁷ (The Lament of Gilgamish).

²⁸ "[O, on a couch of great size will I, thy friend and thy brother,

²⁹ Column III.

³⁰ [Gilgamish, grant thee to lie], on [a handsome] couch [will I grant thee

³¹ Rest, and] to sit on [a throne of great size, a throne at (my) left hand],

³² So that the princes of Hades [may kiss thy feet (in their homage)];

³³ I, too, will make (all) [the people of Erech] lament in thy (honour),

³⁴ [Making them mourn thee], (and) damsels(and)heroes[constrain to thy service],

³⁵ While I myself for thy sake [will cause my body to carry]

³⁶ [Stains], (and) will put on the skin of a [lion , and range o'er the desert]."

³⁷ _____

³⁸ Then when something of morning had dawn'd did [Gilgamish]

³⁹ Loosing his girdle

⁴⁰ (Column IV has only five fragmentary lines at the end, mentioning "to my friend," "thy sword," "likeness," and "to the god Bibbu," i.e., a planet or Mercury. Column V has only a bare dozen fragmentary lines at the end):

⁴¹ Column V.

⁴² " . . . Judge of the Anunnaki . . . "

⁴³ (Then), when Gilgamish heard this, he form'd of the slaying a concept .

⁴⁴ _____

⁴⁵ (Then), with the dawn of the morning did Gilgamish fashion a . . .

⁴⁶ Brought out also a mighty platter of wood from the highlands .

⁴⁷ Fill'd he with honey a bowl of (bright) ruby , a bowl (too) of azure,

⁴⁸ Fill'd he with cream; (and) adorn'd he the . . . , and Shamash instructed ..

⁴⁹ (One line lost at end of Column. Column VI is all lost).

The Ninth Tablet: Gilgamish In Terror of Death Seeks Eternal Life

¹ Column I.

² (Gilgamish determines to seek Eternal Life).

³ Gilgamish bitterly wept for his comrade, (for) Enkidu, ranging

⁴ Over the desert: "I, too—shall I not die like Enkidu also?

⁵ Sorrow hath enter'd my heart; I fear death as I range o'er the desert,

⁶ I will get hence on the road to the presence of Uta-Napishtim ,
⁷ —Offspring of Ubara-Tutu is he—and with speed will I travel.
⁸ (If) 'tis in darkness that I shall arrive at the Gates of the Mountains,
⁹ Meeting with lions, then terror fall on me, I'll lift my head (skywards),
¹⁰ Offer my prayer to the Moon-god, (or else) to . . the gods let my orison
¹¹ Come . . . 'O deliver me!'" . . . He slept . . . (and) a dream . . .
¹² [Saw he] . . . which were rejoicing in life,
¹³ Poised he [his] axe . . . in his hand, (and) drew [his glaive from] his baldric,
¹⁴ Lance-like leapt he amongst them . . . smiting, . . . (and) crushing.
¹⁵ (The rest of the Column is mutilated).
¹⁶ Column II.
¹⁷ (The hero reaches the Mountains of Mashu).
¹⁸ Mashu the name of the hills; as he reach'd the Mountains of Mashu,
¹⁹ Where ev'ry day they keep watch o'er [the Sun-god's] rising [and setting],
²⁰ Unto the Zenith of Heaven [uprear'd are] their summits, (and) downwards
²¹ (Deep) unto Hell reach their breasts: (and there) at their portals stand sentry
²² Scorpion-men, awful in terror, their (very) glance Death: (and) tremendous,
²³ Shaking the hills, their magnificence; they are the Wardens of Shamash,
²⁴ Both at his rising and setting. (No sooner) did Gilgamish see them"
²⁵ (Than) from alarm and dismay was his countenance stricken with pallor,
²⁶ Senseless, he grovell'd before them.
²⁷ (Then) unto his wife spake the Scorpion:
²⁸ "Lo, he that cometh to us—'tis the flesh of the gods is his body."
²⁹ (Then) to the Scorpion-man answer]d his wife: "Two parts of him god-(like),
³⁰ (Only) a third of him human."
³¹ (Eight broken lines remain, in which the Scorpion-man addresses presumably Gilgamish, asking him [why he has gone on a far journey, and telling him how hard the traverse is. Column III begins with the third line in which Gilgamish is evidently telling the Scorpion-man that he proposes to cask(?)] Uta-Napishtim about death and life. But the Scorpion-man says that [the journey has never before been made, that none [has crossed] the mountains. The traverse is by the Road of the Sun by a journey of twenty-four hours, beginning with deep darkness. The last half of this Column and the first half of Column IV are lost, but it would appear that the Scorpion-man describes the journey hour by hour, and that Gilgamish accepts the trial of his strength "[even though it be] in pain . . , [though my face be weather]d] with cold [and heat]
³² [paragraph continues] (and) in grief [I go] . . ." Then the Scorpion-man, with a final word about the mountains of Mashu, farewells him, wishing him success. "[(Then) when] Gilgamish [heard this], [he set off] at the word of the Scorpion-man, taking] the Road of the Sun . . ." The first two hours are in deep darkness, without light, which did not allow [him to see . . . behind him] . . ." Each

succeeding period of two hours is the same until the eighth is reached and passed, and by the ninth he apparently comes to the first glimmer of light. Finally, with the twelfth double hour, he reaches the full blaze of the sun, and there he beholds the Tree of the Gods, the description of which is given in the only four complete lines, 48-51, of Column V. It is conceivable that this is the Vine, the Tree of Life, whence Siduri, the Maker of Wine, plucks the fruit for her trade).

³³ Bearing its fruit (all) ruby, and hung about with (its) tendrils.

³⁴ Fair for beholding, and azure the boskage it bore; (aye), 'twas bearing

³⁵ Fruits (all) desirable unto the eye.

³⁶ (Column VI in the Assyrian is nearly all lost, and it is uncertain what part the Tree plays: but at this point a third Old Babylonian tablet helps us out. At this point, according to this early version the Sun-god takes pity on the hero).

³⁷ "[He of the wild things hath dresséd] their pelts and the flesh of them eateth.

³⁸ Gilgamish, [never] a crossing [shall be (?)] where none hath been ever,

³⁹ (No), [so long] as the gale driveth water."

⁴⁰ Shamash was touch'd, that he summon'd him, (thus) unto Gilgamish speaking:

⁴¹ "Gilgamish, why dost thou run, (forasmuch as) the life which thou seekest

⁴² Thou shalt not find?" (Whereat) Gilgamish answer'd the warrior Shamash:

⁴³ "Shall I, after I roam up and down o'er the waste as a wand'rer,

⁴⁴ Lay my head in the bowels of earth, and throughout the years slumber

⁴⁵ Ever and aye? Let mine eyes see the Sun and be sated with brightness,

⁴⁶ (Yea, for) the darkness is (banish'd) afar, if wide be the brightness.

⁴⁷ When will the man who is dead (ever) look on the light of the Sunshine?"

⁴⁸ (With this ends all our connected text of Column VI, the Assyrian Version ending with about a dozen mutilated lines containing a mention of numerous minerals and stones, and evidently Gilgamish has now come to the girl Siduri the sabitu, which last word is generally taken to mean a provider of strong waters).

The Tenth Tablet: How Gilgamish Reached Uta-Napishtim

¹ Column I.

² (Gilgamish meets Siduri).

³ Dwelt Siduri, the maker of wine

⁴ Wine(?) was her trade, her trade was

⁵ Cover'd she was with a veil and

⁶ Gilgamish wander'd [towards her]

⁷ Pelts was he wearing

⁸ Flesh of the gods in [his body] possessing, but woe in [his belly],

⁹ (Aye), and his countenance like to a (man) who hath gone a far journey.
¹⁰ Look'd in the distance the maker of wine, (and) a word in her bosom
¹¹ Quoth she, in thought with herself: "This is one who would ravish (?) [a woman],
¹² Whither doth he advance in . . . ?" As soon as the Wine-maker saw him,
¹³ Barr'd she [her postern], barr'd she her inner door, barr'd she [her chamber(?)].
¹⁴ Straightway did Gilgamish, too, in his turn catch the sound [of her shutting(?)],
¹⁵ Lifted his chin, and so did he let [his attention fall on her].
¹⁶ _____
¹⁷ Unto her (therefore) did Gilgamish speak, to the Wine-maker saying]:
¹⁸ "Wine-maker, what didst thou see, that [thy postern (now)] thou hast barréd,
¹⁹ Barréd thine inner door, [-barréd thy chamber(?)]? O, I'll smite [thy] portal,
²⁰ [Breaking the bolt]
²¹ (About nine lines mutilated, after which it is possible to restore l. 32—Column II, 8).
²² [Unto him (answer 'd) the Wine-maker, speaking to Gilgamish, (saying):
²³ "Why is thy vigour (so) wasted, (or why) is thy countenance sunken,
²⁴ (Why) hath thy spirit a sorrow (?), (or why) hath thy cheerfulness surcease?
²⁵ (O, but) there's woe in thy belly! Like one who hath gone a far journey
²⁶ (So) is thy face—(O,) with cold and with heat is thy countenance weather'd,
²⁷ . . . that thou shouldst range over the desert."
²⁸ Gilgamish unto her (answer'd and) spake to the Wine-maker, saying:
²⁹ "Wine-maker, 'tis not my vigour is wasted, nor countenance sunken,
³⁰ Nor hath my spirit a sorrow (?), (forsooth), nor my cheerfulness surcease,
³¹ No, 'tis not woe in my belly: nor doth my visage resemble
³² One who hath gone a far journey—nor is my countenance weather'd
³³ Either by cold or by heat . . . that (thus) I range over the desert.
³⁴ Comrade (and) henchman, who chased the wild ass, the pard of the desert,
³⁵ Comrade (and) henchman, who chased the wild ass, the pard of the desert,
³⁶ Enkidu—we who all haps overcame, ascending the mountains,
³⁷ Captured the Heavenly Bull, and destroy'd him]: we [o'erthrew Humbaba,
³⁸ He who abode in the Forest of Cedars; we slaughter'd the lions
³⁹ Column II.
⁴⁰ There in the Gates (?) of the mountains (?); with me enduring all hardships,
⁴¹ Enkidu, (he was) my comrade—the lions we slaughter'd (together),
⁴² (Aye), enduring all hardships—and him his fate hath o'ertaken.
⁴³ (So) did I mourn him six days, (yea), a se'nnight, until unto burial
⁴⁴ I could consign (?) him . . . (then) did I fear

45 Death did I dread, that I range o'er the desert]: the hap of my comrade
46 [Lay on me heavy(?)—O 'tis a long road that I range o'er] the desert!
47 Enkidu, (yea), [of my comrade the hap lay heavy (?) upon me]—
48 ['Tis a long road] that I range o'er the desert—O, how to be silent],
49 (Aye, or) how to give voice? [(For) the comrade I ha' (so) loved]
50 Like to the dust [hath become]; O Enkidu, (he was) my comrade,
51 He whom I loved hath become alike the dust]—[I,] shall I not, also,
52 Lay me down [like him], throughout all eternity [never returning]?"

53

54 (Here may be interpolated, for convenience, the Old Babylonian Version of this episode in the Berlin tablet of 2000 B.C. Column II, 1,-III, 14):

55 Column II.

56 "He who endured all hardships with me, whom I loved dearly,
57 Enkidu,—he who endured all hardships with me (is now perish'd),
58 Gone to the common lot of mankind! (And) I have bewail'd him
59 Day and night long: (and) unto the tomb I have not consign'd him.
60 (O but) my friend cometh not (?) to my call—six days, (yea), a se'nnight
61 He like a worm hath lain on his face—(and) I for this reason
62 Find no life, (but must needs) roam the desert like to a hunter,
63 (Wherefore), O Wine-maker, now that (at last) I look on thy visage,
64 Death which I dread I will see not!"
65 (The Philosophy of the Wine-maker).
66 The Wine-maker Gilgamish answer'd:

67 Column III.

68 "Gilgamish, why runnest thou, (inasmuch as) the life which thou seekest,
69 Thou canst not find? (For) the gods, in their (first) creation of mortals,
70 Death allotted to man, (but) life they retain'd in their keeping.
71 Gilgamish, full be thy belly,
72 Each day and night be thou merry, (and) daily keep holiday revel,
73 Each day and night do thou dance and rejoice; (and) fresh be thy raiment,
74 (Aye), let thy head be clean washen, (and) bathe thyself in the water,
75 Cherish the little one holding thy hand; be thy spouse in thy bosom
76 Happy—(for) this is the dower [of man]
77 (Here the Old Babylonian Version breaks off and we must return to the Assyrian).
78 (Gilgamish, dissatisfied with a Wine-maker's philosophy, would seek further afield).
79 [Gilgamish] (thus) continued his speech to the Wine-maker, (saying),

80 "[Pr'ythee, then], Wine-maker, which is the way unto Uta-Napishtim?
81 [What (is)] its token, I pr'ythee, vouchsafe me, vouchsafe me its token.
82 If it be possible (even) the Ocean (itself) will I traverse,
83 (But) if it should be impossible, (then) will I range o'er the desert."
84 _____
85 (The Wine-maker, in accordance with tradition, attempts to dissuade him).
86 (Thus) did the Wine-maker answer to him, unto Gilgamish (saying),
87 "There hath been never a crossing, O Gilgamish: never aforetime
88 Anyone, coming thus far, hath been able to traverse the Ocean:
89 Warrior Shamash doth cross it , 'tis true, but who besides Shamash
90 Maketh the traverse? (Yea), rough is the ferry, (and) rougher its passage,
91 (Aye), too, 'tis deep are the Waters of Death, which bar its approaches .
92 Gilgamish, if perchance thou succeed in traversing the Ocean,
93 What wilt thou do, when unto the Waters of Death thou arrivest?
94 Gilgamish, there is Ur-Shanabi, boatman to Uta-Napishtim,
95 He with whom sails (?) are, the urnu of which in the forest he plucketh,
96 (Now) let him look on thy presence, (and) [if it be] possible with him
97 Cross—(but) if it be not, (then) do thou retrace thy steps (homewards)."
98 [paragraph continues] Gilgamish, hearing this, [taketh] (his) axe in his [hand], awhile he draweth
Glaive from his baldric (?].
99 (The remainder of this Column in the Assyrian Version is so much mutilated that little can be
made out, but what is obviously essential is that Gilgamish meets Ur-Shanabi, but destroys the sails
(?) of the boat for some reason. Before going on with the restoration of the Assyrian Version, we can
interpolate Column IV from the Old Babylonian Version of the Berlin Tablet)
100 (Then) did Ur-Shanabi speak to him (yea), unto Gilgamish, (saying):
101 "Tell to me what is thy name, (for) I am Ur-Shanabi, (henchman),
102 (Aye), of far Uta-Napishtim ." To him did Gilgamish answer:
103 "Gilgamish, (that) is my name, come hither from Erech(?), E-Anni (?),
104 (One) who hath traversed the Mountains, a wearisome journey of Sunrise,
105 Now that I look on thy face, Ur-Shanabi—Uta-Napishtim
106 Let me see also—the Distant one!" Him did Ur-Shanabi [answer],
107 Gilgamish:"
108 (In the Assyrian Version Ur-Shanabi presently addresses Gilgamish in exactly the same words as
Siduri, the Wine-maker, with the same astonishment at his weather-beaten appearance):
109 Column III.
110 (Thus) did Ur-Shanabi speak to him, (yea), unto Gilgamish, (saying)
111 "Why is thy vigour all wasted . . ."

112 (It continues thus, to be supplied for ll. 2-31 from Columns I, 33-II, 14 with due bracketing for the last words, and then the text goes on):

113 Gilgamish (thus) continued his speech to Ur-Shanabi, (saying)

114 "Pr'ythee, Ur-Shanabi, which is [the way unto Uta-Napishtim ?

115 What is its token, I pr'ythee, vouchsafe me, vouchsafe me nits token].

116 If it be possible (even) the Ocean (itself) will I traverse,

117 But if it should be impossible, [(then) will I range o'er the desert]."

118 _____

119 (Thus) did Ur-Shanabi speak to him, (yea), unto Gilgamish, (saying):

120 "Gilgamish, 'tis thine own hand hath hinder'd [thy crossing the Ocean],

121 Thou hast destroyéd the sails(?), (and) hast piercéd (?) the . . .

122 (Now) destroy'd are the sails(?), and the urnu not

123 Gilgamish, take thee thy axe in [thy] hand; O, descend to the forest,

124 [Fashion thee] poles each of five gar in length; make (knops of) bitumen,

125 Sockets, (too), add (to them) : bring [them me]." (Thereat), when Gilgamish [heard this],

126 Took he the axe in his hand, (and) [the glaive] drew forth [from his baldric],

127 Went to the forest, and poles each of five gar in length [did he fashion],

128 (Knops of) bitumen he made, and he added (their) sockets: and brought them . . ,

129 Gilgamish (then), and Ur-Shanabi fared them forth [in their vessel],

130 Launch'd they the boat on the billow, and they themselves [in her embarking].

131 After the course of a month and a half he saw on the third day

132 How that Ur-Shanabi (now) at the Waters of Death had arrivéd.

133 Column IV.

134 (Thus) did Ur-Shanabi [answer] him, [(yea), unto Gilgamish, (saying)]:

135 "Gilgamish, take the away

136 Let not the Waters of Death touch thy hand

137 Gilgamish, take thou a second, a third, and a fourth pole (for thrusting),

138 Gilgamish, take thou a fifth, (and) a sixth, and a seventh (for thrusting),

139 Gilgamish, take thou an eighth, (and) a ninth, and a tenth pole (for thrusting),

140 Gilgamish, take an eleventh, a twelfth pole!" He ceased from (his) poling,

141 (Aye) with twice-sixty (thrusts); (then) ungirded his loins

142 Gilgamish (?), and set up the mast in its socket.

143 (He reaches Uta-Napishtim).

144 Uta-Napishtim look'd into the distance and, inwardly musing,

145 Said to himself: "(Now), why are [the sails(?)] of the vessel destroyéd,

146 Aye, and one who is not of my . . . (?) doth ride on the vessel?

- 147 (This) is no mortal who cometh: nor
- 148 I look, but (this) is no [mortal]
- 149 I look, but I look but
- 150 (Remainder of Column lost, but about l. 42 it becomes apparent that Uta-Napishtim is asking Gilgamesh in exactly the same words as Siduri, the Wine-maker, and Ur-Shanabi "Why is thy vigour (all) wasted?" and so on, down to Column V, l. 22 "[I], shall I not also lay me down like him, throughout all eternity never returning?"):
- 151 Gilgamesh (thus) continued his speech unto Uta-Napishtim,
- 152 "Then [I bethought me], I'll get hence and see what far Uta-Napishtim
- 153 Saith (on the matter) . (And so), again (?) I came through all countries,
- 154 Travell'd o'er difficult mountains, (aye), [and] all seas have I traversed,
- 155 Nor hath (ever) my face had its fill of gentle sleep (?): (but) with hardship
- 156 Have I exhausted myself, (and) my flesh have I laden with sorrow.
- 157 Ere I had come to the [House(?)] of the Wine-Maker, spent were my garments,
- 158 . . . Owl, bat, lion, pard, wild cat, deer, ibex, and
- 159 [Flesh] of them (all) have I eaten, (and eke) their pelts have I dress'd (?) [me]."
- 160 (The remainder of the Column is mutilated: there is some mention of "let them bolt her gate . . . ; with pitch and bitumen" in l. 33, and then nothing which gives connected sense until Column VI, ll. 26-39):
- 161 Column VI.
- 162 "Shall we for ever build house(s), for ever set signet (to contract),
- 163 Brothers continue to share, or among [foes (?)] always be hatred?
- 164 (Or) will for ever the stream (that hath risen) in spate bring a torrent,
- 165 Kulilu-bird [to] Kirippu-bird ?
- 166 Face which doth look on the sunlight . . . presently (?) shall not be . . .
- 167 Sleeping and dead [are]r alike, from Death they mark no distinction
- 168 Servant and master, when once thy have reach'd [their full span allotted],
- 169 Then do the Anunnaki, great gods,
- 170 Mammetum, Maker of Destiny with them, doth destiny settle,
- 171 Death, (aye), and Life they determine; of Death is the day not reveal'd."

The Eleventh Tablet: The Flood

- 1 Column I.
- 2 (The Cause of the Flood).
- 3 Gilgamesh unto him spake, to Uta-Napishtim the Distant:
- 4 "Uta-Napishtim, upon thee I gaze, (yet) in no wise thy presence

⁵ Strange is, (for) thou art like me, and in no wise different art thou;
⁶ Thou art like me; (yea) a stomach for fighting doth make thee consummate,
⁷ [Aye, and to rest (?)] on thy back thou dost lie. [O tell me (?)], how couldst thou
⁸ Stand in th' Assemblage of Gods to petition for life (everlasting)?"
⁹ Uta-Napishtim (addressing him thus) unto Gilgamish answer'd:
¹⁰ "Gilgamish, I unto thee will discover the (whole) hidden story,
¹¹ Aye, and the rede of the Gods will I tell thee.
¹² The City Shurippak —
¹³ (O 'tis) a city thou knowest!—is set [on the marge] of Euphrates,
¹⁴ Old is this city, with gods in its midst. (Now), the great gods a deluge
¹⁵ Purposed to bring: there was Anu, their sire; their adviser
¹⁶ Warrior Enlil; Ninurta , their herald; their leader(?) Ennugi;
¹⁷ Nin-igi-azag—'tis Ea—, (albeit) conspirator with them,
¹⁸ Unto a reed-hut their counsel betray'd he: "O Reed-hut, O Reed-hut!
¹⁹ Wall, wall! Hearken, O Reed-hut, consider, O Wall! O thou Mortal,
²⁰ Thou of Shurippak, thou scion of Ubara-Tutu, a dwelling
²¹ Pull down, (and) fashion a vessel (therewith); abandon possessions,
²² Life do thou seek, (and) thy hoard disregard, and save life; every creature
²³ Make to embark in the vessel. The vessel, which thou art to fashion,
²⁴ Apt be its measure; its beam and its length be in due correspondence,
²⁵ (Then) [on] the deep do thou launch it." And I—sooth, I apprehending,
²⁶ (This wise) to Ea, my lord, did I speak: '[See], Lord, what thou sayest
²⁷ Thus, do I honour, I'll do—(but) to city, to people, and elders
²⁸ Am I, forsooth, to explain?' (Then) Ea made answer in speaking,
²⁹ Saying to me—me, his henchman!—"Thou mortal, shalt speak to them this wise:
³⁰ "'Tis me alone (?) whom Enlil so hateth that I in your city
³¹ No (more) may dwell, nor turn my face unto the land which is Enlil's.
³² [I will go] down to the Deep, (there) dwelling with Ea, my [liege] lord,
³³ (Wherefore) [on] you will he shower down plenty, yea, fowl [in great number(?)],
³⁴ Booty of fish [and big] the harvest.
³⁵ causing a plentiful rainfall (?) to come down upon you."
³⁶ _____
³⁷ [(Then) when something] of morning had dawn'd
³⁸ (Five lines mutilated).
³⁹ Pitch did the children provide, (while) the strong brought [all] that was needful.
⁴⁰ (Then) on the fifth day (after) I laid out the shape (of my vessel),

41 Ten gar each was the height of her sides, in accord with her planning(?),
 42 Ten gar to match was the size of her deck (?), and the shape of the forepart (?)
 43 Did I lay down, (and) the same did I fashion; (aye), six times cross-pinn'd her,
 44 Sevenfold did I divide her . . . , divided her inwards
 45 Ninefold: hammer'd the caulking within her, (and) found me a quant-pole,
 46 (All) that was needful I added; the hull with six shar of bitumen
 47 Smear'd I, (and) three shar of pitch [did I smear] on the inside; some people,
 48 Bearing a vessel of grease, three shar of it brought (me); (and) one shar
 49 (Out of this) grease did I leave, which the tackling (?) consumed; (and) the boatman
 50 Two shar of grease stow'd away; (yea), beeves for the . . . I slaughter'd,
 51 Each day lambs did I slay: mead, beer, oil, wine, too, the workmen
 52 [Drank] as though they were water , and made a great feast like the New Year,
 53 (Five mutilated lines "I added salve for the hand(s)," "the vessel was finish'd . . . Shamash the
 great." "was difficult," " . . ? I caused to bring above and below," "two-thirds of it"):
 54 _____
 55 [All I possess'd I] laded aboard her; the silver I laded
 56 All I possess'd; gold, all I possess'd I laded aboard her,
 57 All I possess'd of the seed of all living [I laded aboard] her.
 58 Into the ship I embark'd all my kindred and family (with me),
 59 Cattle (and) beasts of the field (and) all handicraftsmen embarking.
 60 (Then) decreed Shamash the hour: " . . . (?)
 61 Shall in the night let a plentiful rainfall(?) pour down . . .
 62 (Then) do thou enter the vessel, and (straightway) shut down thy hatchway."
 63 Came (then) that hour (appointed), (?)
 64 Did in the night let a plentiful rainfall(?) pour down (?)
 65 View'd I the aspect of day: to look on the day bore a horror,
 66 (Wherefore) I enter'd the vessel, and (straightway) shut down my hatchway,
 67 (So, too) to shut down the vessel to Puzur-Amurri (?), the boatman,
 68 Did I deliver the poop (of the ship), besides its equipment.
 69 _____
 70 (Then), when something of dawn had appear'd, from out the horizon
 71 Rose a cloud darkling; (lo), Adad (the storm-god) was rumbling within it,
 72 Nabu and Sharru were leading the vanguard, and coming as heralds
 73 Over the hills and the levels: (then) Irragal wrench'd out the bollards;
 74 Havoc Ninurta let loose as he came, th' Anunnaki their torches
 75 Brandish'd, and shrivell'd the land with their flames; desolation from Adad

⁷⁶ Stretch'd to (high) Heaven, (and) all that was bright was turn'd into darkness.
⁷⁷ (Four lines mutilated "the land like . . .," "for one day the st[orm] . . .," "fiercely blew . . . " "like a battle . . .").
⁷⁸ Nor could a brother distinguish his brother; from heaven were mortals
⁷⁹ Not to be spied. O, were stricken with terror the gods at the Deluge,
⁸⁰ Fleeing, they rose to the Heaven of Anu, and crouch'd in the outskirts,
⁸¹ Cow 'ring like curs were the gods (while) like to a woman in travail
⁸² Ishtar did cry, she shrieking aloud, (e'en) the sweet-spoken Lady
⁸³ (She of the gods): 'May that day turn to dust, because I spake evil
⁸⁴ (There) in th' Assemblage of Gods! O, how could I utter (such) evil
⁸⁵ (There) in the Assemblage of Gods, (so) to blot out my people, ordaining
⁸⁶ Havoc! Sooth, then, am I to give birth, unto (these) mine own people
⁸⁷ Only to glut (with their bodies) the Sea as though they were fish-spawn?'
⁸⁸ Gods—Anunnaki—wept with her, the gods were sitting (all) humbled,
⁸⁹ (Aye), in (their) weeping, (and) closed were their lips amid(?)the Assemblage.
⁹⁰ Six days, a se'nnight the hurricane, deluge, (and) tempest continued
⁹¹ Sweeping the land: when the seventh day came, were quelléd the warfare,
⁹² Tempest (and) deluge which like to an army embattail'd were fighting.
⁹³ Lull'd was the sea, (all) spent was the gale, assuaged was the deluge,
⁹⁴ (So) did I look on the day; (lo), sound was (all) still'd; and all human
⁹⁵ Back to (its) clay was return'd, and fen was level with roof-tree.
⁹⁶ (Then) I open'd a hatchway, and down on my cheek stream'd the sunlight,
⁹⁷ Bowing myself, I sat weeping, my tears o'er my cheek(s) overflowing,
⁹⁸ Into the distance I gazed, to the furthest bounds of the Ocean,
⁹⁹ Land was uprear'd at twelve (points), and the Ark on the Mountain of Nisir
¹⁰⁰ Grounded; the Mountain of Nisir held fast, nor gave lease to her shifting.
¹⁰¹ One day, (nay,) two, did Nisir hold fast, nor give lease to her shifting.
¹⁰² Three days, (nay), four, did Nisir hold fast, nor give lease to her shifting,
¹⁰³ Five days, (nay,) six, did Nisir hold fast, nor give lease to her shifting.
¹⁰⁴ (Then), when the seventh day dawn'd, I put forth a dove, and released (her),
¹⁰⁵ (But) to and fro went the dove, and return'd (for) a resting-place was not.
¹⁰⁶ 150 (Then) I a swallow put forth and released; to and fro went the swallow,
¹⁰⁷ She (too) return'd, (for) a resting-place was not; I put forth a raven,
¹⁰⁸ Her, (too,) releasing; the raven went, too, and th' abating of waters
¹⁰⁹ Saw; and she ate as she waded (and) splash'd, (unto me) not returning.
¹¹⁰ Unto the four winds (of heaven) I freed (all the beasts), and an off'ring

111 Sacrificed, and a libation I pour'd on the peak of the mountain,
112 Twice seven flagons devoting, (and) sweet cane, (and) cedar, and myrtle,
113 Heap'd up beneath them; the gods smelt the savour, the gods the sweet savour
114 Smelt; (aye,) the gods did assemble like flies o'er him making the off'ring.
115 Then, on arriving, the Queen (of the gods) the magnificent jewels
116 Lifted on high, which Anu had made in accord with her wishes;
117 'O ye Gods! I will (rather) forget (this) my necklet of sapphires,
118 Than not maintain these days in remembrance, nor ever forget them.
119 (So), though (the rest of) the gods may present themselves at the off'ring,
120 Enlil (alone of the gods) may (himself) not come to the off'ring,
121 Because he, unreasoning, brought on a deluge, and therefore my people
122 Unto destruction consign'd.'
123 Then Enlil, on his arrival,
124 Spied out the vessel, and (straightway) did Enlil burst into anger,
125 Swollen with wrath 'gainst the gods, the Igigi : 'Hath any of mortals
126 'Scaped? Sooth, never a man could have lived through (the welter of) ruin.'
127 (Then) did Ninurta make answer and speak unto warrior Enlil,
128 Saying: 'O, who can there be to devise such a plan, except Ea?
129 Surely, 'tis Ea is privy to ev'ry design.' Whereat Ea
130 Answer'd and spake unto Enlil, the warrior, saying: 'O chieftain
131 Thou of the gods, thou warrior! How, forsooth, how (all) uncounsell'd
132 Couldst thou a deluge bring on? (Aye,) visit his sin on the sinner
133 Visit his guilt on the guilty, (but) O, have mercy, that (thereby)
134 He shall not be cut off; be clement, that he may not [perish].
135 O, instead of thy making a flood, let a lion come, man to diminish;
136 O, instead of thy making a flood, let a jackal come, man to diminish;
137 O, instead of thy making a flood, let a famine occur, that the country
138 May be [devour'd(?)]; instead of thy making a flood, let the Plague-god
139 Come and the people [o'erwhelm];
140 Sooth, indeed 'twas not I of the Great Gods the secret revealéd,
141 (But) to th' Abounding in Wisdom vouchsafed I a dream, and (in this wise)
142 He of the gods heard the secret. Deliberate, now, on his counsel'.
143 (Then) to the Ark came up Enlil; my hand did he grasp, and uplifted
144 Me, even me, and my wife, too, he raised, and, bent-kneed beside me,
145 Made her to kneel; our foreheads he touch'd as he stood there between us,
146 Blessing us; 'Uta-Napishtim hath hitherto only been mortal,

147 Now, indeed, Uta-Napishtim and (also) his wife shall be equal
 148 Like to us gods; in the distance afar at the mouth of the rivers
 149 Uta-Napishtim shall dwell'. (So) they took me and (there) in the distance
 150 Caused me to dwell at the mouth of the rivers.
 151 But thee, as for thee, pray,
 152 Who will assemble the gods for thy (need), that the life which thou seekest
 153 Thou mayst discover? Come, fall not asleep for six days, aye, a se'nnight!"
 154 (But Gilgamish is too mortal to resist even sleep).
 155 (Then), while he sat on his haunches a sleep like a breeze breathed upon him.
 156 Spake to her, Uta-Napishtim, yea, unto his wife: "O, behold him,
 157 E'en the strong fellow who asketh for life, (how) hath breathéd upon him
 158 Sleep like a breeze!" (Then) his wife unto Uta-Napishtim the Distant
 159 Answer 'd: "O, touch him, and let the man wake, that the road he hath traversed
 160 He may betake himself homeward in peace, that he by the portal
 161 Whence he fared forth may return to his land." Spake Uta-Napishtim,
 162 (Yea), to his wife: "(How) the troubles of mortals do trouble thee also!
 163 Bake then his flour (and) put at his head, but the time he is sleeping
 164 On the house-wall do thou mark it. " (So straightway) she (did so), his flour
 165 Baked she (and) set at his head, but the time he was sleeping she noted
 166 On the house-wall. (So), first was collected his flour, (then) secondly sifted,
 167 Thirdly, 'twas moisten'd, and fourthly she kneaded his dough, and so fifthly
 168 Leaven she added, and sixthly 'twas baked; (then) seventh—he touch'd him,
 169 All on a sudden, and (so from his slumber) awoke the (great) fellow!
 170 _____
 171 Gilgamish unto him spake, (yea) to Uta-Napishtim the Distant:
 172 "(Tell me), I pr'ythee (?), was 't thou, who when sleep was shower'd upon me
 173 All on a sudden didst touch me, and (straightway) rouse me (from slumber)?"
 174 Uta-Napishtim to Gilgamish [spake, (yea), unto him spake he]:
 175 "Gilgamish, told was the tale of thy meal . . . and (then) did I wake thee:
 176 ['One'—was collected] thy flour: [(then) 'two']—it was sifted; (and) 'thirdly'—
 177 Moistened: (and) 'fourthly'—she kneaded thy dough [(and) 'fifthly'] the leaven
 178 Added: (and) 'sixthly'—'twas baked: [(and) 'seventh'] —'twas I on a sudden
 179 Touch'd thee and thou didst awake." To Uta-Napishtim, the Distant,
 180 Gilgamish answer'd: "O, [how] shall I act, (or) where shall I hie me,
 181 Uta-Napishtim? A Robber (from me) hath ravish'd my [courage,
 182 Death [in] my bed-chamber broodeth, and Death is wherever I [listen] ."

184 [Spake] to [him, (yea),] to the boatman Ur-Shanabi Uta-Napishtim:
 185 "'Tis thou, Ur-Shanabi . . . the crossing, will hate thee,
 186 (Sooth), to all those who come to its marge, doth its marge set a limit:
 187 (This) man for whom thou wert guide—are stains to cover his body,
 188 Or shall a skin hide the grace of his limbs? Ur-Shanabi, take him,
 189 Lead him to where he may bathe, that he wash off his stains in the water
 190 (White) as the snow: let him cast off his pelt(s) that the sea may remove (them);
 191 Fair let his body appear: of his head be the fillet renewéd,
 192 Let him, as clothes for his nakedness, garb himself in a mantle,
 193 Such that, or ever he come to his city, and finish his journey,
 194 No (sign of) age shall the mantle betray, but preserve (all) its freshness."
 195 Wherefore Ur-Shanabi took him, and where he might bathe did he lead him,
 196 Washing his stains in the [water] like snow, his pelt(s), [too], discarding,
 197 So that the sea might bear them away; (and) his body appeared
 198 Fair; [of] his head he [the fillet] renewed, and himself in a mantle
 199 Garb'd, as the clothes for his nakedness, [such that or ever his city
 200 Reach he], or ever he finish his journey, [the mantle betray not
 201 Age, but] preserve [(all) its freshness].
 202 (So) into their vessel embarkéd
 203 Gilgamish, (aye), and Ur-Shanabi, launching (their) craft [on the billow],
 204 They themselves riding aboard (her).
 205 (The magic gift of restored youth).
 206 To Uta-Napishtim, the Distant ,
 207 Spake (then) his wife: "Came Gilgamish (hither) aweary with rowing,
 208 What wilt thou give wherewith he return to his land?" and the meanwhile
 209 Gilgamish, lifting his pole, was pushing the boat at the seashore.
 210 (Then answer'd) Uta-Napishtim to him, (yea), [to] Gilgamish [spake he]:
 211 "Gilgamish, (hither) didst come (all) aweary with rowing; (O, tell me),
 212 What shall I give thee (as gift) wherewith to return to thy country?
 213 Gilgamish, I will reveal thee a hidden matter . . . I'll tell thee:
 214 There is a plant like a thorn with its root (?) [deep down in the ocean],
 215 Like unto those of the briar (in sooth) its prickles will scratch [thee],
 216 (Yet) if thy hand reach this plant, [thou'lt surely find life (everlasting)] ."
 217 (Then), when Gilgamish heard this, he loosen'd [his girdle about him],
 218 Bound heavy stones [on his feet], which dragg'd him down to the sea-deeps,

219 [Found he the plant]; as he seized on the plant, (lo), [its prickles did scratch him].
 220 Cut he the heavy stones [from his feet] that again it restore him
 221 Unto its shore.
 222 _____
 223 Gilgamish spake to him, (yea), to the boatman Ur-Shanabi (this wise):
 224 "(Nay, but) this plant is a plant of great wonder(?), Ur-Shanabi," said he,
 225 "Whereby a man may attain his desire—I'll take it to Erech,
 226 (Erech), the high-wall'd, and give it to eat [unto . . .].
 227 'Greybeard-who-turneth-to-man-in-his-prime' is its name and I'll eat it
 228 I myself, that again I may come to my youthful condition."
 229 (The Quest ends in Tragedy).
 230 Broke they their fast at the fortieth hour: at the sixtieth rested.
 231 Gilgamish spied out a pool of cool water, (and) therein descending
 232 Bathed in the water. (But here was) a serpent who snuff'd the plant's fragrance,
 233 Darted he up [from the water (?)], and snatch'd the plant, uttering malison
 234 As he drew back. Then Gilgamish sate him, (and) burst into weeping.
 235 Over his cheeks flow'd his tears: to the boatman Ur -Shanabi [spake he(?)]
 236 "(Pr'ythee), [for] whom have toiled mine arms, O Ur-Shanabi, (tell me),
 237 (Pr'ythee), for whom hath my heart's blood been spent? (yea), not for mine own self,
 238 Have I the guerdon achieved; (no), 'tis for an earth-lion (only)
 239 Have I the guerdon secured—(and) now at the fortieth hour
 240 (Such an) one reiveth (it)—O, when I open'd the sluice and . . .ed the attachment,
 241 (Aye), I noted the sign (?) which to me was vouchsafed as a warning,
 242 Would I had turn'd and abandon'd the boat at the marge (of the ocean)!"
 243 Broke they their fast at the fortieth hour: at the sixtieth rested,
 244 (So in the end) to the middle of Erech, the high-wall'd, arrivéd.
 245 _____
 246 (The Pride of the Architect).
 247 Gilgamish spake to him, (yea), to the boatman Ur-Shanabi (this wise):
 248 "Do thou, Ur-Shanabi, go up and walk on the ramparts of Erech,
 249 Look on its base, and take heed of its bricks, if its bricks be not kiln-burnt,
 250 (Aye), and its ground-work be not bitumen, e'en seven courses,
 251 One shar the city, (and) one shar the gardens, and one shar the (2)
 252 . . . the Temple of Ishtar, amass'd I three shar and . . . (?) of Erech .

The Twelfth Tablet: Gilgamish, In Despair, Enquires of the Dead

¹ Column I.

² (How the dead haunt the living).

³ (Then), what time that the seine had pass'd through the Architect 's dwelling,

⁴ (Aye, and) the net [had taken its toll] [said he]:

⁵ "Lord, what [is't I may do]

⁶ (Now, what time that) the seine hath [pass'd through the Architect's dwelling],

⁷ (Aye and) the net [hath taken its toll]"

⁸ Gilgamish [unto him spake]

⁹ "If unto

¹⁰ (About two lines wanting, in which Gilgamish presumably asks how the dead may be made to haunt the mourner).

¹¹ "Gilgamish,"

¹² (The Mourner's Duty).

¹³ "If to the . . . [thou drawest], unto the temple

¹⁴ Raiment clean [shalt not don], (but) like to a townsman shalt

¹⁵ Nor with sweet oil from the cruse be anointed, (lest) at its fragrance

¹⁶ Round thee they gather: nor mayst thou set bow to the earth, (lest) around thee

¹⁷ Circle those shot by the bow; nor a stick in thy hand mayst thou carry,

¹⁸ (Lest) (stricken) ghosts should gibber against thee: nor shoe to thy footsole

¹⁹ Put on, nor make on the ground a (loud) echo: thy wife, whom thou lovest,

²⁰ Kiss (her) thou mayst not, thy wife whom thou hatest—thou mayst not chastise (her),

²¹ (Aye, and) thy child whom thou lovest not kiss, nor thy child whom thou hatest

²² Mayst not chastise, (for) the mourning of earth doth hold thee enthralled.

²³ "She who dead lieth,

²⁴ She who dead lieth,

²⁵ Mother of Ninazu,

²⁶ She who dead lieth,

²⁷ No more with mantle are

²⁸ Veil'd her fair shoulders,

²⁹ No more her bosom

³⁰ Drawn , like the lard cruse!"

³¹ (Gilgamish by contravening these customs attempts to raise Enkidu).

³² (So) did he draw [the . . . to . . . , and came to the temples,

³³ [Put on clean raiment] . . . (and) like to a townsman . . .

34 (Aye), with [sweet] oil from the cruse [was] anointed: (then) at [its] fragrance
 35 Round him they gather 'd: the bow did he set (?) [to the earth], and around him
 36 Circled the spirits, (yea,) those who were [shot] by the bow at him gibber'd,
 37 [Carried] a stick in his hand [and the (stricken) ghosts at him gibber'd(?)].
 38 [Put on] a shoe to [his foot-sole, and made on the ground a (loud)] echo.
 39 [Kiss'd he] his wife [whom he lovéd, chastiséd his] wife whom he hated,
 40 [Kiss'd he his child] whom he lovéd, chastiséd [his] child whom he hated.
 41 (Aye, in good sooth, 'twas) the mourning of earth which did hold him enthralled:
 42 "She who (dead) lieth,
 43 [She who] (dead) lieth,
 44 Mother of Ninazu,
 45 She who (dead) lieth,
 46 No (more) with mantle are
 47 Veil'd [her] fair shoulders,
 48 No (more) her bosom
 49 Drawn, like the lard cruse."
 50 Cried(?) [he] (for) Enkidu out of the earth to ascend: "[Not] (the Plague-god),
 51 Namtar, hath [seized] him, nor fever, (but only) the earth: nor the Croucher,
 52 [Nergal], the ruthless, hath seized him, (but only) the earth: neither fell he
 53 There where was [battle] of mortals; 'twas only the earth [which hath seized him.] "3
 54 (So) . . . for his servitor Enkidu sorrow'd the offspring of Nin-sun,
 55 (Aye), as he went all alone unto [Ekur], the temple of Enlil:
 56 "[Enlil], (my) Father, ('tis now) that the seine hath stricken me also,
 57 Down to the earth—the net to the earth hath stricken me also.
 58 Enkidu 'tis—whom [I pray thee] to raise [from the earth]—not (the Plague-god),
 59 Namtar, hath seized him, nor fever, [but only the earth]: nor the Croucher,
 60 Nergal, the ruthless, hath seized him, but only the earth]: [neither fell he]
 61 There where was battle of mortals: ['twas only the earth which hath seized him]."
 62 (But) no answer did Enlil, the father vouchsafe.
 63 [To the Moon-god he hied him (?]):
 64 "Moon-god, (my) Father, ('tis now) that the seine [hath stricken me also,
 65 Down to the earth]—the net [to the earth hath stricken me also].
 66 Enkidu 'tis—whom [I pray thee] to raise [from the earths—not (the Plague-god),
 67 Namtar, hath seized him, [nor] fever, [but only the earth: nor] the Croucher,
 68 Nergal, [the ruthless, hath seized him, but only the earth]: [neither fell he]
 69 There where [was battle of mortals: 'twas only the earth which hath seized him]."

70 [(But) no answer the Moon-god vouchsafed:
 71 (Then) to Ea he hied him:]
 72 ["Ea, (my) Father, 'tis now that the seine hath stricken me also,]
 73 [Down to the earth—the net to the earth hath stricken me also.]
 74 [Enkidu 'tis,—whom I pray thee to raise from the earth—not (the Plague-god),]
 75 Nam[ar, hath seized him, nor fever, but only the earth: nor] the Croucher,
 76 Nergal, the ruthless, [hath seized him, but only the earth: neither fell he]
 77 There where was battle of mortals: ['twas only the earth which hath seized him]."
 78 Ea, the father, [gave ear (and) to Nergal], the warrior-hero,
 79 [Spake he]: "O Nergal, O warrior-hero, [give ear to my speaking(?)]!
 80 [Ope now,] a hole [in the earth], that the spirit of [Enkidu, (rising)],
 81 [May from the earth issue forth, and so have speech] with [his] brother."
 82 Nergal, the warrior-hero, [gave ear to the speaking of Ea],
 83 Oped, then, a hole in the earth, and the spirit of Enkidu issued
 84 Forth from the earth like a wind. They embraced and
 85 Communed together, mourning.
 86 "Tell, O my friend, O tell, O my friend, (O) tell (me, I pr'y thee),
 87 What thou hast seen of the laws of the Underworld?" "(Nay, then,) O comrade;
 88 I will not tell thee, (yea,) I will not tell thee—(for), were I to tell thee,
 89 What I have seen of the laws of the Underworld,—sit thee down weeping!"
 90 "(Then) let me sit me down weeping."
 91 (The wretched lot of all who must die).
 92 "(So be it): [the friend(?)] thou didst fondle
 93 (Thereby) rejoicing thee—[into his body(?), as though 'twere a] mantle
 94 Old, hath the worm made its entry: (in sooth, then) [the bride(?)] thou didst fondle,
 95 (Thereby) rejoicing thee—fill'd with the dust [is her body] . . .
 96 . . . he hath spoken and [into the"" ground (?) is he sunken,
 97 . . . he hath spoken and [into the ground (?) is he sunken."
 98 "[He who fell in . . .]
 99 [Didst thou see him?]." "(Aye), I saw"
 100 (About seventeen lines missing).
 101 "As a pillar beautiful
 102 [Props?] an inner por[tico (?)] . . .
 103 (About twenty-five lines missing).
 104 "He who falleth from a pole
 105 Didst thou see him? "(Aye), I saw]:

106 Straightway for
107 By removal of a plug"
108 "He whom death
109 "Didst thou see him?" "[Aye] I saw:
110 He's at rest upon a couch,
111 Limpid water doth he drink."
112 "(Then, the hero) slain in fight,
113 Didst thou see him?" "(Aye) I saw:
114 Father, mother raise his head,
115 O'er him wife [in bitter woe]."
116 "He whose corpse in desert lieth,
117 Hast thou seen him?" "(Aye), I saw;
118 Not in earth doth rest his spirit."
119 "He whose ghost hath none to tend,
120 Didst thou see him?" "(Aye), I saw,
121 Lees of cup, and broken bread
122 Thrown into the street he eateth."