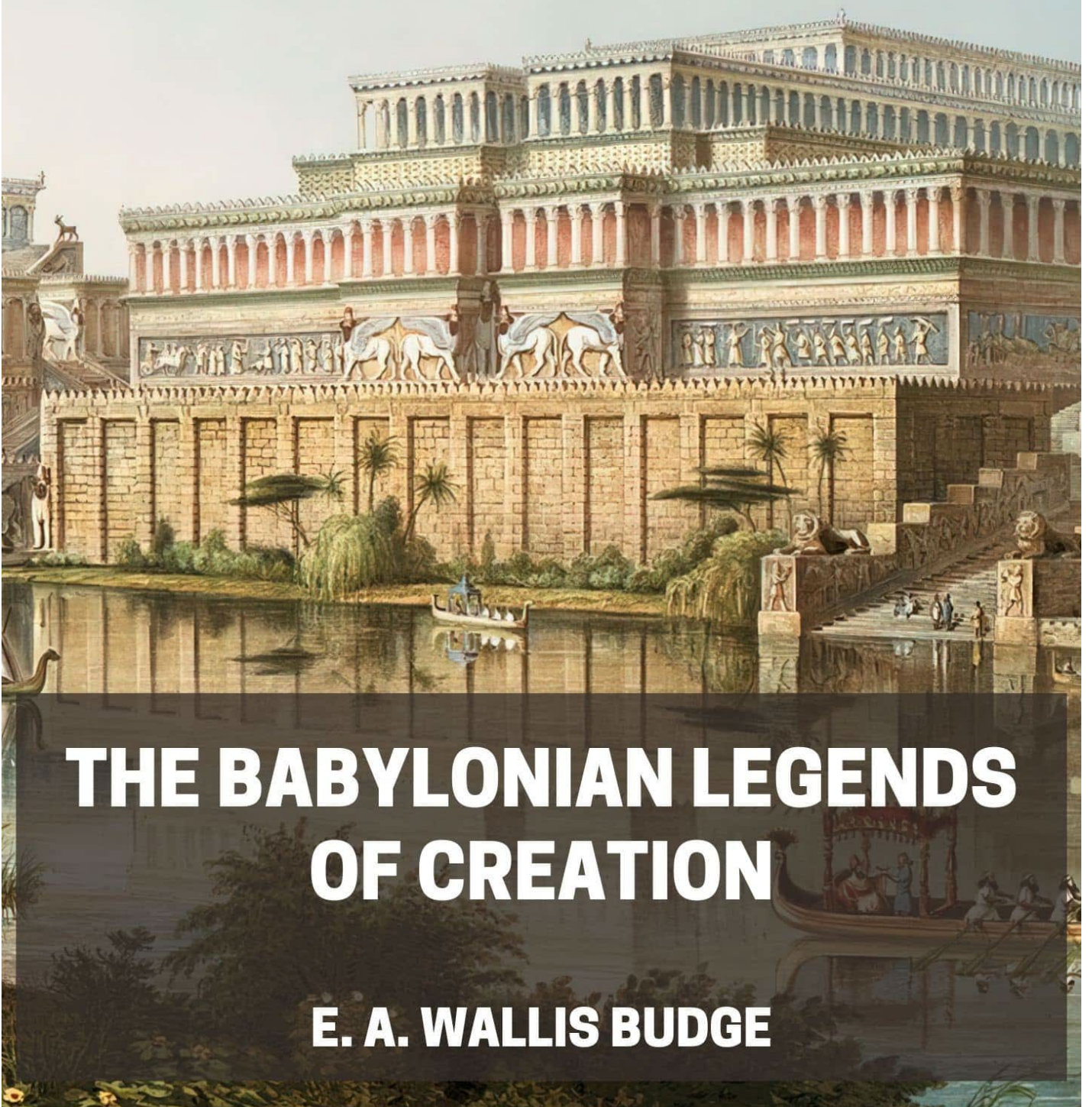


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# **THE BABYLONIAN LEGENDS OF CREATION**

**E. A. WALLIS BUDGE**

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# Contents

Discovery Of The Tablets

Publication Of The Creation Tablets

The Object Of The Babylonian Legend Of The Creation

Variant Forms Of The Babylonian Legend Of The Creation

The “Bilingual” Version Of The Creation Legend

The Legend Of The Creation According To Berosus And Damascius

The Seven Tablets Of Creation. Description Of Their Contents

The Seven Tablets Of Creation. Translation

Notes

List of the name of the Stars or Signs of the Zodiac

## Discovery Of The Tablets

The baked clay tablets and portions of tablets which describe the views and beliefs of the Babylonians and Assyrians about the Creation were discovered by Mr. (later Sir) A.H. Layard, Mormuzd Rassam and George Smith, Assistant in the Department of Oriental Antiquities in the British Museum.

They were found among the ruins of the Palace and Library of Ashur-bani-pal (B.C. 668-626) at Ҡuyûnjik (Nineveh), between the years 1848 and 1876. Between 1866 and 1870, the great “find” of tablets and fragments, some 20,000 in number, which Rassam made in 1852, was worked through by George Smith, who identified many of the historical inscriptions of Shalmaneser II, Tiglath-Pileser III, Sargon II, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, and other kings mentioned in the Bible, and several literary compositions of a legendary character, fables, etc.

In the course of this work he discovered fragments of various versions of the Babylonian Legend of the Deluge, and portions of several texts belonging to a work which treated of the beginning of things, and of the Creation. In 1870, Rawlinson and Smith noted allusions to the Creation in the important tablet K.63, but the texts of portions of tablets of the Creation Series at that time available for study were so fragmentary that it was impossible for these scholars to find their correct sequence. During the excavations which Smith carried out at Ҡuyûnjik in 1873 and 1874 for the proprietors of the *Daily Telegraph* and the Trustees of the British Museum, he was, he tells us, fortunate enough to discover “several fragments of the Genesis Legends.”

In January, 1875, he made an exhaustive search among the tablets in the British Museum, and in the following March he published, in the *Daily Telegraph* (March 4th), a summary of the contents of about twenty fragments of the series of tablets describing the creation of the heavens and the earth. In November of the same year he communicated to the Society of Biblical Archaeology<sup>1</sup> copies of:--(1) the texts on fragments of the First and Fifth Tablets of Creation; (2) a text describing the fight between the “Gods and Chaos”; and (3) a fragmentary text which, he believed, described the Fall of Man. In the following year he published translations of all the known fragments of the Babylonian Creation Legends in his “Chaldean Account of Genesis” (London, 1876, 8vo, with photographs). In this volume were included translations of the Exploits of Gizdubar (Gilgamish), and some early Babylonian fables and legends of the gods.

<sup>1</sup> See the Transactions, Vol. IV, Plates I-VI, London, 1876

## Publication Of The Creation Tablets

The publication of the above-mentioned texts and translations proved beyond all doubt the correctness of Rawlinson's assertion made in 1865, that "certain portions of the Babylonian and Assyrian Legends of the Creation resembled passages in the early chapters of the Book of Genesis." During the next twenty years, the Creation texts were copied and recopied by many Assyriologists, but no publication appeared in which all the material available for reconstructing the Legend was given in a collected form. In 1898, the Trustees of the British Museum ordered the publication of all the Creation texts contained in the Babylonian and Assyrian Collections, and the late Mr. L. W. King, Assistant in the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities, was directed to prepare an edition.

The exhaustive preparatory search which he made through the collections of tablets in the British Museum resulted in the discovery of many unpublished fragments of the Creation Legends, and in the identification of a fragment which, although used by George Smith, had been lost sight of for about twenty-five years. He ascertained also that, according to the Ninevite scribes, the Tablets of the Creation Series were seven in number, and what several versions of the Legend of the Creation, the works of Babylonian and Assyrian editors of different periods, must have existed in early Mesopotamian Libraries.

King's edition of the Creation Texts appeared in "Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum," Part XIII, London, 1901. As the scope of this work did not permit the inclusion of his translations, and commentary and notes, he published these in a private work entitled, "The Seven Tablets of Creation, or the Babylonian and Assyrian Legends concerning the creation of the world and of mankind," London, 1902, 8vo. A supplementary volume contained much new material which had been found by him since the appearance of the official edition of the texts, and in fact doubled the number of Creation Texts known hitherto.

# The Object Of The Babylonian Legend Of The Creation

A perusal of the texts of the Seven Tablets of Creation, which King was enabled, through the information contained in them, to arrange for the first time in their proper sequence, shows that the main object of the Legend was the glorification of the god Marduk, the son of Ea (Enki), as the conqueror of the dragon Tiâmat, and not the narration of the story of the creation of the heavens, and earth and man.

The Creation properly speaking, is only mentioned as an exploit of Marduk in the Sixth Tablet, and the Seventh Tablet is devoted wholly to the enumeration of the honorific titles of Marduk.

It is probable that every great city in Babylonia, whilst accepting the general form of the Creation Legend, made the greatest of its local gods the hero of it. It has long been surmised that the prominence of Marduk in the Legend was due to the political importance of the city of Babylon.

And we now know from the fragments of tablets which have been excavated in recent years by German Assyriologists at Ƙal'at Sharkât (or Shargat, or Shar'at), that in the city of Ashur, the god Ashur, the national god of Assyria, actually occupied in texts<sup>2</sup> of the Legend in use there the position which Marduk held in four of the Legends current in Babylonia.

There is reason for thinking that the original hero of the Legend was Enlil (Bel), the great god of Nippur (the Nafar, or Nufar of the Arab writers), and that when Babylon rose into power under the First Dynasty (about B.C. 2300), his position in the Legend was usurped at Babylon by Marduk.

<sup>2</sup> See the duplicate fragments described in the Index to Ebeling, Keilschrifttexte aus Assur, Leipzig, 1919 fol.

## Variant Forms Of The Babylonian Legend Of The Creation

The views about the Creation which are described in the Seven Tablets mentioned above were not the only ones current in Mesopotamia, and certainly they were not necessarily the most orthodox. Though in the version of the Legend already referred to the great god of creation was Enlil, or Marduk, or Ashur, we know that in the Legend of Gilgamesh (Second Tablet) it was the goddess Aruru who created Enkidu (Eabani) from a piece of clay moistened with her own spittle. And in the so-called "bilingual" version<sup>3</sup> of the Legend, we find that this goddess assisted Marduk as an equal in the work of creating the seed of mankind. This version, although Marduk holds the position of pre-eminence, differs in many particulars from that given by the Seven Tablets, and as it is the most important of all the texts which deal directly with the creation of the heavens and the earth, a rendering of it is here given.

<sup>3</sup> The text is found on a tablet from Abû Habbah, Brit. Mus., No. 93,014 (82-5-22, 1048).



# The “Bilingual” Version Of The Creation Legend

1. “The holy house, the house of the gods in the holy place had not yet been made.
2. “No reed had sprung up, no tree had been made.
3. “No brick had been laid, no structure of brick had been erected.
4. “No house had been made, no city had been built.
5. “No city had been made, no creature had been constituted.
6. “Enlil’s city, (i.e., Nippur) had not been made, E-kur had not been built,
7. “Erech had not been made, E-Aena had not been built,
8. The Deep<sup>4</sup> (or Abyss) had not been made, Eridu had not been built.
9. “Of the holy house, the house of the gods, the dwelling-place had not been made.
10. “All the lands were sea
11. “At the time that the mid-most sea was [shaped like] a trough,
12. “At that time Eridu was made, and E-sagil was built,
13. “The E-sagil where in the midst of the Deep the god Lugal-dul-azaga<sup>5</sup> dwelleth,
14. “Babylon was made, E-sagil was completed.
15. “The gods the Anunnaki he created at one time.
16. “They proclaimed supreme the holy city, the dwelling of their heart’s happiness.
17. “Marduk laid a rush mat upon the face of the waters,
18. “He mixed up earth and moulded it upon the rush mat,
19. “To enable the gods to dwell in the place where they fain would be.
20. “He fashioned man.
21. “The goddess Aruru with him created the seed of mankind.
22. “He created the beasts of the field and [all] the living things in the field.
23. “He created the river Idiglat (Tigris) and the river Purattu (Euphrates), and he set them in their places,
24. “He proclaimed their names rightly.
25. “He created grass, the vegetation of the marsh, seed and shrub;
26. “He created the green plants of the plain,
27. “Lands, marshes, swamps,

<sup>4</sup> APSÛ. It is doubtful if APSÛ here really means the great abyss of waters from out of which the world was called. It was, more probably, a ceremonial object used in the cult of the god, something like the great basin, or “sea,” in the court of the temple of King Solomon, mentioned in I Kings, vii, 23; 2 Kings, xxv, 13, etc.

<sup>5</sup> This is a name under which Marduk was worshipped at Eridu.

28. "The wild cow and the calf she carried, the wild calf, the sheep and the young she carried, the lamb of the fold,
29. "Plantations and shrub land,
30. "The he-goat and the mountain goat ...
31. "The lord Marduk piled up a dam in the region of the sea (*i.e.*, he reclaimed land)
32. "He ... a swamp, he founded a marsh.
33. "... he made to be
34. "Reeds he created, trees he created,
35. "... in place he created
36. "He laid bricks, he built a brick-work,
37. "He constructed houses, he formed cities.
38. "He constructed cities, creatures he set [therein].
39. "Nippur he made, E-Kur he built.
40. "[Erech he made, E-Anna] he built.

[The remainder of the text is fragmentary, and shows that the text formed part of an incantation which was recited in the Temple of E-Zida, possibly the great temple of Nabu at Borsippa.]

## The Legend Of The Creation According To Berosus And Damascius

Versions in Greek of the Legends found by George Smith had long been known to classical scholars, owing to the preservation of fragments of them in the works of later Greek writers, *e.g.*, Eusebius, Syncellus, and others. The most important of these is derived from the History of Babylonia, which was written in Greek by BEROSUS, a priest of Bel-Marduk, *i.e.*, the “Lord Marduk,” at Babylon, about 250 B.C. In this work Berosus reproduced all the known historical facts and traditions derived from native sources which were current in his day. It is therefore not surprising to find that his account of the Babylonian beliefs about the origin of things corresponds very closely with that given in the cuneiform texts, and that it is of the greatest use in explaining and partly in expanding these texts. His account of the primeval abyss, out of which everything came, and of its inhabitants reads:--

“There was a time in which there existed nothing but darkness and an abyss of waters, wherein resided most hideous beings, which were produced on a two-fold principle. There appeared men, some of whom were furnished with two wings, others with four, and with two faces. They had one body but two heads; the one that of a man, the other of a woman; and likewise in their several organs both male and female. Other human figures were to be seen with the legs and horns of goats; some had horses’ feet; while others united the hind-quarters of a horse with the body of a man, resembling in shape the hippo-centaurs. Bulls likewise were bred there with the heads of men, and dogs with four told bodies, terminated in their extremities with the tails of fishes; horses also with the heads of dogs; men too and other animals, with the heads and bodies of horses and the tails of fishes. In short, there were creatures in which were combined the limbs of every species of animals. In addition to these, fishes, reptiles, serpents, with other monstrous animals, which assumed each other’s shape and countenance. Of all which were preserved delineations in the temple of Belus at Babylon.”

[THE SLAUGHTER OF THE QUEEN OF THE ABYSS.]

“The person, who presided over them, was a woman named OMUROCA; which in the Chaldean language is THALATTH; in Greek THALASSA, the sea; but which might equally be interpreted the Moon. All things being in this situation, Belus came, and cut the woman asunder: and of one half of her he formed the earth, and of the other half the heavens; and at the same time destroyed the animals within her. All this (he says) was an allegorical description of nature.”

[THE CREATION OF MAN.]

“For, the whole universe consisting of moisture, and animals being generated therein, the deity above-mentioned<sup>6</sup> took off his own head: upon which the other gods mixed the blood, as it gushed out, with the earth; and from whence were formed men. On this account it is that they are rational and partake of divine knowledge.”

[BELUS CREATES THE UNIVERSE.]

<sup>6</sup> The god whose head was taken off was not Belus, as is commonly thought, but the god who the cuneiform texts tell us was called “Kingu.”

“This Belus, by whom they signify Jupiter, divided the darkness, and separated the Heavens from the Earth, and reduced the universe to order. But the animals not being able to bear the prevalence of light, died. Belus upon this, seeing a vast space unoccupied, though by nature fruitful, commanded one<sup>7</sup> of the gods to take off his head, and to mix the blood with the earth; and from thence to form other men and animals, which should be capable of bearing the air. Belus formed also the stars, and the sun, and the moon, and the five planets. Such, according to Polyhistor Alexander, is the account which Berosus gives in his first book.” (See Cory, *Ancient Fragments*, London, 1832, pp. 24-26.)

In the sixth century of our era DAMASCIUS the SYRIAN, the last of the Neo-Platonic philosophers, wrote in Greek in a work on the Doubts and Solutions of the first Principles, in which he says: “But the Babylonians, like the rest of the Barbarians, pass over in silence the One principle of the Universe, and they conceive Two, TAUTHE and APASON; making APASON the husband of TAUTHE, and denominating her the mother of the gods. And from these proceeds an only-begotten son, MOYMIS, which I conceive is no other than the Intelligible World proceeding from the two principles. From these, also, another progeny is derived, DACHE and DACHUS; and again, a third, KISSARE and ASSORUS, from which last three others proceed, ANUS, and ILLINUS, and AUS. And of AUS and DAUCE is born a son called Belus, who, they say, is the fabricator of the world, the Demiurgus.” (See Cory, *Ancient Fragments*, London, 1832, p. 318.)

<sup>7</sup> The god whose head was taken off was not Belus, as is commonly thought, but the god who the cuneiform texts tell us was called “Kingu.”

## The Seven Tablets Of Creation. Description Of Their Contents

In the beginning nothing whatever existed except APSÛ, which may be described as a boundless, confused and disordered mass of watery matter; how it came into being is unknown. Out of this mass there were evolved two orders of beings, namely, demons and gods. The demons had hideous forms, even as Berosus said, which were part animal, part bird, part reptile and part human. The gods had wholly human forms, and they represented the three layers of the comprehensible world, that is to say, heaven or the sky, the atmosphere, and the underworld. The atmosphere and the underworld together formed the earth as opposed to the sky or heaven. The texts say that the first two gods to be created were LAKHMU and LAKHAMU. Their attributes cannot at present be described, but they seem to represent two forms of primitive matter. They appear to have had no existence in popular religion, and it has been thought that they may be described as theological conceptions containing the notions of matter and some of its attributes.

After countless aeons had passed the gods ANSHAR and KISHAR came into being; the former represents the “hosts of heaven,” and the latter the “hosts of earth.”

After another long and indefinite period the independent gods of the Babylonian pantheon came into being, *e.g.*, ANU, EA, who is here called NUDIMMUD, and others.

As soon as the gods appeared in the universe “order” came into being. When APSÛ, the personification of confusion and disorder of every kind, saw this “order,” he took counsel with his female associate TIÂMAT with the object of finding some means of destroying the “way” (*al-ka-at*) or “order” of the gods. Fortunately the Babylonians and Assyrians have supplied us with representations of Tiâmat, and these show us what form ancient tradition assigned to her. She is depicted as a ferocious monster with wings and scales and terrible claws, and her body is sometimes that of a huge serpent, and sometimes that of an animal. In the popular imagination she represented all that was physically terrifying, and foul, and abominable; she was nevertheless the mother of everything,<sup>8</sup> and was the possessor of the DUP SHIMATI or “TABLET OF DESTINIES”.

No description of this Tablet or its contents is available, but from its name we may assume that it was a sort of Babylonian Book of Fate.<sup>9</sup>

Theologically, Tiâmat represented to the Babylonians the same state in the development of the universe as did *tôhû wâ-bhôhû* (Genesis i. 2), *i.e.*, formlessness and voidness, of primeval matter, to the Hebrews She is depicted both on bas-reliefs and on cylinder seals in a form which associates her with LABARTU,<sup>10</sup> a female devil that prowled about the desert at night suckling wild animals but killing men. And it is tolerably certain that she was the type, and symbol, and head of the whole community of fiends, demons and devils.

In the consultation which took place between APSÛ and TIÂMAT, their messenger MU-UM-MU took part; of the history and attributes of this last-named god nothing is known. The

<sup>8</sup> Muallidat gimrishun .

<sup>9</sup> It is probable that the idea of this Tablet is perpetuated in the “Preserved Tablet” of the Kūr’ân (Surah x, 62), on which the destiny of every man was written at or before the creation of the world. Nothing that is written (maktûb) there can be erased, or altered, or fail to take effect.

<sup>10</sup> (Cun. Texts, Part XXIV, Plate 44, l. 142).

result of the consultation was that a long struggle began between the demons and the gods, and it is clear that the object of the powers of darkness was to destroy the light. The whole story of this struggle is the subject of the Seven Tablets of Creation. The gods are deifications of the sun, moon, planets and other stars, and APSÛ, or CHAOS, and his companions the demons, are personifications of darkness, night and evil. The story of the fight between them is nothing more nor less than a picturesque allegory of natural phenomena. Similar descriptions are found in the literatures of other primitive nations, and the story of the great fight between Her-ur, the great god of heaven, and Set, the great captain of the hosts of darkness, may be quoted as an example. Set regarded the “order” which Her-ur was bringing into the universe with the same dislike as that with which APSÛ contemplated the beneficent work of Sin, the Moon-god, Shamash, the Sun-god, and their brother gods. And the hostility of Set and his allies to the gods, like that of Tiâmat and her allies, was everlasting.

At this point a new Text fills a break in the First Tablet, and describes the fight which took place between Nudimmud or Ea, (the representative of the established “order” which the rule of the gods had introduced into the domain of Apsû and Tiâmat) and Apsû and his envoy Mummu. Ea went forth to fight the powers of darkness and he conquered Apsû and Mummu. The victory over Apsû, *i.e.*, the confused and boundless mass of primeval water, represents the setting of impassable boundaries to the waters that are on and under the earth, *i.e.*, the formation of the Ocean. The exact details of the conquest cannot be given, but we know that Ea was the possessor of the “pure (or white, or holy) incantation” and that he overcame Apsû and his envoy by the utterance of a powerful spell. In the Egyptian Legend of Râ and Aapep, the monster is rendered spell-bound by the god Her-Tuati, who plays in it exactly the same part as Ea in the Babylonian Legend.

When Tiâmat heard of Ea’s victory over Apsû and Mummu she was filled with fury, and determined to avenge the death of Apsû, her husband.

The first act of TIÂMAT after the death of Apsû was to increase the number of her allies. We know that a certain creature called “UMMU-KHUBUR” at once spawned a brood of devilish monsters to help her in her fight against the gods. Nothing is known of the origin or attributes of UMMU-KHUBUR, but some think she was a form of TIÂMAT. Her brood probably consisted of personifications of mist, fog, cloud, storm, whirlwinds and the blighting and destroying powers which primitive man associated with the desert. An exact parallel of this brood of devils is found in Egyptian mythology where the allies of Set and Aapep are called “Mesu betshet” *i.e.*, “spawn of impotent revolt.” They are depicted in the form of serpents, and some of them became the “Nine Worms of Amenti” that are mentioned in the Book of the Dead (Chap. Ia).

Not content with Ummu-Khubur’s brood of devils, Tiâmat called the stars and powers of the air to her aid, for she “set up” (1) the Viper, (2) the Snake, (3) the god Lakhamu, (4) the Whirlwind, (5) the ravening Dog, (6) the Scorpion-man, (7) the mighty Storm-wind, (8) the Fish-man, and (9) the Horned Beast. These bore (10) the “merciless, invincible weapon,” and were under the command of (11) Kingu, whom Tiâmat calls “her husband.” Thus Tiâmat had Eleven mighty Helpers besides the devils spawned by Ummu-Khubur. We may note in passing that some of the above-mentioned Helpers appear among the Twelve Signs of the Zodiac which Marduk “set up” after his conquest of Tiâmat, *e.g.*, the Scorpion-man, the Horned Beast, etc. This fact suggests that the first Zodiac was “set up” by Tiâmat, who with her Eleven Helpers formed the Twelve Signs; the association of evil with certain stars may date from that period. That the Babylonians regarded the primitive gods as powers of evil is clear from the fact that Lakhamu, one of them, is enumerated among the allies of Tiâmat.

The helpers of Tiâmat were placed by her under the command of a god called KINGU who is TAMMUZ. He was the counterpart, or equivalent, of ANU, the Sky-god, in the kingdom of darkness, for it is said in the text "Kingu was exalted and received the power of Anu," *i.e.*, he possessed the same power and attributes as Anu. When Tiâmat appointed Kingu to be her captain, she recited over him a certain spell or incantation, and then she gave him the TABLET OF DESTINIES and fastened it to his breast, saying, "Whatsoever goeth forth from thy mouth shall be established." Armed with all the magical powers conferred upon him by this Tablet, and heartened by all the laudatory epithets which his wife Tiâmat heaped upon him, Kingu went forth at the head of his devils.

When Ea heard that Tiâmat had collected her forces and was determined to continue the fight against the gods which Apsû and Mummu had begun, and that she had made her husband Kingu her champion, he was "afflicted" and "sat in sorrow." He felt unable to renew the fight against the powers of darkness, and he therefore went and reported the new happenings to Anshar, representative of the "host of heaven," and took counsel with him. When Anshar heard the matter he was greatly disturbed in mind and bit his lips, for he saw that the real difficulty was to find a worthy antagonist for Kingu and Tiâmat. A gap in the text here prevents us from knowing exactly what Anshar said and did, but the context suggests that he summoned Anu, the Sky-god, to his assistance. Then, having given him certain instructions, he sent him on an embassy to Tiâmat with the view of conciliating her. When Anu reached the place where she was he found her in a very wrathful state, and she was muttering angrily; Anu was so appalled at the sight of her that he turned and fled. It is impossible at present to explain this interlude, or to find any parallel to it in other ancient Oriental literature.

When Anu reported his inability to deal with Tiâmat, a council of the gods was called, and Ea induced his son, Marduk to be present. We next find Anshar in converse with the god Marduk, who offers to act as the champion of the gods and to fight Tiâmat and her allies. Marduk being a form of the Sun-god, the greatest of all the powers of light, thus becomes naturally the protagonist of the gods, and the adversary of Tiâmat and her powers of darkness. Then Anshar summoned a great council of the gods, who forthwith met in a place called "Upshukkinaku", which may be described as the Babylonian Olympus. It was all-important for Marduk to appear at the council of the gods before he undertook his task, because it was necessary for him to be formally recognised by them as their champion, and he needed to be endowed by them with magical powers. The primitive gods Lakhmu and Lakhamu, and the Igigi (or ), who may be regarded as star-gods, were also summoned. A banquet was prepared, and the gods attended, and having met and kissed each other they sat down, and ate bread and drank hot and sweet sesame wine. The fumes of the wine confused their senses, but they continued to drink, and at length "their spirits were exalted." They appointed Marduk to be their champion officially, and then they proceeded to invest him with the power that would cause every command he spake to be followed immediately by the effect which he intended it to produce. Next Marduk, with the view of testing the new power which had been given him, commanded a garment to disappear and it did so; and when he commanded it to reappear it did so.

Then the gods saluted him as their king, and gave him the insignia of royalty, namely, the sceptre, the throne and the *pala*, whatever that may be. And as they handed to him these things they commanded him to go and hack the body of Tiâmat in pieces, and to scatter her blood to the winds. Thereupon Marduk began to arm himself for the fight. He took a bow, a spear, and a club; he filled his body full of fire and set the lightning before him. He took in his hands a net wherewith to catch Tiâmat, and he placed the four winds near it, to prevent her from escaping from it when he had snared her. He created mighty winds and tempests to assist him, and grasped the thunderbolt in his hand; and then, mounting upon the Storm,

which was drawn by four horses, he went out to meet and defeat Tiâmat. It seems pretty certain that this description of the equipment of Marduk was taken over from a very ancient account of the Fight with Tiâmat in which the hero was Enlil, *i.e.*, the god of the air, or of the region which lies between heaven and hell. Marduk approached and looked upon the “Middle” or “Inside” or “Womb” of Tiâmat<sup>11</sup>, and divined the plan of Kingu who had taken up his place therein.

In the Seventh Tablet (l. 108) Marduk is said to have “entered into the middle of Tiâmat,” and because he did so he is called “Nibiru,” *i.e.*, “he who entered in,” and the “seizer of the middle.” What the words “middle of Tiâmat” meant to the Babylonian we are not told, but it is clear that Marduk’s entry into it was a signal mark of the triumph of the god. When Kingu from the “middle of Tiâmat” saw Marduk arrayed in his terrible panoply of war, he was terrified and trembled, and staggered about and lost all control of his legs; and at the mere sight of the god all the other fiends and devils were smitten with fear and reduced to helplessness. Tiâmat saw Marduk and began to revile him, and when he challenged her to battle she flew into a rage and attempted to overthrow him by reciting an incantation, thinking that her words of power would destroy his strength. Her spell had no effect on the god, who at once cast his net over her. At the same moment he made a gale of foul wind to blow on her face, and entering through her mouth it filled her body; whilst her body was distended he drove his spear into her, and Tiâmat split asunder, and her womb fell out from it. Marduk leaped upon her body and looked on her followers as they attempted to escape. But the Four Winds which he had stationed round about Tiâmat made all their efforts to flee of no effect. Marduk caught all the Eleven allies of Tiâmat in his net, and he trampled upon them as they lay in it helpless. Marduk then took the TABLET OF DESTINIES from Kingu’s breast, and sealed it with his seal and placed it on his own breast.

Then returning to the dead body of Tiâmat he smashed her skull with his club and scattered her blood to the north wind, and as a reward for his destruction of their terrible foe, he received gifts and presents from the gods his fathers.

The text then goes on to say that Marduk “devised a cunning plan,” *i.e.*, he determined to carry out a series of works of creation. He split the body of Tiâmat into two parts; out of one half he fashioned the dome of heaven, and out of the other he constructed the abode of Nudimmud, or Ea, which he placed over against Apsu, *i.e.*, the deep. He also formulated regulations concerning the maintenance of the same. By this “cunning plan” Marduk deprived the powers of darkness of the opportunity of repeating their revolt with any chance of success. Having established the framework of his new heaven and earth Marduk, acting as the celestial architect, set to work to furnish them. In the first place he founded E-Sharra, or the mansion of heaven, and next he set apart and arranged proper places for the old gods of the three realms--Anu, Bel and Ea.

The text of the Fifth Tablet, which would undoubtedly have supplied details as to Marduk’s arrangement and regulations for the sun, the moon, the stars, and the Signs of the Zodiac in the heavens is wanting. The prominence of the celestial bodies in the history of creation is not to be wondered at, for the greater number of the religious beliefs of the Babylonians are grouped round them. Moreover, the science of astronomy had gone hand in hand with the superstition of astrology in Mesopotamia from time immemorial; and at a very early period the oldest gods of Babylonia were associated with the heavenly bodies. Thus the Annunaki

<sup>11</sup> Or perhaps the “belly of Tiâmat.” The Egyptians distinguished a portion of the heavens by the name of “Khat Nut,” “the belly of Nut,” and two drawings of it are extant. The first shows an oval object rimmed with stars and the other a pear-shaped object, with a god inside it. (See Brugsch, *Inschriften (Astronomische)* Leipzig, 1883, p, 146.)



and the Igigi, who are bodies of deified spirits, were identified with the stars of the northern and southern heaven, respectively. And all the primitive goddesses coalesced and were grouped to form the goddess Ishtar, who was identified with the Evening and Morning Star, or Venus. The Babylonians believed that the will of the gods was made known to men by the motions of the planets, and that careful observation of them would enable the skilled seer to recognize in the stars favourable and unfavourable portents. Such observations, treated from a magical point of view, formed a huge mass of literature which was being added to continually. From the nature of the case this literature enshrined a very considerable number of facts of pure astronomy, and as early as the period of the First Dynasty (about 2000 B.C.), the Babylonians were able to calculate astronomical events with considerable accuracy, and to reconcile the solar and lunar years by the use of epagomenal months. They had by that time formulated the existence of the Zodiac, and fixed the “stations” of the moon, and the places of the planets with it; and they had distinguished between the planets and the fixed stars. In the Fifth Tablet of the Creation Series (l. 2) the Signs of the Zodiac are called *Lumashi*<sup>12</sup>, but unfortunately no list of their names is given in the context.

Now these are supplied by the little tablet (No. 77,821) of the Persian Period of which a reproduction is here given. It has been referred to and discussed by various scholars, and its importance is very great. The transcript of the text, which is now published (see p. 68) for the first time, will be acceptable to the students of the history of the Zodiac. Egyptian, Greek, Syriac and Arabic astrological and astronomical texts all associate with the Signs of the Zodiac twelve groups, each containing three stars, which are commonly known as the “Thirty-six Dekans.”<sup>13</sup>

The text of line 4 of the Fifth Tablet of the Creation Series proves that the Babylonians were acquainted with these groups of stars, for we read that Marduk “set up for the twelve “months of the year three stars apiece.”

In the List of Signs of the Zodiac here given, it will be seen that each Sign is associated with a particular month.

At a later period, say about 500 B.C., the Babylonians made some of the gods regents of groups of stars, for Enlil ruled 33 stars, Anu 23 stars, and Ea 15 stars. They also possessed lists of the fixed stars, and drew up tables of the times of their heliacal risings. Such lists were probably based upon very ancient documents, and prove that the astral element in Babylonian religion was very considerable.

The accompanying illustration, which is reproduced from the Boundary Stone of Ritti-Marduk (Brit. Mus., No. 90,858), supplies much information about the symbols of the gods, and of the Signs of the Zodiac in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar I, King of Babylon, about 1120 B.C.. Thus in Register 1, we have the Star of Ishtar, the crescent of the Moon-god Sin, and the disk of Shamash the Sun-god. In Reg. 2 are three stands (?) surmounted by tiaras, which represent the gods Anu, Enlil (Bel) and Ea respectively. In Reg. 3 are three altars (?) or shrines (?) with a monster in Nos. 1 and 2. Over the first is the lance of Marduk, over the second the mason’s square of Nabû, and over the third is the symbol of the goddess Ninkharsag, the Creatress. In Reg. 4 are a standard with an animal’s head, a sign of Ea; a two-headed snake = the Twins; an unknown symbol with a horse’s head, and a bird,

<sup>12</sup> This is the original of the Syriac word for the Signs of the Zodiac *malwâshê* (plural of *malwâshâ*). The Syrians added to it an *m*, thus giving it a participial form.

<sup>13</sup> Δεκανοί also called πρόσωπα, ὠροσκόποι, φύλακες and ἐπίσκοποι. They were well known to the Egyptians, who, as early as the fourteenth century B.C., possessed a full list of them. See Lepsius, *Chronologie*, Berlin, 1848, and Brugsch, *Thesaurus (Astronomische und Astrologische Inschriften)*, Leipzig, 1883.

representative of Shuḫamuna and Shumalia. In Reg. 5 are a seated figure of the goddess Gula and the Scorpion-man; and in Reg. 6 are forked lightning, symbol of Adad, above a bull, the Tortoise, symbol of Ea (?), the Scorpion of the goddess Ishkhara, and the Lamp of Nusku, the Fire-god. Down the left-hand side is the serpent-god representing the constellation of the Hydra.

The mutilated text of the Fifth Tablet makes it impossible to gain further details in connection with Marduk's work in arranging the heavens. We are, however, justified in assuming that the gaps in it contained statements about the grouping of the gods into triads. In royal historical inscriptions the kings often invoke the gods in threes, though they never call any one three a triad or trinity. It seems as if this arrangement of gods in threes was assumed to be of divine origin. In the Fourth Tablet of Creation, one triad "Anu-Bel-Ea" is actually mentioned, and in the Fifth Tablet, another is indicated, "Sin-Shamash-Ishtar." In these triads Anu represents the sky or heaven, Bel or Enlil the region under the sky and including the earth, Ea the underworld, Sin the Moon, Shamash the Sun, and Ishtar the star Venus. When the universe was finally constituted several other great gods existed, *e.g.*, Nusku, the Fire-god, Enurta,<sup>14</sup> a solar god, Nergal, the god of war and handicrafts, Nabu, the god of learning, Marduk of Babylon, the great national god of Babylonia, and Ashur, the great national god of Assyria.

When Marduk had arranged heaven and earth, and had established the gods in their places, the gods complained that their existence was barren, because they lacked worshippers at their shrines and offerings. To make a way out of this difficulty Marduk devised another "cunning plan," and announced his intention of creating man out of "blood and bone" DAMI IŠŠIMTUM. We have already quoted (see p. 11) the statement of Berosus that man was created out of the blood of a god mixed with earth; here, then, is the authority for his words. Marduk made known to Ea his intention of creating man, and Ea suggested that if one of the gods were sacrificed the remainder of them should be set free from service, presumably to Marduk. Thereupon Marduk summons a council of the gods, and asks them to name the instigator of the fight in which he himself was the victor. In reply the gods named Kingu, Tiâmat's second husband, whom they seized forthwith, and bound with fetters and carried to Ea, and then having "inflicted punishment upon him they let his blood." From Kingu's blood Ea fashioned mankind for the service of the gods.

Now among the texts which have been found on the tablets at Ƙal'at Sharḫât is an account of the creation of man which differs from the version given in the Seven Tablets of Creation, but has two features in common with it. These two features are: (1) the council of the gods to discuss the creation of man; (2) the sacrifice which the gods had to make for the creation of man. In the variant version two (or more) gods are sacrificed, *Ilu Nagar Ilu Nagar*, *i.e.*, "the workmen gods," about whom nothing is known. The place of sacrifice is specified with some care, and it is said to be "Uzu-mu-a, or the bond of heaven and earth." Uzu-mu-a may be the bolt with which Marduk locked the two halves of Tiâmat into place.

The Anunnaki, wishing to give an expression of their admiration for Marduk's heroism, decided to build him a shrine or temple. To this Marduk agreed, and chose Babylon, *i.e.*, the "Gate of God," for its site. The Anunnaki themselves made the bricks, and they built the great temple of E-Sagila at Babylon. When the temple was finished, Marduk re-enacted the scene of creation; for, as he had formerly assigned to each god his place in the heavens, so now he assigned to each god his place in E-Sagila. The tablet ends with a long hymn of praise which the Anunnaki sang to Marduk, and describes the summoning of an assembly of the gods to

<sup>14</sup> Formerly known as Ninip.

proclaim ceremonially the great Fifty Names of this god. Thus the gods accepted the absolute supremacy of Marduk.

From the above it is clear that a dispute broke out between Marduk and the gods after he had created them, and the tradition of it has made its way into the religious literatures of the Hebrews, Syrians, Arabs, Copts and Abyssinians. The cuneiform texts tell us nothing about the cause of the dispute, but tradition generally ascribes it to the creation of man by the supreme God; and it is probable that all the apocryphal stories which describe the expulsion from heaven of the angels who contended against God under the leadership of Satan, or Satnael, or Iblîs, are derived from a Babylonian original which has not yet been found. The "Fifty Names," or laudatory epithets mentioned above, find parallels in "Seventy-five Praises of Râ," sung by the Egyptians under the XIXth dynasty,<sup>15</sup> and in the "Ninety-nine Beautiful Names of Allâh," which are held in such great esteem by the Muḥammadans.<sup>16</sup>

The respect in which the Fifty Names were held by the Babylonians is well shown by the work of the Epilogue on the Seventh Tablet, where it is said, "Let them be held in remembrance, let the first-comer (*i.e.*, any and every man) proclaim them; let the wise and the understanding consider them together. Let the father repeat them and teach them to his son. Let them be in the ears of the herdsman and the shepherd."

The object of the writer of the Fifty Names was to show that Marduk was the "Lord of the gods," that the power, qualities and attributes of every god were enshrined in him, and that they all were merely forms of him. This fact is proved by the tablet (No. 47,406),<sup>17</sup> which contains a long list of gods who are equated with Marduk in his various forms.<sup>18</sup>

The tendency in the later Babylonian religion to make Marduk the god above all gods has led many to think that monotheistic conceptions were already in existence among the Babylonians as early as the period of the First Dynasty, about 2000 B.C. It is indisputable that Marduk obtained his pre-eminence in the Babylonian Pantheon at this early period. But some authorities deny the existence of monotheistic conceptions among the Babylonians at that time, and attribute Marduk's kingship of the gods to the influence of the political situation of the time, when Babylon first became the capital of the country, and mistress of the greater part of the known world. Material for deciding this question is wanting, but it may be safely said that whatever monotheistic conceptions existed at that time, their acceptance was confined entirely to the priests and scribes. They certainly find no expression in the popular religious texts.

Both the source of the original form of the Legend of the Fight between Ea and Apsu, and Marduk and Tiâmat, and the period of its composition are unknown, but there is no doubt that in one form or another it persisted in Mesopotamia for thousands of years. The apocryphal book of "Bel and the Dragon" shows that a form of the Legend was in existence among the Babylonian Jews long after the Captivity, and the narrative relating to it associates it with religious observances. But there is no foundation whatsoever for the assertion which has so often been made that the Two Accounts of the Creation which are given in the early chapters in Genesis are derived from the Seven Tablets of Creation described in the preceding pages. It is true that there are many points of resemblance between the narratives in cuneiform and Hebrew, and these often illustrate each other, but the fundamental conceptions of the

<sup>15</sup> See Naville, *La Litanie du Soleil*, Paris, 1875, Plate ii ff.

<sup>16</sup> See Kur'ân, Surah vii, v. 179. That there were ninety-nine Beautiful Names of God rests on the authority of Abû Hurairah, who repeats the statement as made by Muhammad the Prophet.

<sup>17</sup> Published by King, *Cuneiform Texts*, Part XXV, Plate 50.

<sup>18</sup> Thus he is equated with En-Urta, Nergal, En-lil, Nabû, Sin, Shamash, Adad, etc.

Babylonian and Hebrew accounts are essentially different. In the former the earliest beings that existed were foul demons and devils, and the God of Creation only appears at a later period, but in the latter the conception of God is that of a Being Who existed in and from the beginning, Almighty and Alone, and the devils of chaos and evil are His servants.

Among the primitive Semitic peoples there were probably many versions of the story of the Creation; and the narrative told by the Seven Tablets is, no doubt, one of them in a comparatively modern form. It is quite clear that the Account of the Creation given in the Seven Tablets is derived from very ancient sources, and a considerable amount of literary evidence is now available for reconstructing the history of the Legend. Thus in the Sumerian Account the narrative of the exploits of the hero called ZIUSUDU<sup>19</sup> begins with a description of the Creation and then goes on to describe a Flood, and there is little doubt that certain passages in this text are the originals of the Babylonian version as given in the Seven Tablets.

In the Story of ZIUSUDU, however, there is no mention of any Dragon. And there is reason to think that the Legend of the Dragon had originally nothing whatever to do with the Creation, for the texts of fragments of two distinct Accounts<sup>20</sup> of the Creation describe a fight between a Dragon and some deity other than Marduk. In other Accounts the Dragon bears a strong resemblance to the Leviathan of Psalm civ, 26; Job xli, 1. In the one text he is said to be 50 *biru*<sup>21</sup> in length, and 1 *biru* in thickness; his mouth was 6 cubits (about 9 feet) wide, and the circumference of his ears 12 cubits (18 feet).

He was slain by a god whose name is unknown, and the blood continued to flow from his body for three years, three months, one day and one night. In the second text the Dragon is 60 *biru* long and his thickness is 30 *biru*; the diameter of each eye is half a *biru*, and his paws are 20 *biru* long. Thus there is every reason for believing that the Legend as it is given in the Seven Tablets is the work of some editor, who added the Legend of the Creation to the Legend of the Dragon in much the same way as the editor of the Gilgamesh Legends included an account of the Deluge in his narrative of the exploits of his hero. All forms of the Legend of the Creation and of the Dragon were popular in Babylonia, and one of them achieved so much notoriety that the priest employed recited it as an incantation to charm away the toothache.

The literary form of the text of the Seven Tablets fulfils the requirements of Semitic poetry in general. The lines usually fall into couplets, the second line being the antiphon of the first, *e.g.* :--

“When in the height heaven was not named,  
And the earth beneath did not yet bear a name.”

Each line, or verse, falls into two halves, and a well-marked caesura divides each line, or verse, into two equally accented parts. And the half-lines can be further resolved into two halves, each containing a single accented word or phrase.

This is proved by tablet Spartali ii, 265A, where the scribe writes his lines and spaces the words in such a way as to show the subdivision of the lines. Thus we have:--

enuma      | elish                      || lâ nabû      | shamamu

<sup>19</sup> See Poebel, Historical Texts, No. 1.

<sup>20</sup> See King, Cuneiform Texts, Part XIII, Plate 33; and Ebellog, Assurtexte, I, No. 6.

<sup>21</sup> The *biru* was the distance which a man would travel in two hours.

shaplish | ammatum || shuma | lâ zakrat

Here there is clearly a rhythm which resembles that found in the poems of the Syrians and Arabs, but there are many instances of its inconsistent use in several parts of the text.

Both rhyme and alliteration appear to be used occasionally.

# The Seven Tablets Of Creation. Translation

## FIRST TABLET

*This translation is made from transcripts of the British Museum fragments (Cuneiform Texts, Part XIII), and transcripts of the Berlin fragments (Ebeling, Keilschrifttexte aus Assur, Nos. 117, 118).*

1. When the heavens above were yet unnamed,<sup>22</sup>
2. And the name of the earth beneath had not been recorded,
3. Apsu, the oldest of beings, their progenitor,
4. "Mummu" Tiâmat, who bare each and all of them--
5. Their waters were merged into a single mass.
6. A field had not been measured, a marsh had not been searched out,
7. When of the gods none was shining,
8. A name had not been recorded, a fate had not been fixed,
9. The gods came into being in the midst of them.
10. The god Lakhmu and the goddess Lakhamu were made to shine, they were named.
11. [Together] they increased in stature, they grew tall.
12. Anshar and Kishar came into being, and others besides them.
13. Long were the days, the years increased.
14. The god Anu, their son, the equal of his fathers, [was created].
15. The god Anshar made his eldest son Anu in his own image.
16. And the god Anu begat Nudimmud (Ea) the image of himself.
17. The god Nudimmud was the first among his fathers,
18. Endowed with understanding, he who thinketh deeply, the orator
19. Exceedingly mighty in strength above his father Anshar who begat him.
20. Unrivalled amongst the gods his brothers ...
21. The confraternity of the gods was established.
22. Tiâmat was troubled and she ... their guardian.
23. Her belly was stirred up to its uttermost depths.
24. ....
25. Apsu (the watery abyss) could not diminish their brawl
26. And Tiâmat gathered herself together ...
27. She struck a blow, and their works ...

<sup>22</sup> The name of an object was the object itself, and it was believed that nothing could exist apart from its name.

28. Their way was not good,...
29. At that time Apsu, the progenitor of the great gods,
30. Shouted out and summoned Mummu, the steward of his house, saying
31. “[O] Mummu, my steward, who makest my liver to rejoice,
32. “Come, to Tiâmat we will go.”
33. They went, they lay down [on a couch] facing Tiâmat.
34. They took counsel together about the gods [their children].
35. Apsu took up his word and said,
36. To Tiâmat, the holy (?) one, he made mention of a matter, [saying],
37. “... their way ...
38. “By day I find no peace, by night I have no rest.
39. “Verily I will make an end of their way, I will sweep them away,
40. “There shall be a sound of lamentation; lo, then we shall rest.”
41. Tiâmat on hearing this
42. Was stirred up to wrath and shrieked to her husband,<sup>23</sup>
43. ... unto sickness. She raged all alone,
44. She uttered a curse, and unto [Apsu, spake, saying,],
45. “Whatsoever we have made we will destroy.
46. “Verily their way shall be filled with disaster; lo, then we shall rest.”
47. Mummu answered and gave counsel unto Apsu,
48. The counsel of Mummu was ... and dire [in respect of the gods]:
49. “Come, [do thou destroy] their way which is strong.
50. “Then verily by day thou shalt find peace, [and] by night thou shalt have rest.”
51. Apsu heard him, his face grew bright,
52. For that they were planning evil against the gods, his children.
53. Mummu embraced his neck ...
54. He took him on his knee, he kissed him ...
55. They (*i.e.* Mummu and Apsu) planned the cursing in the assembly,
56. They repeated the curses to the gods their eldest sons.
57. The gods made answer ...
58. They began a lamentation...
59. [Endowed] with understanding, the prudent god, the exalted one,
60. Ea, who pondereth everything that is, searched out their [plan].

<sup>23</sup> Tiâmat’s wrath was roused by Apsu, who had proposed to slay the gods, her children. She took no part in the first struggle of Apsu and Mummu against the gods, and only engaged in active hostilities to avenge Apsu.

61. He brought it to nought (?), he made the form of everything to stand still.

62. He recited a cunning incantation, very powerful and holy.

[In the British Museum tablets lines 63-108 are either wanting entirely, or are too broken to translate, and the last 130 lines of the Berlin fragment are much mutilated. The fragments of text show that Ea waged war against Apsu and Mummu. Ea recited an incantation which caused Apsu to fall asleep. He then “loosed the joints” of Mummu, who in some way suffered, but he was strong enough to attack Ea when he turned to deal with Apsu. Ea overcame both his adversaries and divided Apsu into chambers and laid fetters upon him. In one of the chambers of Apsu a god was begotten and born. According to the Ninevite theologians Ea begat by his wife, who is not named, his son Marduk, and according to the theologians of the City of Ashur, Lakhmu begat by his wife Lakhamu a son who is no other than Anshar, or Ashur. A nurse was appointed to rear him, and he grew up a handsome child, to the great delight of his father. He had four ears and four eyes, a statement which suggests that he was two-headed, and resembled the Latin god Janus.]

109. They formed a band, and went forth to battle to help Tiâmat.

110. They were exceedingly wroth, they made plots by day and by night without ceasing.

111. They offered battle, fuming and raging.

112. They set the battle in array, they uttered cries<sup>24</sup> of hostility,

113. Ummu-Khubur,<sup>25</sup> who fashioned all things,

114. Set up the unrivalled weapon, she spawned huge serpents,

115. Sharp of tooth, pitiless in attack (?)

116. She filled their bodies with venom instead of blood,

117. Grim, monstrous serpents, arrayed in terror,

118. She decked them with brightness, she fashioned them in exalted forms,

119. So that fright and horror might overcome him that looked upon them,

120. So that their bodies might rear up, and no man resist their attack,

121. She set up the Viper, and the Snake, and the god Lakhamu,

122. The Whirlwind, the ravening Dog, the Scorpion-man,

123. The mighty Storm-wind, the Fish-man, the horned Beast (Capricorn?)

124. They carried the Weapon<sup>26</sup> which spared not, nor flinched from the battle.

125. Most mighty were Tiâmat’s decrees, they could not be resisted,

126. Thus she caused eleven [monsters] of this kind to come into being,

127. Among the gods, her first-born son who had collected her company,

128. That is to say, Kingu, she set on high, she made him the great one amongst them,

<sup>24</sup> Literally, “they excited themselves to hostility.”

<sup>25</sup> A title of Tiâmat.

<sup>26</sup> These nine monsters with the Weapon (Thunderbolt?) and Kingu form the Eleven Allies of Tiâmat, and it is clear that she and her Allies represent the Twelve Signs of the Zodiac. When Marduk destroyed Tiâmat and her associates, he found it necessary to fix the stars, the images of the great gods, in their places, as the Twelve Signs of the Zodiac. (See the Fifth Tablet of Creation, p. 55.)



129. Leader of the hosts in battle, disposer of the troops,  
 130. Bearer of the firmly grasped weapon, attacker in the fight,  
 131. He who in the battle is the master of the weapon,  
 132. She appointed, she made him to sit down in [goodly apparel]  
 133. [Saying], “I have uttered the incantation for thee. I have magnified thee in the assembly of the gods.  
 134. “I have filled his [*sic*, read ‘thy’] hand with the sovereignty of the whole company of the gods.  
 135. “Mayest thou be magnified, thou who art my only spouse,  
 136. “May the Anunnaki make great thy renown over all of them.”  
 137. She gave him the TABLET OF DESTINIES, she fastened it on his breast, [saying],  
 138. “As for thee, thy command shall not fall empty, whatsoever goeth forth from thy mouth shall be established.”  
 139. When Kingu was raised on high and had taken the heavens (literally, the god Anutum)  
 140. He fixed the destinies for the gods his sons,  
 141. Open your mouths, let the Fire-god<sup>27</sup> be quenched,  
 142. He who is glorious in battle and is most mighty, shall do great deeds.

## SECOND TABLET

1. Tiâmat made solid that which she had moulded.
2. She bound the gods her children with [evil bonds].
3. Tiâmat wrought wickedness to avenge Apsu.
4. When ... had harnessed his chariot he went to meet Ea,
5. Ea hearkened to his story,
6. He was sorely afflicted and abode in sorrow,
7. The days were long, his wrath died down.
8. He went his way to the dwelling of Anshar, his father,
9. He went into the presence of Anshar, the father who begat him,
10. Whatsoever Tiâmat had devised he repeated unto him,
11. Mother Tiâmat who gave us birth hath sown these things.
12. She hath set in order her assembly, she rageth furiously,
13. All the gods have joined themselves to her.
14. They march by her side together with those whom ye have created.
15. They formed a band and went forth to battle to help Tiâmat,
16. They were exceedingly wroth, they made plots by day and by night without ceasing,

<sup>27</sup> The god here alluded to is Mardak, who, in one aspect, is a fire-god; see Tablet IV, II. 39, 40.

17. They offered battle, fuming and raging,
18. They set the battle in array, they uttered cries of defiance.
19. Ummu-Khubur, who fashioned all things,
20. Set up the unrivalled weapon, she spawned huge serpents
21. Sharp of tooth, pitiless in attack (?)
22. She filled their bodies with venom instead of blood,
23. Grim, monstrous serpents arrayed in terror.
24. She decked them with brightness, she fashioned them in exalted forms,
25. So that fright and horror might overcome him that looked upon them,
26. So that their bodies might rear up, and no man resist their attack.
27. She set up the Viper, and the Snake, and the god Lakhamu,
28. The Whirlwind, the ravening Dog, the Scorpion-man,
29. The Storm-wind, the Fish-man, the Horned Beast.
30. They carried the Weapon which spared not, nor flinched from the battle.
31. Most mighty were Tiâmat's allies, they could not be resisted.
32. Thus she caused eleven [monsters] of this kind to come into being.
33. Among the gods, her first-born son who had collected her company,
34. That is to say, Kingu, she set on high, she made him the great one amongst them.
35. Leader of the hosts in battle, disposer of the troops,
36. Bearer of the firmly-grasped weapon, attacker in the fight,
37. He who in the battle is the master of the weapon,
38. She appointed, she made him to sit down in [goodly apparel]
39. [Saying], "I have recited the incantation for thee, I have magnified thee in the assembly of the gods,
40. "I have filled his [*sic*, read 'thy'] hand with the sovereignty of the whole company of the gods.
41. "Mayest thou be magnified, thou who art my only spouse,
42. "May the Anunnaki make great thy renown over all of them."
43. She gave him the TABLET OF DESTINIES, she fastened it on his breast, [saying]--
44. "As for thee, thy command shall not fall empty, what goeth forth from thy mouth shall be established."
45. When Kingu was raised on high and had taken the heavens (literally, "the god Anutum")
46. He fixed the destinies for the gods his sons, [saying],
47. "Open your mouths, let the Fire-god be quenched,
48. "He who is glorious in battle and is most mighty shall do great deeds."
49. When Anshar heard that Tiâmat was stirred mightily,

50. ... he bit his lips

51. ... his mind was not at peace

[Lines 52-54 too fragmentary for translation.]

An'shar then addresses Ea and says:--

55. "Thou hast slain Mummu and Apsu

56. "But Tiâmat hath exalted Kingu--where is the one who can meet her?

[Lines 57 and 58 imperfect; lines 59-71 wanting.]

72. Anshar spake a word unto his son [Anu]:--

73. "... this is a difficulty, my warrior

74. "Whose power is exalted, whose attack cannot be stayed,

75. "Go and stand thou in the presence of Tiâmat,

76. "That her spirit [be quieted], her heart softened.

77. "But should she not hearken unto thy word,

78. "Speak thou our word unto her so that she may be abated."

79. [Anu] heard the order of his father Anshar.

80. He took the straight road to her, and hastened on the way to her.

81. Anu drew nigh, he searched out the plan of Tiâmat,

82. He could not prevail against her, he turned back.

Lines 83 and 84 contain Anu's report to Anshar, but they are too fragmentary to translate; line 85 reads:--

83. He (Anu) went to his father Anshar who begat him,

84. He spake unto him a word [concerning Tiâmat]

85. [She laid] hands upon me that withered me up."

86. Anshar was distressed, he looked down upon the ground,

87. He turned pale; towards Ea he lifted up his head.

88. All the Anunnaki assembled at their posts.

89. They shut their mouths, they sat in lamentation.

90. [They said], "Nowhere is there a god who can attack Tiâmat.

91. "He would not escape from Tiâmat's presence with his life."

92. The Lord Anshar, the Father of the gods, [spake] majestically,

93. He lifted up his heart, he addressed the Anunnaki, [saying]

94. "He whose [strength] is mighty [shall be] an avenger for [us]

95. "The ... in the strife, Marduk the Hero."

96. Ea called Marduk to the place where he gave oracles,

97. Marduk came and according to his heart he addressed him,

98. [Saying], “O Marduk, hear the counsel and advice of thy father,  
 99. “Thou art the son who refresheth his heart,  
 100. “Draw nigh and enter the presence of An-shar,  
 101. “Stand there [with joy], when he looketh upon thee he will be at rest.”<sup>28</sup>  
 113. The Lord [Marduk] rejoiced at the word of his father,  
 114. He approached and took up his place before Anshar.  
 115. Anshar looked upon him and his heart was filled with gladness.  
 116. He (*i.e.*, Anshar) kissed his (Marduk’s) lips, and his (Anshar’s) fear was removed. [Then Marduk said]  
 117. “My father, let not the opening of thy mouth be closed,<sup>29</sup>  
 118. “I will go, I will make to take place all that is in thy heart.  
 119. “Anshar, let not the opening of thy mouth be closed,  
 120. “I will go, I will make to take place all that is in thy heart.” [Anshar says to Marduk]  
 121. “What man is the cause of the battle which made thee go forth  
 122. “... Tiâmat, who is a woman, pursueth thee with weapons.  
 123. “Rejoice our [hearts] and make us glad.  
 124. “Thou thyself shalt soon trample upon the neck of Tiâmat,  
 125. “Rejoice our [hearts] and make us glad.  
 126. “Thou thyself shalt soon trample upon the neck of Tiâmat.  
 127. “My son, who dost comprehend everything,  
 128. “Cast deep sleep upon Tiâmat with thy holy spell.  
 129. “Betake thyself to thy march with all speed.  
 130. “...”  
 131. The Lord [Marduk] rejoiced at the word of his father,  
 132. His heart leaped with joy, to his father he spake, [saying],  
 133. “O Lord of the gods, Overlord of the Great Gods,  
 134. “Should I as your avenger  
 135. “Slay Tiâmat and bestow life upon you,  
 136. “Summon a meeting, proclaim and magnify my position,  
 137. “Sit ye down together in friendly fashion in Upshukkinaku.  
 138. “Let me issue decrees by the opening of my mouth even as ye do.  
 139. “Whatsoever I bring to pass let it remain unaltered,

<sup>28</sup> Lines 83, 84, 88-101 are translated from the British Museum fragments and the Berlin fragments; lines 88-101 contain the equivalent to the whole gap in the British Museum tablet.

<sup>29</sup> *i.e.*, “let what thou sayest prevail.”

140. "That which my mouth uttereth shall never fail or be brought to nought."

### THIRD TABLET

1. Anshar opened his mouth, and
2. Unto the god Gaga, his envoy, spake a word [saying],
3. "O Gaga, my envoy, who makest glad my liver.
4. "I will despatch thee unto the gods Lakhmu and Lakhamu.
5. "Thou must know and understand the [intention of my heart]
6. "... are brought before thee
7. "... all the gods.
8. "Let them make a council, let them sit down to a feast
9. "Let them eat bread, let them heat sesame wine.
10. "Let them issue decrees to Marduk as their avenger.
11. "Get thee gone, Gaga, take up thy stand before them.
12. "All that I am now going to tell thee do thou repeat to them [saying],
13. "[O ye gods], Anshar your son hath charged me,
14. "The intention of his heart he hath made me to know in this wise:--
15. "Mother Tiâmat who gave us birth hath sown these things,
16. "She hath set in order her assembly, she rageth furiously,
17. "All the gods have joined themselves to her.
18. "They march by her side together with those whom ye have created.
19. "They formed a band and went forth to battle to help Tiâmat.
20. "They were exceedingly wroth, they made plots by day and by night without ceasing.
21. "They offered battle, foaming and raging.
22. "They set the battle in array, they uttered cries of defiance.
23. "Ummu-Khubur, who formed all things,
24. "Set up the unrivalled weapon, she spawned huge serpents,
25. "Sharp of tooth, pitiless in attack (?)
26. "She filled their bodies with venom instead of blood.
27. "Grim, monstrous serpents arrayed in terror.
28. "She decked them with brightness, she fashioned them in exalted forms,
29. "So that fright and horror might overcome him that looked upon them,
30. "So that their bodies might rear up, and no man resist their attack.
31. "She set up the Viper, and the Snake, and the god Lakhamu,
32. "The Whirlwind, the Ravening Dog, the Scorpion-man,
33. "The Storm-wind, the Fish-man, the Horned Beast.

34. ““They carried the Weapon which spared not, nor flinched from the battle,
35. ““Most mighty were Tiâmat’s allies, they could not be resisted.
36. ““Thus she caused Eleven [monsters] of this kind to come into being.
37. ““Among the gods, her first-born son who had collected her company,
38. ““That is to say, Kingu, she set on high, she made him the great one among them,
39. ““Leader of the hosts in the battle, disposer of the troops,
40. ““Bearer of the firmly-grasped weapon, attacker in the fight.
41. ““He who in the battle is the master of the weapon,
42. ““She appointed, she made him to sit down in [goodly apparel]
43. ““[Saying]: I have recited the incantation for thee, I have magnified thee in the assembly of the gods.
44. ““I have filled his (*i.e.*, thy) hand with the sovereignty of the whole company of the gods.
45. ““Mayest thou be magnified, thou who art my only spouse,
46. ““May the Anunnaki make great thy renown over all of them.”“
47. “She gave him the TABLET OF DESTINIES, she fastened it on his head [saying]:
48. ““As for thee, thy command shall not fall empty, what goeth forth from thy mouth shall be established.’
49. “When Kingu was raised on high and had taken the heavens (literally, the god Anutum),
50. “He fixed the destinies for the gods, his sons, [saying]:
51. ““Open your mouths, let the Fire-god be quenched.
52. ““He who is glorious in battle and is most mighty shall do great deeds.’
53. ““I sent the god Anu, but he could not prevail against her.
54. ““Nudimmud (*i.e.*, Ea) was afraid and turned back,
55. ““Marduk, your son, the envoy of the gods, hath set out.
56. ““His heart is stirred up to oppose Tiâmat.
57. ““He opened his mouth, he spoke unto me [saying]:
58. ““Should I as your avenger
59. ““Slay Tiâmat, and bestow life upon you,
60. ““Summon a meeting, proclaim and magnify my position,
61. ““Sit ye down together in friendly fashion in Up-shukkinaku.
62. ““Let me issue decrees by the opening of my mouth even as ye do,
63. ““Whatsoever I bring to pass let it remain unaltered.
64. ““That which my mouth uttereth shall neither fail nor be brought to nought.’
65. “Hasten ye therefore, issue your decrees speedily
66. “That he may go to meet your mighty enemy.”
67. Gaga departed and hastened upon his way

68. To the god Lakhmu and the goddess Lakhamu, the gods his fathers, reverently
69. He did homage, and he kissed the ground at their feet.
70. He bowed down, stood up, and spake unto them [saying]:
71. “[O ye gods], Anshar your son hath charged me,
72. “The intention of his heart he hath made me to know in this wise:--
73. “Mother Tiâmat who gave us birth hath sown these things,
74. “She hath set in order her assembly, she rageth furiously.
75. “All the gods have joined themselves to her.
76. “They march by her side together with those whom ye have created,
77. “They formed a band and went forth to battle to help Tiâmat.
78. “They were exceedingly wroth, they made plans by day and by night without ceasing.
79. “They offered battle, foaming and raging.
80. “They set the battle in array, they uttered cries of defiance.
81. “Ummu-Khubur, who formed all things,
82. “Set up the unrivalled weapon, she spawned huge serpents,
83. “Sharp of tooth, pitiless in attack (?)
84. “She filled their bodies with venom instead of blood,
85. “Grim, monstrous serpents, arrayed in terror,
86. “She decked them with brightness, she fashioned them in exalted forms,
87. “So that fright and horror might overcome him that looked upon them,
88. “So that their bodies might rear up, and no man resist their attack.
89. “She set up the Viper, and the Snake, and the god Lakhamu,
90. “The Whirlwind, the Ravening Dog, the Scorpion-man,
91. “The Storm-wind, the Fish-man, the Horned Beast,
92. “They carried the Weapon which spared not, nor flinched from the battle.
93. “Most mighty were Tiâmat’s allies, they could not be resisted.
94. “Thus she caused Eleven [monsters] of this kind to come into being.
95. “Amongst the gods, her first-born son who had collected her company,
96. “That is to say, Kingu, she set on high, she made him the great one among them.
97. “Leader of the hosts in the battle, disposer of the troops,
98. “Bearer of the firmly-grasped weapon, attacker in the fight,
99. “He who in the battle is the master of the weapon
100. “She appointed, she made him to sit down in [goodly apparel],
101. “[Saying]: ‘I have recited the incantation for thee, I have magnified thee in the assembly of the gods.

102. “I have filled his (*i.e.*, thy) hand with the sovereignty of the whole company of the gods.
103. “Mayest thou be magnified, thou who art my only spouse.
104. “May the Anunnaki make great thy renown over all of them.’
105. “She gave him the TABLET OF DESTINIES, she fastened it on his head [saying]:
106. “As for thee, thy command shall not fall empty, what goeth forth from thy mouth shall be established.’
107. “When Kingu was raised on high, and had taken the heavens (Anutum)
108. “He fixed the destinies for the gods, his sons, [saying]:
109. “Open your mouths, let the Fire-god be quenched,
110. “He who is glorious in battle and is most mighty shall do great deeds.
111. “I sent the god Anu, but he could not prevail against her.
112. “Nudimmud (*i.e.*, Ea) was afraid and turned back.
113. “Marduk, your son, the envoy of the gods, hath set out.
114. “His heart is stirred up to oppose Tiâmat.
115. “He opened his mouth, he spoke unto me, [saying]:
116. “Should I as your avenger
117. “Slay Tiâmat, and bestow life upon you,
118. “Summon a meeting (*i.e.*, council), proclaim and magnify my position,
119. “Sit down together in friendly fashion in Upshukkinaku,
120. “Let me issue decrees by the opening of my mouth, even as ye do,
121. “Whatsoever I bring to pass let it remain unaltered.
122. “That which my mouth uttereth shall neither fail nor be brought to nought.”
123. “Hasten ye therefore, issue your decrees speedily
124. “That he may go to meet your mighty enemy.”
125. The gods Lakhmu and Lakhamu heard, they wailed loudly,
126. All the Igigi gods wept bitterly [saying]:
127. “Who were [our] enemies until [the gods] were posted [in heaven]?
128. “We cannot comprehend the work of Tiâmat.”
129. They gathered themselves together, they went,
130. All the great gods, who issue decrees.
131. They entered in, they filled [the court] before Anshar.
132. Brother [god] kissed brother [god] in the [divine] assembly,
133. They held a meeting, they sat down to a feast,
134. They ate bread, they heated the [sesame wine],
135. The taste of the sweet drink confused their ...



136. They drank themselves drunk, their bodies were filled to overflowing,  
 137. They were overcome by heaviness [of drink], their livers (*i.e.*, spirits) were exalted,  
 138. They issued the decree for Marduk as their avenger.

#### FOURTH TABLET

1. They founded for him a majestic canopy,
2. He (*i.e.*, Marduk) seated himself in the seat of kingship in the presence of his fathers [who said unto him]:
3. "Thou art honourable by reason of thy greatness among the gods.
4. "Thy position is unrivalled, the words thou utterest become Anum (*i.e.*, as fixed as the sky).
5. "Thou art honourable by reason of thy greatness among the gods.
6. "Thy position is unrivalled, the words thou utterest become Anum (*i.e.*, as fixed as the sky).
7. "From this day onward thy command shall not be abrogated.
8. "The power to exalt to heaven and to cast down to the earth both shall be in thy hand,
9. "That which goeth forth from thy mouth shall be established, against thy utterance shall be no appeal.
10. "No one among the gods shall overstep thy boundary,
11. "Worship, which is the object of the sanctuary of the gods,
12. "Whosoever they lack [it] shall be forthcoming in thy sanctuary,
13. "O god Marduk, thou art our avenger.
14. "We have given unto thee sovereignty over the whole creation,
15. "Thou shalt sit down, in the council thy word shall be exalted,
16. "Thy weapon shall never fall [from thy hands], it shall break the head of thy foe.
17. "Lord, whosoever putteth his trust in thee, spare thou his life,
18. "And the god who deviseth evil, pour thou out his soul."
19. Then a cloak (literally, one cloak) was set in their midst,
20. They addressed the god Marduk their first-born [saying]:
21. "Thou, Lord, shalt hold the foremost position among the gods.
22. "Decree thou the throwing down<sup>30</sup> and the building up,<sup>31</sup> and it shall come to pass.
23. "Speak but the word, and the cloak shall disappear,
24. "Speak a second time and the cloak shall return uninjured."
25. Marduk spoke the word, the cloak disappeared,
26. He spoke a second time, the cloak reappeared.

<sup>30</sup> *I.e.*, the destruction of Tîamat.

<sup>31</sup> *I.e.*, the establishing of a new creation to take the place of the old.

27. When the gods his fathers saw the issue of the utterance of his mouth
  28. They rejoiced and adored [him, saying], “Marduk is King.”
  29. They conferred upon him the sceptre, the throne, and the symbol of royalty (?).<sup>32</sup>
  30. They gave him the unrivalled weapon, the destroyer of the enemy [saying]:
  31. “Go, cut off the life of Tiâmat.
  32. “Let the wind carry her blood into the depth [under the earth].”
  33. The gods, his fathers, issued the decree for the god Bel.
  34. They set him on the road which leadeth to peace and adoration.
  35. He strung [his] bow, he set ready his weapon [in the stand],
  36. He slung his spear, he attached it to [his belly],
  37. He raised the club, he grasped it in his right hand.
  38. The bow and the quiver he hung at his side.<sup>33</sup>
  39. He set the lightning in front of him.
  40. His body was filled with a glancing flame of fire.
  41. He made a net wherewith to enclose Tiâmat.
  42. He made the four winds to take up their position so that no part of her might escape,
  43. The South wind, the North wind, the East wind, the West wind.
  44. He held the net close to his side, the gift of his father Anu,
  45. He created the “foul” wind, the storm, the parching blast,
  46. The wind of “four,” the wind of “seven,” the typhoon, the wind incomparable
  47. He despatched the seven winds which he had made,
  48. To make turbid the inward parts of Tiâmat; they followed in his train.
  49. The Lord raised up the wind storm, his mighty weapon.
  50. He went up into his chariot, the unequalled and terrible tempest.<sup>34</sup>
  51. He equipped it, he yoked thereto a team of four horses,
  52. Pawing the ground, champing, foaming [eager to] fly,
  53. ... [the odour] of their teeth bore foetidness,
  54. They were skilled [in biting], they were trained to trample under foot.
- [Lines 55-57 too fragmentary to translate; they continue the description of Marduk’s equipment.]
58. His brightness streamed forth, his head was crowned [thereby].
  59. He took a direct path, he hastened on his journey.

<sup>32</sup> The meaning of pal-a is unknown

<sup>33</sup> This equipment of the charioteer is shown on the bas-reliefs.

<sup>34</sup> Compare Psalms xviii, 7-15; civ, i ff.

60. He set his face towards the place of Tiâmat, who was ...
61. On his lips ... he restrained
62. ... his hand grasped.
63. At that moment the gods were gazing upon him with fixed intensity,
64. The gods, his fathers, gazed upon him, they gazed upon him.
65. The Lord approached, he looked upon the middle of Tiâmat,
66. He searched out the plan of Kingu, her husband.
67. Marduk looked, Kingu staggered in his gait,
68. His will was destroyed, his motion was paralysed.
69. And the gods his helpers who were marching by his side
70. Saw the [collapse of] their chief and their sight was troubled.
71. Tiâmat [shrieked but] did not turn her head.
72. With lips full of [rebellious words] she maintained her stubbornness
73. [Saying], "... that thou hast come as the Lord of the gods, [forsooth],
74. "They have appointed thee in the place which should be theirs."
75. The Lord raised up the wind-storm, his mighty weapon,
76. [Against] Tiâmat, who was furious (?), he sent it, [saying]:
77. "[Thou hast made thyself] mighty, thou art puffed upon high,
78. "Thy heart [hath stirred thee up] to invoke battle
79. "... their fathers ...
80. "...
81. "[Thou hast exalted Kingu to be [thy] husband,
82. "[Thou hast made him to usurp] the attributes of Anu
83. "... thou hast planned evil.
84. "[Against] the gods, my fathers, thou hast wrought evil.
85. "Let now thy troops gird themselves up, let them bind on their weapons.
86. "Stand up! Thou and I, let us to the fight!"
87. On hearing these words Tiâmat
88. Became like a mad thing, her senses became distraught,
89. Tiâmat uttered shrill cries again and again.
90. That on which she stood split in twain at the words,
91. She recited an incantation, she pronounced her spell.
92. The gods of battle demanded their weapons.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> I.e., the gods were impatient to begin the fight.

93. Tiâmat and Marduk, the envoy of the gods, roused themselves,  
 94. They advanced to fight each other, they drew nigh in battle.  
 95. The Lord cast his net and made it to enclose her,  
 96. The evil wind that had its place behind him he let out in her face.  
 97. Tiâmat opened her mouth to its greatest extent,  
 98. Marduk made the evil wind to enter [it] whilst her lips were unclosed.  
 99. The raging winds filled out her belly,  
 100. Her heart was gripped, she opened wide her mouth [panting].  
 101. Marduk grasped the spear, he split up her belly,  
 102. He clave open her bowels, he pierced [her] heart,  
 103. He brought her to nought, he destroyed her life.  
 104. He cast down her carcass, he took up his stand upon it,  
 105. After Marduk had slain Tiâmat the chief,  
 106. Her host was scattered, her levies became fugitive,  
 107. And the gods, her allies, who had marched at her side,  
 108. Quaked with terror, and broke and ran  
 109. And betook themselves to flight to save their lives.  
 110. But they found themselves hemmed in, they could not escape,  
 111. Marduk tied them up, he smashed their weapons.  
 112. They were cast into the net, and they were caught in the snare,  
 113. The ... of the world they filled with [their] cries of grief.  
 114. They received [Marduk's] chastisement, they were confined in restraint,  
 115. And [on] the Eleven Creatures which Tiâmat had filled with awfulness,  
 116. The company of the devils that marched at her ...  
 117. He threw fetters, he ... their sides.  
 118. They and their resistance he trod under his feet.  
 119. The god Kingu who had been magnified over them  
 120. He crushed, he esteemed him [as little worth] as the god Dugga, (as a dead god?).  
 121. Marduk took from him the TABLET OF DESTINIES, which should never have been his,  
 122. He sealed it with a seal<sup>36</sup> and fastened it on his breast  
 123. After he had crushed and overthrown his enemies,  
 124. He made the haughty enemy to be like the dust underfoot.

<sup>36</sup> By impressing his seal on the Tablet Marduk proved his ownership of the Tablet, and made his claim to it legal.

125. He established completely Anshar's victory over the enemy,  
 126. The valiant Marduk achieved the object of Nudimmud (Ea),<sup>37</sup>  
 127. He imposed strict restraint on the gods whom he had made captive.  
 128. He turned back to Tiâmat whom he had defeated,  
 129. The Lord [Marduk] trampled on the rump of Tiâmat,  
 130. With his unsparing club he clave her skull.  
 131. He slit open the channels (*i.e.*, arteries) of her blood.  
 132. He caused the North Wind to carry it away to a place underground.  
 133. His fathers (*i.e.*, the gods) looked on, they rejoiced, they were glad.  
 134. They brought unto him offerings of triumph and peace,  
 135. The Lord [Marduk] paused, he examined Tiâmat's carcass.  
 136. He separated flesh [from] hair,<sup>38</sup> he worked cunningly.  
 137. He slit Tiâmat open like a flat (?) fish [cut into] two pieces,  
 138. The one half he raised up and shaded the heavens therewith,  
 139. He pulled the bolt, he posted a guard,  
 140. He ordered them not to let her water escape.  
 141. He crossed heaven, he contemplated the regions thereof.  
 142. He betook himself to the abode of Nudimmud (Ea) that is opposite to the Deep (Apsu),  
 143. The Lord Marduk measured the dimensions of the Deep,  
 144. He founded E-Sharra, a place like unto it,  
 145. The abode E-Sharra, which he made to be heaven.  
 146. He made the-gods Anu, Bel and Ea to inhabit their [own] cities.

#### **FIFTH TABLET**

1. He appointed the Stations for the great gods,
2. He set in heaven the Stars of the Zodiac which are their likenesses.
3. He fixed the year, he appointed the limits thereof.
4. He set up for the twelve months three stars apiece.
5. According to the day of the year he ... figures.
6. He founded the Station of Nibir (Jupiter) to settle their boundaries,
7. That none might exceed or fall short.
8. He set the Station of Bel and Ea thereby.
9. He opened great gates under shelter on both sides.
10. He made a strong corridor on the left and on the right.

<sup>37</sup> This is an oblique way of saying that Marduk succeeded where Ea failed.

<sup>38</sup> The word is *kupu*, *i.e.*, "reed" or "sedge." It is possible that Marduk skinned Tiâmat.

11. He fixed the zenith in the heavenly vault (?)
12. He gave the god Nannar (*i.e.*, the Moon-god) his brightness and committed the night to his care.
13. He set him for the government of the night, to determine the day
14. Monthly, without fail, he set him in a crown (*i.e.*, disk) [saying]:
15. "At the beginning of the month when thou risest over the land,
16. "Make [thy] horns to project to limit six days [of the month]
17. "On the seventh day make thyself like a crown.
18. "On the fourteenth day ...

[Lines 19-26 dealt further with Marduk's instructions to the Moon-god, but are too fragmentary to translate. After line 26 comes a break in the text of 40 lines; lines 66-74 are too fragmentary to translate, but they seem to have described further acts of Creation.]

75. The gods, his (Marduk's) fathers, looked on the net which he had made,
76. They observed how craftily the bow had been constructed,
77. They extolled the work which he had done.
78. [Then] the god Anu lifted up [the bow] in the company of the gods, 79. He kissed the bow [saying]: "That ..."
80. He proclaimed [the names] of the bow to be as follows:--
81. "Verily, the first is 'Long Wood,' the second is ...
82. "Its third name is 'Bow Star in heaven' ..."
83. He fixed a station for it ...

[Of the remaining 57 lines of this tablet only fragments of 17 lines are preserved, and these yield no connected sense.]

## SIXTH TABLET

1. On hearing the words of the gods, the heart of Marduk moved him to carry out the works of a craftsman.
2. He opened his mouth, he spake to Ea that which he had planned in his heart, he gave counsel [saying]:
3. "I will solidify blood, I will form bone.
4. "I will set up man, 'Man' [shall be] his name.
5. "I will create the man 'Man.'
6. "The service of the gods shall be established, and I will set them (*i.e.*, the gods) free.
7. "I will make twofold the ways of the gods, and I will beautify [them].
8. "They are [now] grouped together in one place, but they shall be partitioned in two."<sup>39</sup>
9. Ea answered and spake a word unto him

<sup>39</sup> Reading, ishtenish lu kuppudu-ma ana shina lu uzizu.

10. For the consolation of the gods<sup>40</sup> he repeated unto him a word of counsel [saying]:
11. “Let one brother [god of their number] be given, let him suffer destruction that men may be fashioned.
12. “Let the great gods be assembled, let this [chosen] one be given in order that they (*i.e.*, the other gods) may be established.”
13. Marduk assembled the great gods, [he came near] graciously, he issued a decree,
14. He opened his mouth, he addressed the gods; the King spake a word unto the Anunnaki [saying]:
15. “Verily, that which I spake unto you aforetime was true.
16. “[This time also] I speak truth. [Some there were who] opposed me.”<sup>41</sup>
17. “Who was it that created the strife,
18. “Who caused Tiâmat to revolt, to join battle with me?
19. “Let him who created the strife be given [as sacrifice],
20. “I will cause the axe in the act of sinking to do away his sin.”
21. The great gods, the Igigi, answered him,
22. Unto the King of the gods of heaven and of earth, the Prince of the gods, their lord [they said]:
23. “[It was] Kingu who created the strife,
24. “Who made Tiâmat to revolt, to join battle [with thee].”
25. They bound him in fetters [they brought] him before Ea, they inflicted punishment on him, they let his blood,
26. From his blood he (*i.e.*, Ea) fashioned mankind for the service of the gods, and he set the gods free.
27. After Ea had fashioned man he ... laid service upon him.
28. [For] that work, which pleased him not, man was chosen: Marduk ...
29. Marduk, the King of the gods, divided ... he set the Anunnaki up on high.
30. He laid down for Anu a decree that protected [his] heart ... as a guard.
31. He made twofold the ways on the earth [and in the heavens?] 32. By decrees ...
33. The Anunnaki who ...
34. The Anunnaki ...
35. They spake unto Marduk, their lord, [saying]:
36. “O thou Moon-god<sup>42</sup> (Nannaru), who hast established our splendour,
37. “What benefit have we conferred upon thee?

<sup>40</sup> *I.e.*, “to cause the gods to be content,”

<sup>41</sup> Literally “they (indefinite) opposed me.”

<sup>42</sup> See Cuneiform Texts, Part XXIV, Plate 50, where it is said that the god Sin is “Marduk, who maketh bright the night.”

38. “Come, let us make a shrine, whose name shall be renowned;
39. “Come [at] night, our time of festival, let us take our ease therein,
40. “Come, the staff shall rule ...
41. “On the day that we reach [thereto] we will take our ease therein.”
42. On hearing this Marduk ...
43. The features of his face [shone like] the day exceedingly.
44. [He said),<sup>43</sup> ”Like unto ... Babylon, the construction whereof ye desire
45. “I will make ... a city, I will fashion a splendid shrine.”
46. The Anunnaki worked the mould [for making bricks], their bricks were ...
47. In the second year [the shrine was as high as] a hill, and the summit of E-Sagila reached the [celestial] Ocean.
48. They made the ziggurat<sup>44</sup> [to reach] the celestial Ocean; unto Marduk, Enlil, Ea [shrines] they appointed,
49. It (*i.e.*, the ziggurat) stood before them majestically: at the bottom and [at the top] they observed its two horns.<sup>45</sup>
50. After the Anunnaki had finished the construction of E-Sagila, and had completed the making of their shrines,
51. They gathered together from the ... of the Ocean (Apsu). In BAR-MAH, the abode which they had made,
52. He (*i.e.*, Marduk) made the gods his fathers to take their seats ... [saying]: “This Babylon shall be your abode.
53. “No mighty one [shall destroy] his house, the great gods shall dwell therein.
- [After line 53 the middle portions of several lines of text are obliterated, but from what remains of it it is clear that the gods partook of a meal of consecration of the shrine of E-Sagila, and then proceeded to issue decrees. Next Marduk assigns seats to the Seven Gods of Fate and to Enlil and Anu, and then he lays up in E-Sagila the famous bow which he bore during his fight against Tiâmat. When the text again becomes connected we find the gods singing a hymn of praise to Marduk.]
94. “Whatever is ... those gods and goddesses shall bear(?)
95. “They shall never forget, they shall cleave to the god (?)
96. “... they shall make bright, they shall make shrines.
97. “Verily, the decision (concerning) the Black-headed [belongeth to] the gods
98. “... all our names have they called, he (Marduk) is most holy (*elli*)
99. “... they proclaimed and venerated (?) his names.

<sup>43</sup> Lines 44 and 45 announce Marduk’s determination to build Babylon.

<sup>44</sup> This is the word commonly used for “temple-tower.” The famous ziggurat of E-Sagila here mentioned was built in Seven Stages or Steps, each probably having its own distinctive colour. It was destroyed probably soon after the capture of Babylon by Cyrus (539 B.C.) and when Alexander the Great reached Babylon he found it ruins.

<sup>45</sup> This is the first known mention of the “horns” of a ziggurat, and the exact meaning of the word is doubtful.



100. "His ... is exceedingly bright, his work is ...
101. "Marduk, whose father Anu proclaimed [his name] from his birth,
102. "Who hath set the day at his door ... his going,
103. "By whose help the storm wind was bound ...
104. "Delivered the gods his fathers in the time of trouble.
105. "Verily, the gods have proclaimed his sonship.
106. "In his bright light let them walk for ever.
107. "[On] men whom he hath formed, the created things fashioned by his fingers
108. "He hath imposed the service of the gods, and them he hath set free
109. "...
110. "... they looked at him,
111. "[He is] the far-seeing (*maruku*) god, verily ...
112. "Who hath made glad the hearts of the Anunnaki, who hath made them to ...
113. "The god Marudukku-- verily, he is the object of trust of his country ...
114. "Let men praise him ...
115. "The 'King of the Protecting Heart,' (?), hath arisen and hath [bound] the Serpent ...
116. "Broad is his heart, mighty [his] belly.
117. "King of the gods of heaven and of earth, whose name our company hath proclaimed,
118. "We will fulfil (?) the utterance of his mouth. Over his fathers the gods,
119. "Yea, [over] the gods of heaven and earth, all of them,
120. "His kingship [we will exalt].
121. "[We] will look unto the King of all the heaven and the earth at night when the place of all the gods is darkness (literally sadness).
122. "He hath assigned our dwelling in heaven and in earth in the time of trouble,
123. "He hath allotted stations to the Igigi and the Anunnaki.
124. "The gods themselves are magnified by his name; may he direct their sanctuaries.
125. "ASAR-LU-DUG, is his name by which his father Anu hath named him.
126. "Verily, he is the light of the gods, the mighty ...
127. "Who ... all the parts of heaven and of the land
128. "By a mighty combat he saved our dwelling in the time of trouble.
129. "ASAR-LU-DUG, the god who made him (*i.e.* man) to live, did the god ... call him in the second place
130. "[And] the gods who had been formed, whom he fashioned as though [they were] his offspring.
131. "He is the Lord who hath made all the gods to live by his holy mouth."

[Lines 132-139 are too fragmentary to translate, but it is clear from the text that remains that Lakhmu, and Lakhamu, and Anshar all proclaimed the names of Marduk. When the text again becomes connected Marduk has just been addressing the gods.]

140. In Up-shukkinaku<sup>46</sup> he appointed their council for them.

141. [They said]:--"Of [our] son, the Hero, our Avenger,

142. "We will exalt the name by our speech."

143. They sat down and in their assembly they proclaimed his rank.

144. Every one of them pronounced his name in the sanctuary.

### SEVENTH TABLET

1. O ASARI,--giver of plantations, appointer of sowing time,

2. Who dost make grain and fibrous plants, who makest garden herbs to spring up.

3. O ASARU-ALIM--who art weighty in the council-chamber, who art fertile in counsel,

4. To whom the gods pay worship (?) reverent ...

5. O ASARU-ALIM-NUNA--the adored light of the Father who begat him,

6. Who makest straight the direction of Anu, Bel, [and Ea].<sup>47</sup>

7. He is their patron who fixed [their] ...

8. Whose drink is abundance, who goeth forth ...

9. O TUTU--creator of their new life,

10. Supplier of their wants, that they may be satisfied [or, glad],

11. Let but [Tutu] recite an incantation, the gods shall be at rest;

12. Let but [the gods] attack him (*i.e.*, Tutu) in wrath, he shall resist them successfully;

13. Let him be raised up on a high throne in the assembly of the gods....

14. None among the gods is like unto him.

15. O god TUTU, who art the god ZI-UKKINA, life of the host of the gods,

16. Who stablished the shining heavens for the gods,

17. He founded their paths, he fixed [their courses].

18. Never shall his deeds be forgotten among men.

19. O god TUTU, who art ZI-AZAG, was the third name they gave him--holder (*i.e.*, possessor) of holiness,

20. God of the favourable wind, lord of adoration and grace,

21. Creator of fulness and abundance, stablisher of plenty,

<sup>46</sup> From this text it seems clear that Up-shukkinaku was the name of a chamber in the temple of E-Sagila. This name probably means the "chamber of the shakkanaku," *i.e.*, the chamber in which the governor of the city (shakkanaku) went annually to embrace the hands of the god Bel-Marduk, from whom he thereby received the right of sovereignty over the country.

<sup>47</sup> This line seems to imply that Marduk was regarded as the instructor of the "old" gods; the allusion is, probably, to the "ways" of Anu, Bel and Ea, which are treated as technical terms in astrology.

22. Who turneth that which is little into that which is much.
23. In sore straits we have felt his favouring breeze.
24. Let them (the gods) declare, let them magnify, let them sing his praises.
25. O TUTU, who art the god AGA-AZAG in the fourth place--let men exult.
26. Lord of the holy incantation, who maketh the dead to live,
27. He felt compassion for the gods who were in captivity.
28. He riveted on the gods his enemies the yoke which had been resting on them.
29. In mercy towards them he created mankind,
30. The Merciful One in whose power it is to give life.
31. His words shall endure for ever, they shall never be forgotten,
32. In the mouth of the Black-headed<sup>48</sup> whom his hands have made.
33. O God TUTU, who art the god MU-AZAG in the fifth place--let their mouth recite a holy incantation [to him],
34. Who by his own holy incantation hath destroyed all the evil ones.
35. O god SHAZU, the wise heart of the gods, who searchest the inward parts of the belly,
36. Who dost not permit the worker of evil to go forth by his side,
37. Establisher of the company of the gods ... their hearts.
38. Reducer of the disobedient ...
- [Lines 39-106 are wanting. The positions of the fragmentary lines supplied by duplicate fragments are uncertain; in any case they give no connected sense.]
107. Verily, he holdeth the beginning and the end of them,<sup>49</sup> verily ...
108. Saying, "He who entered into the middle of Tiâmat resteth not;
109. "His name shall be 'Nibiru' the seizer of the middle.
110. "He shall set the courses of the stars of the heavens,
111. "He shall herd together the whole company of the gods like sheep.
112. "He shall [ever] take Tiâmat captive, he shall slit up her treasure (variant, life), he shall disembowel her."<sup>50</sup>
113. Among the men who are to come after a lapse of time,
114. Let [these words] be heard without ceasing, may they reign to all eternity,
115. Because he made the [heavenly] places and moulded the stable [earth].
116. Father Bel proclaimed his name, "Lord of the Lands."

<sup>48</sup> Here the title "Black-headed" refers to all mankind, but it is sometimes used by the scribes to distinguish the population of the Euphrates Valley from foreign peoples of light complexions.

<sup>49</sup> Compare the language of the Kur'ân (Surah II, v. 256), "He (Allah) knoweth what is before them and what is behind them."

<sup>50</sup> These lines suggest that the fight between Marduk and Tiâmat was recurrent; it is incorrect to translate the verbal forms as preterites.

117. All the Igigi repeated the title.  
 118. Ea heard and his liver rejoiced,  
 119. Saying, "He whose title hath rejoiced his fathers  
 120. "Shall be even as I am; his name shall be Ea.  
 121. "He shall dispose of all the magical benefits of my rites,  
 122. "He shall make to have effect my instructions."  
 123. By the title of "Fifty times" the great gods  
 124. Proclaimed his names fifty times, they magnified his going.

### EPILOGUE

125. Let the first comer take them and repeat them;  
 126. Let the wise man and the learned man meditate upon all of them;  
 127. The father shall repeat them to his son that he may lay hold upon them.  
 128. Let them (*i.e.*, the names) open the ears of the shepherd and the herdsman.<sup>51</sup>  
 129. Let [man] rejoice in Marduk, the Lord of the Gods,  
 130. That his land may be fertile and he himself abide in security.  
 131. His word is true, his command altereth not.  
 132. No god hath ever brought to the ground that which issueth from his mouth.  
 133. They (*i.e.*, the gods) treated him with contempt, he turned not his back [in flight],  
 134. No god could resist his wrath at its height.  
 135. His heart is large, his bowels of mercy are great.  
 136. Of sin and wickedness before him ...  
 137. The first comer utters his complaint of humiliation before him.  
 [Lines 138-142 are too fragmentary to translate.]

<sup>51</sup> "To open the ears" -- to give understanding.

## Notes

1. There are in the British Museum several fragments of Neo-Babylonian copies of the Seven Tablets of Creation, the exact position of which is at present uncertain. One of these (S. 2013) is of some importance because it speaks of one object which was in the “upper Tiâmat”, and of another which was in the “lower Tiâmat”. This shows that the Babylonians thought that one half of the body of Tiâmat, which was split up by Marduk, was made into the celestial ocean, and the other half into the terrestrial ocean, in other words, into “the waters that were above” and “the waters that were beneath” the firmament respectively.

2. When George Smith published his *Chaldean Account of Genesis* in 1876, he was of opinion that the Creation Tablets in the British Museum contained descriptions of the Temptation of Eve by the serpent and of the building and overthrow of the Tower of Babel. The description of Paradise in Genesis ii seems to show traces of Babylonian influence, and the cylinder seal, Brit. Mus. No. 89,326, was thought to be proof that a Babylonian legend of the Temptation existed. In fact, George Smith printed a copy of the seal in his book (p. 91). But it is now known that the tablet which was believed to refer to man’s eating of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge (K. 3, 473 + 79-7-8, 296 + R. 615) describes the banquet of the gods to which they invited Marduk. In like manner the text on K. 3657, which Smith thought referred to the Tower of Babel, is now known to contain no mention of a tower or building of any sort. It was also thought by him that K. 3364 contained a set of instructions which God gave to Adam and Eve after their creation, but it is now known and admitted by all Assyriologists that the text on this tablet contains moral precepts and has nothing to do with the Creation Series. Enquiries are from time to time made at the Museum for tablets which deal with the Temptation of Eve, and the destruction of the Tower of Babel, and the Divine commands to Adam and Eve; it is perhaps not superfluous to say that nothing of the kind exists.

## List of the name of the Stars or Signs of the Zodiac

List of the name of the Stars or Signs of the Zodiac, with a List Showing the Month that was Associated with Each Star in the Persian Period.

BY SIDNEY SMITH, M.A., and C.J. GADD, M.A., Assistants in the Department.

No. 77,821 (85-4-30, 15).

Nisannu

(kakkab) (amel) Agru....

*The Labourer.*

Airu

Kakkab u (kakkab) Alap shame

*The Star and the Bull of heaven.*

Simanu

Re'u kinu shame u (kakkab) tu'ame rabuti

*The faithful shepherd of heaven and the Great Twins.*

Duuzu

AL.LUL. (shittu)<sup>52</sup>...

*The Tortoise.*

Abu

Kalbu rabu ....

*Great Dog (Lion).*

Ululu

Shiru ....

*Virgin with ear of corn.*

Tashritum

Zibanitum ....

....

Arah shaman

Akrabu ....

*The Scorpion.*

Kislimu

<sup>52</sup> The Egyptian Sheta

PA.BIL.SAG ....

*Enurta (the god).*

Ṭebetum

SUḤUR.MASH ....

*The Goat-fish.*

Shabaṭu

Gula ....

*The Great Star*

Addaru

DIL.GAN.u rikis nuni

*The star ... and the Band of Fishes.*

I have been assisted in the preparation of this monograph by Mr. Sidney Smith, M.A., Assistant in the Department.

E.A. WALLIS BUDGE.

DEPARTMENT OF EGYPTIAN AND ASSYRIAN ANTIQUITIES, BRITISH MUSEUM. *June 1, 1921.*

THE END

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