IMAGINING CREATION

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BRILL

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Creation as a concept requires some amplification. In modern western thought it is commonly used without clear definition, but in fact it is influenced by the usual translation of Genesis 1:1:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

This is not unlike an ancient version of modern scientists’ “big bang”: a great primeval event which started things off. But in fact this is a mistranslation, as first announced by the great Mediaeval scholar Rashi (1040–1105 C.E.). The correct translation can be taken from The Jewish Publication Society of America’s *The Torah: The Five Books of Moses—A New Translation of The Holy Scriptures according to the Masoretic Text; First Section* (Philadelphia, 1962):

When God began to create the heaven and the earth—the earth being unformed and void, with darkness over the surface of the deep and a wind from God sweeping over the water—God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

That this is the correct translation can be seen from (among other things) the end of this narrative of six days of creation followed by one of rest:

And on the seventh day God finished the work which He had been doing...

Here, then, creation is not a “big bang” but a series of acts in sequence starting from earth and water (“the deep”), the origins of which are neither sought for nor explained. The traditional rendering of Genesis 1:1 invites the idea of *creatio ex nihilo* (“creation from nothing”), but that is later theological speculation, not the sense of the author of Genesis 1.

In this one respect Genesis conforms to its ancient Near Eastern background where creation (to use the modern term) is about the
processes by which the universe we know reached its present form, with no attempt to delve into the question of ultimate origins.

There are of course differences. Genesis with its monotheism has a technical term for God’s creative acts (bā’ār) not used of human activity, while Sumerians and Babylonians lacked a comparable term, using ordinary words with human applications such as “build” and “make”. And the polytheistic accounts of creation often present narratives of the gods’ follies and misdeeds which the modern world cannot take seriously as a basis for personal belief, while the dignity of Genesis 1 so struck an ancient pagan literary critic, Longinus, or Dionysius (or: Dionysius Longinus), c. 100 C.E., that he quoted it with high approval in his treatise On the Sublime 9, 9.

While the Hebrew accounts of creation have reached us through millennia of written tradition in a fixed form, ancient Mesopotamian literature with this content was mostly lost by the turn of the centuries. A little, sometimes garbled, survived in Greek writers that have been preserved into the modern world. But for ancient material we depend on cuneiform tablets which have been unearthed in Mesopotamia beginning in the 19th century C.E. Very little of this kind of literature has been recovered from Palestine, Syria, Anatolia and elsewhere in the ancient Near East. The relevant texts on clay come from Sumerians and Babylonians and vary in date from c. 2500–300 B.C.E. Almost nothing of this kind has come from the Assyrians, though their scribes c. 1300–600 B.C.E. were responsible for copying out Babylonian texts on tablets which have in part been recovered in the modern world. As recovered these tablets are rarely complete, mostly pieces only survive. However, at various periods, and especially after c. 1000 B.C.E., many of the texts were established classics in their respective worlds so that multiple copies existed, and cuneiform scholars busy themselves putting together complete texts from broken pieces, where possible.

It is of course a disadvantage to have only partly preserved texts in many cases, but as compared with texts which have come down to us complete by a long copying tradition there is one advantage. We have only the final form of the Hebrew Bible, and scholars speculate about its compilation and transmission before it reached that final form. With the cuneiform tradition we are in a position in some cases to tap the tradition at varying points over the centuries.

While creation in its ancient sense is a theme not infrequently alluded to in Sumerian and Babylonian texts, works specifically devoted to it are so far unknown. It appears incidentally to other interests. Thus to present their opinions about creation we have to gather material from a wide range of texts, noting the purpose of each one so that we correctly grasp the context and function of the relevant matter. The most widely known text of this category has been called the Babylonian Epic of Creation, and it remains a major document of relevance. It has 1091 lines, most completely preserved, and is generally divided into seven tablets, though the author did not compose the work in seven sections: the division is no doubt purely scribal: to avoid one big and heavy tablet with all the 1091 lines. The story begins with a theogony: the descent of the primeval gods culminating quite quickly in Marduk, patron god of the town Babylon. This betrays the real aim of the work. Babylon was a small and unimportant place in the third millennium B.C.E., very rarely mentioned, and its patron god was very little known. Hammurabi, king of Babylon in the 18th century B.C.E., put Babylon on the map by making it the capital of an empire embracing the whole of southern Mesopotamia and some areas beyond. While his successors lost much of this territory the prestige of the town remained, and so did the prestige of its patron god. Marduk, thanks to Hammurabi, had been promoted to a top-ranking god, but not head of the pantheon.

Hammurabi’s dynasty fell c. 1600 B.C.E., and Cassites migrating from Kurdistan took over Babylon, forming a dynasty which lasted until 1156 B.C.E., when they were ousted and a native Babylonian dynasty took over. The status of Marduk had remained unchanged under the Cassite kings, and very late in the dynasty the Elamites from south west Iran had raided Babylonia and in the course of that had taken off as booty the holy statue of Marduk from its shrine in Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar I, a native Babylonian king 1126–1104 B.C.E., successfully campaigned in Elam and restored Babylonian morale by bringing back this statue amid rejoicing. Under this king Marduk was officially declared “king of the gods” for the first time, a position he enjoyed for the remainder of Babylonian civilization, though by the time of Nebuchadnezzar II (the Biblical Nebuchadnezzar, 605–562 B.C.E.), his divine son Nabû (Nebo) has risen in effect to equality with his father.

The so-called Babylonian Epic of Creation is a narrative myth composed to assert and justify the status of Marduk as head of the pantheon, when previously even his limited promotion under Hammurabi had not in any way undermined the status as head of the pantheon of such Sumerian gods as Enlil and An. Nothing is known of the author of the work, nor of its date of composition, though its literary character and ideological single-mindedness mark it as the product of a single author at one point of time, using of course whatever he wanted from existing mythological materials. Most likely it was composed either during
or shortly after the reign of Nebuchadnezzar I as a manifesto of the theological revolution which demoted the old Sumerian Enlil to make way for Marduk. The text begins:

1 When the heavens above did not exist,  
   And earth below had not come into being—  
   There was Apsû, the first in order, their begetter,  
   And demiurge Tiamat, who gave birth to them all:

5 They had mingled their waters together  
   Before meadow-land had coalesced and reed-bed was to be found—  
   When not one of the gods had been formed  
   Or had come into being, when no destinies had been decreed.  
   The gods were created within them:

10 Lahmu and Lahamu were formed and came into being.  
   While they grew and increased in stature  
   Anšar and Kišar, who excelled them, were created.  
   They prolonged their days, they multiplied their years.  
   Anu, their son, could rival his fathers.

15 Anu, the son, equalled Anšar;  
   Nudimmud was the champion among his fathers:  
   And Anu begat Nudimmud, his own equal.  
   Profoundly discerning, wise, of robust strength;  
   Very much stronger than his father's begetter, Anšar,

20 He had no rival among the gods, his brothers.

The text starts with a theogony. The story begins before the present universe (as Sumerians and Babylonians conceived it) of heaven and earth existed, when only Apsû and Tiamat existed. Apsû was the body of water conceived by the Sumerians and Babylonians to exist below the surface of the earth from which all springs drew their water and into which somehow the rivers eventually poured their water. Normally it is a common noun of masculine gender, but here it is conceived as having personality and being male. Tiamat is a common noun in Babylonian, feminine, meaning “sea”, but here it is a female being, a Goddess in Babylonian thought. So the cosmogony here begins with water, but since creation is conceived on the pattern of bisexual reproduction as known from humans, animals and some plants, the basic element has been rendered into a male-female pair to start off creation. The mingling of the waters is the required sexual copulation and “within them” means of course within these mingled waters. Note how here the primaeval elements are alive and have personality, unlike the earth and water (the deep) in Genesis, which are inert and are manipulated by God. This can also happen in Mesopotamia, but here it is different.

The results of this copulation are first two pairs of matching male-female gods. The character of the first pair, Lahmu and Lahamu, is not sure. In Sumero-Babylonian mythology there is a nude hero, save for belt, with much head and facial hair, called a Lahmu, but no female partner is known. The second pair, Anšar and Kišar, bear Sumerian names meaning “Whole Heaven” and “Whole Earth” and in this mythologem Father Heaven sends down his rain into the bosom of Mother Earth so that plant life flourishes. However, our author chooses to ignore this aspect and appoints Anšar to be king of the junior gods, as is made clear later. Anu, his son, also bears as his name the Sumerian An “Heaven,” but with Babylonian ending. In some traditions Anšar and Anu are two names of one god, but our author differs, and no spouse of Anu is anywhere named in this text. His son, Nudimmud occurs here also without spouse, but later she is named as Damkina.

While our author here is drawing on traditional theogonic material his real aim is to prepare the way for his hero Marduk. The details of the primaeval pairs do not concern him, instead he reaches Nudimmud and lavishes extreme praise on him. This god, usually called Enki in Sumerian and Ea in Babylonian, is everywhere Marduk’s father.

The story now moves quickly. The younger gods disturb the older ones—specified as Apsû, Tiamat and a vizier Mummu—by their jollification, preventing Tiamat from sleeping. The elders discuss the problem and wipe out the youngsters is considered. Ea hears of this and strikes first, killing Apsû and setting up his abode on Apsû’s dead body. In this particular the author has reached one end: in his time it was everywhere believed that Ea lived in the subterranean water, the Apsû. In this now dead Apsû Marduk was born, with even more praise than his father received (I 79–104).

The story now moves to a second battle. Unexplained gods appear from nowhere and advise Tiamat, who now lacks the help of Apsû and the vizier Mummu, to take action to prevent her suffering the same fate as overtook Apsû. To this end she creates eleven monsters and puts them in charge of Qingu, her spouse, who likewise appears here from nowhere. Anšar, king of the junior gods, hears of these preparations and gets first Ea and then Anu to go out to defeat this monstrous horde, but each in turn falls back at the very sight. So the young Marduk is asked to take up the challenge. He agrees, but imposes the condition that should he return victorious he will be promoted to kingship of the gods. This condition is accepted by all the junior gods in assembly.
Marduk is equipped, goes forth and defeats Tiamat in single combat, at which point Qingu and the monsters are easily overcome.

Battles with monsters or giants are common in cosmogenetic traditions from the ancient Near East and beyond, for example Baal and Yam, Baal and Leviathan, the Titans, etc., but while they form episodes within accounts of creation, they are not strictly matters of creation themselves. So we shall not study this battle between Marduk and Tiamat in detail, but pass on to the aftermath: how Marduk used his just-acquired authority to form the universe known to the Babylonians.

IV 125 (After Marduk) had established victory for Anšar over all his foes, Had fulfilled the desire of Nudimmud.
He strengthened his hold on the Bound Gods,
And returned to Tiamat, whom he had bound.
Bel (= Marduk) placed his feet on the lower parts of Tiamat
130 And with his merciless club smashed her skull.
He severed her arteries
And let the north wind bear up (her blood) to give the news.
His fathers saw it and were glad and exulted;
They brought gifts and presents to him.

Bel rested, surveying the corpse
In order to divide the lump by a clever scheme.
He split her into two like a dried fish:
One half of her he set up and stretched out as the heavens.
He stretched a skin and appointed a watch
140 With the instruction not to let her water escape.
He crossed over the heavens, surveyed celestial parts,
And adjusted them to match the Apsû, Nudimmud’s abode.
Bel measured the shape of the Apsû
And set up Esarra, a replica of Esgalla.

In Esgalla, Esarra which he had built, and the heavens,
He settled in their shrines Anu, Enlil, and Ea.

V 1 He fashioned heavenly stations for the great gods,
And set up constellations, the patterns of the stars.
He appointed the year, marked off divisions,
And set up three stars each for the twelve months.

After he had organized the year,
He established the heavenly station of Néberu to fix the stars’ intervals.
That none should transgress or be slothful
He fixed the heavenly stations of Enlil and Ea with it.
Gates he opened on both sides,
And put strong bolts at the left and the right.
He placed the heights (of heaven) in her (Tiamat’s) belly,
He created Nannar, entrusting to him the night.

15 (Saying), “Shine over the land at the beginning of the month.
Resplendent with horns to fix six days.
On the seventh day the crown will be half size,
On the fifteenth day, halfway through each month, stand in opposition.
When Šamaš sees you on the horizon
20 Diminish in proper stages and shine backwards.
On the 29th day, draw near to the path of Šamaš,
[... the 30th day, stand in conjunction and rival Šamaš.
I have [......] the sign, follow its track.
Draw near.[......] give judgment.
25 [......] Šamaš, constrain [murder] and violence,
[.................] me.
(Lines 27–32 too damaged for translation)
Let there not be[......]

35 At the end of[......]
Let there be a 29th day[......]
After [he had]... the decrees [...
The organization of front and [...
He made the day[......]
40 Let the year be equally [...
At the new year [...
The year...[......]
Let there be regularly [...
The projecting bolt [...
45 After he had[......]
The watches of night and day [...
The foam which Tiamat [...
Marduk fashioned [...
He gathered it together and made it into clouds.
50 The raging of the winds, violent rainstorms.
The billowing of mist—accumulation of her spittle—
He appointed for himself and took them in his hand.
He put her head in position and poured out [...[......]
He opened the abyss and it was sated with water.
From her two eyes he let the Euphrates and Tigris flow,
He blocked her nostrils, but left [...
He heaped up the distant [mountains] on her Tigris flow.
He bored wells to channel the springs.
He twisted her tail and wove it into the Durmaḫu,
60 [...] ...the Apsû beneath his feet.
[He set up] her crotch—it wedged up the heavens—
[The half of her] he stretched out and made it firm as the earth.
[AFTER] he had finished his work inside Ti'amat,
[He spread] his net and let it right out.
He surveyed the heavens and the earth...[.]
[...] their bonds.....

It is unfortunate that this section contains the least well preserved part of the whole text, but overall the general sense is clear: Marduk is setting up the universe as known to the ancient Babylonians, using especially the body of the dead Ti'amat, and drawing in many motifs from existing mythologies. The Bound Gods who turn up first in IV 127 are comparable to the Titans: defeated and jailed for misdeeds. The motif of the wind bearing up the blood of the killed monster as a signal of victory from afar to the waiting, apprehensive friendly gods (IV 131–132) is borrowed from the then traditional Anzû Myth, and the splitting of Ti'amat's body into two parts is borrowed from the extremely widespread myth of the splitting of heaven and earth from an original single lump of matter. In these lines (IV 135–140) only the upper part—the newly made heavens—is dealt with. The lower part—earth—has to wait to V 62. The reason for this separation is that our author had two cosmologies he wished to incorporate: the first is the splitting of heaven and earth from an original single body of matter, the other a three-decker universe conceived as the home of a ruling trinity of three Sumerian gods: An, Enlil and Enki/ Ea. Anu (“Heaven”) of course in heaven, Enlil in his main shrine in Nippur on earth, and Enki/Ea, as always, in the subterranean Apsû. Our author started from the two bodies: of Apsû and Ti'amat.

Marduk's father Ea had lived in the body of the dead Apsû for some time, and Marduk was born there, so this had to stay. The dead Ti'amat is split in IV 137–140 and her upper part becomes the sky: still a watery mass, as steps were taken to prevent the water from falling down. (Southern Iraq has extremely little rainfall.) The lower part of this body, as noted before, is kept over for V 62. So the author had little choice over heaven and Apsû: their residents were inevitably Anu and Ea. But what of Enlil? He was the god ousted from the top of the pantheon when Marduk took over that status. Lines IV 145–146 mention Enlil for the first time, in the traditional sequence for the Sumerian trinity. And their three abodes are given in chiastic order since Anu goes in heaven. Thus Enlil is put in what is called Ešarrā, while Ea is put in Ešgalla. These two names of parts of the universe are not conventional Babylonian usage. Ešarrā means “Temple of Totality” and Ešgalla “Large Shrine” but that does not explain anything. From the context Ešgalla is clearly used for the Apsû, and similarly from the context Ešarrā must be a middle level of the Babylonian cosmos, but not earth. Another Babylonian cosmogony has three heavens, and that is drawn on here. The top heaven is that of Anu, the middle heaven is the residence of the Igigī, a group of major gods, and the lower heaven housed the stars, naturally since they can be seen from the surface of the earth. Our author takes up the stars at the beginning of Tablet V, so one is forced to the conclusion that by Ešarrā he means a lower heaven, but not the lowest. In short he knows the concept of a three-decker heaven, but chooses not to use the normal terminology for it. The Apsû was the model on which the upper and middle heaven were trimmed or made, and the only item actually made by Marduk in this stage of the work was the middle heaven as expressly stated in IV 145.

Marduk's creativity is presented in downwards sequence. V 1–46 deal with the heavenly bodies: what goes on in the lower heaven, and V 47–58 deal with the surface of the earth: meteorological phenomena and geographical features, while V 59–66 detail finishing touches to the whole universe.

The setting up of heavenly bodies described in V 1–46 is very detailed compared with the previous account of organizing the levels of the universe, and the interest is not in astronomy as such, but rather in the calendar. To worship acceptably for Babylonians meant observing particular cultic festivals normally based on the lunar calendar. The first day of each month was cultically the most important, the 15th the second most important, and the 7th was third in ranking. Thus maintenance of a correct calendar was considered vitally important, and something of divine origin. When studied in detail V 1–46 deal systematically with the year, the month and the day. The year, consisting of a notional twelve months of thirty days each, was marked in the sky by 36 stars or constellations. three for each month, each one of the three being seen on the first day of each decade. To this end the sky was divided into three zones, and the movements were construed as files of gods marching across the sky, each zone with a commander like an officer over soldiers. And the commander of one zone was considered commander-in-chief. All this is very briefly alluded to in V 1–8, so briefly that it is almost impossible to understand the system without previous knowledge. The only change is that the previous commander-in-chief is displaced to make way for Marduk, whose star, Šeberu, fortunately
happened to be in the same zone as that of the erstwhile commander-in-chief. Thus in theory the year was fixed by 36 stars each starting a new ten-day period.

The month is detailed in V 11–26. Since the Babylonian month was lunar, the moon inevitably was in charge of showing humanity the month by its waxing and waning. It was believed that at the end of each month the sun and moon, being in conjunction, held a judgment session together, as alluded to in V 21–26. Our author is very coy in alluding to sun and moon. They were of course the visible form of two second-ranking gods in the Babylonian pantheon, but they are treated as impersonally as possible here. Marduk’s supremacy in this text tolerates no rivals.

The day was of course regulated by the sun, and V 39–45 seems to explain this, but is too damaged to be fully clear. This is followed by meteorological phenomena in V 47–52, related to Tiamat because, as explained expressly in V 62, the earth is the lower part of Tiamat’s body, but the creature has changed its form completely from IV 139–140, where the upper half is a body of water. Here the lower half is a monstrous quadruped with head, eyes, nostrils, udler and tail. The author is simply combining two originally separate conceptions but keeping one name for the two.

Later in Tablet V the gods in general, thankful for their deliverance from Tiamat and the monsters under Qingu, express their gratitude by building Babylon, at Marduk’s suggestion, the first city, to be the meeting place at the centre of the universe where gods coming down from heaven and up from the Apsu can meet in Marduk’s shrine to take important decisions. This is taking over the previous orthodoxy by which Enlil in Nippur was at the centre of the universe, and the gods met under Enlil to make decisions.

Tablet VI begins with the final act of creation (in our understanding of that term) in the story. When the gods agreed to Marduk’s terms should he come back victorious from fighting Tiamat, they had inserted a small condition of their own: should he be victorious and become king of the gods, he was required to arrange that thereafter their food and drink be supplied gratis. This Marduk arranges:

VI  1 When Marduk heard the gods’ speech
   He conceived a desire to accomplish clever things.
   He opened his mouth, addressing Ea,
   He counsels that which he had pondered in his heart,
5   “I will bring together blood and form bone.

Here again the author is combining different traditions. It was a general Babylonian opinion that the human race was created to supply the food and drink of the gods, and that happened in the provision of victuals to temples on a regular basis for consumption by the gods. But there were different traditions of how the subject race was made. In one tradition he simply grew out of the ground like plants. Another tradition

I will bring into being Lullû (Sumerian: ‘man’), whose name shall be ‘man’
I will create Lullû-man.
On whom the toil of the gods will be laid that they may rest,
I will skillfully alter the organization of the gods:
   Though they are honoured as one, they shall be divided into two.”
Ea answered, as he addressed a word to him,
Expressing his comments on the resting of the gods,
   “Let one brother of theirs be given up,
   Let him perish that people may be fashioned.
Let the great gods assemble
   And let the guilty one be given up that they may be confirmed.”
Marduk assembled the great gods,
Using gracious direction as he gave his order,
As he spoke the gods heeded him:
   The king addressed a word to the Anunnaki,
   “Your former oath was true indeed.
   (Now also) tell me the solemn truth:
   Who is the one who instigated warfare,
   Who made Tiamat rebel and set battle in motion?
Let him who instigated warfare be given up
That I may lay his punishment on him, but you sit and rest.”
The Igigi, the great gods, answered him,
   That is, Lugalkimezraniš’a, the counsellor of the gods, their lord,
   “Qingu is the one who instigated warfare,
   Who made Tiamat rebel and set battle in motion.”
They bound him, holding him before Ea.
   They inflicted the penalty on him and severed his blood-vessels,
From his blood he (Ea) created mankind,
   On whom he imposed the service of the gods, and set the gods free.
35 After the wise Ea had created mankind
   And had imposed the service of the gods upon them—
   That task is beyond comprehension
   For Nudimmud performed the creation with the skill of
   Marduk,
had Ea and the Mother Goddess make man by forming bodies from clay mixed with the blood of a miscreant god and performing magic over them. This is the tradition our author has preferred. However, the Mother Goddess has no place in his narrative, so his hero Marduk takes her place. Ea still plays the major role, but using only the blood of the executed prisoner, no clay. Marduk's part is not minimised in that the plan was his and he identified the criminal with the consent of the assembled gods. The blame heaped on Qingu is of course contrary to the narrative of this text, but such inconsistencies are not to be worried over. The author again is blending two separate traditions. The one is the tradition of "Bound Gods" and related groups. Like the Titans they were put in prison after their defeat, and in the Babylonian tradition the ringleader was executed while the others were freed from prison. But the "setting of the gods free" in line VI 34 subtly blends this freeing from prison with the required freeing of the gods from the hard labour of producing their own food and drink.

This exposition of the episodes of creation in this so-called Babylonian Epic of Creation illustrates, first, that only a small amount is really about creation, and, secondly, that there existed a vast amount of floating mythological material from which each author drew, selected, combined and gave the result his own particular emphasis. It is an extreme case, but it shows the background against which one must study the other often scattered and contextless material, to which we now turn.

The theogony at the beginning of the so-called Babylonian Epic of Creation could be set out in list form as:

Apsû—Tîmat
Laḫmu—Laḫamu
Anšar—Kišar
Anu
Nudimmud—Damkina
Marduk

Ambiguities and questions are raised. First, are Anšar—Kišar the third generation in turn, offspring of Laḫmu—Laḫamu, or a second pair born to Apsû—Tîmat? The narrative is silent on this matter. Also nothing is written about Damkina’s origin. Is this silence a reaction to the problem in any such theogony that after the first generation it implies brother and sister marriages that were taboo in Sumero-Babylonian society? The one clear conclusion that emerges from this text is that the universe began with water, and creation started from that.

Enlil, city god of the town Nippur, was usually the most important god of later third-millennium and succeeding second-millennium Babylonia. His status was related to that of his town, Nippur, which had high religious standing, but was never a political centre of power. Thus its god was everywhere accepted in Sumer, traditionally a land of city states. As noted before, by 2000 B.C.E. there was a generally accepted ranking of all the major Sumerian gods with a group of three at the top: An, Enlil and Enki/Ea, occasionally joined by a fourth, the Mother Goddess. Of these four Enlil was commonly supplied with a theogony. An occasionally had this honour, but not Enki or the Mother Goddess. Thus these two theogeneis are major sources for concepts of creation. Enlil had a spouse Ninlil, though curiously scribes in the middle of the third millennium write slightly different signs for LIL following En- as compared with LIL following Nin-, but that is a scribal whim. En means “lord” and Nin “lady”, and thus Enlil provided thinkers with a bisexual pair, and their divine ancestors connected them with the primaeval matching pair. This ancestry of Enlil in list form is frequently found in lists of gods’ names and in liturgies and exorcistic texts where they are invoked to bring divine power into play. The earliest of these occur in lists of gods’ names coming from two Sumerian sites: Fara (ancient Súrūp-pak) and Abu Salâbikh, both dating to roughly the middle of the third millennium. The lists generally are very different, but the ancestry of Enlil is the same in both sources, and in each case it does not head the list.

It reads:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>En-ki</th>
<th>Nin-ki</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>En-lil</td>
<td>Nin-lil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>En-UH</td>
<td>Nin-UH</td>
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<tr>
<td>En-bulug</td>
<td>Nin-bulug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>En-du-utu’a</td>
<td>Nin-du-utu’a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>En-gukkal</td>
<td>Nin-gukkal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>En-a</td>
<td>Nin-a</td>
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Understanding this list depends on study of all the different ones so far known in the light of such other knowledge that we have. The one just given is the only third-millennium example so far known, but there are many examples spread over the second millennium and the first half of the first, to which we shall soon turn, but our comments on the above result from study of all. In this earliest example alone Enlil and Ninlil occur second. Later they are always put last, or their position there is
otherwise indicated. But Enki—Ninki always come first. They are, then, like Apsû—Tiamat in Marduk's theogony, the original matter of the universe. Study of meanings of the names is thus required, something which the ancient scholars occupied themselves with.

The Sumerian lil means “breath, vapour, nothingness,” so not surprisingly the ancients do not involve themselves in the exposition of the name Enlil. It might allude to the gap in the universe between a solid heavens and the solid earth, where human activity takes place, and where Nippur was religiously supreme. The meaning of ki is “earth”, and this Enki (—Ninki) is not to be confused with Enki/Ea, whose name has properly a final -g, usually dropped, and the meaning of this kig is unknown. Thus in this tradition the universe began with ki “earth”, (perhaps to be given a capital: Earth) in two genders, from which all else eventually emerged. In Marduk’s ancestry the pairs intervening between praeval water and the hero do not supply a rational succession of stages in the development of the universe, as one might have expected from ancient Egyptian parallels, and the same holds for Enlil’s ancestry. The Sumerian ub means “house”, but later versions replace it with garā “leek”, which suggests the Sumerian girī “butterfly”, which in early Sumerian script is written with a sign which could be confused or interchanged with the sign ub. The sign bulug has a variety of meanings (“great, milt, control”), none particularly apposite. But du is “hill”, and utu a “breeding ram” and gukka “fattailed sheep”. In the last a is “arm” or “strength”. The result is clear: the names of these pairs, save for the first, are irrelevant for cosmology. This is confirmed by two pieces of evidence. The various lists vary enormously, indeed it is difficult to find two which exactly agree. They vary in length from three to twenty-two, though all begin with Enki—Ninki and end or presume Enlil—Ninil. Also already in the third millennium they can be summed up as the Enkis, the Ninkis” (Sumerian: Enki-(e)ne Ninki-(e)ne).

Of the many later examples two only will be given here, an Old Babylonian god list (c. 1700–1600 B.C.E.), and a first-millennium copy of an incantation of earlier origin, being their source(s). We give the significant element in each name, omitting the Ens and Nins, and translating or giving comment when helpful. A detailed discussion would be very long and not helpful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old Babylonian god list</th>
<th>Incantation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ki</td>
<td>“earth”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ul</td>
<td>“star” or “shining”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mul</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nun</td>
<td>“lordly”, “much”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kur</td>
<td>“mountain”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kingal</td>
<td>“president”?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>šar</td>
<td>“totality”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bulu₂</td>
<td>(two variants?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bulug</td>
<td>“butterfly”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>girī</td>
<td>“side of dung”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dašurimma</td>
<td>“sheep-pen”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anaš</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dukuga</td>
<td>“holy hill”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anna</td>
<td>“of heaven”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>utila</td>
<td>“living days”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mešarra</td>
<td>“total decrees”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of these listings offer explanatory summaries at the end:

Old Babylonian:

Mother Ninil, father Enlil (VAS 2 11 v 1–7)
Mother of Enlil, father of Enlil (PRAK II C 72 obv. 13–17)

First millennium incantations:

Lords of mother-father of Enlil (K 9417+, etc.)
Lord of mother-father of Enlil, lady of mother-father of Ninil (CT 16 13 11–28, etc.)

The variety in these “explanations” of the lists of En-Nin-pairs shows that the lists were traditional, but the explanation was not fixed. And there seem to be two alternatives. Either each pair in the lists began the following pair, with the implication of incest, or each male and each female of the pairs was conceived to be an evolved form of the previous one, that Enlil slowly evolved from Enki, and Ninil from Ninki. The term “mother-father” is clearly a technical term for such pairs, but its order so blantly contradicts that of the whole tradition of these lists that it must have been a distinct mythological motif in origin. We have unfortunately no other material from this “feminist” tradition.
Other differing traditions were from time to time inserted into the Enkis and Ninkis. In some texts an extra line is prefixed:

An (and) Urash; Earth, where barley sprouted

S.A. Smith, *Miscellaneous Assyrian Texts*, p. 12

Urash in Sumerian is “earth”, and in this context a deity, female, so that this expresses the idea of origins as being in a male heaven and female earth mentioned above. The mention of barley, the typical Sumerian grain, is another small myth of origins: plant life in barley was first from the copulation of heaven and earth.

By chance there is one mid-third-millennium occurrence of this theogony not in list-form, but in part of a literary text. It seems that only the introduction of the text was written on this tablet, and that is damaged, but the lines relevant here are complete:

At that time Enki and Nunki had not emerged,
Enlil did not exist. Ninlil did not exist…

Nunki for Ninki is no problem: it occurs elsewhere, and in Hittite Enki Ninki appear as Minki Ammunk. The occurrence in this context is typical: Sumerian authors often begin their story with, in effect, “In the beginning” and then move on by appropriate stages to the main narrative.

The theogony of Anu (“Heaven”) is more relevant to that of Marduk because he was Marduk’s grandfather, while Enlil was the god deposed to make way for Marduk at the head of the pantheon, so to be ignored or downgraded. While it is possible to consider Marduk’s ancestry in the Epic of Creation as Anu’s also, in fact the Epic has constructed its own theogony uniquely, to our knowledge, headed by a male and female watery pair. Anu had a theogony of his own which was entirely different save for one pair. The Old Babylonian list of gods’ names from which we excerpted Enlil’s theogony above also gives one for Anu:

An (“Heaven”)
Anšargal (“Great whole heaven”)
En-uru-ulla (“Lord of the pramaeval city”)
Urš (“Earth”)
Belet-ili (“Lady of the gods”)
Namma (“?”)
Ama-tu-an-ki (“Mother who bore heaven and earth”)

In this list all the names are put in single columns, and while there was no difficulty in noting that e.g. Enki, Ninki are a matching pair, there is no such self-evident explanation of Anu’s ancestry. He comes first in accordance with the general style of the whole list, and Anšargal could be another name of his, or the name of his father. If the latter, then this short list is in reverse chronological order. The final name suggests a prime mover, and the present writer accepts this and the implication that for chronological sequence one must read upwards. But even that is not the end of the matter. The present writer proposes the following arrangement of the list for normal sequence:

Namma (= Ama-tu-an-ki)
Urš (= Belet-ili)
En-uru-ulla
An (= Anšargal)

Namma is Enki’s mother, commonly without any specified spouse, and since Enki/Ea was god of the subterranean waters, it may be suspected that his mother was similarly associated. Her name is written with the sign ENGUR, which is another name of the Apsê. Ama-tu-an-ki is certainly an epithet rather than a primary name, so no doubt it is a title of Namma. Urš (“Earth”) is no doubt described as “Lady of the gods” because that was a real name in common use referring to the Mother Goddess, who was associated with the earth. Little is known of En-uru-ulla.

Thus the pertinent result from this list is that cosmic water came first and was followed by Earth, on which cities were built, and finally by heaven. The sequence “earth-heaven” is supported by a few third-millennium examples in literary texts, contrary to the common “heaven-earth”. Similarly Genesis 1 also begins with earth and water, while heaven is created later. Later versions of this theogony of Anu turn it into a list of male-female pairs by creating matching pairs: Anšargal—Ninšargal; En-uru-ulla—Nin-uru-ulla, and by drawing on another, entirely different theogony for Anu.

This alternative ancestry occurs in its least manipulated form in Babylonian incantations known to us from first-millennium copies, but certainly of older origin. Two examples only are given here:

Dûrû—Dûrû
Laḫamu—Laḫamu
Ala—Belîlî
KAR 22 obv. 23–25

Dûrû—Dûrû
Laḫmu—Laḫamu
Engur—Gara
Ala—Belîlî
K 9417*. 6916, 9992
The first pair in both these lists have Semitic names meaning “ever and ever,” like the Hebrew dōr wadārī and are not linguistically masculine and feminine, but are made into a male-female pair for the sake of the theogony. Lahmu and Lahamu have been incorporated into Marduk’s ancestry and commented on above. Alalu occurs in a second-millennium Hurrian myth of origins but in Hittite language. According to this Alalu reigned first in heaven, for nine years, but was then deposed by Anu, who in turn lost to Kūmarbi, and he in turn (apparently) to the storm god Teshub, but the text is very damaged and complicated at this point. The text does not state that Anu was son of Alalu, but the succession would allow ancient mythographers to draw that conclusion if they wished, even if the text did not imply that already. Thus we conclude that Alalu—Bēlili were meant as parents of Anu, and so conclude this list, while Dūrī—Dārī are chronologically the first. Here eternal time is the prime mover in creation, a rare and interesting concept since time is not a physical thing like earth and water.

There is in fact one second-millennium example Dūrī—Dārī of interest. A short incantation in Elamite language but written in Babylonian and dated to the 26th year of Šamsi-Iluma of Babylon (c. 1724 B.C.E.) has two lines in dialectal Sumerian:

Dūrī—Dārī, lord Enil, Dārī—Dārī, lord Enil
F. M. Th. Bohl, Mededelingen der Koninklijke Academie van Wetenschappen, Afdeeling Letterkunde, Deel 78, Series B, no. 2, p. 8 (Amsterdam, 1934)

Most probably “lord Enil” is abbreviated for “lords of mother-father of Enil”, and here the motif of eternal time is made the ancestor of Enil, a further example of variety in this material.

The four main myths considered so far were to some extent central to their civilization. Enil and Anu were heads of the pantheon until about 1100 B.C., and Marduk was head thereafter. But not one of these four theogonies has enough narrative to satisfy our curiosity about these lists of pairs, or single figures, as handed down. Thus we shall now take up a narrative myth of the same date narrating the main events about these bisexual pairs which led on to the world as currently constituted. This text is known from a single copy, much damaged on the reverse, and somewhat damaged on the obverse. It is also difficult to read and to understand, and the following rendering is given on the basis of repeated collation. The tablet is Babylonian but the only information about the origin of the text, provided by the damaged colophon, is that it antedates the fall of the Assyrian town Ashur in 614 B.C.E.

The text is both an account of origins by giving a series of bisexual pairs leading on to the gods worshipped in the author’s time, but it is also a succession myth like the Hittite text described above. The male of each pair rules until his successor deposes him. The action takes place, at least at the beginning of the narrative, in a town called Dunnu. There are several different places of that name known to us, and this text provides no geographical information. However, all the gods whose names survive on the damaged reverse belong to the pantheon of Nippur, so our Dunnu was presumably not far from that town. A Late Babylonian economic text does refer to Dunnu “in the district of Nippur.”

Translation BM 74329

1 [...] in the beginning [...]
2 [...]... and [...]...[.]
3 They protected [...]... and [hitched on] their plough.
4 [With the] stroke of their plough they brought Sea into being.
5 [Secondly], by themselves they bore Amākandu:
6 [Thirdly], they both built the city of Dunnu, the primeval city.
7 Hā’ in dedicated the overlordship in the city of Dunnu to himself.
8 [Earth] cast her eyes on Amākandu, her son,
9 “Come, let me make love to you,” she said to him.
10 Amākandu married Earth, his mother, and
11 Hā’ in, his [father] he killed [and]
12 Laid [him] to rest in the city of Dunnu, which he loved.
13 Then Amākandu took the overlordship of his father, [and]
14 married Sea, his sister [.]
15 Lahār, son of Amākandu, went [and]
16 Killed Amākandu, and in the city of Dunnu
17 He laid [him] to rest in the … of his father.
18 He married [Sea] his mother.
19 Then Sea murdered Earth, her mother.
20 In the month Chislev on the 16th day they took the overlordship and kingship.
21 [...] son of Lahār, married River, his own sister, and
22 He killed [Lahār] his father, and Sea, his mother, and
23 Laid them to rest [in] a tomb like (?) the netherworld.
24 [In the month …] on the first day [he] took the kingship and overlordship for himself.
25 [...] son of …married Ga’u, his sister, and
26 … earth …
27 …...[.]
28 …...[.] fathers and … [.]
...for of the gods [...] 
30 [...] he killed River, his mother, [and] 
31 [...] he settled them. 
32 [In the month...on the .th day] he [took] the overlordship and kingship for himself.

 [...], son of [...], married Ningeština, his sister, [and] 
34 Killed [...], his father, and Ga'ū, his mother, [and] 
35 Settled them [...]
36 [In the month...]. on the 16th (variant: 29th) day, [he took] the kingship and overlordship.

 [...] the child/servant of Šumurnu [...]
38 [...] married his own sister, [and] 
39 [...] took the overlordship of his father, and [...]
40 [...] he killed him and [...] 
41 [...] to the city of Šupat- [...] 
42 [...] life [...] 
Reverse

5 This [...] 
6 And Ungal-Nibrû... 
9 Ninurta [...] 
11 Enlil [...] 
12 Nusku [...] 
15 Enlil [...] 
16 Ninurta [...] 

The actors in this drama can be listed as follows:

Ha'īn —— Earth
Anakandu —— Sea
Lahar
[... ] —— River
[... ] —— Ga’ū
[... ] —— Ningeština

After which our text breaks off. The first three females are nothing unexpected in such a context, but the males are. Ha’īn occurs only here, and is twice written clearly Ha’īn, but nothing at all is known about him. The deity we have rendered Anakandu could also be rendered Šekandu due to the complications of Sumerian writing, but in either case he was a god of domestic quadrupeds, sometimes involved with wild ones as well. Lahar is a Babylonian common noun for “ewe”, but the god Lahar can be identified with the Sumerian god Shara, and in this text he is certainly male, and no doubt carries a connection with domestic flocks. Ga’ūm is our emendation of what the tablet has: “U’a’um,” which is a deified exclamation “Alas!” The deity Ga’um is little known but has strong connections with domestic flocks. Ningeština is goddess of wine.

The narrative is a horror of incest and murder, the prize going to Amakandu who murdered his father and then married first his mother and then his sister. The author of this text not only accepted the implication of incest is these “mother-father” pairs, but positively revelled in it, and so far from being satisfied with heroic battles to gain the succession to power, males and females alike in his story glibly commit murder. One distinctive feature of this text is the cultic allusions before each ruling. It seems that each succession to power as the preceding generation was finally killed off was commemorated in a cultic performance, presumably in the town Dumnu.

The figure Šumurnu in line 37 is obscured by the damaged surface of the tablet, but one suspects that he continued the tradition of his elders. His name in fact is the Hurrian word “Heaven”, which is appropriate since nothing preceding in this text explains the origin of that part of the universe.

All the texts so far considered have creation set in motion by what were considered the primaeval parts of the universe. A different attitude is shown in a bilingual Sumero-Babylonian incantation. The first 40 lines can be reconstructed, but the end is so far lost:

Translation

1 A pure temple, a temple of the gods, had not been made in a pure place,
2 A reed had not sprouted, a tree had not been created,
3 A brick had not been moulded, a brick-mould had not been created,
4 A temple had not been made, a city had not been created,
5 A city had not been made, a settlement had not been established,
6 Nippur had not been made, Ekur had not been created.
7 Uruk had not been made, Eanna had not been created,
8 The Apsû had not been made, Eridu had not been created,
9 A pure temple, a temple of the gods, for them to dwell in, had not been made,
10 But all the lands were sea,
11 And the spring in the sea was a water-pipe.
12 Then Eridu was made, Esagil was created,
13 Esagil, which Lugaldugula founded in the Apsû,
14 Babylon was made, Esagil was completed.
15 He made the Anunnaki gods, all of them,
16 And they gave an exalted name to the pure city in which they were pleased to dwell.
Marduk constructed a raft on the surface of the waters,
He made earth and heaped it up on the raft,
That the gods should be settled in a dwelling of their pleasure
He created mankind.
Aruru with him created the seed of mankind.
He created animals, the creatures in the open country,
He created the Tigris and Euphrates and put them in place,
Benevolently he assigned names to them.
He created cane, sedges, marshes, reeds and canebrakes,
He created the vegetation of the open country,
But the lands were marshes and reed-beds.
There were cow, the calf, the bull; the ewe, the lamb, the breeding ram.
There were palm groves and forests.
The wild sheep and the antelope were standing at his service.
The lord Marduk made a terrace on the edge of the sea,
... he turned the reed-beds into dry land.
... he brought into being
[He made the reed grow, he created the tree,
... he created in the place,
[He moulded the brick], he created the brick-mould,
[He made the temple], he created the city,
[He created the city], he established the settlement,
[He made Nippur], he created Ekur,
[He made Uruk], he created [Eanna].

First, in good Sumerian literary style, what was originally lacking is listed, with emphasis on the cities of the triad of Sumerian gods: Uruk of Anu, Nippur of Enlil, and Eredu of Enki/Ea. At the time described there was only water (line 10), and some kind of primaeval water circulation (line 11). The creation necessary to bring into being the present world is confused as described. The author wanted to have Marduk as the creator, and his city Babylon and his temple in it, Esagil, as the first items to be made. But Lugalduguga is a name of Enki/Ea, not of Marduk, and Esagil is Marduk’s temple in Babylon, not a temple in Eredu, Enki/Ea’s town. “He” in line 15 must be Marduk and the Anunnaki are all the great gods, so Marduk is suddenly the prime god. And it is he who makes the earth by placing a raft on the existing cosmic water and heaping up earth on it. Then he creates the rest of the then-known universe, including Nippur and Uruk. It may be suspected that an original story of Enki’s creation has been edited to put Marduk in Enki’s place, with appropriate town and temple. But even here there is no complete creatio ex nihilo. Cosmic water apparently always existed. And Marduk simply appears: nothing
33. They went and sat, facing Tiamat,
34. As they conferred about the gods, their sons.
35. Apsu opened his mouth
36. And addressed Tiamat
37. “Their behaviour has become displeasing to me
38. And I cannot rest in the day-time or sleep at night.
39. I will destroy and break up their way of life
40. That silence may reign and we may sleep.”
41. When Tiamat heard this
42. She raged and cried out to her spouse,
43. She cried in distress, fuming within herself,
44. She grieved over the (plotted) evil,
45. “How can we destroy what we have given birth to?
46. Though their behaviour causes distress, let us tighten discipline
   graciously.”
47. Mummu spoke up with counsel for Apsu——
48. (As from) a rebellious vizier was the counsel of his Mummu——
49. “Destroy, my father, that lawless way of life,
50. That you may rest in the day-time and sleep by night!”
51. Apsu was pleased with him, his face beamed
52. Because he had plotted evil against the gods, his sons.
53. Mummu put his arms around Apsu’s neck,
54. He sat on his knees kissing him.
55. What they plotted in their gathering
56. Was reported to the gods, their sons.
57. The gods heard it and were frantic.
58. They were overcome with silence and sat quietly.
59. The one who excels in knowledge, the skilled and learned.
60. Ea, who knows everything, perceived their tricks.
61. He fashioned it and made it to be all-embracing.
62. He executed it skilfully as supreme—his pure incantation.
63. He recited it and set it on the waters,
64. He poured sleep upon him as he was slumbering deeply.
65. He put Apsu to slumber as he poured out sleep,
66. And Mummu, the counsellor, was breathless with agitation.
67. He split (Apsu’s) sinews, ripped off his crown,
68. Carried away his aura and put it on himself.
69. He bound Apsu and killed him;
70. Mummu he confined and handled roughly.
71. He set his dwelling upon Apsu,
72. And laid hold on Mummu, keeping the nose-rope in his hand.
73. After Ea had bound and slain his enemies,
74. Had achieved victory over his foes,
75. He rested quietly in his chamber,
76. He called it Apsu, whose shrines he appointed.
77. Then he founded his living-quarters within it,
78. And Ea and Damkina, his wife, sat in splendour.

79. In the chamber of the destinies, the room of the archetypes,
80. The wisest of the wise, the sage of the gods, Bel was conceived.
81. In Apsu was Marduk born,
82. In pure Apsu was Marduk born.
83. Ea his father begat him,
84. Damkina his mother bore him.
85. He sucked the breasts of goddesses,
86. A nurse reared him and filled him with terror.
87. His figure was well developed, the glance of his eyes was dazzling.
88. His growth was manly, he was mighty from the beginning.
89. Anu, his father’s begetter, saw him.
90. He exulted and smiled; his heart filled with joy.
91. Anu rendered him perfect; his divinity was remarkable,
92. And he became very lofty, excelling them in his attributes.
93. His members were incomprehensibly wonderful,
94. Incapable of being grasped with the mind, hard even to look on.
95. Four were his eyes, four his ears.
96. Flame shot forth as he moved his lips.
97. His four ears grew large.
98. And his eyes likewise took in everything.
99. His figure was lofty and superior in comparison with the gods.
100. His limbs were surpassing, his nature was superior:
101. ‘Mari-utu, Mari-utu,
102. ‘The Son, the Sun-god, the Sun-god of the gods.’
103. He was clothed with the aura of the Ten Gods, so exalted was his strength,
104. The Fifty Dreads were loaded upon him.
105. Anu formed and gave birth to the four winds.
106. He delivered them to him, “My son, let them whirl!”
107. He formed dust and set a hurricane to drive it.
108. He made a wave to bring consternation on Tiamat.
109. Tiamat was confounded; day and night she was frantic.
110. The gods took no rest, they——
111. In their minds they plotted evil,
112. And addressed their mother Tiamat,
113. “When Apsu, your spouse, was killed.
114. Did you not go at his side, but sat quietly.
115. The four dreadful winds have been fashioned
116. To throw you into confusion, and we cannot sleep.
117. You gave no thought to Apsu, your spouse.
118. Nor to Mummu, who is a prisoner. Now you sit alone.
119. Henceforth you will be in frantic consternation!
120. And as for us, who cannot rest, you do not love us!
121. Consider our burden, our eyes are hollow.
122. Break the immovable yoke that we may sleep.
123. Make battle, avenge them!
124. [...]——reduce to nothingness!
125. Tiâmat heard, the speech pleased her,
(Shesaid, “Let us make demons, [as you] have advised.”
127. The gods assembled within her.
128. They conceived [evil] against the gods their begetters.
129. They……and took the side of Tiâmat,
130. Fiercely plotting, unresting by night and day,
131. Lusting for battle, raging, storming,
132. They set up a host to bring about conflict.
133. Mother Hubur, who forms everything,
134. Supplied irresistible weapons, and gave birth to giant serpents.
135. They had sharp teeth, they were merciless,…
136. With poison instead of blood she filled their bodies.
137. She clothed the fearful monsters with dread.
138. She loaded them with an aura and made them godlike.
(Shesaid, “Let their onlooker feebly perish,
140. May they constantly leap forward and never retire.”
141. She created the Hydra, the Dragon, the Hairy Hero
142. The Great Demon, the Savage Dog, and the Scorpion-man,
143. Fierce demons, the Fish-man, and the Bull-man,
144. Carriers of merciless weapons, fearless in the face of battle.
145. Her commands were tremendous, not to be resisted.
146. Altogether she made eleven of that kind.
147. Among the gods, her sons, whom she constituted her host,
148. She exalted Qingu, and magnified him among them.
149. The leadership of the army, the direction of the host,
150. The bearing of weapons, campaigning, the mobilization of conflict,
151. The chief executive power of battle, supreme command,
152. She entrusted to him and set him on a throne,
153. “I have cast the spell for you and exalted you in the host of the gods,
154. I have delivered to you the rule of all the gods.
155. You are indeed exalted, my spouse, you are renowned,
156. Let your commands prevail over all the Anunnaki.”
157. She gave him the Tablet of Destinies and fastened it to his breast,
158. (Saying) “Your order may not be changed; let the utterance of your
mouth he firm.”
159. After Qingu was elevated and had acquired the power of Anuship
160. He decreed the destinies for the gods, her sons:
161. “May the utterance of your mouths subdue the fire-god,
162. May your poison by its accumulation put down aggression.”

Tablet II
1. Tiâmat gathered together her creation
2. And organised battle against the gods, her offspring.
3. Henceforth Tiâmat plotted evil because of Apsû,
4. It became known to Ea that she had arranged the conflict.
5. Ea heard this matter,
6. He lapsed into silence in his chamber and sat motionless.

7. After he had reflected and his anger had subsided
8. He directed his steps to Anšar his father.
9. He entered the presence of the father of his begetter, Anšar,
10. And related to him all of Tiâmat’s plotting.
11. “My father, Tiâmat our mother has conceived a hatred for us,
12. She has established a host in her savage fury.
13. All the gods have turned to her,
14. Even those you (pl.) begat also take her side
15. They……and took the side of Tiâmat,
16. Fiercely plotting, unresting by night and day,
17. Lusting for battle, raging, storming,
18. They set up a host to bring about conflict.
19. Mother Hubur, who forms everything,
20. Supplied irresistible weapons, and gave birth to giant serpents.
21. They had sharp teeth, they were merciless,…
22. With poison instead of blood she filled their bodies.
23. She clothed the fearful monsters with dread.
24. She loaded them with an aura and made them godlike.
(Shesaid, “Let their onlooker feebly perish,
26. May they constantly leap forward and never retire.”
27. She created the Hydra, the Dragon, the Hairy Hero,
28. The Great Demon, the Savage Dog, and the Scorpion-man,
29. Fierce demons, the Fish-man, and the Bull-man,
30. Carriers of merciless weapons, fearless in the face of battle.
31. Her commands were tremendous, not to be resisted.
32. Altogether she made eleven of that kind.
33. Among the gods, her sons, whom she constituted her host,
34. She exalted Qingu and magnified him among them.
35. The leadership of the army, the direction of the host,
36. The bearing of weapons, campaigning, the mobilization of conflict,
37. The chief executive power of battle, supreme command,
38. She entrusted to him and set him on a throne.
39. “I have cast the spell for you and exalted you in the host of the gods,
40. I have delivered to you the rule of all the gods.
41. You are indeed exalted, my spouse, you are renowned,
42. Let your commands prevail over all the Anunnaki.”
43. She gave him the tablet of Destinies and fastened it to his breast,
44. (Saying) “Your order may not be changed; let the utterance of your
mouth he firm.”
45. After Qingu was elevated and had acquired the power of Anuship
46. He decreed the destinies for the gods, her sons:
47. “May the utterance of your mouths subdue the fire-god,
48. May your poison by its accumulation put down aggression.”
49. Anšar heard; the matter was profoundly disturbing.
50. He cried “Woe!” and bit his lip.
51. His heart was in fury, his mind could not be calmed.
52. Over Ea his son his cry was faltering.
99. Hasten and stand before Tiāmat,
100. Appease her rage that her heart may relax
101. If she does not harken to your words,
102. Address to her words of petition that she may be appeased.”
103. He heard the speech of Anšar his father,
104. He took the road to her; proceeded on the route to her.
105. Anu went, he perceived the tricks of Tiāmat,
106. He stopped, fell silent, and turned back,
107. He entered the presence of Anšar the father who begat him,
108. Penitently addressing him.
109. “My father, Tiāmat’s [deeds] are too much for me.
110. I perceived her planning, but my [incantation] was not [equal] (to it).
111. Her strength is mighty, she is [full] of dread.
112. She is altogether very strong, none one [can go against her].
113. Her very loud noise does not diminish,
114. I became afraid of her cry and turned back.
115. My father, do not lose hope, send another person against her.
116. Though a woman’s strength is very great, it is not equal to a man’s.
117. Disband her cohorts, break up her plans,
118. Before she lays her hands on us.”
119. Anšar lapsed into silence, staring at the ground.
120. He nodded to Ea, shaking his head.
121. The Ijītu and all the Anunnaki had assembled,
122. They sat in tight-lipped silence.
123. No god would go to face Tiāmat… […]
124. Would go out against Tiāmat… […]
125. Yet the lord Anšar, the father of the great gods,
126. Was angry in his heart, and did not summon any one.
127. A mighty son, the avenger of his father,
128. He who hastens to war, the warrior Marduk,
129. Ea summoned (him) to his private chamber
130. To explain to him his plans.
131. “Marduk, give counsel, listen to your father.
132. You are my son, who gives me pleasure,
133. Go reverently before Anšar,
134. Speak, take your stand, appease him with your glance.”
135. Bel rejoiced at his father’s words.
136. He drew near and stood in the presence of Anšar.
137. Anšar saw him, his heart filled with satisfaction,
138. He kissed his lips and removed his tear.
139. “My [father] do not hold your peace, but speak forth,
140. I will go and fulfil your desires!
141. [Anšar] do not hold your peace, but speak forth.
142. I will go and fulfil your desires!
143. Which man has drawn up his battle array against you?
144. And will Tiāmat, who is a woman, attack you with (her) weapons?
[“My father], begetter, rejoice and be glad,
146. Soon you will tread on the neck of Tiamat!
147. [Anšar], begetter, rejoice and be glad,
148. Soon you will tread on the neck of Tiamat!
149. [“Go.] my son, conversant with all knowledge,
150. Appease Tiamat with your pure spell.
151. Drive the storm chariot without delay,
152. And with a [...] which cannot be repelled turn her back.”
153. Bel rejoiced at his father’s words,
154. With glad heart he addressed his father,
155. “Lord of the gods, Destiny of the great gods,
156. If I should become your avenger.
157. If I should bind Tiamat and preserve you,
158. Convene an assembly and proclaim for me an exalted destiny.
159. Sit, all of you, in Ušuššuššuššuššuš with gladness.
160. And let me, with my utterance, decree destinies instead of you.
161. Whatever I instigate must not be changed.
162. Nor may my command be nullified or altered.”

Tablet III
1. Anšar opened his mouth
2. And addressed Kaka, his vizier,
3. “Vizier Kaka, who gratifies my pleasure,
4. I will send you to Laḫmu and Laḫamu,
5. You are skilled in making inquiry, learned in address.
6. Have the gods, my fathers, brought to my presence.
7. Let all the gods be brought,
8. Let them confer as they sit at table.
9. Let them eat grain, let them drink ale,
10. Let them decree the destiny for Marduk their avenger.
11. Go, be gone, Kaka, stand before them.
12. And repeat to them all that I tell you:
13. “Anšar, your son, has sent me,
14. And I am to explain his plans.

15–52. = II, 11–48 (* instead of ‘‘My father,’ put ‘‘Thus.’’)
53. I sent Anu, but he could not face her.
54. Nudimmud took fright and retired.
55. Marduk, the sage of the gods, your son, has come forward.
56. He has determined to meet Tiamat.
57. He has spoken to me and said,

58–64. = II, 156–162 (* begin with quotation marks: “If
65. Quickly, now, decree your destiny for him without delay,
66. “That he may go and face your powerful enemy.”
67. Kaka went. He directed his steps

68. To Laḫmu and Laḫamu, the gods his fathers.
69. He prostrated himself, he kissed the ground before them.
70. He got up, saying to them as he stood.
71–124. = II, 13–66
125. When Laḫmu and Laḫamu heard, they cried aloud.
126. All the Igigi moaned in distress.
127. “What has gone wrong that she took this decision about us?
128. We did not know what Tiamat was doing.”
129. All the great gods who decree destinies
130. Gathered as they went.
131. They entered the presence of Anšar and became filled with [joy],
132. They kissed one another as they . […] in the assembly.
133. They conferred as they sat at table,
134. They ate grain, they drank ale.
135. They strained the sweet liquor through their straws,
136. As they drank beer and felt good,
137. They became quite carefree, their mood was merry,
138. And they decreed the fate for Marduk, their avenger.

Tablet IV
1. They set a lordly dais for him
2. And he took his seat before his fathers to receive kingship.
3. (They said,) “You are the most honoured among the great gods,
4. Your destiny is unequalled, your command is like Anu’s.
5. Marduk, you are the most honoured among the great gods,
6. Your destiny is unequalled, your command is like Anu’s.
7. Henceforth your order will not be annulled.
8. It is in your power to exalt and abase.
9. Your utterance is sure, your command cannot be rebelled against.
10. None of the gods will transgress the line you draw.
11. Shrines for all the gods needs provisioning,
12. That you may be established where their sanctuaries are.
13. You are Marduk, our avenger.
14. We have given you kingship over the sum of the whole universe.
15. Take your seat in the assembly, let your word be exalted,
16. Let your weapons not miss the mark, but may they slay your enemies.
17. Bel, spare him who trusts in you,
18. But destroy the god who set his mind on evil.”
19. They set a constellation in the middle
20. And addressed Marduk, their son,
21. “Your destiny, Bel, is superior to that of all the gods,
22. Command and bring about annihilation and re-creation.
23. Let the constellation disappear at your utterance,
24. With a second command let the constellation reappear.”
25. He gave the command and the constellation disappeared,
26. With a second command the constellation came into being again.
27. When the gods, his fathers, saw (the effect of) his utterance,
28. They rejoiced and offered congratulation: “Marduk is the king!”
29. They added to him a mace, a throne, and a rod.
30. They gave him an irresistible weapon that overwhelms the foes:
31. (They said,) “Go, cut Tiamat’s throat,
32. And let the winds bear up her blood to give the news.”
33. The gods, his fathers, decreed the destiny of Bel.
34. And set him on the road, the way of prosperity and success.
35. He fashioned a bow and made it his weapon,
36. He set an arrow in place, put the bow string on.
37. He took up his club and held it in his right hand,
38. His bow and quiver he hung at his side.
39. He placed lightning before him,
40. And filled his body with tongues of flame.
41. He made a net to enmesh the entails of Tiamat,
42. And stationed the four winds that no part of her escape.
43. The South Wind, the North Wind, the East Wind, the West Wind,
44. He put beside his net, winds given by his father, Anu.
45. He fashioned the Evil Wind, the Dust Storm, Tempest.
46. The Four-fold Wind, the Seven-fold Wind, the Chaos-spreading Wind, the…… Wind.
47. He sent out the seven winds that he had fashioned.
48. And they took their stand behind him to harass Tiamat’s entails.
49. Bel took up the Storm-flood, his great weapon,
50. He rode the fearful chariot of the irresistible storm.
51. Four steeds he yoked to it and harnessed them to it,
53. Their lips were parted, their teeth bore venom,
54. They were strangers to weariness, trained to sweep forward.
55. At his right hand he stationed raging battle and strife,
56. On the left, conflict that overwhelms a united battle array.
57. He was clad in a tunic, a fearful coat of mail.
58. And on his head he wore an aura of terror.
59. Bel proceeded and set out on his way.
60. He set his face toward the raging Tiamat.
61. In his lips he held a spell.
62. He grasped a plant to counter poison in his hand.
63. Thereupon they milled around him, the gods milled around him,
64. The gods, his fathers, milled around him, the gods milled around him.
65. Bel drew near, surveying the maw of Tiamat,
66. He observed the tricks of Qingu, her spouse.
67. As he looked, he lost his nerve,
68. His determination went and he faltered.
69. His divine aides, who were marching at his side,
70. Saw the warrior, the foremost, and their vision became dim.
71. Tiamat cast her spell without turning her neck.
72. In her lips she held untruth and lies,
73. “[ ]…………
74. In their [ ].] they have assembled by you.”
75. Bel [lifted up] the Storm-flood, his great weapon,
76. And with these words threw it at the raging Tiamat,
77. “Why are you aggressive and arrogant,
78. And strive to provoke battle?
79. The younger generation have shouted, outraging their elders,
80. But you, their mother, hold pity in contempt.
81. Qingu you have named to be your spouse,
82. And you have improperly appointed him to the rank of Anuship.
83. Against Anšar, king of the gods, you have stirred up trouble,
84. And against the gods, my fathers, your trouble is established.
85. Deploy your troops, gird on your weapons,
86. You and I will take our stand and do battle.”
87. When Tiamat heard this
88. She went insane and lost her reason.
89. Tiamat cried aloud and fiercely.
90. All her lower members trembled beneath her.
91. She was reciting an incantation, kept reciting her spell,
92. While the (battle-)gods were sharpening their weapons of war.
93. Tiamat and Marduk, the sage of the gods, came together,
94. Joining in strife, drawing near to battle.
95. Bel spread out his net and enmeshed her;
96. He let loose the Evil Wind, the rear guard, in her face.
97. Tiamat opened her mouth to swallow it,
98. She let the Evil Wind in so that she could not close her lips.
99. The fierce winds weighed down her belly.
100. Her inwards were distended and she opened her mouth wide.
101. He let fly an arrow and pierced her belly,
102. He tore open her entrails and slit her inwards,
103. He bound her and extinguished her life.
104. He threw down her corpse and stood on it.
105. After he had killed Tiamat, the leader,
106. Her assembly dispersed, her host scattered.
107. Her divine aides, who went beside her,
108. In trembling and fear beat a retreat.
109. ….. to save their lives,
110. But they were completely surrounded, unable to escape,
111. He bound them and broke their weapons,
112. And they lay enmeshed, sitting in a snare,
113. Hiding in corners, filled with grief.
114. Bearing his punishment, held in a prison.
115. The eleven creatures who were laden with fearfulness,
116. The throng of devils who went as grooms at her right hand,
117. He put ropes upon them and bound their arms,
118. Together with their warfare he trampled them beneath him.
119. Now Qingu, who had risen to power among them,
120. He bound and reckoned with the Dead Gods.
121. He took from him the Tablet of Destinies, which was not properly his,
122. Sealed it with a seal and fastened it to his own breast.
123. After the warrior Marduk had bound and slain his enemies,
124. Had... the arrogant enemy...,
125. Had established victory for Enšar over all his foes,
126. Had fulfilled the desire of Nudimmud,
127. He strengthened his hold on the Bound Gods,
128. And returned to Tiamat, whom he had bound.
129. Bel placed his feet on the lower parts of Tiamat
130. And with his merciless club smashed her skull.
131. He severed her arteries
132. And let the North Wind bear up (her blood) to give the news.
133. His fathers saw it and were glad and exulted;
134. They brought gifts and presents to him.
135. Bel rested, surveying the corpse,
136. In order to divide the lump by a clever scheme.
137. He split her into two like a dried fish;
138. One half of her he set up and stretched out as the heavens.
139. He stretched the skin and appointed a watch
140. With the instruction not to let her waters escape.
141. He crossed over the heavens, surveyed the celestial parts,
142. And adjusted them to match the Apsû, Nudimmud's abode.
143. Bel measured the shape of the Apsû
144. And set up Eṣarra, a replica of Eṣgalla.
145. In Eṣgalla, Eṣarra which he had built, and the heavens,
146. He settled in their shrines Anu, Enlil, and Ea.

Tablet V
1. He fashioned heavenly stations for the great gods,
2. And set up constellations, the patterns of the stars.
3. He appointed the year, marked off divisions,
4. And set up three stars each for the twelve months.
5. After he had organized the year,
6. He established the heavenly station of Nēberu to fix the stars' intervals.
7. That none should transgress or be slothful
8. He fixed the heavenly stations of Enlil and Ea with it.
9. Gates he opened on both sides,
10. And put strong bolts at the left and the right.
11. He placed the heights (of heaven) in her (Tiāmat's) belly,
12. He created Nannar, entrusting to him the night.
13. He appointed him as the jewel of the night to fix the days,
14. And month by month without ceasing he elevated him with a crown,
15. (Saying) "Shine over the land at the beginning of the month,
16. Resplendent with horns to fix six days.

17. On the seventh day the crown will be half size,
18. On the fifteenth day, halfway through each month, stand in opposition.
19. When Samaš [sees] you on the horizon,
20. Diminish in the proper stages and shine backwards.
21. On the 29th day, draw near to the path of Samaš,
22. [...] the 30th day, stand in conjunction and rival Samaš.
23. I have (.....). the sign, follow its track,
24. Draw near (.....) give judgment.
25. [...] Samaš, constrain [murder] and violence,
26. [.......................]. me.

* * * * * *

35. At the end [...
36. Let there [be] the 29th day [...]"
37. After [he had...] the decrees [...
38. The organization of front and [...
39. He made the day [...
40. Let the year be equally [...
41. At the new year [...
42. The year. [...] [...
43. Let there be regularly [...
44. The projecting bolt [...
45. After he had [...
46. The watches of night and day [...
47. The foam which Tiāmat [...
48. Marduk fashioned [...
49. He gathered it together and made it into clouds,
50. The raging of the winds, violent rainstorms.
51. The billowing of mist—the accumulation of her spittle—
52. He appointed for himself and took them in his hand.
53. He put her head in position and poured out [...] [...
54. He opened the abyss and it was sated with water.
55. From her two eyes he let the Euphrates and Tigris flow.
56. He blocked her nostrils, but left [...
57. He heaped up the distant [mountains] on her breasts,
58. He bored wells to channel the springs.
59. He twisted her tail and wove it into the Durmahu,
60. [...] the Apsû beneath his feet.
61. [He set up] her crotch—it wedged up the heavens—
62. [Thus] the half of her he stretched out and made it firm as the earth.
63. [After] he had finished his work inside Tiāmat,
64. [He spread] his net and let it right out.
65. He surveyed the heavens and the earth [...] [...]
66. [...] their bonds. .....[...
67. After he had formulated his regulations and composed [his] decrees.
68. He attached guide-ropes and put them in Ea's hands.
69. [The Tablet] of Destinies which Qingu had taken and carried,
70. He took charge of it as a trophy (?) and presented it to Anu.
71. [The] battle, which he had tied on or had put on his head,
72. ...he brought before his fathers.
73. [Now] the eleven creatures to which Tiamat had given birth and...
74. He broke their weapons and bound them (the creatures) to his feet.
75. He made images of them and stationed them at the [Gate] of the Apsû,
76. To be a sign never to be forgotten.
77. [The gods] saw it and were jubilantly happy,
78. That is, Lahmu, Lahamu and all his fathers.
80. Anu, Enlil and Ea gave him gifts.
81. Mother Damkina, who bore him, hailed him.
82. With a clean festal robe she made his face shine.
83. To Ušnû, who held her present to give the news,
84. [He entrusted] the vizierate of the Apsû and the care of the holy

85. The Igiqi assembled and all did obeisance to him,
86. Every one of the Anunnaki was kissing his feet.
87. They all [gathered] to show their submission.
88. ...[...], they stood, they bowed down, “Behold the king!”
89. His fathers [...]. and took their fill of his beauty.
90. Bel listened to their utterance, being girded with the dust of battle.
91. [...][............]......
92. Anointing his body with [...] cedar perfume.
93. He clothed himself in [his] lordly robe.
94. With a crown of terror as a royal aura.
95. He took up his club and held it in his right hand,
96. [...]. he grasped in his left.
97. [...][.............]
98. [...]. he set his feet.
99. He put upon [...]
100. The sceptre of prosperity and success [he hung] at his side.
101. After [he had] the aura [...]
102. He adorned (?) his sack, the Apsû, with a fearful [...]
103. Was settled like [...]
104. In [his] throne room [...]
105. In his cella [...]
106. Every one of the gods [...]
107. Lahmu and Lahamu. [........].
108. Opened their mouths and [addressed] the Igiqi gods,
109. “Previously Marduk was our beloved son,
110. Now he is your king, heed his command!”
111. Next, they all spoke up together;
112. “His name is Lugaldimmerlanda, trust in him!”
113. When they had given kingship to Marduk,
114. They addressed to him a benediction for prosperity and success,
Tablet VI

1. When Marduk heard the gods' speech
2. He conceived a desire to accomplish clever things.
3. He opened his mouth addressing Ea,
4. He counsels that which he had pondered in his heart,
5. "I will bring together blood and form bone,
6. I will bring into being Lullū, whose name shall be 'man'.
7. I will create Lullū—man
8. On whom the toil of the gods will be laid that they may rest.
9. I will skilfully alter the organization of the gods:
10. Though they are honoured as one, they shall be divided into two.
11. Ea answered, as he addressed a word to him,
12. Expressing his comments on the resting of the gods,
13. "Let one brother of theirs be given up.
14. Let him perish that people may be fashioned.
15. Let the great gods assemble
16. And let the guilty one be given up that they may be confirmed."
17. Marduk assembled the great gods,
18. Using gracious direction as he gave his order,
19. As he spoke the gods heeded him:
20. The king addressed a word to the Anunnaki,
21. "Your former oath was true indeed,
22. (Now also) tell me the solemn truth:
23. Who is the one who instigated warfare,
24. Who made Tiamat rebel, and set battle in motion?
25. Let him who instigated warfare be given up
26. "That I may lay his punishment on him; but you sit and rest."
27. The Igigi, the great gods, answered him,
28. That is, Lugaldimmerankia, the counsellor of the gods, their lord,
29. "Qingu is the one who instigated warfare,
30. Who made Tiamat rebel and set battle in motion."
31. They bound him, holding him before Ea,
32. They inflicted the penalty on him and severed his blood-vessels.
33. From his blood he (Ea) created mankind,
34. On whom he imposed the service of the gods, and set the gods free.
35. After the wise Ea had created mankind
36. Had imposed the service of the gods upon them—
37. That task is beyond comprehension
38. For Nudimmud performed the creation with the skill of Marduk—
39. King Marduk divided the gods,
40. All the Anunnaki into upper and lower groups.
41. He assigned 300 in the heavens to guard the decrees of Anu,
42. And appointed them as a guard.
43. Next he arranged the organization of the netherworld.
44. In heaven and netherworld he stationed 600 gods.
45. After he had arranged all the decrees,
46. And had distributed incomes among the Anunnaki of heaven and netherworld.
47. The Anunnaki opened their mouths
48. And addressed their lord Marduk,
49. "Now, lord, seeing you have established our freedom
50. What favour can we do for you?
51. Let us make a shrine of great renown:
52. Your chamber will be our resting place wherein we may repose.
53. Let us erect a shrine to house a pedestal
54. Wherein we may repose when we finish (the work)."
55. When Marduk heard this,
56. He beamed as brightly as the light of day,
57. "Build Babylon, the task you have sought,
58. Let bricks for it be moulded, and raise the shrine!"
59. The Anunnaki wielded the pick.
60. For one year they made the needed bricks.
61. When the second year arrived,
62. They raised the peak of Esagil, a replica of the Apsû.
63. They built the lofty temple tower of the Apsû
64. And for Anu, Enlil, and Ea they established its...as a dwelling.
65. He sat in splendid before them,
66. Suveying its horns, which were level with the base of Esarra.
67. After they had completed the work on Esagil
68. All the Anunnaki constructed their own shrines.
69. {300 Igigi of heaven and 600 of the Apsû, all of them, had
70. Assembled.}
71. Bel seated the gods, his fathers, at the banquet
72. In the lofty shrine which they had built for his dwelling.
73. (Saying) "This is Babylon, your fixed dwelling.
74. Take your pleasure here! Sit down in joy!"
75. The great gods sat down,
76. Beer-mugs were set out and they sat at the banquet.
77. After they had enjoyed themselves inside
78. They held a service in awesome Esagil.
79. The regulations and all the rules were confirmed;
80. The college of the Fifty great gods took their seats.
81. The Seven gods of destinies were appointed to give decisions.
82. Bel received his weapon, the bow, and laid it before them:
83. His divine fathers saw the set which he had made.
84. His fathers saw how skilfully wrought was the structure of the bow
85. As they praised what he had made.
86. Anu lifted it up in the divine assembly.
87. He kissed the bow, saying, "It is my daughter!"
88. Thus he called the names of the bow:
89. "Long Stick" was the first; the second was, "May it hit the mark."
90. With the third name, "Bow Star", he made it to shine in the sky,
91. He fixed its heavenly position along with its divine brothers.
92. After Anu had decreed the destiny of the bow,
93. He set down a royal throne, a lofty one even for a god,
94. Anu set it there in the assembly of the gods.
95. The great gods assembled,
96. They exalted the destiny of Marduk and did obeisance.
97. They invoked a curse on themselves
98. And took an oath with water and oil, and put their hands to their throats.
99. They granted him the right to exercise kingship over the gods,
100. They confirmed him as lord of the gods of heaven and netherworld.
101. Anšar gave him his exalted name, Asallubi:
102. “At the mention of his name, let us show submission!
103. When he speaks, let the gods heed him,
104. Let his command be superior in upper and lower regions.
105. May the son, our avenger, be exalted.
106. Let his lordship be superior and himself without rival.
107. Let him shepherd the black-heads, his creatures,
108. Let them tell of his character to future days without forgetting
109. Let him establish lavish food offerings for his fathers,
110. Let him provide for their maintenance and be caretaker of their sanctuaries,
111. Let him burn incense to rejoice their sanctuums.
112. Let him do on earth the same as he has done in heaven:
113. Let him appoint the black-heads to worship him,
114. The subject humans should take note and call on their gods,
115. Since he commands they should heed their goddesses,
116. Let food offerings be brought [for] (?) their gods and goddesses,
117. May they (?) not be forgotten, may they remember their gods,
118. May they...their..., may they...their shrines.
119. Though the black-heads worship some one, some another god,
120. He is the god of each and every one of us!
121. Come, let us call the fifty names
122. Of him whose character is resplendent, whose achievement is the same.”

123. (1) MARDUK
As he was named by his father Anu from his birth,
124. Who supplies pasturage and watering, making the stables flourish.
125. Who bound the boastful with his weapon, the storm flood,
126. And saved the gods, his fathers, from distress.
127. He is the son, the sun-god of the gods, he is dazzling.
128. Let them ever walk in his bright light.
129. On the peoples that he created, the living beings,
130. He imposed the service of the gods and they took rest.
131. Creation and annihilation, forgiveness and exacting the penalty
132. Occur at his command, so let them fix their eyes on him.
133. (2) Marukka: he is the god who created them
134. Who put the Anunnaki at ease, the Igigi at rest.
135. (3) Marutukku: he is the support of land, city, and its peoples,
136. Henceforth let the peoples ever heed him.
137. (4) Meršakūšu: fierce yet deliberating, angry yet relenting,
138. His mind is wide, his heart is all-embracing.
139. (5) Lugaldimmeranka: is the name by which we all called him,
140. Whose command we have exalted above that of the gods his fathers.
141. He is the lord of all the gods of heaven and netherworld,
142. The king at whose injunctions the gods in upper and lower regions shudder.
143. (6) Narilugaldimmeranka is the name we gave him, the mentor of every god,
144. Who established our dwellings in heaven and netherworld in time of trouble,
145. Who distributed the heavenly stations between Igigi and Anunnaki,
146. Let the gods tremble at his name and quake on their seats.
147. (7) Asallubi is the name by which his father Anu called him,
148. He is the light of the gods, a mighty hero,
149. Who, as his name says, is a protecting angel for god and land,
150. Who by a terrible combat saved our dwelling in time of trouble.
151. (8) Asallub-Nam-tilla they called him secondly, the life-giving god,
152. Who, in accordance with the form (of) his (name), restored all the ruined gods,
153. The lord, who brought to life the dead gods by his pure incantation,
154. Let us praise him as the destroyer of the crooked enemies.
155. (9) Asallubi-Namru, as his name is called thirdly,
156. The pure god, who cleanses our character.
157. Anšar, Lahamu, and Lahamu (each) called him by three of his names,
158. Then they addressed the gods, their sons.
159. “We have each called him by three of his names,
160. Now you call his names, like us.”
161. The gods rejoiced as they heard their speech,
162. In Ušumuukinaki they held a conference,
163. “Of the warrior son, our avenger,
164. Of the provisioner, let us extol the name.”
165. They sat down in their assembly, summoning the destinies,
166. And with all due rites they called his name:

Tablet VII
1. (10) Asarre, the giver of arable land who established plough-land,
2. The creator of barley and flax, who made plant life grow.
3. (11) Asaralim, who is revered in the counsel chamber, whose counsel excels,
4. The gods heed it and grasp fear of him.
5. (12) Asaralimmunna, the noble, the light of the father, his begetter,
6. Who directs the decrees of Anu, Enil, and Ea, that is Ninšiku.
7. He is their provisioner, who assigns their incomes.
8. Whose turban multiplies abundance for the land.
9. (13) Tu-tu is he, who accomplishes their renovation.
10. Let him purify their sanctuaries that they may repose.
11. Let him fashion an incantation that the gods may rest.
12. Though they rise up in fury, let them withdraw.
13. He is indeed exalted in the assembly of the gods, his [fathers],
14. No one among the gods can [equal] him.
15. (14) Tu-tu-zu-kin-na, the life of [his] host,
16. Who established, the pure heavens for the gods.
17. Who took charge of their courses, who appointed [their stations],
18. May he not be forgotten among mortals, but [let them remember]
   his deeds.
19. (15) Tu-tu-zu they called him thirdly, the establisher of purification,
20. The god of the pleasant breeze, lord of success and obedience,
22. Who turns everything scant that we have into profusion,
23. Whose pleasant breeze we sniffed in time of terrible trouble.
24. Let men command that his praises be constantly uttered, let them
   offer worship to him.
25. As (16) Tu-tu-agaku, fourthly, let humans extol him,
26. Lord of the pure incantation, who brought the dead back to life,
27. Who showed mercy on the Bound Gods,
28. Who threw the imposed yoke on the gods, his enemies,
29. And to spare them created mankind.
30. The merciful, in whose power it is to restore to life,
31. Let his words be sure and not forgotten.
32. From the mouths of the black-heads, his creatures.
33. As (17) Tu-tu-tu, fifthly, let their mouth give expression to his pure
   spell,
34. Who extirpated all the wicked by his pure incantation.
35. (18) Sa-su, who knew the heart of the gods, who saw the reins,
36. Who did not let an evil-doer escape from him.
37. Who established the assembly of the gods, who rejoiced their hearts,
38. Who subjugated the disobedient, he is the gods' encompassing
   protection.
39. He made truth to prosper, he uprooted perverse speech.
40. He separated falsehood from truth.
41. As (19) Sa-su-zu-zi, secondly, let them continually praise him, the
   subduer of aggressors,
42. Who ousted consternation from the bodies of the gods, his fathers.
43. (20) Sa-su-zu-ri, thirdly, who extirpated every foe with his weapons,
44. Who confounded their plans and turned them into wind.
45. He snuffed out all the wicked who came against him,
46. Let the gods ever shout acclamations in the assembly.
47. (21) Sa-su-sa-gur-im, fourthly, who established success for the gods, his
   fathers,
48. Who extirpated foes and destroyed their offspring.
49. Who scattered their achievements, leaving no part of them,
50. Let his name be spoken and proclaimed in the land.
51. As (22) Sa-su-zu-ri, fifthly, let future generations discuss him,
52. The destroyer of every rebel, of all the disobedient,
53. Who brought all the fugitive gods into the shrines.
54. Let this name of his be established.
55. As (23) Sa-su-zu-gr-im, sixthly, let them altogether and everywhere
   worship him.
56. Who himself destroyed all the foes in battle.
57. (24) En-bilu-lu is he, the lord who supplies them abundantly.
58. Their great chosen one, who provides cereal offerings.
59. Who keeps pasturage and watering in good condition and established
   it for the land.
60. Who opened watercourses and distributed plentiful water.
61. (25) En-bilu-lu-epadun, lord of common land and... let them [call him]
   secondly,
   Canal supervisor of heaven and netherworld, who sets the furrow,
   Who establishes clean arable land in the open country.
62. Who directs irrigation ditch and canal, and marks out the furrow.
63. As (26) En-bilu-lu-gugal, canal supervisor of the water courses of the
   gods, let them praise him thirdly.
64. Lord of abundance, profusion, and huge stores (of grain).
65. Who provides bounty, who enriches human habitations,
66. Who gives wheat, and brings grain into being.
67. (27) En-bilu-lu-hegal, who accumulates abundance for the peoples... .
68. Who rains down riches on the broad earth, and supplies abundant
   vegetation.
69. (28) Sir-sir, who heaped up a mountain on top of Tiamat.
70. Who plundered the corpse of Tiamat with [his] weapons,
71. The guardian of the land, their trustworthy shepherd.
72. Whose hair is a growing crop, whose turban is a furrow,
73. Who kept crossing the broad Sea in his fury.
74. And kept crossing over the place of her battle as though it were a
   bridge.
75. (29) Sir-sir-malad they named him secondly—so be it—
76. Tiamat was his boat, he was her sailor.
77. (30) Gil, who ever heaps up piles of barley, massive mounds,
78. The creator of grain and flocks, who gives seed for the land.
79. (31) Gilima, who made the bond of the gods firm, who created
   stability.
80. A snare that overwhelmed them, who yet extended favours.
81. (32) Agilima, the lofty, who snatches off the crown, who takes charge
   of snow.
82. Who created the earth on the water and made firm the height of
   heaven.
84. (33) Zulum, who assigns meadows for the gods and divides up what he has created,
85. Who gives incomes and food-offerings, who administers shrines.
86. (34) Mummu, creator of heaven and netherworld, who protects refugees,
87. The god who purifies heaven and underworld, secondly Zulimmu,
88. In respect of whose strength none other among the gods can equal him.
89. (35) Gišnumunab, creator of all the peoples, who made the world regions,
90. Who destroyed Tiāmat’s gods, and made peoples from part of them.
91. (36) Lugalaldubur, the king who scattered the works of Tiāmat, who uprooted her weapons,
92. Whose foundation is secure on the “Fore and Aft”.
93. (37) Pagalgunna, foremost of all lords, whose strength is exalted,
94. Who is the greatest among the gods, his brothers, the most noble of them all.
95. (38) Lugaldu巴巴, king of the bond of the gods, lord of Durmaḫu.
96. Who is the greatest in the royal abode, infinitely more lofty than the other gods.
97. (39) Aranunna, counsellor of Ea, creator of the gods, his fathers,
98. Whom no god can equal in respect of his lordly walk.
99. (40) Dumuduku, who renews for himself his pure abode in Duku.
100. Dumulduku, without whom Lugulduku does not make a decision.
101. (41) Lugulšuanna, the king whose strength is exalted among the gods,
102. The lord, the strength of Anu, he who is supreme, chosen of Anšar.
103. (42) Irugga, who plundered them all in the Sea,
104. Who grasps all wisdom, is comprehensive in understanding.
105. (43) Iriqingu, who plundered Qingu in…battle,
106. Who directs all decrees and establishes lordship.
107. (44) Kinma, the director of all the gods, who gives counsel,
108. At whose name the gods bend down in reverence as before a hurricane.
109. (45) Dingir-Esisku—let him take his lofty seat in the House of Benediction,
110. Let the gods bring their presents before him
111. Until he receives their offerings.
112. No one but he accomplishes clever things
113. The four (regions) of black-heads are his creation
114. Apart from him no god knows the measure of their days.
115. (46) Girru, who makes weapons hard (?),
116. Who accomplished clever things in the battle with Tiāmat,
117. Comprehensive in wisdom, skilled in understanding.
118. A deep mind, that all the gods combined do not understand.
119. Let (47) Addu be his name, let him cover the whole span of heaven,
120. Let him thunder with his pleasant voice upon the earth.

121. May the rumble fill (?) the clouds
   And give sustenance to the peoples below.
122. (48) Ašaru, who, as his name says, mustered the Divine Fates
123. He indeed is the warden of absolutely all peoples.
124. As (49) Nebetu let him hold the crossing place of heaven and netherworld,
125. They should not cross above or below, but should wait for him.
126. Nebetu is his star, which he caused to shine in the sky.
127. Let him take his stand on the heavenly staircase that they may look at him.
128. Yes, he who constantly crosses the Sea without resting,
129. Let his name be Nebetu, who grasps her middle,
130. Let him fix the paths of the stars of heaven,
131. Let him shepherd all the gods like sheep,
132. Let him bind Tiāmat and put her life in mortal danger,
133. To generations yet unborn, to distant future days,
134. May he continue unchecked, may he persist into eternity.
135. Since he created the heavens and fashioned the earth.
136. Enlil, the father, called him by his own name, (50) ‘Lord of the Lands’.
137. Ea heard the names which all the Iuggi called
138. And his spirit became radiant.
139. “Why! He whose name was extolled by his fathers
140. Let him, like me, be called (51) ‘Ea’,
141. Let him control the sum of all my rites,
142. Let him administer all my decrees.”
143. With the word “Fifty” the great gods
144. Called his fifty names and assigned him an outstanding position.
145. They should be remembered; a leading figure should expound them,
146. The wise and learned should confer about them,
147. A father should repeat them and teach them to his son,
148. One should explain them to shepherd and herdman.
149. If one is not negligent to Marduk, the Enlil of the gods,
150. May one’s land flourish, and oneself prosper.
151. (For) his word is reliable, his command unaltered,
152. No god can alter the utterance of his mouth.
153. When he looks in fury, he does not relent,
154. When his anger is ablaze, no god can face him.
155. His mind is deep, his spirit is all-embracing,
156. Before whom sin and transgression are sought out,
157. Instruction which a leading figure repeated before him (Marduk);
158. He wrote it down and stored it so that generations to come might hear it.
159. [..] Marduk, who created the Iuggi gods,
160. Though they diminish…let them call on his name.
161. …the song of Marduk,
162. Who defeated Tiāmat and took kingship.