

## TABLET I: The Creation of Gilgamesh and Enkidu

He who has seen everything, I will make him known to the lands.

I will teach about him who experienced all things.

Anu granted him the totality of knowledge of all.

He saw the Secret, discovered the Hidden,

he brought information of the time before the Flood.

He went on a distant journey, pushing himself to exhaustion,  
but then was brought to peace.

He carved on a stone **stela** all of his toils, and built the wall of **Uruk**-Haven,  
the wall of the sacred **Eanna Temple**, the holy sanctuary.

Look at its wall which gleams like copper,

inspect its inner wall, the likes of which no one can equal!

Take hold of the threshold stone--it dates from ancient times!

Go close to the Eanna Temple, the residence of **Ishtar**,  
such as no later king or man ever equaled!

Go up on the wall of Uruk and walk around,  
examine its foundation, inspect its brickwork thoroughly.

Find the copper tablet box,

open ... its lock of bronze, undo the fastening of its secret opening.

Take and read out from the lapis lazuli tablet

how Gilgamesh went through every hardship.

stela - slab, tablet

Uruk = modern day Iraq

**Eanna Temple** was built  
for Ishtar in the center of  
Uruk.

**Ishtar** is the goddess of  
love, war, fertility, and  
sexuality. She was  
known to take many  
lovers and treat them all  
cruelly.

Supreme over other kings, lordly in appearance,  
he is the hero, born of Uruk, the goring wild bull.

He walks out in front, the leader,

and walks at the rear, trusted by his companions.

Gilgamesh is awesome to perfection.

It was he who opened the mountain passes,  
who dug wells on the flank of the mountain.

It was he who crossed the ocean, the vast seas, to the rising sun,  
who explored the world regions, seeking life.

It was he who reached by his own sheer strength **Utanapishtim**, the  
Faraway,

who restored the cities that the Flood had destroyed!

... for teeming mankind.

Who can compare with him in kingliness?

Two-thirds of him is god, one-third of him is human.

The Great Goddess **Aruru** designed the model for his body,  
she prepared his form ... beautiful, handsomest of men,... perfect...

He walks around in the enclosure of Uruk,

Like a wild bull he makes himself mighty, head raised over others.

There is no rival who can raise his weapon against him.

**Utanapishtim** is an  
ancestor of  
Gilgamesh that was  
granted eternal life  
after the Great  
Flood. He lives on  
the other side of the  
earth.

**Aruru** is the goddess  
& creator of mankind.

But the men of Uruk become anxious...they mutter in their houses:

"Gilgamesh - his arrogance has no bounds by day or night.

The king should be a shepherd to his people but his lust leaves neither the warrior's daughter nor the wife of the noble untouched; yet this is the shepherd of the city."

Is Gilgamesh the shepherd of Uruk-Haven?

Gilgamesh does not leave a girl to her mother,  
the daughter of the warrior, the bride of the young man.

**Anu** is the sky-god.  
When the citizens of Uruk  
beg for help, Anu delegates  
the task of creating a **zikru** to  
Aruru.

The gods kept hearing their complaints, so

the gods of the heavens implored the Lord of Uruk [**Anu**]:

"You have indeed brought into being a mighty wild bull, head raised!

There is no rival who can raise a weapon against him.

His fellows stand at the alert, attentive to his orders!

But Gilgamesh - his arrogance has no bounds by day or night."

**Anu** listened to their complaints,

and the gods called out to Aruru:

"It was you, Aruru, who created mankind!

now create a **zikru** to him.

Let him be equal to Gilgamesh's stormy heart,

let them be a match for each other so that Uruk may find peace!"

When Aruru heard this she created within herself the **zikrtt** of Anu.

Aruru washed her hands, she pinched off some clay, and threw it into  
the wilderness.

**Zikru** has various meanings:  
equal, double, or man. The gods  
wanted Anu to create someone  
who could stand up to Gilgamesh

In the wildness she created valiant Enkidu,

born of Silence, endowed with strength by **Ninurta**.

His whole body was shaggy with hair,

he had a full head of hair like a woman,

his locks billowed in profusion like **Ashnan**.

He knew neither people nor settled living,

but wore a garment like **Sumukan**."

He ate grasses with the gazelles,

and jostled at the watering hole with the animals;

as with animals, his thirst was slaked with mere water.

A trapper came face-to-face with him opposite the watering hole.

On seeing him the trapper's face went stark with fear,

and Enkidu and his animals drew back home.

**Zikrtt** is "memory of,  
remembrance".

**Ninurta** is the god (patron saint)  
of the ancient city of Lagash,  
east of Uruk.  
**Ashnan** is the goddess of grain.  
**Sumukan** is a god of animals.

The trapper addressed his father saying:

"Father, a certain fellow has come from the mountains.

He is the mightiest in the land, his strength is as mighty as the meteorite of Anu!

I was afraid, so I did not go up to him.

He filled in the pits that I had dug, wrenched out my traps that I had spread, and  
released from my grasp the wild animals.

He does not let me make my rounds in the wilderness!"

The trapper's father spoke to him saying:

"My son, there lives in Uruk a certain Gilgamesh.

There is no one stronger than he,

he is as strong as the meteorite of Anu.  
Go, set off to Uruk, tell Gilgamesh of this Man of Might.

Heeding his father's advice, the trapper went off to Uruk,  
and declared to ... Gilgamesh:

"There is a certain fellow who has come from the mountains--  
he is the mightiest in the land, his strength is as mighty as the meteorite of Anu!  
I was afraid, so I did not go up to him.  
He filled in the pits that I had dug, wrenched out my traps that I had spread, and  
released from my grasp the wild animals.  
He does not let me make my rounds in the wilderness!"

Gilgamesh said to the trapper:

"Go, trapper, bring the harlot, Shamhat, with you.  
When the animals are drinking at the watering place  
have her take off her robe.  
When he sees her he will draw near to her,  
and his animals, who grew up in his wilderness, will be alien to him."

The trapper went, bringing the harlot, Shamhat, with him.  
They set off on the journey, making direct way.  
The animals arrived and drank at the watering hole.  
Then he, Enkidu, offspring of the mountains, who eats grasses with the gazelles,  
came to drink at the watering hole with the animals.  
Then Shamhat saw him--a primitive, a savage fellow from the depths of the wilderness!  
When Shamhat saw Enkidu at the watering hole,  
she enticed him with her naked body.  
For seven nights, Shamhat and Enkidu lay together.  
After seven nights, Enkidu sought the company of the animals once again,  
but now they fled from him.

Enkidu ... drew himself up, for his understanding had broadened.  
Turning around, he sat down at the harlot's feet,  
Shamhat said to Enkidu:

"You are beautiful, Enkidu, you are become like a god.  
Why do you gallop around the wilderness with the wild beasts?  
Come, let me bring you into Uruk-Haven,  
to the Holy Temple, the residence of Anu and Ishtar,  
the place of Gilgamesh, who is wise to perfection,  
but who struts his power over the people like a wild bull."

Enkidu spoke:

"Come, Shamhat, take me away with you.  
I will challenge him ...  
Let me shout out in Uruk: I am the mighty one!  
Lead me in and I will change the order of things;  
he whose strength is mightiest is the one born in the wilderness!"

In Uruk, Gilgamesh got up and revealed a dream to his mother:

"Mother, I had a dream last night.  
Stars of the sky appeared, and some kind of meteorite of Anu fell next to me.  
I tried to lift it but it was too mighty for me,  
I tried to turn it over but I could not budge it.  
The Land of Uruk was standing around it, the whole land had assembled about it,  
the populace was thronging around it, the Men clustered about it,  
and kissed its feet as if it were a little baby!  
I loved it and embraced it.  
I laid it down at your feet, and you made it compete with me."  
The mother of Gilgamesh, the wise, all-knowing, said to Gilgamesh:  
"There will come to you a mighty man.  
You will love him and embrace him;  
and it is he who will repeatedly save you.  
Your dream is good and propitious!"  
Gilgamesh spoke to his mother saying:  
"By the command of Enlil, the Great Counselor, so may it pass!  
May I have a friend and adviser."

## **Tablet II: Enkidu and Gilgamesh fight.**

Shamhat pulled off a piece of her clothing, and clothed Enkidu with it.  
She took hold of him and brought him to the hut of the shepherds.  
The shepherds gathered all around about him and marveled to themselves:  
"How the youth resembles Gilgamesh--  
tall in stature, towering up to the battlements over the wall!"  
They placed food and beer in front of him;  
Enkidu knew nothing about either.  
Shamhat spoke to Enkidu, saying:  
"Eat the food, Enkidu, it is the way one lives.  
Drink the beer, as is the custom of the land."  
Enkidu ate and drank until he was sated.  
He splashed his shaggy body with water,  
and rubbed himself with oil, and turned into a human.  
He put on some clothing and became like a warrior.  
He took up his weapon and chased lions and routed the wolves.  
With Enkidu as their guard, the herders could lie down.

A young man stopped by the shepherd's camp on his way to a wedding in Uruk.  
The young man spoke, saying to Enkidu:  
"They have invited me to a wedding, as is the custom of the people.  
For the King of Uruk, open is the veil!  
For Gilgamesh, the King of Uruk, will have intercourse with the 'destined wife,'  
he first, the husband afterward."  
At the young man's speech Enkidu's face flushed with anger.  
Enkidu proclaimed,  
"I will go to Uruk. I will challenge Gilgamesh."

Enkidu walked down the street of Uruk-Haven, ... mighty...

He blocked the way through...

The land of Uruk stood around him, the whole land assembled about him,  
the populace was thronging around him, the men were clustered about him,  
and kissed his feet as if he were a little baby!.

The bed of marriage was ready - for Gilgamesh as for a god.

Enkidu blocked the entry to the marital chamber,  
and would not allow Gilgamesh to be brought in.

They grappled with each other at the entry to the marital chamber,  
in the street they attacked each other, the public square of the land.

The doorposts trembled and the wall shook.

Finally, Gilgamesh wrestled Enkidu to the ground.

"You are the strongest," Enkidu gasped, "You are the rightful king of Uruk."

The mother of Gilgamesh spoke to Gilgamesh **plaintively**, saying;

"This is the star that fell from the heavens -  
the companion who will never forsake you.

Enkidu has no father or mother, his shaggy hair no one cuts.

He was born in the wilderness, no one raised him.

See him now as my son and your brother."

Enkidu was standing there, and heard the speech.

He ... sat down and wept, his eyes filled with tears.

Gilgamesh and Enkidu embraced.

<p><b>plaintively-</b> mournfully; with pity or sorrow</p>
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## Tablets III and IV

Gilgamesh wants to increase his fame. He and Enkidu journey to the Cedar Forest to slay the monster Humbaba. Each night, Gilgamesh has horrible, distressing dreams which he tells to Enkidu. Each time Enkidu interprets the dream:

"Shamash the sun will shine upon you, and you will slay Humbaba.

Standing together, we two will prevail."

## Tablet V: The Battle with Humbaba

... They stood at the forest's edge,

gazing at the top of the Cedar Tree, at the entrance to the forest.

Across the face of the mountain the Cedar brought forth luxurious foliage,  
cool, green, and fragrant.

Gilgamesh and Enkidu entered and felled a tree with their axes.

Humbaba roared, "Who has entered my forest?"

In a swirl, the demon-monster surrounded them, terrifying Gilgamesh and Enkidu.

Enkidu trembled.

"The forest is dark. Shamash the sun has abandoned us."

But Gilgamesh replied,

"Standing together, we two can prevail. All men must die, but I am not ready to die yet.

Shamash, protect us."

Shamash heard the prayer and sent seven powerful winds to torment Humbaba.

Humbaba railed at Enkidu:

"I knew you in the wild.

When you were young, I saw you, but did not devour you.  
 You, who does not even know his own father!  
 ...,you have brought Gilgamesh into my presence,  
 ... you stand..., an enemy, a stranger...

Gilgamesh spoke to Enkidu, saying:

"My Friend, Humbaba's face keeps changing!

Enkidu spoke to Gilgamesh, saying:

"Why, my friend, are you whining so pitifully, hiding behind your whimpering?  
 Now there, my friend,...to send the Flood, to crack the Whip.  
 Do not snatch your feet away, do not turn your back, ... strike even harder!"

As they whirled around in circles Mt. Hermon and Lebanon split.  
 The white clouds darkened, death rained down on them like fog.  
 Shamash raised up against Humbaba mighty tempests'--  
 and covered Humbaba's face.  
 He could not butt through the front, and could not scramble out the back,  
 so that Gilgamesh's weapons were in reach of Humbaba.

Humbaba begged for his life, saying to Gilgamesh:

"You are young yet, Gilgamesh,  
 O scion of the heart of Uruk, King Gilgamesh!  
 Gilgamesh, let me go, I will dwell with you as your servant.  
 As many trees as you command me I will cut down for you,  
 I will guard for you myrtle wood...fine enough for your palace!"

Enkidu addresses Gilgamesh, saying: "My friend, do not listen to Humbaba!"

Humbaba sees that Gilgamesh is influenced by Enkidu, and moves  
 to dissuade Enkidu:

"You understand the rules of my forest,  
 you are aware of all the things ordered by **Enlil**."  
 I should have carried you up, and killed you  
 at the very entrance to the branches of my forest.  
 I should have fed your flesh to the screeching vulture!  
 So now, Enkidu, clemency is up to you.  
 Speak to Gilgamesh to spare my life!"

**Enlil**, a chief deity,  
 is able to talk to An,  
 the god of heaven,  
 and is one of the  
 more powerful gods.  
 He is also the god of  
 weather who  
 created the Great  
 Flood in an attempt  
 to wipe out mankind.

Enkidu addressed Gilgamesh, saying:

"Humbaba, Guardian of the Forest, grind up, kill, pulverize, and destroy him!  
 Before the Preeminent God Enlil hears...  
 and the ...gods be filled with rage against us."

Humbaba heard ...Humbaba cursed Enkidu.

"Neither of you will grow old; Gilgamesh will bury you."

But Gilgamesh struck the monster, cutting off his head.



**Tablet VI: Gilgamesh, Ishtar, and the Bull of Heaven**

Gilgamesh washed himself and put on regal clothes.

When Gilgamesh placed his crown on his head,

**Ishtar** raised her eyes to the beauty of Gilgamesh.

"Come along, Gilgamesh, be you my husband,  
to me grant your lusciousness.'

Be you my husband, and I will be your wife.

I will have harnessed for you a chariot of lapis lazuli and gold.

Bowed down beneath you will be kings, lords, and princes."

Gilgamesh addressed Princess Ishtar saying:

"What would I have to give you if I married you? You...

a half-door that keeps out neither breeze nor blast,

a palace that crushes down valiant warriors,

an elephant who devours its own covering,

pitch that blackens the hands of its bearer,

a waterskin that soaks its bearer through,

limestone that buckles out the stone wall,

a battering ram that attracts the enemy land,

a shoe that bites its owner's feet!

Where are your bridegrooms that you keep forever?

And now me! You will use me and discard me like all your other lovers."

When Ishtar heard this, in a fury she went up to the heavens,

to Anu, her father, and to Anrum, her mother, and weeping:

"Father, Gilgamesh has insulted me

"Father, give me the Bull of Heaven, so he can kill Gilgamesh.

If you do not give me the Bull of Heaven,

I will knock down the Gates of the Netherworld,

I will smash the door posts, and let the dead go up to eat the living!"

Anu placed the nose rope of the Bull of Heaven in her hand.

Ishtar led the Bull of Heaven down to the earth.

When it reached Uruk, it snorted and stamped, opening a huge pit.

Three hundred young men of Uruk fell in.

Enkidu fell in up to his waist.

Then Enkidu jumped out and seized the Bull of Heaven by its horns.

Enkidu addressed Gilgamesh, saying:

"Standing together, we two can prevail!"

Enkidu grasped the bull and held onto it with both his hands,

while Gilgamesh, like an expert butcher,

boldly and surely approached the Bull of Heaven.

Between the nape and the horns... he thrust his sword.

Ishtar went up onto the top of the Wall of Uruk-Haven,

cast herself into the pose of mourning, and hurled her woeful curse:

"Woe unto Gilgamesh who slandered me and killed the Bull of Heaven!"

When Enkidu heard this pronouncement of Ishtar,  
he wrenched off the Bull's hindquarter and flung it in her face:

"If I could only get at you I would do the same to you!  
I would drape his innards over your arms!"

Gilgamesh held a celebration in his palace.  
The young men dozed off.  
Enkidu was sleeping, and had a dream.  
He woke up and revealed his dream to his friend.

## Tablet VII

Enkidu said to Gilgamesh:

"My friend, why are the Great Gods in conference?  
In my dream Anu, Enlil, and Shamash held a council, and Anu spoke to Enlil:  
"Because they killed the Bull of Heaven and have also slain Humbaba,  
the one of them who pulled up the Cedar of the Mountain must die!"  
Enlil said: 'Let Enkidu die, but Gilgamesh must not die!'

Enkidu was lying sick in front of Gilgamesh.  
His tears flowing like canals, Gilgamesh said:

"O brother, dear brother, why are they absolving me instead of my brother?"

Then Enkidu said:

"So now must I become a ghost, to see my dear brother nevermore!"

Gilgamesh listened to the words of Enkidu and his tears flowed.

Gilgamesh addressed Enkidu, saying:

To the living the gods leave sorrow,  
to the living the dream leaves pain.  
I will pray, and beseech the Great Gods,  
I will appeal to Enlil; I will fashion a statue of gold without measure.

Enkidu spoke everything he felt, saying to his friend:

"Listen, my friend, to the dream that I had last night.

The heavens cried out and the earth replied,  
and I was standing between them.

There appeared a man of dark visage--

he seized me by my hair and overpowered me.

'Help me, my friend,' I cried,

but you did not rescue me, you were afraid and did not.. .

Then he... seizing me, led me down to the House of Darkness,

to the house where those who enter do not come out,  
along the road of no return,

to the house where those who dwell, do without light,

where dirt is their drink, their food is of clay,

and light cannot be seen, they dwell in the dark,

and upon the door and bolt, there lies dust.



The day he had the dream ... came to an end.  
 Enkidu lies down a first day, a second day...a ninth, a tenth, Enkidu ... lies in his bed.  
 Enkidu's illness grew ever worse.  
 Enkidu drew up from his bed, and called out to Gilgamesh ...:  
 "Do not forget how we stood together.  
 Alas, I do not die in battle. I am cursed.  
 Who will remember my name?"

## Tablet VIII The Lament of Gilgamesh

Just as day began to dawn Gilgamesh addressed his friend, saying:  
 "Enkidu, may the gazelles of the grassland mourn you,  
 and the animals at the watering hole.  
 May the path that winds through the cedar forest mourn you, by day and by night.  
 May the elders of strong-walled Uruk mourn you.  
 May Shamhat mourn you in the Temple of Ishtar.  
 Hear me: The young men who cheered for us weep for you now.  
 The rivers weep for you, and the mountains too.  
 Enkidu, my friend, after we joined together and went up into the mountain,  
 fought the Bull of Heaven and killed it,  
 and overwhelmed Humbaba, who lived in the Cedar Forest,  
 now what is this sleep which has seized you?  
 You have turned dark and do not hear me!"  
 But Enkidu's eyes do not move, his heart beats no longer.  
 He covered his friend's face like a bride,  
 then sheared off his own curls, and cast away his clothes.  
 Gilgamesh displayed before Shamash a carnelian bowl filled with honey  
 and a lapis lazuli bowl filled with butter.  
 Gilgamesh gathered lapis lazuli and gold for Enkidu's burial.

## Tablet IX: Gilgamesh Journeys through the Mountains

Over his friend, Enkidu, Gilgamesh cried bitterly, roaming the wilderness.  
 "I am going to die!--am I not like Enkidu?!  
 I am stalked by death! Alone I will never prevail!  
 Who can tell me how to escape death?"  
 He resolved to seek out **Utanapishtim**, the survivor of the Great Flood.

Gilgamesh reached the great mountains where the sun rises and sets. The  
 two Scorpion-Beings watch over the Sun,  
 their gaze doling out death.  
 When Gilgamesh saw them, trembling terror blanketed his face,  
 but he pulled himself together and drew near to them.  
 The scorpion-being called out to his female:  
 "He who comes to us must be a god!"  
 The female answered him:  
 "Only two-thirds of him is a god, one-third is human."  
 The male scorpion-being called out to Gilgamesh:  
 "Why have you traveled so far? No mortal has ever crossed these mountains."

**Utanapishtim** is an  
 ancestor of  
 Gilgamesh that was  
 granted eternal life  
 after the Great  
 Flood. He lives on  
 the other side of the  
 earth.

Gilgamesh spoke:

"I have come on account of my ancestor Utanapishtim,  
who joined the Assembly of the Gods, and was given eternal life.  
About Death and Life I must ask him!"

The Scorpion-beings are amazed at his bravery and determination and let him pass.

Along the Road of the Sun he journeyed--

Gilgamesh ...

## Tablet X

As soon as the tavern-keeper saw him, she bolted her door.

Gilgamesh spoke to the tavern-keeper, saying:

"I am Gilgamesh!  
I destroyed Humbaba who lived in the Cedar Forest,  
I grappled with the Bull that came down from heaven, and killed him."

The tavern-keeper spoke to Gilgamesh, saying:

"If you are Gilgamesh, who destroyed Humbaba and killed the Bull.  
why are your cheeks emaciated, your expression desolate?"

Gilgamesh spoke to her:

"Should not my cheeks be emaciated?  
I mourn for my friend, Enkidu, whom I love deeply.  
So now, tavern-keeper, what is the way to Utanapishtim?"

The tavern-keeper spoke to Gilgamesh, saying:

"Ah, Gilgamesh, don't you know that all men must die?  
The gods keep immortality for themselves.  
Go, wash up, eat, and enjoy your life.  
The only one who crosses the sea is valiant Shamash.  
Besides, the Waters of Death are treacherous.  
But, over there is Urshanabi, the ferryman of Utanapishtim.  
Go on, let him see your face, let him see your sorrow.  
Maybe he will help you.  
if not, you should turn back."

Urshanabi spoke to Gilgamesh, saying:

"Why are your cheeks emaciated, your expression desolate?"

Gilgamesh spoke to Urshanabi, saying:

"Should not my cheeks be emaciated?  
Should my heart not be wretched, my features not haggard?  
Should there not be sadness deep within me!  
My friend, Enkidu, whom I love deeply,  
who went through every hardship with me,  
the fate of mankind has overtaken him.  
How can I stay silent, how can I be still?  
My friend whom I love has turned to clay.  
Am I not like him? Will I lie down, never to get up again?  
That is why I must go on, to see Utanapishtim.  
So now, Urshanabi, what is the way to Utanapishtim?"

Gilgamesh and Urshanabi launched the boat and they sailed away.  
 By the third day, Urshanabi arrived at the Waters of Death.  
 As the boat approached, Utanapishtim was gazing at it,  
 puzzled, wondering to himself:

“The one who is coming is not a man of mine, ...”

Gilgamesh spoke to Utanapishtim, telling him the story of his treacherous journey.  
 After hearing of Gilgamesh's travails, Utanapishtim said to him:

“Ah, Gilgamesh, why do you seek sorrow?  
 Take care about it, Gilgamesh,  
 The gods are sleepless ...  
 They are troubled, restless...  
 Long ago it has been established...  
 You trouble yourself...  
 You have toiled without cease, and what have you got?  
 Through toil you wear yourself out, you fill your body with grief,  
 your long lifetime you are bringing near to a premature end!  
 Mankind, whose offshoot is snapped off like a reed by... death.  
 No one can see death,  
 no one can see the face of death,  
 no one can hear the voice of death,  
 yet there is savage death that snaps off mankind.  
 The image of Death cannot be depicted.  
 When the Great Gods, assembled they established Death and Life,  
 but they did not make known *the days of death*.”

## Tablet XI: The Story of the Flood

Gilgamesh spoke to Utanapishtim:

"I have been looking at you,  
 but your appearance is not strange--you are like me!  
 How are you different than me? Why did the Gods grant you immortality?"

Utanapishtim spoke to Gilgamesh, saying:

"I will reveal to you, Gilgamesh, a thing that is hidden,  
 a secret of the gods I will tell you!  
 The gods once lived in Shuruppak, a city that you surely know,  
 situated on the banks of the Euphrates.  
 That city was very old, but it grew crowded and noisy.  
 The hearts of the Great Gods moved them to inflict the Flood."

Ea, the Ocean God, whispered their plan to me.  
 Ea told me to build a boat and gave me the dimensions.  
 He told me to 'abandon wealth and seek living beings.'

“O man of Shuruppak, son of Ubartutu:  
 Tear down the house and build a boat!

Abandon wealth and seek living beings!  
Spurn possessions and keep alive living beings!  
Make all living beings go up into the boat."

I understood and did as my lord Ea commanded.  
When the time came, I sealed up all the living beings that I had I loaded on it-  
all my kith and kin and all the beasts and animals of the field.

Six days and seven nights  
came the wind and flood, the storm flattening the land.  
When the seventh day arrived, the storm was pounding,  
the flood was a war--struggling with itself like a woman writhing in labor.  
The sea calmed, fell still, the whirlwind and flood stopped up.  
I opened a vent and fresh air - daylight!- fell upon my face.  
On Mt. Nimush the boat lodged firm,  
water stretching endlessly in all directions.  
Mt. Nimush held the boat, allowing no sway.  
I sent out birds, but they all came back, finding no place to land.  
Finally, when one did not return, I sacrificed a sheep to the gods.

When Enlil arrived, he saw the boat and became furious,  
filled with rage:

"Where did a living being escape?

No man was to survive the annihilation!"

Ea defended me, but Enlil condemned me and my wife.

Enlil grasped my hand.

He had my wife go up and kneel by my side.

He touched our forehead and, standing between us, he blessed us:

'Previously Utanapishtim was a human being.

But now let Utanapishtim and his wife become like us, the gods!

Let Utanapishtim reside far away, at the Mouth of the Rivers.'

They took us far away and settled us at the Mouth of the Rivers.

Now then, Gilgamesh, you think you deserve immortality?

You must not sleep for a week."

As soon as Gilgamesh sat down, sleep blew over him like a fog.

Utanapishtim's wife baked a loaf of bread each day as he slept and placed it by his head.

After a week, the wife encouraged Utanapishtim to awaken him and send him on his way.

When Gilgamesh awoke, he wailed to Utanapishtim:

"O woe! What shall I do, Utanapishtim, where shall I go?

The Snatcher has taken hold of my flesh,

in my bedroom Death dwells, and wherever I set foot there too is Death!"

Utanapishtim instructed Urshanabi, the ferryman to get Gilgamesh cleaned up.

Urshanabi took him away and brought him to the washing place.

He washed his matted hair, moistened his body with fine oil,

made a new wrap for his head, and put on a royal robe worthy of him.

Gilgamesh and Urshanabi bearded the boat, and cast off to sail away.

Utanapishtim spoke to Gilgamesh, saying:

"Gilgamesh, you came here exhausted and worn out.

I will disclose to you a thing that is hidden, Gilgamesh.

There is a plant whose thorns will prick your hand like a rose.

But if you eat that plant you will become a young man again."

Hearing this, Gilgamesh dove down, picking the plant, though it pricked his hand,

Gilgamesh spoke to Urshanabi, the ferryman, saying:

"Urshanabi, this plant is a plant against decay.

I will bring it to Uruk-Haven, and have an old man eat the plant to test it.

Then I will eat it and return to the condition of my youth."

They stopped for the night and Gilgamesh went down to bathe in a spring.

A snake smelled the fragrance of the plant, silently came up and carried off the plant.

At that point Gilgamesh sat down, weeping,

his tears streaming over the side of his nose.

"Counsel me, O ferryman Urshanabi!

For all my labors, I achieved nothing!"

When they arrived in Uruk-Haven

Gilgamesh showed the city to Urshanabi, the ferryman.

Weary from his journey, Gilgamesh surveyed the city he had built  
and inscribed his story.