

## ENUMA ELISH

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### Enuma Elish (The Babylonian Epic of Creation)

#### Tablet I

- 1 When the heavens above did not exist,
- 2 And earth beneath had not come into being —
- 3 There was Apsû, the first in order, their begetter,
- 4 And demiurge Tia-mat, who gave birth to them all;
- 5 They had mingled their waters together
- 6 Before meadow-land had coalesced and reed-bed was to be found —
- 7 When not one of the gods had been formed
- 8 Or had come into being, when no destinies had been decreed,
- 9 The gods were created within them:
- 10 Lah(mu and Lah(amu were formed and came into being.
- 11 While they grew and increased in stature
- 12 Anšar and Kišar, who excelled them, were created.
- 13 They prolonged their days, they multiplied their years.
- 14 Anu, their son, could rival his fathers.
- 15 Anu, the son, equalled Anšar,
- 16 And Anu begat Nudimmud, his own equal.
- 17 Nudimmud was the champion among his fathers:
- 18 Profoundly discerning, wise, of robust strength;
- 19 Very much stronger than his father's begetter, Anšar
- 20 He had no rival among the gods, his brothers.
- 21 The divine brothers came together,
- 22 Their clamour got loud, throwing Tia-mat into a turmoil.
- 23 They jarred the nerves of Tia-mat,
- 24 And by their dancing they spread alarm in Anduruna.
- 25 Apsû did not diminish their clamour,
- 26 And Tia-mat was silent when confronted with them.
- 27 Their conduct was displeasing to her,
- 28 Yet though their behaviour was not good, she wished to spare them.
- 29 Thereupon Apsû, the begetter of the great gods,
- 30 Called Mummu, his vizier, and addressed him,
- 31 "Vizier Mummu, who gratifies my pleasure,
- 32 Come, let us go to Tia-mat!"
- 33 They went and sat, facing Tia-mat,
- 34 As they conferred about the gods, their sons.
- 35 Apsû opened his mouth
- 36 And addressed Tia-mat
- 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 Tia-mat 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 Apsû—  
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 Apsû was pleased with him, his face beamed  
52 Because he had plotted evil against the gods, his sons.  
53 Mummu put his arms around Apsû'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 Ea, 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 Apsû to slumber as he poured out sleep,  
66 And Mummu, the counsellor, was breathless with agitation.  
67 He split (Apsû's) sinews, ripped off his crown,  
68 Carried away his aura and put it on himself.  
69 He bound Apsû and killed him;  
70 Mummu he confined and handled roughly.  
71 He set his dwelling upon Apsû,  
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 Apsû, 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, Be-l was conceived.  
81 In Apsû was Marduk born,  
82 In pure Apsû 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,  
93 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 Tia-mat.  
109 Tia-mat 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 Tia-mat,  
113 "When Apsû, your spouse, was killed,  
114 You did 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 Apsû, your spouse,  
113 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 Tia-mat heard, the speech pleased her,  
126 (She said,) "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 Tia-mat,  
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 H(ubur, 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.  
 139 (She said,) "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 be 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 Tia-mat gathered together her creation  
 2 And organised battle against the gods, her offspring.  
 3 Henceforth Tia-mat 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 Tia-mat's plotting.  
 11 "My father, Tia-mat 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 Tia-mat,  
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 H(ubur, 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.  
25 (She said,) "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 be 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.  
53 "My son, you who provoked the war,  
54 Take responsibility for whatever you alone have done!  
55 You set out and killed Apsû,  
56 And as for Tia-mat, whom you made furious, where is her equal?"  
57 The gatherer of counsel, the learned prince,

58 The creator of wisdom, the god Nudimmud  
59 With soothing words and calming utterance  
60 Gently answered [his] father Anšar  
61 "My father, deep mind, who decrees destiny,  
62 Who has the power to bring into being and destroy,  
63 Anšar, deep mind, who decrees destiny,  
64 Who has the power to bring into being and to destroy,  
65 I want to say something to you, calm down for me for a moment  
66 And consider that I performed a helpful deed.  
67 Before I killed Apsû  
68 Who could have seen the present situation?  
69 Before I quickly made an end of him  
70 What were the circumstances were I to destroy him?"  
71 Anšar heard, the words pleased him.  
72 His heart relaxed to speak to Ea,  
73 "My son, your deeds are fitting for a god,  
74 You are capable of a fierce, unequalled blow .. [ . . . ]  
75 Ea, your deeds are fitting for a god,  
76 You are capable of a fierce, unequalled blow .. [ . . . ]  
77 Go before Tia-mat and appease her attack,  
78 .. [ . . . ] . . . her fury with [your] incantation."  
79 He heard the speech of Anšar his father,  
80 He took the road to her, proceeded on the route to her.  
81 He went, he perceived the tricks of Tia-mat,  
82 [He stopped], fell silent, and turned back.  
83 [He] entered the presence of august Anšar  
84 Penitently addressing him,  
85 "[My father], Tia-mat's deeds are too much for me.  
86 I perceived her planning, and [my] incantation was not equal (to it).  
87 Her strength is mighty, she is full of dread,  
88 She is altogether very strong, none can go against her.  
89 Her very loud cry did not diminish,  
90 [I became afraid] of her cry and turned back.  
91 [My father], do not lose hope, send a second person against her.  
92 Though a woman's strength is very great, it is not equal to a man's.  
93 Disband her cohorts, break up her plans  
94 Before she lays her hands on us."  
95 Anšar cried out in intense fury,  
96 Addressing Anu his son,  
97 "Honoured son, hero, warrior,  
98 Whose strength is mighty, whose attack is irresistible  
99 Hasten and stand before Tia-mat,  
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 Tia-mat,  
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, Tia-mat'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, no 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 Igigi and all the Anunnaki had assembled,  
122 They sat in tight-lipped silence.  
123 No god would go to face . . [ . . ]  
124 Would go out against Tia-mat . . . [ . . ]  
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 Be-l 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 fear.  
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 Tia-mat, who is a woman, attack you with (her) weapons?  
145 ["My father], begetter, rejoice and be glad,  
146 Soon you will tread on the neck of Tia-mat!  
147 [Anšar], begetter, rejoice and be glad,  
148 Soon you will tread on the neck of Tia-mat!  
149 ["Go,] my son, conversant with all knowledge,

150 Appease Tia-mat with your pure spell.  
 151 Drive the storm chariot without delay,  
 152 And with a [ . . ] which cannot be repelled turn her back."  
 153 Be-l 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 Tia-mat and preserve you,  
 158 Convene an assembly and proclaim for me an exalted destiny.  
 159 Sit, all of you, in Upšukkinakku 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 Lah(mu and Lah(amu.  
 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 Tia-mat.  
 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 Lah(mu and Lah(amu, the gods his fathers.  
 69 He prostrated himself, he kissed the ground before them,  
 70 He got up, saying to them he stood,  
 71-124 = II, 13-66  
 125 When Lah(h(a and Lah(amu 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 Tia-mat 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 Be-l, 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, Be-l, 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 foe:  
31 (They said,) "Go, cut Tia-mat's throat,  
32 And let the winds bear up her blood to give the news."  
33 The gods, his fathers, decreed the destiny of Be-l,

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 entrails of Tia-mat,  
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 Tia-mat's entrails.  
49 Be-l 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,  
52 The Destroyer, The Merciless, The Trampler, The Fleet.  
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 Be-l proceeded and set out on his way,  
60 He set his face toward the raging Tia-mat.  
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 Be-l drew near, surveying the maw of Tia-mat,  
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 Tia-mat 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 Be-l [lifted up] the Storm-flood, his great weapon,  
76 And with these words threw it at the raging Tia-mat,  
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 Tia-mat heard this  
88 She went insane and lost her reason.  
89 Tia-mat 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 Tia-mat and Marduk, the sage of the gods, came together,  
94 Joining in strife, drawing near to battle.  
95 Be-l spread out his net and enmeshed her;  
96 He let loose the Evil Wind, the rear guard, in her face.  
97 Tia-mat 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 Tia-mat, 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 Anšar over all his foes,  
 126 Had fulfilled the desire of Nudimmud,  
 127 He strengthened his hold on the Bound Gods,  
 128 And returned to Tia-mat, whom he had bound.  
 129 Be-l placed his feet on the lower parts of Tia-mat  
 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 Be-l 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 Be-l measured the shape of the Apsû  
 144 And set up Ešarra, a replica of Ešgalla.  
 145 In Ešgalla, Ešarra 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 Ne-beru 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 (Tia-mat'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 Šamaš [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 Šamaš,  
 22 . [ . . ] the 30th day, stand in conjunction and rival Šamaš.





122 I will build a house to be my luxurious abode.  
 123 Within it I will establish its shrine,  
 124 I will found my chamber and establish my kingship.  
 125 When you come up from the Apsû to make a decision  
 126 This will be your resting place before the assembly.  
 127 When you descend from heaven to make a decision  
 128 This will be your resting place before the assembly.  
 129 I shall call its name 'Babylon', "The Homes of the Great Gods",  
 130 Within it we will hold a festival: that will be the evening festival.  
 131 [The gods], his fathers, [heard] this speech of his,  
 132 . [ . . . . . ] . they said,  
 133 "With regard to all that your hands have made,  
 134 Who has your [ . . . ]?  
 135 With regard to the earth that your hands have made,  
 136 Who has your [ . . . ]?  
 137 In Babylon, as you have named it,  
 138 Put our [resting place] for ever.  
 139 . [ . . . . . ] let them our bring regular offerings  
 140 . [ . . . . . ] ..  
 141 Whoever [ . . . ] our tasks which we . [ . . .  
 142 Therein [ . . . . . ] its toil . [ . . .  
 143 [ . . . . . ]  
 144 They rejoiced [ . . . . . ] .. [ . . .  
 145 The gods . [ . . . . . ]  
 146 He who knows [ . . . . . ] . them  
 147 He opened [his mouth showing] them light,  
 148 .. [ . . . . . ] his speech . [ . ]  
 149 He made wide [ . . . . . ] . them [ . . .  
 150 And . [ . . . . . ] ..  
 151 The gods bowed down, speaking to him,  
 152 They addressed Lugaldimmerankia, their lord,  
 153 "Formerly, lord, [you were our beloved] son,  
 154 Now you are our king, .. [ . . . ]  
 155 He who . [ . ] . [ . ] preserved [us]  
 156 .. [ . . . ] the aura of club and sceptre.  
 157 Let him conceive plans [ . . . . . ] .. [ . . . ]  
 158 [ . ] .. [ . . . . . that] we . [ . . . ."

**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 to form bone,  
 6 I will bring into being Lullû, whose name shall be 'man'.  
 7 I will create Lullû—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 Tia-mat 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, the lord,  
29 "Qingu is the one who instigated warfare,  
30 Who made Tia-mat 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 And 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 splendour before them,  
66 Suveying its horns, which were level with the base of Ešarra.  
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 assembled.  
70 Be-l seated the gods, his fathers, at the banquet  
71 In the lofty shrine which they had built for his dwelling,  
72 (Saying,) "This is Babylon, your fixed dwelling,  
73 Take your pleasure here! Sit down in joy!  
74 The great gods sat down,  
75 Beer-mugs were set out and they sat at the banquet.  
76 After they had enjoyed themselves inside  
77 They held a service in awesome Esagil.  
78 The regulations and all the rules were confirmed:  
79 All the gods divided the stations of heaven and netherworld.  
80 The college of the Fifty great gods took their seats,  
81 The Seven gods of destinies were appointed to give decisions.  
82 Be-l received his weapon, the bow, and laid it before them:  
83 His divine fathers saw the net 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, Asalluh(i  
 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 sanctums.  
 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) Meršakušu: fierce yet deliberating, angry yet relenting,  
 138 His mind is wide, his heart is all-embracing.  
 139 (5) Lugaldimmerankia 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) Narilugaldimmerankia 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) Asalluh(i 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) Asalluh(i-Namtilla 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) Asalluh(i-Namru, as his name is called thirdly,  
 156 The pure god, who cleanses our character."  
 157 Anšar, Lah(mu, and Lah(amu (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 Upšukkinaki 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)Asaralimnunna, the noble, the light of the father, his begetter,  
 6 Who directs the decrees of Anu, Enlil, and Ea, that is Ninšiku.  
 7 He is their provisioner, who assigns their incomes,  
 8 Whose turban multiplies abundance for the land.  
 9 (13) Tutu 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) Tutu-Ziukkinna, 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],  
 16 May he not be forgotten among mortals, but [let them remember] his deeds.  
 19 (15) Tutu-Ziku they called him thirdly, the establisher of purification,  
 20 The god of the pleasant breeze, lord of success and obedience,  
 21 Who produces bounty and wealth, who establishes abundance,  
 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) Tutu-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) Tutu-Tuku, fifthly, let their mouth give expression to his pure spell,  
34 Who extirpated all the wicked by his pure incantation.
- 35 (18) Šazu, 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) Šazu-Zisi, secondly, let them continually praise him, the subduer of aggressors,  
42 Who ousted consternation of from the bodies of the gods, his fathers.
- 43 (20) Šazu-Suh(rim, 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) Šazu-Suh(gurim, 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) Šazu-Zah(rim, 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) Šazu-Zah(gurim, sixthly, let them altogether and everywhere worship him,  
56 Who himself destroyed all the foes in battle.
- 57 (24) Enbilulu 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) Enbilulu-Epadun, lord of common land and . . ., let them [call him] secondly,  
62 Canal supervisor of heaven and netherworld, who sets the furrow,  
Who establishes clean arable land in the open country,  
63 Who directs irrigation ditch and canal, and marks out the furrow.
- 64 As (26) Enbilulu-Gugal, canal supervisor of the water courses of the gods, let them

praise him thirdly,

- 65 Lord of abundance, profusion, and huge stores (of grain),  
66 Who provides bounty, who enriches human habitations,  
67 Who gives wheat, and brings grain into being.  
68 (27) Enbilulu-H(egal, who accumulates abundance for the peoples . . . .  
69 Who rains down riches on the broad earth, and supplies abundant vegetation.  
70 (28) Sirsir, who heaped up a mountain on top of Tia-mat,  
71 Who plundered the corpse of Tia-mat with [his] weapons,  
72 The guardian of the land, their trustworthy shepherd,  
73 Whose hair is a growing crop, whose turban is a furrow,  
74 Who kept crossing the broad Sea in his fury,  
75 And kept crossing over the place of her battle as though it were a bridge.  
76 (29) Sirsir-Malah( they named him secondly—so be it—  
77 Tia-mat was his boat, he was her sailor.  
78 (30) Gil, who ever heaps up piles of barley, massive mounds,  
79 The creator of grain and flocks, who gives seed for the land.  
80 (31) Gilima, who made the bond of the gods firm, who created stability,  
81 A snare that overwhelmed them, who yet extended favours.  
82 (32) Agilima, the lofty, who snatches off the crown, who takes charge of snow,  
83 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 underworld, who protects refugees,  
87 The god who purifies heaven and underworld, secondly Zulummu,  
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 Tia-mat's gods, and made peoples from part of them.  
91 (36) Lugalabdubur, the king who scattered the works of Tia-mat, who uprooted her  
weapons,  
92 Whose foundation is secure on the "Fore and Aft".  
93 (37) Pagalguenna, 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) Lugalduumah(, king of the bond of the gods, lord of Durmah(u),  
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 Dumuduku, without whom Lugalduku does not make a decision.  
101 (41) Lugalšuanna, 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) Irqingu, 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-Esiskur—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 Tia-mat,  
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) Aša-ru, who, as his name says, mustered the Divine Fates  
123 He indeed is the warden of absolutely all peoples.  
124 As (49) Ne-beru let him hold the crossing place of heaven and underworld,  
125 They should not cross above or below, but should wait for him.  
126 Ne-beru 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 Ne-beru, 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 Tia-mat 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 Igigi 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 herdsman.  
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 unchanged,  
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 Igigi gods,  
160 Though they diminish . . . let them call on his name.  
161 . . . the song of Marduk,  
162 Who defeated Tia-mat and took kingship

### Conclusion

The Enuma Elish as a mythological work is timeless, but some scholars have argued that, in its day, it would have resonated with an audience who understood Babylon as a city breaking with the traditions of the past to create a new and better future. Scholar Thorkild Jacobsen, for example, notes:

Babylon warred with the territory of ancient Sumer and all its renowned and venerable ancient cities and their gods. It waged an upstart's war with its own parent civilization. And that this was a live issue, that [Babylon] was keenly aware of being heir to and continuer of Sumerian civilization, is clear from the fact that its kings, especially those of the latter half of the [Sealand] dynasty, sport elaborate Sumerian names. Understandably, therefore, Babylon might have felt - consciously or unconsciously - its victory to be in some sense patricidal. (190)

The story, then, can be read not only as a grand tale of the triumph of order over chaos and light over darkness but as a parable of the rise of Babylon and Babylonian culture over the old Sumerian model of civilization. Further, the tale can be understood as an illustration of the concept of life as perpetual change.

The old static gods in the story are replaced by the younger and more dynamic gods who then introduce the concept of change and mutability to the universe through their creation of mortal beings who are subject to death. These creatures are tasked with helping the gods maintain their creation and so, although they are not themselves eternal, play an integral role in the eternal work of the gods.