

"EPIC OF GILGAMESH," 1800-600 BCE

The 'EPIC OF GILGAMESH,' a heroic epic about King Gilgamesh of Uruk (in modern Iraq), is not just a tale of adventure. It delves into profound themes of mortality, friendship, and the search for immortality. Accompanied by his friend Enkidu, Gilgamesh embarks on adventures and interacts personally with the gods. After Enkidu's death as punishment for Gilgamesh's rejection of the goddess Ishtar, the protagonist turns his focus toward immortality. The epic's flood narrative, a striking parallel, is often compared with the biblical tale of Noah, further underlining its thematic depth.

Of him who] found out all things, I [shall tell the land, [Of him who] experienced everything, I shall teach the whole. He searched (?) the lands (?) everywhere—he who experienced the whole gained complete wisdom.

He found out what was secret and uncovered what was hidden; He brought back a tale of times before the Flood. He had journeyed far and wide, weary and at last resigned. He engraved all toils on a memorial monument of stone.

The story of that man, Gilgamesh, who went through all kinds of suffering. He was superior to other kings, a warrior lord of great stature, a hero born of Uruk, and a goring wild bull. He marches at the front as leader; He goes behind the support of his brothers, A strong net, the protection of his men, The raging flood-wave, which can destroy even a stone wall.

Son of Lugalbanda, Gilgamesh, perfect in strength, Son of the lofty cow, the wild cow Ninsun. He is Gilgamesh, perfect splendor, Who opened up passes in the mountains, Who could dig pits even in the mountainside, Who crossed the ocean, the broad seas, as far as the sunrise. Who inspected the edges of the world, kept searching for eternal life, Who reached Ut-napishtim the far-distant, by force. Who restored to their rightful place cult centers (?) which the Flood had ruined?

There is nobody among the kings of teeming humanity Who can compare with him, Who can say "I am king" besides Gilgamesh? Gilgamesh (was) named from birth to fame. Two-thirds of him was divine, and one-third mortal. He had no rival and at his pukku His weapons would rise up, and his comrades would have to rise up. The young men of Uruk became dejected in their private [quarters(?)].

Gilgamesh would not leave any son alone for his father. Day and night, his [behavior(?)] was overbearing. He was the shepherd (?) He was their shepherd (?) yet [] Powerful, superb, [knowledgeable and expert], Gilgamesh would not leave [young girls alone], The daughters of warriors, the brides of young men.

The gods often heard their complaints—the gods of heaven [] the lord of Uruk. "Did [Aruru (?)] create such a rampant wild bull? Is there no rival? At the pukku His weapons rise up; his comrades have to rise up. Gilgamesh will not leave any son alone for his father. Day and night, his [behavior (?)] is overbearing. He is the shepherd of Uruk the Sheepfold. He is their shepherd, yet [] Powerful, superb, knowledgeable [and expert]. Gilgamesh will not leave young girls [alone], the daughters of warriors, the brides of young men.

Anu often hears their complaints." They called upon the great Aruru: "You, Aruru, you created [mankind(?)]! Now, create someone for him to match (?) the ardor (?) of his energies! Let them be regular rivals and let Uruk be allowed peace!" When Aruru heard this, she created inside herself the word (?) of Anu.

Aruru washed her hands, pinched off a piece of clay, and cast it out into the open country. She created a [primitive man], Enkidu the warrior: offspring of silence (?), sky-bolt of Ninurta. His whole body was shaggy with hair; he was furnished with tresses like a woman; his locks of hair grew luxuriant like grain. He knew neither people nor country; he was dressed as cattle are. With gazelles, he eats vegetation; with cattle, he quenches his thirst at the watering place. With wild beasts, he presses forward for water.

Gilgamesh spoke to him, to the hunter, "Go, hunter, lead forth the harlot Shamhat, And when he approaches the cattle at the watering place, She must take off her clothes and reveal her attractions." Then wild beasts arrived at the water; they satisfied their need. And he, Enkidu, whose origin is the mountain, (Who) eats vegetation with gazelles, Drinks (at) the watering place with cattle, Satisfied his need for water with wild beasts. Shamhat looked at the primitive man, The murderous youth from the depths of the open country. "Here he is, Shamhat, bare your bosom, Open your legs, and let him take in your attractions!

Do not pull away; take the wind off him! He will see you and come close to you. Spread open your garments and let him lie upon you. Do it for him, the primitive man, as women do. Then his cattle, who have grown up in open country with him, will become alien to him. His love-making he will lavish upon you!" Shamhat loosened her undergarments, opened her legs and he took in her attractions.

She did not pull away. She took wind of him, Spread open her garments, and he lay upon her. She did for him, the primitive man, as women do. His love-making he lavished upon her. For six days and seven nights, Enkidu was aroused and poured himself into Shamhat. When he was sated with her charms, He set his face towards the open country of his cattle. The gazelles saw Enkidu and scattered; the cattle of the open country were kept away from his body. For Enkidu had stripped (?); his body was too dean. His legs, which used to keep pace with (?) his cattle, were at a standstill. Enkidu had been diminished; he could not run as before. Yet he had acquired judgment (?), and had become wiser.

He turned back (?), he sat at the harlot's feet. The harlot was looking at his expression, And he listened attentively to what the harlot said. The harlot spoke to him, to Enkidu, "You have become [profound] Enkidu, you have become like a god. Why should you roam the open country with wild beasts?

Come, let me take you into Uruk the Sheepfold, To the pure house, the dwelling of Anu, and Ishtar, where Gilgamesh is perfect in strength and like a wild bull, more powerful than (any of) the people." She spoke to him, and her speech was acceptable. Knowing his own mind (now), he would seek for a friend.

They stood at the edge of the forest. Gazed and gazed at the height of the pines, Gazed and gazed at the entrance to the pines. Where Humbaba made tracks as he went to and fro. The paths were well-trodden, and the road was excellent. They beheld Pine Mountain, the dwelling place of gods, the shrine of Irnini. The pines held up their luxuriance even on the

face of the mountain. Their shade was good, filling one with happiness.

Undergrowth burgeoned, entangling the forest. He struck(?) (his) head (?) and matched him []. They stirred up the ground with the heels of their feet; Sirara and Lebanon were split apart at their gyrations. White clouds grew black, and Death dropped down over them like a fog. Shamash summoned up great tempests against Humbaba, South Wind, North Wind, East Wind, West Wind, Moaning Wind, Gale, saporziqqu-Wind, imhullu-Wind, ... -Wind Asakku, Wintry Wind, Tempest, Whirlwind, Thirteen winds rose up at him and Humbaba's face grew dark. He could not charge forwards; he could not run backward. Thus, Gilgamesh's weapons succeeded in defeating Humbaba.

He washed his filthy hair, cleaned his gear, and Shook out the locks over his back. He threw away his dirty clothes and put on fresh ones. He dressed himself in robes and tied on a sash. Gilgamesh put his crown on his head, and Ishtar, the princess, raised her eyes to his beauty.

"Come to me, Gilgamesh, and be my lover! Bestow on me the gift of your fruit! You can be my husband, and I can be your wife. I shall have a chariot of lapis lazuli and gold harnessed for you, With wheels of gold and horns of elmesu-stone."

Gilgamesh made his voice heard and spoke. He said to Ishtar the princess, "What could I give you if possessed you? I would give you body oil and garments; I would give you food and sustenance. Could I provide you with bread fit for gods? Could I provide you with ale fit for kings? Which of your lovers [lasted] forever? Which of your masterful paramours went to heaven? Come, let me (describe(?)) your lovers to you! He of the sheep(?) [...] knew him: For Dumuzi, the lover of your youth, You decreed that he should keep weeping year after year. You loved the colorful allallu-bird, But you hit him and broke his wing.

He stays in the woods crying, "My wing!" You loved the lion, whose strength is complete, But you dug seven and seven pits for him. You loved the horse, so trustworthy in battle, But You decreed that he should gallop seven leagues (non-stop); you decreed that he should be overwrought and thirsty; you decreed endless weeping for his mother, Sililu. You loved the shepherd, herdsman, and chief shepherd who was always heaping up the glowing ashes for you and cooking ewe lambs for you every day. But you hit him and turned him into a wolf; his own herd-boys hunt him down, And his dogs tear at his haunches.

You loved Ishullanu, your father's gardener, who always brought you baskets of dates. They brightened your table every day; You lifted your eyes to him and went to him. "My own Ishullanu, let us enjoy your strength, So put out your hand and touch our vulva!" But Ishullanu said to you, "Me? What do you want of me? Did my mother not bake for me, and did I not eat? What I eat (with you) would be loaves of dishonor and disgrace; Rushes would be my only covering against the cold."

You listened as he said this, And you hit him, turned him into a frog (?), Left him to stay amid the fruits of his labors. But the pole(?) goes up no more, (his) bucket goes down no more. And how about me? You will love me and then [treat me] just like them!" When Ishtar heard this, Ishtar was furious and [went up] to heaven. Ishtar went up and wept before her father, Anu; her tears flowed before her mother, Antu. "Father, Gilgamesh has shamed me again and again!

Gilgamesh spelled out to me my dishonor, my dishonor, and my disgrace." He made his voice heard and spoke. He said to Princess Ishtar, "Why (?) didn't you accuse Gilgamesh the king for yourself, since Gilgamesh spelled out your dishonor, your dishonor, and your disgrace?" Ishtar made her voice heard and spoke. She said to her father, Anu, "Father, please give me the Bull of Heaven, and let me strike Gilgamesh down!

Let me ... Gilgamesh in his dwelling! If you don't give me the Bull of Heaven, I shall strike (?) I shall set my face towards the infernal regions, I shall raise up the dead, and they will eat the living, I shall make the dead outnumber the living!" At the snorting of the Bull of Heaven, a chasm opened up, and one hundred young men of Uruk fell into it, Two hundred young men, three hundred young men. At its second snorting, another chasm opened up, and another hundred young men of Uruk fell into it; two hundred young men, three hundred young men fell into it. At its third snorting, a chasm opened up, And Enkidu fell into it. But Enkidu leaped out. He seized the Bull of Heaven by the horns.

The Bull of Heaven blew spittle into his face, whipping up its dung with its thick tail. Then Gilgamesh, like a but [cher (?)] heroic and [] Plunged his sword in between the base of the horns and the neck tendons. When they had struck down the Bull of Heaven, they pulled out its innards, Set them before Shamash, Backed away, and prostrated themselves before Shamash. Then, the two brothers sat down. Ishtar went up onto the wall of Uruk the Sheepfold.

She was contorted with rage, she hurled down curses, "That man, Gilgamesh, who reviled me has killed the Bull of Heaven!" Enkidu listened to Ishtar saying this, And he pulled out the Bull of Heaven's shoulder and slapped it into her face: "If I could only get at you as that does, I would do the same to you myself, I would hand its intestines on your arms!" Then daylight came. [And] Enkidu said to Gilgamesh, "O my brother, what a dream [I saw] last night! Anu, Elil, Ea, and heavenly Shamash [were in the assembly]. And Anu said to Elli! 'As they have slain the Bull of Heaven, So too they have slain Huwawa, who [guarded] the mountains pla[n]ted with pines.' " And Anu said, "One of them [must die]." Elli! replied: "Let Enkidu die, but let Gilgamesh not die."

Then heavenly Shamash said to valiant Elli. "Was it not according to your word that they slew the Bull of Heaven and Huwawa? Should now innocent Enkidu die?" But Elli! turned in anger to heavenly Shamash, saying, "(The fact is), you accompanied them daily, like one of their comrades."

Enkidu lay down before Gilgamesh, his tears flowing like streams. "O my brother, my brother is so dear to me. But they are taking me from my brother." And: "I shall sit among the dead, I shall [] the threshold of the dead; Never again [shall I see] my dear brother with my own eyes." He decided to curse the harlot, too. "Come, Shamhat, I shall fix a fate for you! [Curses(?)] shall not cease forever and ever. I shall curse you with a great curse! Straight away, my curses shall rise up against you! You shall never make your house voluptuous again. You shall not release [] of your young bulls; you shall not let them into the girls' rooms. Filth shall impregnate your lovely lap (?), The drunkard shall soak your party dress with vomit; You shall never obtain the best cosmetic [oil (?),]

Bright silver, people's affluence, shall not accumulate in your house. The crossroads (?) shall be your only sitting place. Waste ground shall be your only lying place. The shade of a city wall shall be your only sitting place. Thorns and spikes shall skin your feet. The drunkard and the

thirsty shall slap your cheek. Because you defiled me when I was pure because you seduced me in the open country when I was pure."

Shamash heard the utterance of his mouth. Immediately, a loud voice called down to him from the sky: "Enkidu, why are you cursing my harlot Shamhat, Who fed you on food fit for gods, Gave you ale to drink, fit for kings, Clothed you with a great robe, Then provided you with Gilgamesh for a fine partner? And now Gilgamesh, the friend who is a brother to you Will lay you to rest on a great bed And lay you to resent on a bed of loving care, And let you stay in a restful dwelling, the dwelling on the left. Princes of the earth will kiss your feet. He will make the people of Uruk weep for you and mourn for you. He will fill the proud people with woe, and he himself will neglect his appearance after you(r death). Clothed only in a lionskin, he will roam the open country.

Enkidu listened to the speech of Shamash, the warrior. [His anger abated (?)]; his heart became quiet (about 2 lines missing). "Come, Shamhat, I shall change your fate! My utterance, which cursed you, shall bless you instead.

Governors and princes shall love you, and The single-league man shall smite his thigh. (for you), the double-league man shall shake out his locks (for you), and the herdsman shall not hold back for you; he shall undo his belt for you. He shall give you ivory, lapis lazuli, and gold Rings (and) brooches (?) shall be presented for you.

Gilgamesh mourned bitterly for Enkidu, his friend, and roamed the open country. "Shall I die too? Am I not like Enkidu? Grief has entered my innermost being. I am afraid of Death, and so I roam the open country. I shall take the road and go quickly To see Ut-napishtim, son of Ubara-Tutu.

[Gilgamesh spoke to her, to Siduri the alewife], "(How could my cheeks not be wasted, nor my face dejected), [Nor my heart wretched, nor my appearance worn out), [Nor my grief in my innermost being], [Nor my face like that of a long-distance traveler), [Nor my face weathered by cold and heat ...), [Nor roaming open country, clad only in a lionskin?] [My friend whom I love so much, who experienced every hardship with me), [Enkidu, whom I love so much, who experienced every hardship with me-]

[The fate of mortals conquered him!] Six days [and seven nights I wept over him], [I did not allow him to] be buried, [until a worm fell out of his nose). [I was frightened and). I am afraid of Death, [and so I roam open country). The words of my friend [weigh upon me).

[I roam open country] for long distances; the words of my friend Enkidu weigh upon me. I roam the open country on long journeys. [How, O how) could I stay silent, how, O how could I keep quiet []? My friend whom I love has turned to clay: Enkidu, my friend whom I love [has turned to clay.) Am I not like him? Must I lie down too, Never to rise, ever again?"

Ut-napishtim spoke to him, to Gilgamesh, "Why do you prolong grief, Gilgamesh? Since [the gods made you) from the flesh of gods and mankind, Since (the gods) made you like your father and mother, [Death is inevitable(?)) at some time, both for Gilgamesh and for a fool, But a throne is set down [for you (?)) in the assembly []. (Why(?)) have you exerted yourself? What have you achieved (?)? You have made yourself weary for lack of sleep, You only fill your flesh with grief; You only bring the distant days (of reckoning) closer. Mankind's fame is cut down like reeds in a reed-bed. Nobody sees Death, Nobody sees the face of Death, Nobody hears the voice of Death.

Savage Death just cuts mankind down. Sometimes, we build a house, and sometimes we make a nest, but then brothers divide it upon inheritance. Sometimes there is hostility in [the land], But then the river rises and brings flood water. Dragonflies drift on the river, Their faces look upon the face of the Sun. (But then) suddenly, there is nothing. The sleeping (?) and the dead are just like each other; Death's picture cannot be drawn.

The primitive man (is as any) young man(?). When they blessed me, The Anunnaki, the great gods, assembled Mammitum, who creates fate-decreed destinies with them. They appointed death and life. They did not mark out days for death, But they did so for life."

Ut-napishtim spoke to him, to Gilgamesh, "Let me reveal to you a closely guarded matter, Gilgamesh, And let me tell you the secret of the gods. Shuruppak is a city that you know yourself. It is situated [on the bank of] the Euphrates. That city was already old when the gods within it Decided that the great gods should make a flood. There was Anu, their father, warrior Elli! Their counsellor, Ninurta, was their chamberlain, Enuugi, their canal controller.

Far-sighted Ea swore the oath (of secrecy) with them, So he repeated their speech to a reed hut, "Reed hut, reed hut, brick wall, brick wall, Listen, reed hut, and pay attention, brick wall: (This is the message:) 'Man of Shuruppak, son of Ubara-Tutu, Dismantle your house, build a boat. Leave possessions and search out living things. Reject chattels and save lives! Put aboard the seed of all living things into the boat. The boat that you are to build She shall have her dimensions in proportion, her width, and length in harmony, and she shall be roofed like the Apsu.'

I realized and spoke to my master Ea, 'I have paid attention to the words that you spoke in this way, My master, and I shall act upon them. But how can I explain myself to the city, the Men, and the elders?' Ea made his voice heard and spoke, and He said to me, his servant, 'You shall speak to them thus: "I think that Elli! has rejected me, And so I cannot stay in your city, And I cannot set foot in Ellil's land again." '

When the first light of dawn appeared, the country gathered about me. The carpenter brought his axe, and The reed worker brought his stone; on the fifth day, I laid down her form. One acre was her circumference, ten poles each the height of her walls; her top edge was likewise ten poles all around. I laid down her structure, drew it out, Gave her six decks,

Divided her into seven. I divided her middle into nine and drove the water pegs into her middle. I saw to the paddles and put down what was needed: Three sar of bitumen I poured into the kiln, Three sar of pitch I poured into the inside. Three sar of oil they fetched, the workmen

who carried the baskets. Not counting the sar of oil that the dust(?) soaked up, The boatman stowed away two more sar of oil.

At the [] I slaughtered oxen. I sacrificed sheep every day. I gave the workmen ale and beer to drink, Oil and wine as if they were river water. They made a feast, like the New Year's Day festival. When the sun [rose(?)] I provided hand oil. (When] the sun went down, the boat was complete. (The launching was (?)] very difficult; Launching rollers had to be fetched (from) above (to) below. Two-thirds of it [stood clear of the water line (?)]. I loaded her with everything there was, loaded her with all the silver, loaded her with all the gold, and loaded her with all the seed of living things, all of them. I put on board the boat all my kith and kin. Put on board cattle from open country, wild beasts from open country, all kinds of craftsmen.

When the first light of dawn appeared, A black cloud came up from the base of the sky. Adad kept rumbling inside it. Shullat and Hanish were marching ahead, Marched as chamberlains (over) (?) mountain and country. Erakal pulled out the mooring (?) poles, Ninurta marched on and made the weir(s) overflow.

The Anunnaki had to carry torches, and they lit up the land with their brightness. The calm before the Storm-god came over the sky; everything light turned to darkness. [] On the first day the tempest [rose up], Blew swiftly and [brought(?) the flood-weapon], Like a battle force [the destructive kasusu-weapon] passed over [the people] No man could see his fellow. Now, people could be distinguished from the sky. Even the gods were afraid of the flood-weapon. They withdrew; they went up to the heaven of Anu.

The gods cowered like dogs crouched by an outside wall. Ishtar screamed like a woman giving birth; The Mistress of the Gods, sweet of voice, was wailing, "Has that time really returned to clay because I spoke evil in the gods' assembly? How could I have spoken such evil in the gods' assembly? I should have (?) ordered a battle to destroy my people; I myself gave birth (to them). They are my own people, Yet they fill the sea like fish spawn!"

The gods of Anunnaki were weeping with her. The gods, humbled, sat there weeping. Their lips were closed and covered with scabs. For six days and [seven(?)] nights The wind blew, flood and tempest overwhelmed the land; When the seventh day arrived the tempest flood and onslaught Which had struggled like a woman in labor, blew themselves out(?). The sea became calm; the hull-wind grew quiet, and the flood held back.

I looked at the weather; silence reigned, For all mankind had returned to clay. The floodplain was as flat as a roof. I opened a porthole, and light fell on my cheeks. I bent down, then sat. I wept. My tears ran down my cheeks. I looked for banks, for limits to the sea. Areas of land were emerging everywhere(?). The boat had come to rest on Mount Nimush.

When the seventh day arrived, I put out and released a dove. The dove went; it came back, For no perching place was visible to it, and it turned around. I put out and released a swallow. The swallow went; it came back, For no perching place was visible to it, and it turned round. I put out and released a raven. The raven went and saw the waters receding. And it ate, preened (?), lifted its tail, and did not turn round. Then I put (everything?) out to the four winds, and I made a sacrifice, Set out a surqinnu-offering upon the mountain peak, people, Yet they fill the sea like fish spawn!"

The gods of Anunnaki were weeping with her. The gods, humbled, sat there weeping. Their lips were closed and covered with scabs. For six days and [seven(?)] nights The wind blew, flood and tempest overwhelmed the land; When the seventh day arrived the tempest flood and onslaught Which had struggled like a woman in labor, blew themselves out(?). The sea became calm, the imhullu-wind grew quiet, the flood held back. I looked at the weather; silence reigned, For all mankind had returned to clay. The floodplain was as flat as a roof. I opened a porthole and light fell on my cheeks. I bent down, then sat. I wept. My tears ran down my cheeks. I looked for banks, for limits to the sea. Areas of land were emerging everywhere(?). The boat had come to rest on Mount Nimush.

When the seventh day arrived, I put out and released a dove. The dove went; it came back, For no perching place was visible to it, and it turned around. I put out and released a swallow. The swallow went; it came back, For no perching place was visible to it, and it turned round. I put

out and released a raven. The raven went and saw the waters receding. And it ate, preened (?), lifted its tail, and did not turn round. Then I put (everything?) out to the four winds, and I made a sacrifice, Set out a surqinnu-offering upon the mountain a thing?

For Ea can do everything?" Ea made his voice heard and spoke; he said to the warrior Elli! "You are the sage of the gods, warrior; so how, O how, could you fail to consult and impose the flood? Punish the sinner for his sin, punish the criminal for his crime, but ease off, let work not cease; be patient, and let not []. Instead of your imposing a flood, let a lion come up and diminish the people. Instead of your imposing a flood, let a wolf come up and diminish the people. Instead of your imposing a flood, let famine be imposed and [lessen] the land. Instead of imposing a flood, let Erra rise up and savage the people.

I did not disclose the secret to the great gods; I just showed Atrahasis a dream, and thus he heard the secret of the gods." Now, the advice (that prevailed) was his advice. Ellil came up into the boat, seized my hand, and led me up. He led up my woman and made her kneel down at my side. He touched our foreheads, stood between us, and blessed us: "Until now, Ut-napishtim was mortal, But henceforth, Ut-napishtim and his woman shall be as we gods are. Ut-napishtim shall dwell far off at the mouth of the rivers."

Ut-napishtim spoke to him, to Gilgamesh, "Gilgamesh, you came, weary, striving; what can I give you to take back to your country? Let me reveal a closely guarded matter, Gilgamesh, And let me tell you the secret of the gods. There is a plant whose root is like camel-thorn, and whose thorn is like a rose's, which will spike [your hands].

If you yourself can win that plant, you will find [rejuvenation (?)]. When Gilgamesh heard this, he opened the pipe And tied a heavy stone to his feet. They dragged him down into the Apsu, and [he saw the plant]. He took the plant himself: it spiked [his hands]. He cut the heavy stones from his feet. The sea threw him up on its shore. Gilgamesh spoke to him, to Ur-shanabi the boatman. Ur-shanabi, this plant is a plant to cure a crisis!

With it, a man may win the breath of life. I shall take it back to Uruk the Sheepfold; I shall give it to an elder to eat and so try out the plant. Its name (shall be): "An old man grows into a young man." I, too, shall eat (it) and turn into the young man that I once was."

At twenty leagues, they ate their ration. At thirty leagues, they stopped for the night. Gilgamesh saw a pool whose water was cool and went down into the water and washed. A snake smelt the fragrance of the plant. It came up silently and carried off the plant. As it took it away, it shed its scaly skin. Thereupon, Gilgamesh sat down and wept. His tears flowed over his cheeks.

[He spoke to(?)] Ut-shanabi the boatman, "For what purpose(?), Ur-shanabi, have my arms grown weary? For what purpose (?) was the blood inside me so red (?)? I did not gain an advantage for myself, And the spirit of Enkidu came out of the Earth like a gust of wind. They hugged and kissed (?), They discussed, they agonized. "Tell me, my friend, tell me, my friend, Tell me Earth's conditions that you found!" "I can't tell you, my friend, I can't tell you! If I tell you about the conditions that I found on Earth, you must sit (and) weep! I would sit and weep! (Your wife(?),] whom you touched, and your heart was glad, Vermin eat (like(?)) an old [garment]. (Your son (?) whom] you touched, and your heart was glad, (Sits in a crevice(?)) full of dust. 'Woe,' she said and groveled in the dust. 'Woe,' he said and groveled in the dust."

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the gods' reasons for their humbling of Gilgamesh?
2. Contrast the relationship between Enkidu and Gilgamesh with the relationships between Gilgamesh and female figures in the narrative. What does the document suggest about the superiority of same-sex friendship to heterosexual encounters?