

# THERE WILL BE NO CRISIS NEXT WEEK

## Tablet XI

Gilgamesh said to him, to Utnapishtim the Faraway:  
 "As I look upon thee, Utnapishtim,  
 Thy features are not strange; even as I art thou.  
 Thou art not strange at all; even as I art thou.  
 My heart had regarded thee as resolved<sup>182</sup> to do battle,  
 [Yet] thou liest indolent upon thy back!  
 [Tell me,] how joinedst thou the Assembly of the gods,  
 In thy quest of life?"

Utnapishtim said to him, to Gilgamesh:  
 "I will reveal to thee, Gilgamesh, a hidden matter  
 And a secret of the gods will I tell thee: (10)  
 Shurippak—a city which thou knowest,  
 [(And) which on Euphrates' [banks] is situate—  
 That city was ancient, (as were) the gods within it,  
 When their heart led the great gods to produce the flood.  
 [There] were Anu, their father,  
 Valiant Enlil, their counselor,  
 Ninurta, their assistant,  
 Ennuge, their irrigator.<sup>183</sup>  
 Ninigiku-Ea was also present with them;  
 Their words he repeats to the reed-hut:<sup>184</sup> (20)  
 'Reed-hut, reed-hut! Wall, wall!  
 Reed-hut, hearken! Wall, reflect!  
 Man of Shuruppak,<sup>185</sup> son of Ubar-Tutu,  
 Tear down (this) house, build a ship!  
 Give up possessions, seek thou life.  
 Forswear (worldly) goods and keep the soul alive!  
 Aboard the ship take thou the seed of all living things.  
 The ship that thou shalt build,  
 Her<sup>186</sup> dimensions shall be to measure.  
 Equal shall be her width and her length. (30)  
 Like the Apsu thou shalt ceil her.<sup>187</sup>  
 I understood, and I said to Ea, my lord:  
 '[Behold], my lord, what thou hast thus ordered,  
 I will be honored to carry out.  
 [But what] shall I answer the city, the people and  
 elders?'<sup>188</sup>

<sup>181</sup> Lit. "draw, design."

<sup>182</sup> For the sense of *uagmir libbi* cf. F. Thureau-Dangin, *Huitième campagne de Sargon* (1912), line 52, and p. 11, n.7. And for the factitive force of the intensive conjugation cf. Heidel, *EG*, 80, n.164.

<sup>183</sup> More specifically, "inspector of canals." cf. *Creation Epic*, VII, 62.

<sup>184</sup> Presumably, the dwelling place of Utnapishtim. Ea addresses him through the barrier of the wall.

<sup>185</sup> Line 11 has the uncommon form Shurippak instead.

<sup>186</sup> The Akkadian for "ship" is feminine, although without the grammatical feminine ending.

<sup>187</sup> For the description of the subterranean waters of the Apsū cf. *Creation Epic*, IV, 62.

<sup>188</sup> cf. my remarks in *Studies in the History of Culture* (1942), 60.

Ea opened his mouth to speak,  
 Saying to me, his servant:  
 "Thou shalt then thus speak unto them:  
 "I have learned that Enlil is hostile to me,  
 So that I cannot reside in your city, (40)  
 Nor set my f[oo]t in Enlil's territory.  
 To the Deep I will therefore go down,  
 To dwell with my lord Ea.

[But upon] you he will shower down abundance,  
 [The choicest] birds, the rarest<sup>189</sup> fishes.  
 [The land shall have its fill] of harvest riches.  
 [He who at dusk orders] the husk-greens,  
 Will shower down upon you a rain of wheat."<sup>190</sup>

With the first glow of dawn,  
 The land was gathered [about me].  
 (too fragmentary for translation) (50-53)  
 The little ones [carr]ied bitumen,  
 While the grown ones brought [all else] that was need-  
 ful.

On the fifth day I laid her framework.  
 One (whole) acre<sup>191</sup> was her floor space,<sup>192</sup>  
 Ten dozen cubits the height of each of her walls,  
 Ten dozen cubits each edge of the square deck.<sup>193</sup>  
 I laid out the contours (and) joined her together.<sup>194</sup>  
 I provided her with six decks, (60)  
 Dividing her (thus) into seven parts.  
 Her floor plan I divided into nine parts.  
 I hammered water-plugs into her.<sup>195</sup>  
 I saw to the punting-poles and laid in supplies.<sup>196</sup>  
 Six 'sar' (measures)<sup>197</sup> of bitumen I poured into the  
 furnace,  
 Three sar of asphalt [I also] poured inside.  
 Three sar of oil the basket-bearers carried,  
 Aside from the one sar of oil which the *calking*<sup>198</sup> con-  
 sumed,  
 And the two sar of oil [which] the boatman stowed  
 away.  
 Bullocks I slaughtered for the [people], (70)  
 And I killed sheep every day.  
 Must, red wine, oil, and white wine<sup>199</sup>  
 [I gave the] workmen [to drink], as though river water,  
 That they might feast as on New Year's Day.  
 I op[ened . . . ] ointment, applying (it) to my hand.

<sup>189</sup> I take these genitive forms to denote the superlative, in accordance with Semitic usage. The literal sense would be "[A choice of] birds, a hiding of fishes."

<sup>190</sup> Restored from lines 87, 90. As has long been recognized, these lines feature word plays in that both *kukku* and *kibūti* may designate either food or misfortune; cf. C. Frank, *ZA*, xxxvi (1935), 218. Wily Ea plays on this ambiguity: To the populace, the statement would be a promise of prosperity; to Utnapishtim it would signalize the impending deluge.

<sup>191</sup> cf. Heidel, *EG*, 82, n.170.

<sup>192</sup> Schott and Landsberger, *ZA*, XLII (1934), 137.

<sup>193</sup> The ship was thus an exact cube, cf. Heidel, *EG*, 82, n.173.

<sup>194</sup> Or "fashioned." "Contours," lit. "outside shape."

<sup>195</sup> For O. Neugebauer's explanation of the plugs cf. *ZA*, XLII, 138.

<sup>196</sup> Lit. "the needful."

<sup>197</sup> Var. "three sar." The *šar* was the number 3,600. If the measure understood with it was the *sātu* (seah), each *šar* designated about 8,000 gallons; cf. Heidel, *EG*, 83, n.178.

<sup>198</sup> For *niqqu* cf. A. Salonen, *Die Wasserfahrzeuge in Babylonien* (1939), 149, n.2.

<sup>199</sup> See A. Poebel, *ZA*, xxxix (1929), 149.

