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Translation of Ludlul Bel Nemeqi

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Translation

Tablet I

I will praise the lord of wisdom, the con[siderate] god,
Angry at night *but* relenting at daybreak.
Marduk, the lord of wisdom, the considerate god,
Angry at night *but* relenting at daybreak.

⁵ Who in his fury *is* like a violent storm, a wasteland,
But whose blowing is pleasant, like a breeze at dawn.
Who in his anger *is* irresistible, his fury a flood,
But his mind is merciful, his mood relenting.

The brunt of whose hands the heavens cannot bear,
¹⁰ But whose palm is so gentle it rescues the dying.
Marduk, the brunt of whose hands the heavens cannot bear,
But whose palm is so gentle it rescues the dying.

On account of whose wrath, graves are dug,
Through his mercy he raises up the fallen from disaster.
¹⁵ He frowns: the divine guardian and protective spirit withdraw,
He takes notice: his god turns back to the one he had rejected.

His grievous punishment is immediately overbearing,
He shows pity and instantly becomes motherly.
He hastens to butt like a wild bull,
²⁰ But like a cow with a calf, he is ever attentive.

His beatings are barbed, they pierce the body,
But his bandages mo[lly]fy, they revive the dead.
He speaks and imputes guilt,
But on the day of his offering liability and guilt are absolved.

²⁵ He is the one who causes one to suffer from a demon *and* shivering,
But with his incantation he e[xp]els chills and cold tremors.
The one who . . . the [flo]od² of Adad, the blow of Erra,
But who reconciles *one's* enraged god and goddess.

The Lord, he sees everything in the heart of the gods,
³⁰ But no one a[mong] the gods knows his way.
Marduk, he sees everything in the heart of the gods,
But no god can learn his counsel.

As heavy as is his hand, his heart is merciful.
As murderous as are his weapons, his intention is life-sustaining.
³⁵ Without his consent, who could assuage his striking?
Apart from his intention, who could stay¹ his hand?

I, who ate mud like a fish, will extol his anger,

¹ Variant: "diminish, discredit."

He quickly bestowed favor on me, just as he revived the dead.
I will teach the people their plea for favor is near,
40 May his favora[ble] invocation carry off their [sin²].
Fr[om] the day Bel² punished me,
And the hero Marduk³ was angry [wi]th me,
My god rejected me, he disappeared,
My goddess left, she departed from my side.
45 [The protec]tive spirit of good fortune who was at my side [spl]it off,
My divine guardian became terrified and sought out another.
My dignity [w]as taken, my masculine features obscured,
My characteristic manner was cut off, it jumped for cover.
Portents of terror were established for me,
50 I was expelled from my house, I wandered about outside.
My omens were confused, equivocal² every day,
My oracle was not decided by diviner and dream interpreter.
What I overheard (my *egerrû*) in the street *portended* evil for me,
When I lay down at night, my dream was terrifying.
55 The king, the flesh of the gods, the sun of his people:
His heart was angry *with me* and made forgiving me difficult.
Courtiers were plotting to slander me,
They gathered themselves, they were inciting calumny.
If the first was saying, “I will make him pour out his life,”
60 The second was saying, “I made *him* vacate his post.”
Likewise the third: “I will seize his office,”
“I will take over his household,” says the fourth.
The fifth overturned the opinion of the fifty,
The sixth and the seventh followed on his heels.
65 The band of seven gathered their pack,
They were relentless as a devil, equal to a demon.
Their flesh was one, but each had a mouth,
They unleashed *their* rage against me, they were set ablaze like fire.
They set slander and obstruction in alliance against me,
70 My eloquent speech they hindered as with reins.
I, whose lips chattered constantly, turned into a mute,
My resounding cries trailed off into silence.
My proud head bowed to the ground,
Terror weakened my stout heart.
75 A lad turned back my burly chest,
My arms, *once* far-reaching, were continually covered, they clutched each other.
I, who walked about as a lord, learned to slink,

² Variant: “the lord.”

³ Variant: “Bel.”

I was *once* dignified, but I turned into a slave.

I became alienated from *my* extensive family.

⁸⁰ When I walked through the street, fingers were pointed *at me*,
When I entered the palace, eyes would squint *at me in disapproval*.
My city glared at me as an enemy,
My country was hostile *to me* as if it were foreign.

My brother became a stranger,
⁸⁵ My friend became an enemy and a demon.
My comrade would denounce me furiously,
My colleague dirtied *his* weapon for bloodshed.

My best friend would slander me,
My slave openly cursed me in the assembly.
⁹⁰ My slave girl defamed *me* before the crowd,
When an acquaintance saw me, he hid.

My family rejected me as their own flesh *and blood*.

A grave lay open for one speaking well of me,
The one uttering slander against me promoted.
⁹⁵ The one speaking calumny against me: a god was his helper.
For the one who said “mercy!”: death was hastened.

The one who did not help: life became his protective spirit,
I had no one walking alongside me, I saw no mercy.
They distributed my things to the riff-raff,
¹⁰⁰ They ruined the opening of my canals with silt.

They drove out the work song from my fields,
They silenced my city like an enemy city.⁴
They handed my cultic offices to another,
And they installed an outsider in my cultic obligations.

¹⁰⁵ The day was sighing, the night lamentation,
Every month endless silence, the year misery.
Like a dove I would moan all my days,
Like a singer I would wail my lamentation.⁵

With perpetual weeping my eyes . . . ,
¹¹⁰ My cheeks burned with tears for a fifth time.
The apprehension of my heart darkened my countenance,
Terror and panic turned my flesh⁶ pale.

My guts trembled in perpetual fear,
They were hardened as *with* the burning of fire.
¹¹⁵ My prayer was as confused as a blazing flame,

⁴ I.e., like a city that has been destroyed.

⁵ Variant: “I would make singers wail my lamentation.”

⁶ Variant: “skin.”

Like discord, my entreaty was a quarrel.

I sweetened my lips, *but* they were as obscure as darkness,
I would speak sharply, *but* my conversation was a stumbling block.

“Perhaps good fortune will arrive⁷ at daybreak,” *I hoped*,
¹²⁰ “*Or, when the new moon appears, maybe then my sun will shine on me.*”

Tablet II

One year to the next, the allotted time passed.

I turned about and misery *abounded*,⁸

My bad luck was increasing, I could not find prosperity.

I called to *my* god, *but* he did not pay attention to me,

⁵ I implored my goddess, *but* she paid me no heed.

The diviner could not determine the situation with divination,

The dream interpreter could not clarify my⁹ case with incense.

I prayed to the dream god, *but* he did not open my ear,

The exorcist with *his* rituals did not release the divine anger *against me*.

¹⁰ What strange conditions everywhere!

I looked behind *me*, harassment *and* trouble!

Like one who had not made a libation for *his* god,

And did not invoke *his* goddess with a food offering,

Who did not engage in prostration, was not seen bowing down,

¹⁵ From *whose* mouth prayers *and* supplications had ceased,

Who had abandoned the day of the god,¹⁰ disregarded the festival,

Become negligent and despised their rites,¹¹

Who had not taught his people to fear and pay heed to *the gods*,

Who did not invoke his god *when* he ate his (i.e., the god's) food,

²⁰ *Who* had abandoned his goddess, *and* did not bring a flour-offering,

Like the one who had gone mad *and* forgotten his lord,

Who had invoked the solemn oath of his god in vain, *that is how* I was treated.¹²

But I was in fact attentive to prayers and supplications,

Prayer was common sense, sacrifice my rule.

²⁵ The day to fear the gods was a delight to my heart,

The day of the goddess's procession was wealth *and* weal.

The king's prayer: it was a pleasure,

And his fanfare truly a delight.

⁷ Lit. “come straight to me.”

⁸ Lit. “it is bad, it is bad.”

⁹ Variant: “their.”

¹⁰ Variant: “gods.”

¹¹ Variant: “the rites of the gods.”

¹² Lit. “looked upon.”

I taught my land to observe the rites of the god,¹³

30 I instructed my people to revere the name of the goddess.
I made *my* praises of the king like a god's,
And taught the masses fear for the palace.

Would that I knew these things were acceptable to the god¹⁴!

35 That which is good to oneself *may be* a sacrilege to the god,
That which is wretched to one's heart may be good to one's god.

Who *can* learn the plan of the gods in the heavens?
Who understands the counsel of the deep?
Where did humanity learn the way of the gods?¹⁵

The one who lived in strength died in distress.

40 In one moment *a person* is worried *then* suddenly becomes exuberant,
In one instant he sings with jubilation,
The next he groans like a mourner.

Their destiny changes in a blink of the eye.

45 *When* they are hungry, they turn into corpses,
When they are sated, they rival their god.
In the good times they speak of ascending to the heavens,
When they become distressed, they talk of descending to the netherworld.

I have . . . these things, *but* I have not learn[ed] their meaning.

[As for] me, the wear[ied one], a storm was dr[iv]ing *me*.

50 Debilitating sickness advanced against me,
Evil wind [from] the [hor]izon blew against me.
Headache cropped up from the surface of the netherworld,
A wicked demon/cough came forth from its Apsu.

55 An un[relen]ting ghost came forth from Ekur,
Lamashtu c[am]e down from the midst of the mountain.
Shivering streamed in with the waters of the inundation,
Debility broke through *the soil* with the crops.

They [joined] their forces, together they approached me.

60 They stru[ck my hea]d, they covered my skull,
[My countena]nce darkened, my eyes welled-up.
They strained my neck muscles, they made *my* neck slack,
They struck *my* chest, they beat *my* breast.
They attacked my back, they threw *me* into convulsions,
They kindled a fire in my chest.¹⁶

¹³ Variant: "gods."

¹⁴ Variant: "gods." Likewise, lines 34–35.

¹⁵ Variant: "god."

¹⁶ Lit. "in the head of my heart," which is the epigastrium. The line suggests "heart burn."

65 They roiled my innards, they twisted my guts,
They infected [my lun]gs with coughing *and* phlegm,
They inflicted my limbs *with li'bu*,¹⁷ they made my belly feel queasy.
My high stature they demolished like a wall,
My broad build they leveled like rushes,
70 I was thrown down like an *uliltu*,¹⁸ cast down on *my* face.
A malevolent demon clothed my body *as* a garment,
Sleep covered me like a net.
They were staring, but my eyes could not see,
They were open, but my ears could not hear.
75 Numbness had seized my entire body,
Paralysis had fallen upon my flesh.
Stiffness had apprehended my arms,
Debility had fallen on my legs,¹⁹
My feet forgot mobility.
80 [A bl]ow² over took *me*, I choked like one fallen,
Death [has]tened²⁰ to shroud my face.
[He was acc]using me, but I could not answer the interrogator,²¹
“[Wo]le!” they were crying, *but* I could not control myself.
A trap was laid on my mouth,
85 And a bolt barred my lips.
My [g]ate was bolted, my watering place sealed up,
My hunger [pr]olonged, my thr[oa]t blocked.
If *it* was grain, I would swallow *it* like stinkweed,
Beer, the sustenance of people, had become displeasing to me.
90 Indeed, *my* sickness stretched on.
Through lack of food, my countenance chan[ged],
My flesh had wasted away, my blood drai[ned].
My bones became visible, covering [my] sk[in],
My tissues were inflamed, affli[cted] with jaundice(?).
95 I took to a sick-bed of confinement, going out *was* a hards[hip],
My house became my prison.
A fetter for my flesh, my arms were useless,
A shackle to my person, my feet were done for.
My afflictions were severe, the wound gra[ve].
100 The whip that beat me was full of thorns,
A goad covered with thorns pricked me.
All day long a persecutor would pursue [me],

¹⁷ An undetermined ailment.

¹⁸ An unidentified plant.

¹⁹ Lit. “knees.”

²⁰ There is no agreement about the restoration of the first word of this line.

²¹ Šā'ilu in a general usage or perhaps an unrecognized ša'īlu*, “allegation,” should be preferred.

At night he did not let me breathe freely for a moment.

Through constant turning my sinews were loosened,

¹⁰⁵ My limbs were splayed, *just* hanging apart.

I would spend the night in my own filth like an ox,

I would wallow in my own excrement like a sheep.

The exorcist was scared by my symptoms,

And the diviner confused my omens.²²

¹¹⁰ The exorcist could not reveal the nature of my illness,

And the diviner did not give the duration of my sickness.

My god did not rush in to help, he did not take my hand,

My goddess did not have mercy on me, she did not walk alongside.

My grave lay open, my funerary goods prepared,

¹¹⁵ Before my death, mourning for me was completed.

My entire land said about me, “How wronged is he!”

When my ill-wisher heard, his face brightened,

When they informed my nemesis, her mood became radiant.

The day grew dark for my entire family,

¹²⁰ For those among my friends their sun darkened.

Tablet III

His hand²³ was so heavy I could not bear it,²⁴

My dread of him was [ove]rwhelming, I [. . .].

His furious [pun]ishment [. . .] flood,

Whose advance was [aggres]sive[?], it [. . .].

⁵ [Sev]ere, serious illness does not . . . [my] perso[n],

I forgot alertness, [. . .] made me delirious.²⁵

[D]ay and night alike I would m[oa]n,

Dreaming *and* waking moments both aff[li]cted me].

There was a singular man, extraordinary in fo[rm],

¹⁰ Magnificent in physique, clo[th]ed in new garments.

Because *I was just* waking up, his outline la[cke]d form,

He was clad in radiance, clothed in aw[e].

[He en]tered and stood over [m]e,

When [I saw] him, [my] flesh was paralyzed.

¹⁵ [He said], “Your lord sent [me].”

[. . .] he stood, they were suffering [. . .].

“[Gath]er[?] here, and I will speak their will.

²² Variant: “has forgotten.”

²³ Variant: The line begins with “afterwards.”

²⁴ Variant: “him.”

²⁵ Lit. “made me wander.”

- “The men [that] the king sent,
“They were silent, [n]o [one] answered me,
20 “I was looking at those who heard me.”
I s[aw] a dream a sec[ond t]ime.
In the dream I saw at nig[ht],
There was a singular purification priest bearing [a ritual water vessel],
He was holding in [his ha]nd a purifying t[ama]risk rod.
- 25 “Laluralimma, resident of Nippur,
Has sent m[e] to purify you,” *he said*.
He po[ured] the water that he was carrying over me,
He pronounced the incantation of life *and* massaged [my bod]y.
I s[aw] a dream for a third time.
- 30 In the dream that I saw at ni[ght],
There was a singul[ar] young woman, [whose] app[earance] was beautiful,
[. . .] like a human *but* eq[ual] to a god.
A queen of people [. . .]
She entered and sat [down beside me].²⁶
- 35 She ordered my deliverance: “He is utterly exhausted,
“Do not fear,” she said, “I will [. . .],
“And in whatever dream he saw [. . .].”
She spoke my deliverance, “He is greatly distr[essed],
“Whoever *he be* who saw a vi[sion] in the night.”
- 40 In the dream was Ur-Nintinugga of [B]abyl[on . . .]
A bearded man, crowned by his diadem,
An exorcist, carrying a writing-[board].
He said, “Marduk sent m[e].
I brought *this* band[age] to Shubshi-meshre-Shakkan.”
- 45 From his pure hands he brought a band[age],
He entr[usted] *it* into the hands of my ministrant.
[At] the time of waking he sent the mess[age],
He rev[aled] his favorable sign to my people.
From the protracted illness, a snake [. . .],
50 The sickness cam[e to an] end quickly, [my] fe[tters] were broken.
After the heart of my lord was st[illed],
The mind of merciful Marduk was app[eased],
After [he accept]ed my prayers, my requests [. . .],
And re[ve]al[ed] his sweet [benevolent a]ttention [. . .].
- 55 [After he order]ed my deliverance by saying “he is u[tt]erly exhaus]ted,”
[Then . . .] to make manifest [. . .].
[. . .] to complete and [. . .]
[. . .] my sin [. . .]

²⁶ Alternatively, the line could be reconstructed to end: “she stood over me” (see III 13).

- [. . .] *my* iniquity [. . .]
60 [. . .] *my* transgression [. . .]
He caused the wind to carry off my acts of negligence,²⁷
[. . .] *my* curse [. . .].
Lines 63–64 are missing. Lines 65–66 are too fragmentary to derive sense.
- 67 . . . like . . .
[He a]pplied²⁸ his spell, which d[rive]s away ev[il],
[He dr]ove the evil wind back to the horizon.
70 He expelled headache to the surface of the netherworld,
[He se]nt the wicked demon/cough *back* down to its Apsu.²⁹
He returned the unrelenting ghost to Ekur,
He overthrew Lamaštu, he made *her* ta[ke to] the mountain.
He made the current of the waters receive *my* chills,
75 He tore out the root of debility like a plan[t].
Unpleasant sleep, the pouring out of slumber—
As though the heavens were filled with smoke—he sent away.
With “woe” and “alas” . . . and . . .,³⁰
He made rise like fog, he re[moved]³¹ to the netherworld.
80 Constant headache, which was as hea[vy] as a [grind]ing stone—
He withdrew like the dew of ni[gh]t, he dr[ove] *it* away from me.
My blurred eyes, which were cov[er]ed with the pall of de[ath]—
He removed *the pall* far, far away, he brightened *my* vis[ion].
My ears, which were clogged, stopped up like a deaf man’s—
85 He removed their wax, he opened *my* hearing.
My nose, [whose br]eathing was blocked with the onset of fever—
He relieved its illness so that I could [soon] breathe freely.
My lips, which were raging *and* took [. . .]—
He wiped away their fear, he rel[eased] their bond.
90 My mouth, which was closed up so that speaking was diff[icult],
He polished like copper, its dirt [. . .]
My [tee]th, which were clenched, bo[und] together—
He opened their binding and made their roots [. . .].
My tongue, which was bound *so that* it c[ould no]t move about—
95 He wiped away its thickness so that [my] speech became clear?
My throat, which was constricted, blocked as with a lump,
He made well and caused *it* t[o sou]nd its songs like a reed flute.

²⁷ This line could be line 66 instead of line 61. The manuscript evidence is ambiguous.

²⁸ Lit. “brought near.”

²⁹ A subterranean, watery domain, here associated with the netherworld.

³⁰ The second half of the line is preserved but not understood.

³¹ The only witness to this line has space for one sign in the break. I suggest *uš-[riq] = ušrīq*.

My throat, which was swollen *and* would not [acc]ept [food],³²
Its swelling went down, and he opened its stoppage.

¹⁰⁰ My [. . .] are high, its rain [. . .],
The heaped up [. . .] on high, [. . .] he poured out.
[. . . which] was darkened, like . . . [. . .]
[. . .] of his, a song [. . .]
The large intestine, which was always empty due to hunger and woven together like a basket,
¹⁰⁵ [. . .] water, its swelling?[?] [. . .].
It accepts meals, it takes drink.
[. . .] . . . [. . .] I flourished.

Lines 108–110 are too fragmentary to translation. Lines 111–120 are still missing.

Lines from the Commentary³³

- a My neck, which was loose *and* twisted at *its* base[?],
- b He strengthened *as* a mountain, he planted *it* erect like a tree[?].
- c He made my physique like one perfect in strength.³⁴
- d Like expelling *nakimtu*-disease[?], he trimmed[?] my nails.³⁵
- e He dispelled their fatigue, their . ? . he made well.

Tablet IV³⁶

Section A

^{1'} [. . .]like a towe[r . . .]
Interi[or . . .] . . . [. . .]
^f My knees, which were bound *and* [restrain]ed li[ke] a *būṣu*-bird's—
My leg [he has straight]ened[?] li[ke . . .].
^{5'} My feet, which had become a ruin, [. . .]
My strength . ? . [. . .]
^g The form of my body . ? . [. . .]
My limbs [. . .]
My [bo]dy, my members [. . .]
^{10'} He clothed like [. . .]

³² Alternate restoration: “[wind].”

³³ The first group of lettered lines are divided up between the end of Tablet III and the beginning of Tablet IV. We are not certain where the separation occurred. We do not always know how many lines are missing between them.

³⁴ *Gāmīr abāri* also designates a wrestler.

³⁵ The line is obscure and the words poorly understood.

³⁶ The sources that comprise this Tablet are uncertain. In fact, the Tablet itself has only recently been suggested to exist within the poem. See Oshima 2014, 6–7, 102–105, 423–428.

[What ca]me out of [. . .]
[. . .] . . . [. . .]

Lines from the Commentary³⁷

- ^h He wiped clean the dirt,³⁸ he cleaned its f[i]lth.
ⁱ My overshadowed features have become brilliant *again*.
^j On the bank of the River, where the case of the people is decided.

Section B

- ^{1'} [. . .] . . . [. . .]
[. . .] . . . [. . .]
[. . . god]s² . . . [. . .]
[. . .] goddesses . . . [. . .]
^{5'} [. . .] them . . . [. . .]
[. . .] . . . both [. . .]
[. . .] . . . I was tormente[d . . .]
[. . . wit]h him restoring to health, . . . is established [. . .]
[. . . he rest]ored me, h[is] penalty . . . [. . .]
^{10' k} I was struck on the forehead, I was released from slavery.³⁹
[. . .] . ? . [. . .]
[. . .] . . . belt/snake² [. . .]
[. . .] . . . bowed dow[n . . .]
[. . . in Esagi]la [I said] a *shigû*⁴⁰-pray[er].
^{15'} [. . .] my . . . *shigû*-pray[er . . .]
^o I walked along the street [Kunush-k]adru⁴¹ released.⁴²
[. . .] . . . [. . .]

Section C

- ^{1'} To Zarpa[nitu . . .]
To [my] god [. . .]
To m[y] goddess [. . .]
The one who does not fear [his] g[od. . .]
^{5'} The one who does not fear [his] g[od]dess . . .
^p Let the one who was negligent of Esagil learn from my example.

³⁷ The second group of lettered lines are probably part of Tablet IV.

³⁸ Lit. “frost” but the ancient commentary associates the word with “rust, patina.”

³⁹ lit., “from the slave hair style,” which metonymically stands for the institution of slavery. Lines l and m in the Commentary are entirely missing. Line n is too fragmentary to translate. These would have to fit somewhere between lines k and o in the present reconstruction.

⁴⁰ A kind of penitential prayer.

⁴¹ A street in Babylon, whose name means “bow, O fierce one.”

⁴² Lit. “in release.”

The one who [. . .] to Babylon [. . .].
Distress, de[ed . . .]
Penalties? [. . .]
10' . . . [. . .]

Tablet V

My [lo]rd [soo]thed me,⁴³
My [lo]rd bandaged me.
My [lo]rd removed affliction from me,
My [lo]rd revived me.

5 [From the pi]t he rescued me,
[. . . he g]athered me up.
[From disas]ter he raised me up,
He pulled me out of the Hubur River.

He held my hand through adversity.

10 He struck me on the right,
And raised my head on the left.
He struck the hand of my striker,
Marduk made him throw down his weapon.

On the mouth of the lion eating me,

15 Marduk put a muzzle.
Marduk, that of my pursuer,
Snatched his sling, turned back his sling stone.

He snatched the shovel from the hands of my grave-digger.

He forced the harp² from the hands of the male-wailer,

20 He made the mouth of my female-mourner cease lamentation.
He fille[d] the mouth of my male-gloater with woe,
The mouth of my female-gloater [. . .].

He recited a mourning rite [. . .].

[. . .] . . . [. . .]
25 [. . .] . . . [. . .]

He took me [. . .] to the city square,
He brought me into the presence of [. . .].

[. . .] . . . Marduk,
. . . [. . .] Zarpan[itu]⁴⁴ made strong² / delayed² / helped².⁴⁵

30 Who might it have been? The lord released m[e].⁴⁶

⁴³ Lines 1–4 each consist of only two words.

⁴⁴ Zarpanitu is Marduk's female consort.

⁴⁵ The derivation of ^rú¹-kaš-šú is unclear. It could be from *kašû*, “to make strong,” or *kâšu* (A), “to delay,” or *kâšu* (B), “to help.” For the last of these, see *Ludlul* I 12.

⁴⁶ The translation of V 30–36 is quite tentative.

Had *my* life quickly come to an end? Ye[s].
Was I not descending to the netherworld? Y[es].
Had I turned into a ghost? Yes.

Who might it have been? Marduk spared m[e].

³⁵ I was reckoned as the flesh of an *asakku*-demon.⁴⁷
A corpse . ? . I walked . . . [. . .].

They pur[ified me] by washing *my* matted hair,
My ablution *and* renewal . . . [. . .].

And he swore that he heard in *my* prayer [. . .],
⁴⁰ [I went up] to Esagil for prostration and supplication.

I, who was from the grave, entered the Gate of [the Rising Sun] again.⁴⁸

In the Gate of Prosperity, prosperity [. . .].

In the Gate of . ? . the Divine Guardian, a divine guardian appro[ached me].

In the Gate of Well-Being, I loo[ked upon] well-being.

⁴⁵ In the Gate of Life, I was granted life.

In the Gate of the Rising Sun, I was counted among the living.

In the Gate of Brilliant Astonishment, my signs became clear.

In the Gate of the Releasing of Guilt, my bond was released.

In the Gate of Praise, my mouth inquired.

⁵⁰ In the Gate of Releasing Sighing, my sighing was released.

In the Gate of Pure Water, I was sprinkled with water of purification.

In the Gate of Well-being, I was seen with Marduk.

In the Gate Sprinkled with Luxury, I kissed the feet of Zarpanitu.

I continually prayed before them with entreaties and intense supplication.

⁵⁵ I offered⁴⁹ fragrant incense before them,

I presented an offering, a gift, heaped up donations.

I sacrificed fattened bulls, slaughtered prime sheep(?),

I continually poured out sweet *karanu*-beer *and* pure wine.

As for the protective spirit *and* divine guardian, the divine attendants of the brickwork of Esagil,

⁶⁰ [With] a libation I brightened their mood,

[With] an opulent [mea]l I made their heart rejoice.

[The door jamb, the b]olt socket, the bar of the doors,

[I . . .] sesame oil, ghee, *and* the abundance of grain.

[. . .] . . . [to E]zida[?], to the rites (ordinance)⁵⁰ of the temple,

⁶⁵ . . . red-gold grain . . .

I continuously sprinkled fragrant cedar-oil on them [. . .].

The citizens of Babylon [. . .] [a fe]ast,

⁴⁷ As food or kin? It is unclear.

⁴⁸ Variant: “[I, who went d]own to the grave, [entered] the Gate of the [Rising] Su[n] again.”

⁴⁹ lit. “I made . . . burn.”

⁵⁰ “Ordinance” may be an explanatory gloss.

The [peop]le⁷ made/performed his house of burying⁵¹ at the feast.
The citizens of Babylon saw how he (i.e., Marduk) revived [hi]s [servant],

70 Every one of their mouths extolled [his] greatness, saying:

“Who thought⁵² he would see *the light of his sun again?*

“Who imagined⁵³ he would stroll along his street *again?*

“Who but Marduk could restore him from the dead?

Which goddess but Zarpanitu could give *him* his life?

75 “Marduk is able to revive from the grave,

“Zarpanitu is experienced at sparing from disaster.

“Wherever the earth is established, the heavens stretched out,

“The sun shines *and* fire⁵⁴ blazes,

“Wherever water flows *and* wind blows,

80 “Those whose lump of clay Aruru pinched off,

“[Li]ving beings, *who* walk along,

“As many [peo]ple as there are, praise Marduk!”

[. . .] I have answered [. . .], those who were established by testimony,

[. . .] may he rule over [a]ll the people.

85 [. . .] [she]pherd of all the inhabi[ted world],

[. . .] the floods from the d[ee]p [. . .].

[. . .] sanctuary of the gods [. . .]

[. . .] the extent of the heavens and the [earth]

[. . .] help[?] . . . [. . .]

90 [. . .] . ? .

[. . .] . . . [. . .]

[. . .] light, may [. . .]

[. . .] and the seas . . . [. . .]

[. . .] . . . [. . .]

95 [May he establish[?]] the days of his reign . . . [. . .]

[Livin]g[?] beings . . . [. . .]

[. . .] days [. . .] life

[. . .] Esagi[la . . .] . . . its roots

[. . . of hea]ven, may he spread *his* offspring

100 [. . . Nazi]murutash [. . .] . . . was forgotten

[Living[?]] bein[gs . . .] his days[?]

[. . .] . . . they[?] turned his city . . .

[. . .] may he rule over the people, the black-headed ones.

[. . . Zarpa]nit, mercy of Marduk

105 [. . .] . . . and Babylon, the splendid light[?]/army[?] of the king

May [. . .] be called to goodness [forever af]ter.

May [. . .] enjoy [. . . happ]iness of life.

⁵¹ The meaning of “house of burying” is unclear. Oshima suggests it is a ritual (ORA 14, 334).

⁵² Lit. “said.”

⁵³ Lit. “in the heart of whom did . . . come into being?”

⁵⁴ Lit. “Girra (the fire god).”

[. . .] . . . heavens . . . may he possess.

[. . . may he s]atisfy his desire.

¹¹⁰ [. . .] over his subjects

[. . .] Shubshi-meshre-Shakkan

[. . . Sum]er and Akkad, who governs the land

[The one who] experienced [troub]le, let his sin be released,

[. . .] may his fatigue be put to rest.

¹¹⁵ [. . .] may his goddess treat him with honor,

[. . .] may [*his pe*]ople become² healthy/in peace.

[. . .] may his [goddess]s⁵⁵ treat him with honor,

May he stroll along [in . . .] and happiness of heart daily.

[. . .] the song [. . .] Shubshi-meshre-Shakkan,

¹²⁰ He sang [your] prai[ses (. . .?)], your praise is sweet.

⁵⁵ One MS adds “and king.”