

# MYSTERIES UNEARTHED

## ENUMA ELISH

The one you see is part of the 4<sup>th</sup> of seven tablets on which is inscribed the Babylonian poem of the creation. The name “Enuma Elish” comes from the first two words on the first tablet “When above (or on high)”. It is a Babylonian account of the creation that was found in the Nineveh library of Ashurbanipal. Before these tablets were translated critics assumed that the Biblical account of creation was copied from an earlier Babylonian story but Lambert has dated the epic to 1100BC which comes too late to influence Moses. Both accounts obviously come from a similar source, but one is corrupted as shown in the following extracts:

### COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ENUMA ELISH AND CREATION ACCOUNT

#### 1. RESEMBLANCE: Initial state of earth.

GENESIS ACCOUNT	ENUMA ELISH
“And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep ... face of the waters.” (1:2)	“Their waters coming as a single body; No reed hut had been matted, no marsh land had appeared.” (Tablet 1)

#### 2. RESEMBLANCE: Order of events in creation.

GENESIS ACCOUNT	ENUMA ELISH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Begins with a Divine being, God (1:1)</li> <li>b. Watery chaos (1:2)</li> <li>c. Firmament (1:6,8)</li> <li>d. Dry land (1:10)</li> <li>e. Sun, moon &amp; stars (1:14-18)</li> <li>f. Man (1:26;2:7) given work “to dress and keep the garden.”(2:1-3)</li> <li>g. Rest after Creation of man (2:1-3)</li> </ul>	Primeval deities Apsu & Tiamat  Watery chaos (tablet 1) Firmament (tablet IV, line 145 ) ‘Stations’ (tablet V, line 1) Celestial luminaries- includes moon & sun (tablet V, line 2-24) Man (tablet IV, line 6-9,32,34) Given work to serve and relief of the gods (VI,8,12,36) Rest after creation of man (VI.7,8.3)

#### 3. RESEMBLANCE: Predilection for- number- seven,

GENESIS ACCOUNT	ENUMA ELISH
Earth created in 6 days Seventh day Sabbath (2:1-3)	Seven tablets of creation Seven gods of destiny (VI, 81) Sevenfold wind (IV,46)

#### 1. DIFFERENCE: Deities.

GENESIS ACCOUNT	ENUMA ELISH
Monotheistic “In the beginning God ...” (1:1) Elohim = Plural. cf. Deut. 6:4 “The Lord our God is ONE God.”	Polytheistic- Apsu(male) and Tiamat(female) were the original gods who brought forth the other gods.

## 2. DIFFERENCE: Superiority of the creators.

<b>GENESIS ACCOUNT</b> Though Lucifer rebelled (Isa.14:12-17; Ezek.28:12-19) and there was war in heaven (Rev.12:7-9) and man sinned (Gen 3) “yet God is in perfect control, the manifestation of evil being foreseen and a remedy provided (Gen.3:15;Rev,13:8.)	<b>ENUMA ELISH</b> Apsu and Tiamat were killed by their offspring, after severe struggle. (I. 69 - Apsu; 97-105 Tiamat).
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## 3- DIFFERENCE: Spirit and matter.

<b>GENESIS ACCOUNT</b> God, an eternal spirit, created cosmic matter and exists independently of it (1:1). God is IMMORTAL (1Tim.1:17).	<b>ENUMA ELISH</b> Heaven and earth already existed (ie. not created) from the beginning with the gods. False assumptions that divine spirit and cosmic matter are co-existent and co-eternal. Apsu and Tiamat are personifications of cosmic matter and also MORTAL.
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## 4. DIFFERENCE: Creation of Man.

<b>GENESIS ACCOUNT</b> “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul (being). (2:7)	<b>ENUMA ELISH</b> "They bound him (Kingu) ... and severed his blood (vessels). Out of his blood they fashioned mankind.” (VI. 31-33)
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As can be seen, the Enuma Elisha tells the story of the origin of the gods from a primeval chaos from which two entities. Apsu and Tiamat were commingled in a single body. From these came the gods. One of the younger gods, Marduk overthrew Tiamat cutting her into two to form heaven and earth. “In comparison with this strange story ... the magestic narrative of Genesis 1 and 2 stand out above the weird polytheism of the Babylonian legend as a masterpiece.” *J Arthur Thompson The Bible and Archaeology. Grand Rapids: The Paternoster Press 1962.* In the words of Unger “the Genesis account is not only the purest, but everywhere bears the unmistakable impress of divine inspiration when compared with the extravagances and corruptions of other accounts.” *Archaeology and the Old Testament, Zondervan P.M., 1960 p.37.*