

## How grain came to Sumer

(Sumerian text, 3rd Millennium BC, University of Oxford translation, The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature)

Men used to eat grass with their mouths like sheep. In those times, they did not know grain, barley or flax. An brought these down from the interior of heaven. Enlil lifted his gaze around as a stag lifts its horns when climbing the terraced ..... hills. He looked southwards and saw the wide sea. He looked northwards and saw the mountain of aromatic cedars. Enlil piled up the barley, gave it to the mountain. He piled up the bounty of the Land, gave the *innuḫa* barley to the mountain. He closed off access to the wide-open hill. He ..... its lock, which heaven and earth shut fast, its bolt, which .....

Then Ninazu ....., and said to his brother Ninmada: "Let us go to the mountain, to the mountain where barley and flax grow, ..... the rolling river, where the water wells up from the earth. Let us fetch the barley down from its mountain, let us introduce the *innuḫa* barley into Sumer. Let us make barley known in Sumer, which knows no barley."

Ninmada, the worshipper of An, replied to him: "Since our father has not given the command, since Enlil has not given the command, how can we go there to the mountain? How can we bring down the barley from its mountain? How can we introduce the *innuḫa* grain into Sumer? How can we make barley known in Sumer, which knows no barley?"

"Come, let us go to Utu of heaven, who as he lies there, as he lies there, sleeps a sound sleep, to the hero, the son of Ningal, who as he lies there sleeps a sound sleep." He raised his hands towards Utu of the seventy doors.

Utu ..... table .....