

Nanna Suen's journey to Nibru

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

The heroic Nanna-Suen fixed his mind on the city of his mother. Suen Ašimbabbar fixed his mind on the city of his mother. Nanna-Suen fixed his mind on the city of his mother and his father. Ašimbabbar fixed his mind on the city of Enlil and Ninlil:

"I, the hero, will set off for my city. I will set off for my city, I will set off to my father. I, Suen, will set off for my city. I will set off for my city, I will set off to my father. I will set off to my father Enlil. I will set off for my city, I will set off to my mother. I will set off to my mother Ninlil. I will set off to my father."

"The shining city, the pure place

6 lines missing

..... very great, very great, very great, very great."

"My Nibru, where black birch trees grow in a good place, my sanctuary Nibru, where white birch trees grow in a pure place, my Nibru's shrine is built in a good place. The sanctuary Nibru's name is a good name. My Nibru's shrine is built in a good place. The sanctuary Nibru's name is a good name. Before Dilmun existed, palm trees grew in my city. Before Dilmun existed, palm trees grew in Nibru and the great mother Ninlil was clothed in fine linen."

Suen set about constructing a barge. He set about constructing a barge and sent for reed matting.

Nanna-Suen despatched people to Tummal for the barge's reeds. Ašimbabbar despatched people to the *abzu* for the barge's pitch. Nanna-Suen despatched people to Du-ašaga for its rushes. Ašimbabbar despatched people to the cypress forest for its strakes. Nanna-Suen despatched people to the forests of Kug-nuna for its ribbing. Ašimbabbar despatched people to the mountain of fragrant cedar for its beams.

Ašimbabbar despatched people to the forests of Ebla for its planking. Nanna-Suen despatched people to the fragrant cedar forest for its fir wood. Ašimbabbar despatched people to the junipers of Langi for its Ašimbabbar despatched people to for its Nanna-Suen despatched people to the mound of for its

When the barge's reeds were brought to Nanna-Suen from Tummal, when the barge's pitch was brought to Ašimbabbar from the *abzu*, when its rushes were brought to Nanna-Suen from Du-ašaga, when its strakes were brought to Ašimbabbar from the cypress forest, when its ribbing was brought to Nanna-Suen from the forests of Kug-nuna, when its beams were brought to Ašimbabbar from the mountain of fragrant cedar, when its planking was brought to Ašimbabbar from the forests of Ebla, when its fir wood was brought to Nanna-Suen from the fragrant cedar forest, when its was brought to Ašimbabbar from the junipers of Langi, when its was brought to Ašimbabbar from, when its was brought to Nanna-Suen from the mound of,

1 line fragmentary

Utu rejoiced at him and put Gibil rejoiced at him.

64 lines missing or fragmentary

(He declared:) "I am Nanna-Suen, I, I will to the house of Enlil. I am Ašimbabbar, and I will to the house of Enlil."

6 lines missing

Nanna-Suen will gather bulls for the cow-pen for the house of Enlil. Ašimbabbar will collect fattened sheep for the house of Enlil. Nanna-Suen will purify the cow-pen for the house of Enlil. Ašimbabbar will feed meal to the goats for the house of Enlil. Nanna-Suen will porcupines for the house of Enlil.

Ašimbabbar will long-tailed bush-rats for the house of Enlil. Nanna-Suen will gather turtles and small birds for the house of Enlil. Ašimbabbar will bring small *ubi* birds from the pond for the house of Enlil. Nanna-Suen will bring small *azagun* birds from the for the house of Enlil.

Ašimbabbar will *suḫur* carp for the house of Enlil. Nanna-Suen will *eštub* carp for the house of Enlil. Ašimbabbar will pour the oil of rushes onto the water for the house of Enlil. Nanna-Suen will fill baskets with eggs for the house of Enlil. Ašimbabbar will cause old reed and fresh reed to thrive for the house of Enlil.

Nanna-Suen will cause six hundred ewes to give birth to lambs for the house of Enlil, for he will cause their rams to be let loose among them, and he will distribute them along the banks of the Surungal canal. Ašimbabbar will cause six hundred she-goats to give birth to kids for the house of Enlil, for he will cause their bucks to be let loose among them, and he will distribute them along the banks of the Surungal canal. Nanna-Suen will cause six hundred cows to give birth to calves for the house of Enlil, for he will cause their bulls to be let loose among them, and he will distribute them along the banks of the Surungal canal.

Enegir lay ahead of the offerings, Urim lay behind them. She brought out of the house what should not come out of the house, what should not come out of the house. Ningirida brought out of the house what should not come out of the house: "Welcome, welcome, welcome, O boat! O boat of Suen, welcome, welcome, O boat!"

She laid out flour before the barge and spread bran. At her feet stood a covered bronze *gakkul* vat. With her fingers she pulled out the boxwood bung for him (declaring): "I shall rub precious oil on this peg. May ghee, syrup and wine be abundant in your midst, may the *suḫur* carp and the *eštub* carp rejoice at the prow of your boat!" But the boat did not give her its cargo: "I am going to Nibru!"

Larsam lay ahead of the offerings, Enegir lay behind them. She brought out of the house what should not come out of the house, what should not come out of the house, the lovely Šerida brought out of the house what should not come out of the house: "Welcome, welcome, welcome, O boat! O boat of my father, welcome, welcome, O boat!"

She laid out flour before the barge and spread bran. At her feet stood a covered bronze *gakkul* vat. With her fingers she pulled out the boxwood bung for him (declaring): "I shall rub precious oil on this peg. May ghee, syrup and wine be abundant in your midst, may the *suḫur* carp and the *eštub* carp rejoice at the prow of your boat!" But the boat did not give her its cargo: "I am going to Nibru!"

Unug lay ahead of the offerings, Larsam lay behind them. She brought out of the house what should not come out of the house, what should not come out of the house, holy Inana brought out of the house what should not come out of the house: "Welcome, welcome, welcome, O boat! O boat of my father welcome, welcome, O boat! O boat of Suen welcome, welcome, O boat!"

She laid out flour before the barge and spread bran. At her feet stood a covered bronze *gakkul* vat. With her fingers she pulled out the boxwood bung for him (declaring): "I shall rub precious oil on your peg. May ghee, syrup and wine be abundant in your midst, may the *suḥur* carp and the *eštub* carp rejoice at the prow of your boat!" But the boat did not give her its cargo: "I am going to Nibru!"

Šuruppag lay ahead of the offerings, Unug lay behind them. She brought out of the house what should not come out of the house, what should not come out of the house, Ninunuga brought out of the house what should not come out of the house: "Welcome, welcome, welcome, O boat! O boat of Suen welcome, welcome, O boat!"

She laid out flour before the barge and spread bran. At her feet stood a covered bronze *gakkul* vat. With her fingers she pulled out the boxwood bung for him (declaring): "I shall rub precious oil on this peg. May ghee, syrup and wine be abundant in your midst, may the *suḥur* carp and the *eštub* carp rejoice at the prow of your boat!" But the boat did not give her its cargo: "I am going to Nibru!"

Tummal lay ahead of the offerings, Šuruppag lay behind them. She brought out of the house what should not come out of the house, what should not come out of the house, the fair Ninlil brought out of the house what should not come out of the house: "Welcome, welcome, welcome, O boat! O boat of the princely son welcome, welcome, O boat!"

She laid out flour before the barge and spread bran. At her feet stood a covered bronze *gakkul* vat. With her fingers she pulled out the boxwood bung for him (declaring): "I shall rub precious oil on this peg. May ghee, syrup and wine be abundant in your midst, may the *suḥur* carp and the *eštub* carp rejoice at the prow of your boat!" But the boat did not give her its cargo: "I am going to Nibru!"

Nibru lay ahead of the offerings, Tummal lay behind them. At the Shining Quay, the quay of Enlil, Nanna-Suen finally docked the boat. At the White Quay, the quay of Enlil, Ašimbabbar finally docked the boat.

He stood at the grand stairway of his father who begot him and called out to the porter of his father who begot him: "Open the house, porter, open the house! Open the house, Kalkal, open the house! Kalkal, doorkeeper, open the house! Doorman, doorkeeper, open the house! Porter, open the house! Kalkal, open the house!"

"I, Nanna-Suen, have gathered bulls for the cow-pen for the house of Enlil; porter, open the house. I, Ašimbabbar, have collected fattened sheep for the house of Enlil; porter, open the house. I, Nanna-Suen, shall purify the cow-pen for the house of Enlil; porter, open the house. I, Ašimbabbar, shall feed meal to the goats for the house of Enlil; porter, open the house. I, Nanna-Suen, have porcupines for the house of Enlil; porter, open the house."

"I, Ašimbabbar -- I, Ašimbabbar -- have long-tailed bush-rats for the house of Enlil; porter, open the house. I, Nanna-Suen, have gathered turtles and little birds for the house of Enlil; porter, open the house. I, Ašimbabbar, have brought small *ubi* birds from the pond for the house of Enlil; porter, open the house. I, Nanna-Suen, have brought small *azagun* birds from the pond for the house of Enlil; porter, open the house."

"I, Ašimbabbar, *suḥur* carp for the house of Enlil; porter, open the house. I, Nanna-Suen, *eštub* carp for the house of Enlil; porter, open the house. I, Ašimbabbar, shall pour the oil of rushes onto the water for the house of Enlil; porter, open the house. I, Nanna-Suen, have filled baskets with eggs for the house of Enlil; porter, open the house. I, Ašimbabbar, have caused old reed and fresh reed to thrive for the house of Enlil; porter, open the house."

"I, Nanna-Suen, have caused six hundred ewes to give birth to lambs for the house of Enlil, for I have caused their rams to be let loose among them, and I have distributed them along the banks of the Surungal canal; porter, open the house. I, Ašimbabbar, have caused six hundred she-goats to give birth to kids for the house of Enlil, for I have caused their bucks to be let loose among them, and I have distributed them along the banks of the Surungal canal; porter, open the house. I, Nanna-Suen, have caused six hundred cows to give birth to calves for the house of Enlil, for I have caused their bulls to be let loose among them, and I have distributed them along the banks of the Surungal canal; porter, open the house."

"Porter, open the house! Kalkal, open the house! I will give you that which is in the prow of the boat as a first offering, and I will give you that which is in the stern of the boat as a last offering."

Rejoicing, the porter rejoicing, the porter rejoicing opened the house. Kalkal, the doorkeeper, rejoicing, the porter rejoicing opened the house. Kalkal, in charge of the bolt-handle, rejoicing, the porter rejoicing opened the house. At the house of Enlil,, Nanna-Suen made the offerings. Enlil, rejoicing over the offerings, offered bread to Suen, his son.

Enlil rejoiced over Suen and spoke kindly: "Give sweet cakes to my little fellow who eats sweet cakes. Give sweet cakes to my Nanna who loves eating sweet cakes. Bring out from the E-kur the bread allotment and first quality bread for him. Pour out for him the finest beer, my pure May the of the towering *tilimda* vessels, standing on the ground, Order pure sweet cake, syrup, crescent cake and clear water for him."

Suen replied to his father who begot him: "Father who begot me, I am indeed satisfied with what you have given me to eat. O Great Mountain, father who begot me, I am indeed satisfied with what you have given me to drink. Wherever you lift your eyes, there is kingship. O Enlil, your abundance is"

"Give to me, Enlil, give to me -- I want to set off for Urim! In the river give me the carp-flood, I want to set off for Urim! In the fields give me speckled barley, I want to set off for Urim! In the marshes give me *kuda* carp and *suḥur* carp, I want to set off for Urim! In the reedbeds give me old reed and fresh reed, I want to set off for Urim! In the forests give me the ibex and wild ram, I want to set off for Urim! In the high plain give me the *mašgurum* tree, I want to set off for Urim! In the orchards give me syrup and wine, I want to set off for Urim! In the palace give me long life, I want to set off for Urim!"

He gave to him, Enlil gave to him, and he set off for Urim. In the river he gave him the carp-flood, and he set off for Urim. In the field he gave him speckled barley, and he set off for Urim. In the pond he gave him *kuda* carp and *suḥur* carp, and he set off for Urim. In the reedbeds he gave him old reed and fresh reed, and he set off for Urim. In the forests he gave him the ibex and wild ram, and he set off for Urim. In the high plain he gave him the *mašgurum* tree, and he set off for Urim. In the orchards he gave him syrup and wine, and he set off for Urim. In the palace he gave him long life, and he set off for Urim.

My king, on your throne, for Enlil, may Nanna-Suen make you be born for seven days. On your holy throne, for the great mother Ninlil, may Lord Ašimbabbar make you be born for seven days.