

**Ishtar Weaves a Mystic Spell Over The King and Seer,
And Vanishes—The Seer Advises the King to Seek
The Aid Of The Immortal Seer Who Escapes From
The Flood**

From *The Epic of Ishtar and Izdubar*
By Unknown

The goddess Ishtar wrapped in darkness waits
Until the goddess Tsil-at-tu¹ the gates
Of sleep has closed upon the darkened plain;
Then lightly to the palace flies the Queen.
O'er the King's couch she weaves an awful dream,
While her bright eyes upon him furious gleam.
Then o'er Heabani's couch a moment stands,
And Heaven's curtains pulls aside with hands
Of mystic power, and he a vision sees—
The gods in council;—vanishing, she flees
Without the palace like a gleam of light,
And wakes the guard around in wild affright.

Next day the seer reveals to Izdubar
How all the gods a council held of war,
And gave to Ann power to punish them
For thus defying Ishtar's godly claim;
And thus the seer gave him his counsel, well
Considered, how to meet their plottings fell:

“To Khasisadra go, who from the flood
Escaped when o'er the earth the waters stood
Above mankind, and covered all the ground;
He at the river's mouth may yet be found.
For his great aid, we now the seer must seek,
For Anu's fury will upon us break.
Immortal lives the seer beside the sea;
Through Hades pass, and soon the seer mayst see.”

Thus Izdubar replied, and him embraced:
“With thee, Heabani, I my throne have graced;

With thee I go, mine own companion dear,
And on the road each other we may cheer.”

¹ Goddess of darkness, or shades of night.

“The way is long, my King, and if I live,
With thee I go, but oh, thou must not grieve,
For perils great attend the way, and old
Am I: the suppleness of youth to hold
My strength I need, but it alas! is gone.
My heart is ready, but I fear, my son,
These crippled limbs which Anu’s bull bath left
Of my strong vigor, have thy seer bereft.
Too weak am I, for that long journey hard
To undertake; my presence would retard
Thee,—with these wounds; nor strength have I to last
To guard my body in the mountain fast.
But if thou wilt, my strength is thine, my King!
To do thy will my aged form shall spring
With gladness, and all perils I’ll defy;
If need be, for thee will thy servant die.”

“Heabani, noble one! my chosen seer!
I love thee, bid thy loyal heart good cheer.
He steeds may take to ride through all the way,
With easy journeys on the road each day;
From perils I will guard thee, and defend;
To-morrow then we on our way will wend.”

Equipped for the long journey they appear
Next morn and leave, while Erech’s people cheer
Them on their way across the glowing plain,
To perils dire they go—distress and pain.