

mouth of all gods, all men, all cattle, all creeping things, and everything that lives, by thinking and commanding everything that he wishes.

His Ennead is before him in the form of teeth and lips. That is the equivalent of the semen and hands of Atum. Whereas the Ennead of Atum came into being by his semen and his fingers, the Ennead of Ptah, however, is the teeth and lips in this mouth, which pronounced the name of everything, from which Shu and Tefnut came forth, and which was the fashioner of the Ennead.²

The sight of the eyes, the hearing of the ears, and the smelling the air by the nose, they report to the heart. It is this which causes every completed concept to come forth, and it is the tongue which announces what the heart thinks.

Thus all the gods were formed and his Ennead was completed. Indeed, all the divine order really came into being through what the heart thought and the tongue commanded. * * * Thus justice was given to him who does what is liked, and injustice to him who does what is disliked. Thus life was given to him who has peace and death was given to him who has sin. Thus were made all work and all crafts, the action of the arms, the movement of the legs, and the activity of every member, in conformance with this command which the heart thought, which came forth through the tongue, and which gives value to everything.

Thus it happened that it was said of Ptah: "He who made all and brought the gods into being." He is indeed Ta-tenen,³ who brought forth the gods, for everything came forth from him, nourishment and provisions, the offerings of the gods, and every good thing. Thus it was discovered and understood that his strength is greater than that of the other gods. And so Ptah was satisfied,⁴ after he had made everything, as well as all the divine order. He had formed the gods, he had made cities, he had founded nomes, he had put the gods in their shrines, he had established their offerings, he had founded their shrines, he had made their bodies like that with which their hearts were satisfied. So the gods entered into their bodies of every kind of wood, of every kind of stone, of every kind of clay, or anything which might grow upon him [Ptah], in which they had taken form. So all the gods, as well as their *ka*'s gathered themselves to him, content and associated with the Lord of the Two Lands.

* * *

[CREATION EQUAL FOR RICH AND POOR][†]

Like the Pyramid Texts of the Old Kingdom, the Coffin Texts, written for wealthy commoners toward the end of the third millennium, were intended to protect the dead from the terrors of the underworld and ensure their immortality. The following spell begins with the sun-god Re reciting the four "good deeds" he performed at the creation when he overcame the cosmic serpent Apophis. This is followed by the petition of the deceased.

2. See "The One and the Many" (above), notes 3 and 5.

3. Ptah in his form as "the land arising" (out of the primeval waters to support the creation).

4. Or "so Ptah rested"; cf. Gen 2:2.

Words spoken by Him-whose-names-are-hidden, the All-Lord, as he speaks those who silence the storm, in the sailing of the court:

Hail in peace! I repeat to you the good deeds which my own heart did from within the serpent-coil, in order to silence strife. I did four good within the portal of lightland:

I made the four winds, that every man might breathe in his time. This the deeds.

I made the great inundation, that the humble might benefit by it like the deeds.

I made every man like his fellow; and I did not command that they do. It is their hearts that disobey what I have said. This is one of the deeds.

I made that their hearts are not disposed to forget the West, in order that sacred offerings be made to the gods of the nomes. This is one of the deeds.

I have created the gods from my sweat, and the people from the tears of the deeds.

I shall shine and be seen every day as a dignitary of the All-Lord, having satisfaction to the Weary-hearted.¹

I shall sail rightly in my bark, I am lord of eternity in the crossing of the sea. I am not afraid in my limbs, for Hu and Hike² overthrow for me that evil.

I shall see lightland, I shall dwell in it. I shall judge the poor and the wicked. I shall do the same for the evil-doers; for mine is life, I am its lord, scepter will not be taken from me.

I have spent a million years with the Weary-hearted, the son of Geb, with him in one place; while hills became towns and towns hills, for he destroys dwelling.

* * *

EPIC TALES FROM MESOPOTAMIA AND CANAAN

ENUMA ELISH

THE BABYLONIAN EPIC OF CREATION[†]

The Babylonian Epic of Creation, also known as the Enuma Elish from its first line ("When on high"), appropriates important features of Sumerian mythology and brings them into the canonical Mesopotamian myth of creation. In an early form it

1. An epithet of Osiris, god of the netherworld who has the power to bestow eternal life. In the Egyptian text, Re identifies with him, who each night crosses the waters of the netherworld in his bark to rise again in "lightland."

2. Personifications of speech and magic.

† From "The Epic of Creation," in *Myths from Mesopotamia: Creation, the Flood, Gilgamesh, and Others*, trans. Stephanie Dalley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 231-7. Brackets indicate gaps in the text.

dates to the first half of the second millennium B.C.E., but the standard version, comprising seven clay tablets, is a seventh-century copy recovered from the library of Ashurbanipal in Nineveh. Recited annually as part of the Babylonian New Year festival, the poem celebrates the triumph of order over chaos and the ascendancy of Marduk as supreme ruler of the Babylonian pantheon in four linked movements: a theogony, which relates the birth of the gods in successive generations; a theomachy, which relates the struggles between them; a cosmogony, which describes the creation and ordering of the physical world by the victorious Marduk; and a hymnic conclusion, in which the gods celebrate the attributes of Marduk by proclaiming his fifty names. Politically, the submission of the older gods to Marduk reflects the historical rise of Babylonia, which under Hammurabi had displaced Sumeria as the dominant power in Mesopotamia. At the same time (as in the *Theogony* of Hesiod, for which it was the model), the original conflict between the older gods, self-sufficient but passive, and their more active offspring dramatizes the opposition of what Freud would call the primal drives—quiescent on the one hand, assertive and appetitive on the other. Elements of the myth are assumed or echoed in almost every cosmogonic text from Mesopotamia and the adjacent regions, including Greece and Canaan (in addition to the Hebrew Bible, see the Baal cycle, below). Although biblical authors took care to elide the sexual dimension, poetic books such as Psalms and Isaiah refer repeatedly to an ancient battle between YHWH and a sea beast similar to the battle between Marduk and Tiamat, and sections of the Primeval History in Genesis—particularly the first creation account and the tower of Babel story—are best seen as a polemical response to a Babylonian precursor. Creation in both texts begins from a watery chaos, is set in motion by an act of naming, and proceeds by the double path of nominal procession and physical division. Moreover, the features of the physical world emerge in roughly the same order (day and night, firmament, earth, celestial bodies, and finally man), and the work of creation is followed in both texts by divine approbation and ritualized repose.

TABLET I

When skies above were not yet named
Nor earth below pronounced by name,
Apsu, the first one, their beggetter
And maker Tiamat, who bore them all,
Had mixed their waters together,¹
But had not formed pastures, nor discovered reed-beds;

1. The primal parents, Apsu and Tiamat, represent the fresh waters and salt waters, respectively, whose mingling at the outlet of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers on the Persian Gulf was the central geographical feature of ancient Sumeria. In the course of the poem, Apsu will be reembodyed as the watery underworld, while the slain Tiamat (whose name is cognate with Hebrew *tehom*, "deep"; Gen 1:2) is transmuted from the ocean of chaos into the ordered cosmos. The lines that follow introduce four generations of offspring (all with Sumerian names): the obscure Lahmu and Lahamu (mud and silt?), their children Anshar and Kishar (heaven and earth), and their son the sky-god Anu, who generates Nudimmud (god of wisdom and the civilized arts), also known as Enki or Ea.

When yet no gods were manifest,
Nor names pronounced, nor destinies decreed,
Then gods were born within them.
Lahmu and Lahamu emerged, their names pronounced.
As soon as they matured, were fully formed,
Anshar and Kishar were born, surpassing them.
They passed the days at length, they added to the years.
Anu their first-born son rivalled his forefathers:
Anshar made his son Anu like himself,
And Anu begot Nudimmud in his likeness.
He, Nudimmud, was superior to his forefathers:
Profound of understanding, he was wise, was very strong at arm
Mightier by far than Anshar his father's beggetter,
He had no rival among the gods his peers.
The gods of that generation would meet together
And disturb Tiamat, and their clamour reverberated.
They stirred up Tiamat's belly,
They were annoying her by playing inside Anduruna.²
Apsu could not quell their noise
And Tiamat became mute before them;
However grievous their behaviour to her,
Nevertheless bad their ways, she would indulge them.
Finally Apsu, beggetter of the great gods,
Called out and addressed his vizier Mummu,³
'O Mummu, vizier who pleases me!
Come, let us go to Tiamat!
They went and sat in front of Tiamat,
And discussed affairs concerning the gods their sons.
Apsu made his voice heard
And spoke to Tiamat in a loud voice,
'Their ways have become very grievous to me,
By day I cannot rest, by night I cannot sleep.
I shall abolish their ways and disperse them!
Let peace prevail, so that we can sleep.'
When Tiamat heard this,
She was furious and shouted at her lover;
She shouted dreadfully and was beside herself with rage,
But then suppressed the evil in her belly.
'How could we allow what we ourselves created to perish?
Even though their ways are so grievous, we should bear it pati.
Vizier Mummu replied and counselled Apsu;
The vizier did not agree with the counsel of his earth mother.

2. The "heavenly abode" (Sumerian).

3. The name "Mummu" means "maker." Accordingly, some translators turn the 1 Apsu and "maker Tiamat" into a trinity (see the fourth line, which is perhaps better on words).

TABLET II

Tiamat assembled [her] creatures
 And collected battle-units against the gods [her] offspring.
 Tiamat did even more evil for posterity than Apsu.
 It was reported (?) to Ea that she had prepared for war.
 Ea listened to that report,
 And was dumbfounded and sat in silence.
 When he had pondered and his fury subsided,
 He made his way to Anshar his father;
 Came before Anshar, the father who begot him
 And began to repeat to him everything that Tiamat had planned.
 'Father, Tiamat who bore us is rejecting us!
 She has convened an assembly and is raging out of control.
 The gods have turned to her, all of them,
 Even those whom you begot have gone over to her side,
 Have crowded round and rallied beside Tiamat.'

* * *

Anshar listened, and the report was very disturbing. [* * *]
 His roar to Ea his son was quite weak.

'You must be the one who declares war!
 Keep brandishing what you have made (as arms) for yourself!
 You are the hero (?), you slew Apsu.
 Where else will we find someone to face Tiamat when she rages
 uncontrollably?'

* * *

Now, the Igigi assembled, all the Anukki.⁷
 They sat silently (for a while), tight-lipped. [* * *]
 Then Ea from his secret dwelling called
 The perfect one (?) of Anshar, father of the great gods,
 Whose heart is perfect like a fellow-citizen or countryman (?),
 The mighty heir who was to be his father's champion,
 Who rushes fearlessly into battle: Marduk the Hero!
 He told him his innermost design, saying,
 'O Marduk, take my advice, listen to your father!
 You are the son who sets his heart at rest!

7. The relationship between the two divine orders, the Igigi and the Anukki (or Anunnaki), is obscure. Here the two terms seem to be synonymous, whereas further on in Tablet VI "the three hundred" (Igigi) are established as a heavenly guard while "the six hundred" (Anunnaki) are divided between heaven and earth (elsewhere earth and the underworld). In the Atrahasis, the Anunnaki are the "great gods," and the Igigi serve them. Marduk is sometimes classified with the Igigi, and it is possible that the division between supporters and opponents of Tiamat in the poem's central conflict reflects a primordial rivalry between the two orders.

Approach Anshar, drawing near to him,
 And make your voice heard, stand your ground:

he will be calmed by the sight of you.'
 The Lord rejoiced at the word of his father,
 And he approached and stood before Anshar.
 Anshar looked at him, and his heart was filled with joy.
 He kissed him on the lips, put away his trepidation. [* * *]

'What kind of man has ordered you out (to) his war?
 My son, (don't you realize that) it is Tiamat, of womankind, who will
 advance against you with arms?'

'Father, my creator, rejoice and be glad!
 You shall soon set your foot upon the neck of Tiamat!
 Anshar, my creator, rejoice and be glad,
 You shall soon set your foot upon the neck of Tiamat.'

'Then go, son, knowing all wisdom!
 Quell Tiamat with your pure spell!
 Set forth immediately in the storm chariot;
 Let its [] be not driven out, but turn (them?) back!'

The Lord rejoiced at the word of his father;
 His heart was glad and he addressed his father,

'Lord of the gods, fate of the great gods,
 If indeed I am to be your champion,
 If I am to defeat Tiamat and save your lives,
 Convene the council, name a special fate,
 Sit joyfully together in Ushu-ukkinakku:⁸
 My own utterance shall fix fate instead of you!
 Whatever I create shall never be altered!
 The decree of my lips shall never be revoked, never changed!'

TABLET III

Anshar made his voice heard
 And addressed his speech to Kakka⁹ his vizier,
 'O Kakka, vizier who pleases me!
 I shall send you to Lahmu and Lahamu.
 You know how to probe, you are skilled in speaking.
 Have the gods my fathers brought before me;
 Let all the gods be brought to me.
 Let there be conversation, let them sit at a banquet,
 Let them eat grain, let them drink choice wine,
 And then let them decree a destiny for Marduk their champion.

8. Sumerian name for the divine assembly hall.

9. A lesser Amorite god venerated in Assyria; he appears elsewhere in his present messenger. Anshar was sometimes identified with the Assyrian national god Ashur.

Set off, Kakka, go and stand before them, and
 Everything that I am about to tell you, repeat to them,
 "Anshar your son has sent me,
 He has told me to report his heart's message,
 To say, 'Tiamat who bore us is rejecting us!
 She has convened a council, and is raging out of control.
 The gods have turned to her, all of them,
 Even those whom you begot have gone over to her side,
 Have crowded round and rallied beside Tiamat.'

* * *

I sent Anu, but he was unable to face her.
 Nudimmud panicked and turned back.
 Then Marduk, sage of the gods, your son, came forward.
 He wanted of his own free will to confront Tiamat.
 He addressed his words to me,
 'If indeed I am to be your champion,
 To defeat Tiamat and save your lives,
 Convene the council, name a special fate,
 Sit joyfully together in Ushu-ukkinakku:
 And let me, my own utterance, fix fate instead of you.
 Whatever I create shall never be altered!

Let a decree from my lips never be revoked, never changed!
 Hurry and decree your destiny for him quickly,
 So that he may go and face your formidable enemy!

Kakka set off and went on his way,
 And before Lahmu and Lahamu the gods his fathers
 Prostrated himself and kissed the earth in front of them,
 Then straightened up and stood and spoke to them,
 'Anshar your son has sent me.

He has told me to report his personal message,
 To say, "Tiamat who bore us is rejecting us!
 She has convened a council, and is raging out of control.
 The gods have turned to her, all of them,
 Even those whom you begot have gone over to her side,
 Have crowded round and rallied beside Tiamat."

* * *

Lahmu and Lahamu listened and cried out aloud. [* * *]
 All the great gods who fix the fates,
 Entered into Anshar's presence and were filled with joy.
 Each kissed the other: in the assembly []
 There was conversation, they sat at the banquet,
 Ate grain, drank choice wine,
 Let sweet beer trickle through their drinking straws.
 Their bodies swelled as they drank the liquor;

They became very carefree, they were merry,
 And they decreed destiny for Marduk their champion.

TABLET IV

They founded a princely shrine for him,
 And he took up residence as ruler before his fathers, (*who proclaim*
 'You are honoured among the great gods.
 Your destiny is unequalled, your word has the power of Anu! [*

From this day onwards your command shall not be altered.
 Yours is the power to exalt and abase.

May your utterance be law, your word never be falsified.
 None of the gods shall transgress your limits.
 May endowment, required for the gods' shrines

Wherever they have temples, be established for your place.
 O Marduk, you are our champion!
 We hereby give you sovereignty over all of the whole universe.

Sit in the assembly and your word shall be pre-eminent!
 May your weapons never miss (the mark), may they smash your ei

O lord, spare the life of him who trusts in you,
 But drain the life of the god who has espoused evil!

* * *

The gods his fathers thus decreed the destiny of the lord
 And set him on the path of peace and obedience.
 He fashioned a bow, designated it as his weapon,
 Feathered the arrow, set it in the string.

He lifted up a mace and carried it in his right hand,
 Slung the bow and quiver at his side,
 Put lightning in front of him,

His body was filled with an ever-blazing flame.
 He made a net to encircle Tiamat within it,

Marshalled the four winds so that no part of her could escape:
 South Wind, North Wind, East Wind, West Wind,

The gift of his father Anu, he kept them close to the net at his side. [*
 He released the winds which he had created, seven of them.

They advanced behind him to make turmoil inside Tiamat.
 The lord raised the flood-weapon, his great weapon,

And mounted the frightful, unfaceable storm-chariot.

* * *

The Lord lifted up the flood-weapon, his great weapon
 And sent a message to Tiamat who feigned goodwill, saying:
 'Why are you so friendly on the surface
 When your depths conspire to muster a battle force?
 Just because the sons were noisy and disrespectful to their fathers,

Should you, who gave them birth, reject compassion?
 You named Qingu as your lover,
 You appointed him to rites of Anu-power, wrongfully his.
 You sought out evil for Anshar, king of the gods,
 So you have compounded your wickedness against the gods my fathers!
 Let your host prepare! Let them gird themselves with your weapons!
 Stand forth, and you and I shall do single combat!¹
 When Tiamat heard this,
 She went wild, she lost her temper.
 Tiamat screamed aloud in a passion,
 Her lower parts shook together from the depths.
 She recited the incantation and kept casting her spell.
 Meanwhile the gods of battle were sharpening their weapons.
 Face to face they came, Tiamat and Marduk, sage of the gods.
 They engaged in combat, they closed for battle.
 The Lord spread his net and made it encircle her,
 To her face he dispatched the *imhullu*-wind [evil wind], which had been
 behind:

Tiamat opened her mouth to swallow it,
 And he forced in the *imhullu*-wind so that she could not close her lips.
 Fierce winds distended her belly;
 Her insides were constipated and she stretched her mouth wide.
 He shot an arrow which pierced her belly,
 Split her down the middle and slit her heart,
 Vanquished her and extinguished her life.
 He threw down her corpse and stood on top of her.
 When he had slain Tiamat, the leader,
 He broke up her regiments; her assembly was scattered.
 Then the gods her helpers, who had marched at her side,
 Began to tremble, panicked, and turned tail.
 Although he allowed them to come out and spared their lives,
 They were surrounded, they could not flee.
 Then he tied them up and smashed their weapons. [* * *]
 As for Qingu, who had once been the greatest among them,
 He defeated him and counted him among the dead gods,
 Wrested from him the Tablet of Destinies, wrongfully his,
 Sealed it with his own seal and pressed it to his breast.
 When he had defeated and killed his enemies
 And had proclaimed the submissive (?) foe his slave,
 And had set up the triumphal cry of Anshar over all the enemy,
 And had achieved the desire of Nudimmud, Marduk the warrior
 Strengthened his hold over the captive gods,
 And to Tiamat, whom he had ensnared, he turned back.
 The Lord trampled the lower part of Tiamat,
 With his unsparing mace smashed her skull,
 Severed the arteries of her blood,

And made the North Wind carry it off as good news.
 His fathers saw it and were jubilant: they rejoiced,
 Arranged to greet him with presents, greetings gifts.
 The Lord rested, and inspected her corpse.
 He divided the monstrous shape and created marvels (from it).
 He sliced her in half like a fish for drying:
 Half of her he put up to roof the sky,
 Drew a bolt across and made a guard hold it.
 Her waters he arranged so that they could not escape. [* * *]

TABLET V

He fashioned stands for the great gods.
 As for the stars, he set up constellations corresponding to them.
 He designated the year and marked out its divisions,
 Apportioned three stars each to the twelve months[.]. [* * *]
 He made the crescent moon appear, entrusted night (to it)
 And designated it the jewel of night to mark out the days.¹

* * *

TABLET VI

When Marduk heard the speech of the gods,
 He made up his mind to perform miracles.
 He spoke his utterance to Ea,
 And communicated to him the plan that he was considering.
 'Let me put blood together, and make bones too.
 Let me set up primeval man: Man shall be his name.
 Let me create a primeval man.
 The work of the gods shall be imposed on him, and so they shall b
 leisure.²
 Let me change the ways of the gods miraculously,
 So they are gathered as one yet divided in two.'
 Ea answered him and spoke a word to him,
 Told him his plan for the leisure of the gods.
 'Let one who is hostile to them be surrendered up,
 Let him be destroyed, and let people be created from him.
 Let the great gods assemble,
 Let the culprit be given up, and let them convict him.'
 Marduk assembled the great gods,
 Gave (them) instructions pleasantly, gave orders.

1. In the following omitted verses, Marduk continues with the work of creati
 acclaimed king of the gods.

2. For a more detailed account of the creation of man, see the Eridu Genesis and
 basis (below). In the Assyrian legend of Ulligarra and Zalgarra, probably composed i
 a.c.e., the gods create humanity in two kinds, male and female, and endow them wi

The gods paid attention to what he said.
 The king addressed his words to the Anunnaki,
 'Your election of me shall be firm and foremost
 I shall declare the laws, the edicts within my power.
 Whosoever started the war,
 And incited Tiamat, and gathered an army,
 Let the one who started the war be given up to me,
 And he shall bear the penalty for his crime, that you may dwell in peace.'
 The Igigi, the great gods, answered him,
 Their lord Lugal-dimmer-ankia,³ counsellor of gods,
 'It was Qingu who started the war,
 He who incited Tiamat and gathered an army!
 They bound him and held him in front of Ea,
 Imposed the penalty on him and cut off his blood.
 He created mankind from his blood,
 Imposed the toil of the gods (on man) and released the gods from it . . .
 When Ea the wise had created mankind,
 Had imposed the toil of the gods on them—
 That deed is impossible to describe,
 For Nudimmud performed it with the miracles of Marduk—
 Then Marduk the king divided the gods,
 The Anunnaki, all of them, above and below.
 He assigned his decrees to Anu to guard,
 Established three hundred as a guard in the sky;
 Did the same again when he designed the conventions of earth,
 And made the six hundred dwell in both heaven and earth.
 When he had directed all the decrees,
 Had divided lots for the Anunnaki, of heaven and of earth,
 The Anunnaki made their voices heard
 And addressed Marduk their lord,
 'Now, O Lord, that you have set us free,
 What are our favours from you?
 We would like to make a shrine with its own name.
 We would like our night's resting place to be in your private quarters,
 and to rest there.
 Let us found a shrine, a sanctuary there.
 Whenever we arrive, let us rest within it.'
 When Marduk heard this,
 His face lit up greatly, like daylight.
 'Create Babylon, whose construction you requested!
 Let its mud bricks be moulded, and build high the shrine!
 The Anunnaki began shovelling.
 For a whole year they made bricks for it.

3. 'King of the gods of heaven and earth'—a Sumerian title given to Marduk. The creation of man that follows is carried out by Ea.

When the second year arrived,
 They had raised the top of Esagila⁴ in front of (?) the Apsu;
 They had built a high ziggurat for the Apsu.
 They founded a dwelling for Anu, Ellil, and Ea likewise.
 In ascendancy he settled himself in front of them,
 And his 'horns' look down at the base of Esharra.
 When they had done the work on Esagila,
 And the Anunnaki, all of them, had fashioned their individual shrines
 The three hundred Igigi of heaven and the Anunnaki of the Apsu assembled.
 The Lord invited the gods his fathers to attend a banquet
 In the great sanctuary which he had created as his dwelling.
 'Indeed, Bab-illi⁵ (is) your home too!
 Sing for joy there, dwell in happiness!
 The great gods sat down there,
 And set out the beer mugs; they attended the banquet. [* * *]
 All the decrees and designs were fixed.
 All the gods divided the stations of heaven and earth.
 The fifty great gods were present, and
 The gods fixed the seven destinies for the cult.
 The Lord received the bow, and set his weapon down in front of the
 The gods his fathers looked at the net which he had made,
 Looked at the bow, how miraculous her construction,
 And his fathers praised the deeds that he had done.
 Anu raised the bow and spoke in the assembly of gods,
 He kissed the bow. 'May she go far!
 He gave to the bow her names[.] [* * *]
 He fixed her position among the gods her companions.⁶
 When Anu had decreed the destiny of the bow,
 He set down her royal throne. 'You are highest of the gods!
 And Anu made her sit in the assembly of gods.
 The great gods assembled
 And made Marduk's destiny highest; they themselves did obeisance.
 They swore an oath for themselves,
 And swore on water and oil, touched their throats.
 Thus they granted that he should exercise the kingship of the gods
 And confirmed for him mastery of the gods of heaven and earth.⁷

* * *

4. The Esagila ("House of the raised head"; cf. Gen 11:4) was Marduk's temple it was surrounded by a small lake ("the Apsu"), sacred to Enki/Ea, the god of fresh water.
 5. Etymologically, "Gate of the gods" (cf. Gen 11:9 and note).
 6. Contrast Gen 9:12-17, where God sets his bow in the sky as a sign of his promise. Here "the gods" are presumably the heavenly bodies; their relation to "the gods" (above), and of those fifty to the full complement of Anunnaki and Igigi, is uncertain.
 7. The verses that follow list the fifty names of Marduk. Each name, in Sumerian, is a recitation of attributes in Akkadian.

With fifty epithets the great gods
 Called his fifty names, making his way supreme.
 May they always be cherished, and may the older explain (to the
 younger). [* * *]
 May the [people?]/s of Marduk whom the Igigi gods created
 Weave the [tale?] and call upon his name
 In remembrance (?) of the song of Marduk
 Who defeated Tiamat and took the kingship.

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[THE BATTLE OF BAAL AND SEA][†]

The following excerpts from the Canaanite Baal cycle were written in Ugaritic, a Northwest Semitic language close to biblical Hebrew. The millennia-old port city of Ugarit (modern Ras Shamra) on the Syrian coast was rediscovered in 1929, having been abandoned ca. 1190 B.C.E. during the years of chaos coincident with the movements of the "Sea Peoples," the destruction of Troy, and the collapse of the Hittite and Mycenaean kingdoms. Baal (meaning "Lord"), the patron deity of Ugarit, was, like YHWH, a storm- and warrior-god (cf. Pss 18:7-14; 29:3-10), who displaced the older sky-god "El"—a pervasive pattern in Bronze Age mythology (compare, in addition to the biblical conflation, the triumph of Marduk in Babylonia and of Zeus in Greece). The parallels are helpful in reconstructing the fragmentary story, of which two episodes are given here. The first describes Baal's victory over Sea (Yam) and his acclamation as king of the gods; the second, the building of his heavenly palace (compare the Babylonian Epic of Creation, where Marduk defeats Tiamat and is rewarded with a palace—though Sea is here in league rather than at war with the father El). Echoes of both can be found in the Bible, the first in YHWH's defeat of the sea serpent or dragon of chaos (e.g., Job 26:12-13; Ps 89:9-10; Isa 27:1), the second in the building of his tabernacle and temple (Exod 25-31, 35-40; 1 Kgs 5-8). A further episode, in which Baal is devoured by El's son Death (Motu) and then released, is more pertinent to the New Testament. (All three themes—the defeat of Sea, the building of the heavenly palace, and the triumph over death—appear together in Rev 20-21.) A colophon ascribes the composition, or at least this version, to the scribe Ilmilku.

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Sea sent two messengers . . .
 "Leave, lads, do not turn back;
 now head toward the Assembly in council,
 at the center of the mountain of night.

Do not fall at El's feet,
 do not prostrate yourselves before the Assembly in council
 still standing speak your speech,
 repeat your message;
 and address the Bull, my father El,
 repeat to the Assembly in council:
 'Message of Sea, your master,
 your lord, Judge River:¹
 El, give up the one you are hiding,
 the one the masses are hiding;
 give up Baal and his powers,
 the son of Dagon: I will assume his inheritance.'"
 The lads left; they did not turn back;
 they headed toward the center of the mountain of night,
 the Assembly in council.

There the gods had sat down to eat,
 the holy ones to a meal;
 Baal was standing by El.
 As soon as the gods saw them,
 saw the messengers of Sea,
 the mission of Judge River,
 the gods lowered their heads
 to the top of their knees,
 and onto their princely seats.
 Baal rebuked them:

"Gods, why have you lowered your heads
 to the top of your knees,
 and onto your princely seats?
 I see, gods, that you are stricken
 with fear of the messengers of Sea,
 the mission of Judge River.
 Gods, raise your heads
 from the top of your knees,
 from your princely seats.

For I will reply to the messengers of Sea,
 the mission of Judge River."
 The gods raised their heads
 from the top of their knees,
 from their princely seats.
 Then the messengers of Sea arrived,
 the mission of Judge River.

[†] From "Baal," in *Stories from Ancient Canaan*, ed. and trans. Michael David Coogan (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978), 86-89, 99-102. The ellipsis points indicate gaps in the original.

¹ The Sea-River parallel is preserved in the Bible, where versions of the same motif describe the crossing of the Red Sea and the Jordan River (cf. Ps 114; also Ps 89:25). For council, see especially Ps 82 (also 1 Kgs 22; Job 1-2; Isa 6; Zech 3).