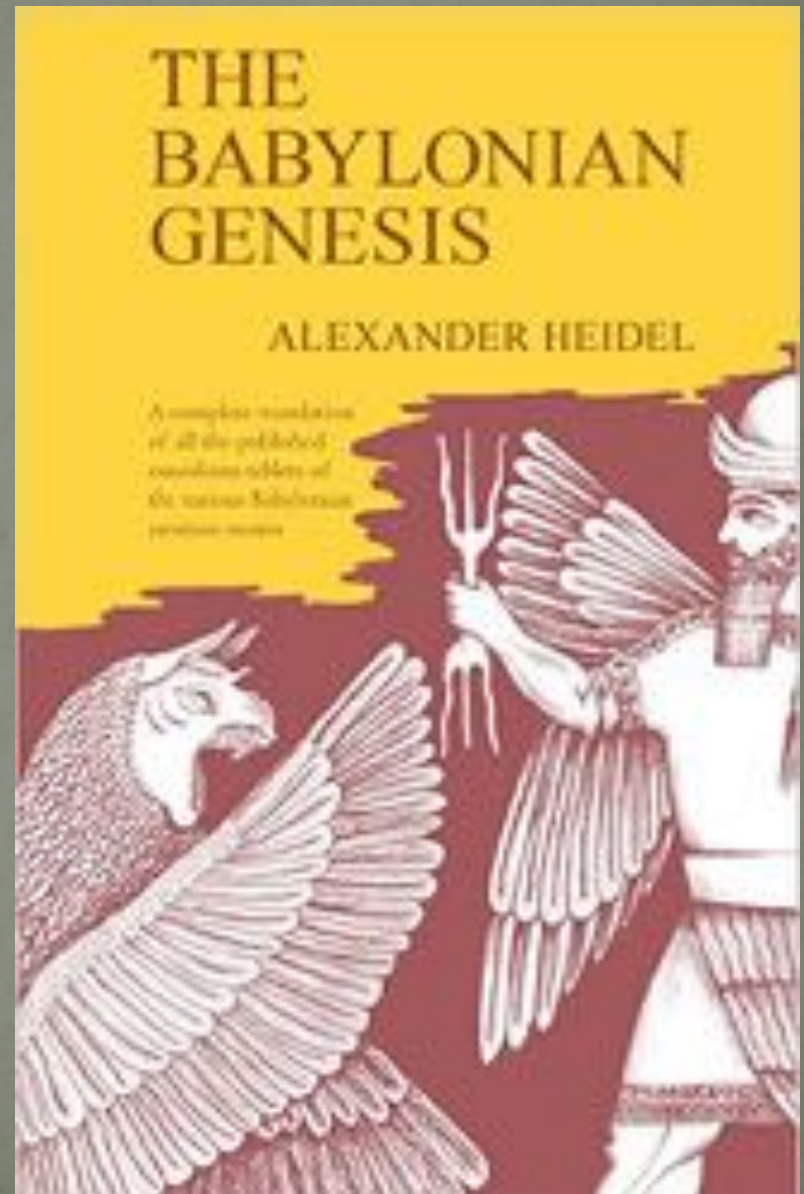


Moses vs. Babylon

The Babylonian Genesis

*The Babylonian Genesis:
The Story of Creation*

Alexander Heidel
Oriental Institute,
University of Chicago
(2nd Edition, published 1963
University of Chicago Press)



Cosmogony per Moses

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

Genesis 1:1-2

Cosmogony = Cosmos Genesis
= Beginning of the Cosmos

Theogony = Theos Genesis
= Beginning of the gods

Creation

Day 1: Light, day, night

Day 2: Divides the waters from the waters
=> Sky and Sea

Day 3: Dry Land

Day 4: Luminaries (sun, moon, stars)

Day 5: Birds and Sea Creatures

Day 6: Land Animals and Man

Day 7: Rest

Days 4-6 populate the spaces created in days 1-3

(Rachel's analogy: like populating the zoo and the aquarium)

Enuma Elish



Tablet 3 in Assyrian. Portion of a tablet inscribed in Assyrian with a text of the Third Tablet of the Creation Series. [No. 93,017.]
<http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/blc/blc10.htm>



Tablet 4 in Babylonian. Portion of a tablet inscribed in Babylonian with a text of the Fourth Tablet of the Creation Series. [No. 93,016.]
<http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/blc/blc10.htm>

Parallel Sources

Adam and Eve

Methuselah

Noah

Ham

Shem,
Melchizedek

Japheth

Sumer,
Babylon

Abraham, Isaac,
Jacob, Joseph

Enuma Elish

Moses - Genesis

Greeks

Cosmogony and Theogony per Babylon (Enuma Elish)

When above the heaven had not yet been named*
And below the earth had not yet been called by a name*
When Apsu primeval their begetter
Mummu and Tiamat, she who gave birth to them all
Still mingled their waters together
And no pasture land had been formed and not even a reed
marsh was to be seen;
When none of the other gods had been brought into being
When they had not yet been called by their names, and
their destinies had not yet been fixed
At that time, were the gods created within them

* *“Named” or “called by a name” = to be created*

Marduk vs. the Dragon



Marduk battling the dragon. Drawn from a bas-relief from the Palace of Ashur-nasir-pal, King of Assyria, 885-860 B.C., at Nimrûd. [Nimrûd Gallery, Nos. 28 and 29.]

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/blc/blco7.htm>

From Eternity Past

Genesis 1:1

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

God creates cosmos (all things)
God exists independent of it

“The Chaldeans say that the substance of the world is eternal and that it neither had a first beginning nor that it will at a later time suffer destruction.”
(Diodorus Siculus, Heidel, 89)

Enuma Elish

Primordial gods and the cosmos are coexistent and coeternal

Primordial gods are in stasis (sleep, rest) from eternity past
Enuma Elish I.37-40, 50

Apsu and Tiamat, matter and divine spirit coexistent, contain all of the undifferentiated matter and energy of the universe.
Enuma Elish I.1-9
(Heidel, 88)

The Beginning

Genesis 1:2

The earth was without form and
void;

and darkness was on the face of
tehowm (deep).

“deep” = tehowm (feminine)

Strong's #8415

And the Spirit of God was
hovering over the face of the
waters.

Enuma Elish

Primeval chaos,
undirected energy

Tiamat (the deep) is enveloped in
darkness; “There was a time in
which all was water and darkness”

-Berossus, priest of Marduk at
Babylon

(Heidel, 77-78, 101)

Mummu, the spirit god / fog /
mist hovers on the face of Tiamat
(the deep) between she and Apsu

Babylonian Cosmogony

Tiamat

The Deep

Waters of chaos

Mummu

The Mist

Hovering mist

Absu

The Abyss

Sweet life-giving waters

*Primordial gods in eternal rest
In stasis but containing all eternal energy
All is darkness and water*

Light and Darkness

Genesis 1:3-5

Day 1:

God creates light, calls the light day and the darkness night

(prior to sun, moon, stars)

Enuma Elish

Day / night exist
Enuma Elish I.38

Light emanates from the gods
Enuma Elish I.68
(prior to sun, moon, stars)

Dividing the Waters: Sky and Seas

Genesis 1:6-8

Day 2:

“Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.’ Thus, God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament.”

Enuma Elish IV.137-140

Marduk splits Tiamat’s dead body into two parts.

“Half of her he set in place and formed the sky”

The other half remained below and formed the seas

Dry Land

Genesis 1:9-13

Day 3:
God creates dry land

“Then God said, ‘Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear’”

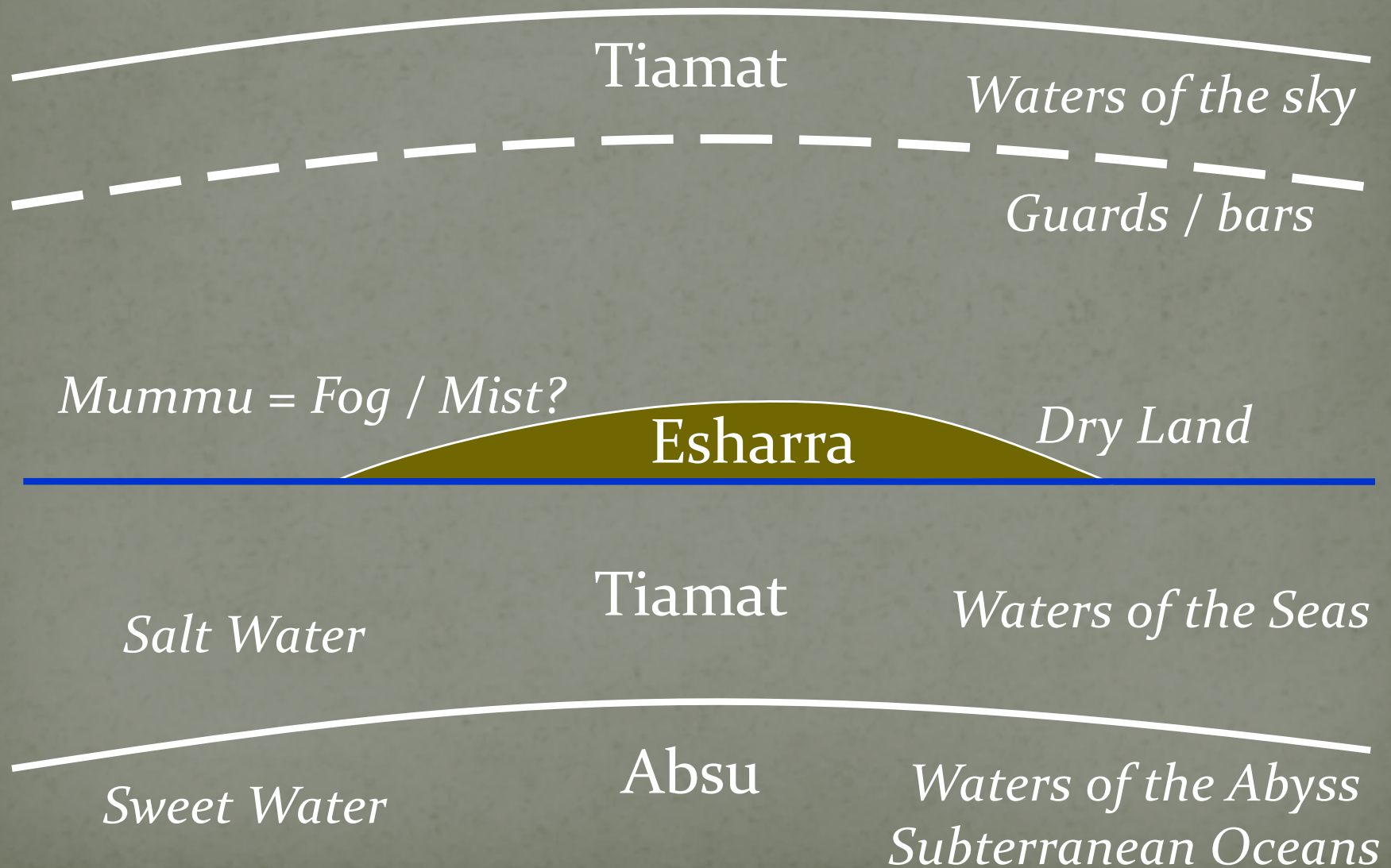
God creates plants: grass, herbs, fruit trees...

Enuma Elish IV.141-146

Marduk creates dry land

Marduk creates earth as a great structure, a canopy, that stretches out over the body of Apsu, the sweet water abyss from which flow springs of drinkable water

Babylonian Cosmology



Sun, Moon, Stars

Genesis 1:14-15

Day 4:

God creates the sun, moon, stars

vs. 14

“Let them be for signs and seasons, for days and years”

Enuma Elish V.1-22

Marduk created the stars, sun, and moon

Stars

Signs: EE V.2

Seasons of the year: EE V.3-4

Days of the year: EE V.x5

Greater and Lesser Lights

Genesis 1:16-19

God creates the sun
and the moon

“Then God made two great lights:
the greater light to rule the day,
and the lesser light to rule the
night. He made the stars also.”

Sun: Shemesh (#8121) Gen 15:12

Moon: yareach (#3394)
Gen. 37:9, Deut. 4:19, 17:3
Or, yerach (#3391)
Deut. 33:14, Is. 60:20

Enuma Elish

The fifteenth day shall always be
the mid-point, the half of each
month.

When **Shamash** looks at you from
the horizon,
Gradually shed your visibility and
begin to wane.

Always bring the day of
disappearance close to the path of

Shamash,

And on the thirteenth day, the
[year] is always equalized, for
Shamash is (responsible for) the
year.

Shamash, Sun-god



Shamash the Sun-god rising on the horizon, flames of fire ascending from his shoulder. The two portals of the dawn, each surmounted by a lion, are being drawn open by attendant gods. From a Babylonian seal cylinder in the British Museum. [No. 89,110.] <http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/blc/blco7.htm>

Shamash the Sun-god setting (?) on the horizon.

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/blc/blco7.htm>



Shamash, Sun-god

Shamash (seated), depicted as handing symbols of authority to Hammurabi



Relief on the upper part of the stele of Hammurabi's code of laws

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shamash>

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Canaanite Myth

Shemesh: sun-goddess
(Akkadian Shamash, sun-god)

Rules over justice, truth:
sun sees everything

Yarih: moon-god

sun = sun-goddess
moon = moon-god

Impossible to say “God made the
sun” without also saying “God
made the sun-goddess”

Birds and Sea Creatures

Genesis 1:20-23

Day 5: God creates sea creatures

Vs. 21 'So God created great sea creatures"

No struggle, no battle, no conflict

God creates them with a word
Moses relays this is plain, simple scientific, historical fact

Genesis *is* a science book

Genesis *is* a history book

Redeemed science and history!

Mesopotamian myth

Curiously, creation of birds and sea creatures is not mentioned in Enuma Elish, however if it were in the same order as Moses' creation account, it would be described in Tablet 5, portions of which are missing. Those portions might contain this missing information.

Common theme: The gods battle against great sea creatures

Baal fought against a giant sea creation (sea serpent?)

Marduk vs. Tiamat



Marduk destroying Tiâmat, who is here represented in the form of a huge serpent.

From a seal-cylinder in the British Museum. [No. 89,589.]

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/blc/blco7.htm>

Man

Genesis 1:24-31

Day 6: God creates land animals
and man

“Then God said, ‘Let Us make
man in Our image, according to
Our likeness; let them have
dominion over the fish... birds...
cattle... all the earth...
Then God blessed them”

*Man was made for a Covenantal
relationship with God*

Enuma Elish VI.1-34

Vs. 5-8

Marduk creates man:

“Blood I will mass and cause bones
to be,
I will establish a savage, ‘man’ shall
be his name.

Verily, savage-man I will create.
He shall be charged with the
service of the gods,
That they might be at ease!”

*Man was born to be a slave to the
gods and also to their earthly king*

Rest

Genesis 1:24-31

Day 7: God rests from creating

Genesis 11:1-9

vs. 3-4 “Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly...

Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves”

Enuma Elish VI.50-73

Marduk and the gods rest

Vs. 51-60 “Come, let us make [?] whose name shall be called ‘Sanctuary’. It shall be a dwelling for our rest... ‘So shall Babylon be... Let its brickwork be fashioned’... One year they made bricks for it”

They build a city, a tower (vs. 63), and gave it a name: ‘Babylon’
Vs. 72 “Here is Babylon, your favorite dwelling place.”

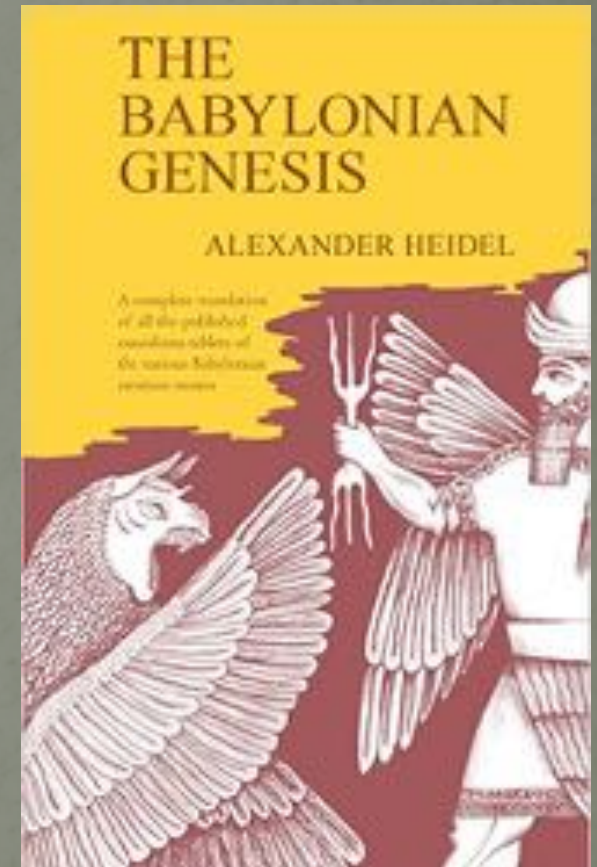
Marduk rests at Babylon

Sin, Death, the Fall

Fallen man has “changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man – and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things...” and “exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever.” -Romans 1

“So far no proof for the first sin has been found anywhere in Babylonian or Assyrian literature. If it is at all permissible to speak of a fall, it was a fall of the gods, not of man... In Genesis man is created in the image of God; but the Babylonians created their gods in the image of man... Since all the gods were evil by nature and since man was formed with their blood, man of course inherited their evil nature... Man, consequently, was created evil and was evil from his very beginning. How, then, could he fall?”

-Alexander Heidel, p.125-126



Moses vs. Myth

Moses wrote Genesis in a way that directly opposed the world's pagan (e.g. Romans 1) worldview

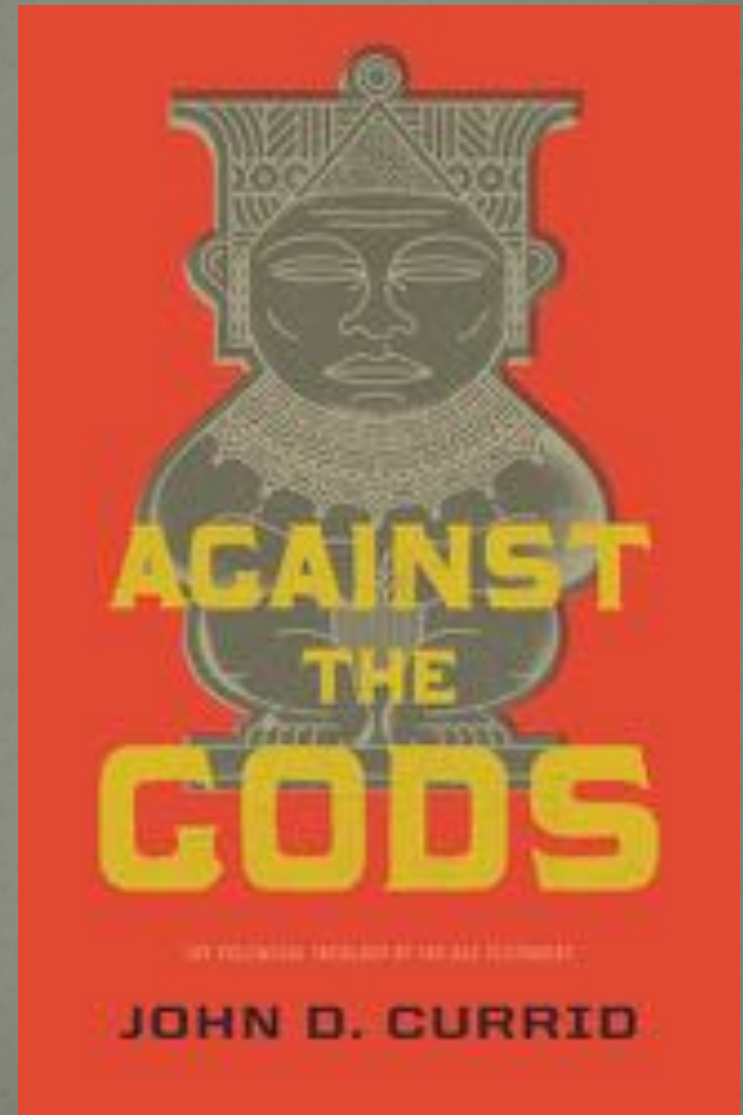
Matter, energy, the universe are presented as inanimate facts of Creation

Cosmogony vs. Theogony

God does not struggle against Nature to create the world

Primordial and progressive gods

Man, sin, and death



The Cosmos

“The cosmos is all that is or ever was or ever will be.”

-Carl Sagan, *Cosmos*

The big idea is not how modern the pagan Babylonian worldview was

The big idea is, rather...

How pagan and Babylonian our modern worldview really is

And...

How relevant Moses' historical, scientific, God-honoring
Creation account is in opposing the evolutionary myths and
pagan worldview of Babylon today

All Reality Is Covenantal

“All created reality is covenantally revelational. The facts of mans’ created environment are what they are as the field of operation for the covenantal reaction of man to God. Man, made in the image of God, is either covenantally obedient or covenantally disobedient in all of his reactions to all of the facts of God’s revelational material.”

Van Til, *Protestant Doctrine of Scripture*, 62-72; quoted in Bahnsen, *Van Til’s Apologetic: Readings and Analysis*, 680.