

for the Ancient of Days in Daniel 7, for in contrast there is nothing but calm and confidence as the Ancient of Days and the Son of Man make their appearance. As mentioned earlier, the ones at risk from the threats of the antagonist in Daniel 7 are identified as the holy ones, and in that role they are comparable to the divine assembly, whether they should be identified in Daniel as supernatural creatures or not.

In *Ee*, Anu (II:106) and Ea (II:82) are specifically cited as being terrified, and the entire assembly of Igigi and Anunnaki are stunned and in mourning (II:121-24; III:127). They are joined by the ancient Laḥmu and Laḥamu (III:126). Anshar, who is treated as the one in charge, is distressed and angry (II:49-51), but not in a panic.

In *Baal and Yamm*, the assembly of the gods does not express fear, but appears totally cowed by Yamm and readily submits to his demands (CTA 2.i.22-27). Baal, when ordered to submit to Yamm, is described as shaken or angry, and begins to attack his messengers (CTA 2.i.38-41).

In *Anzu*, the chief god, Enlil, registers the first distraught reaction, since the tablet has been taken away from him (I:82). After three candidates refuse to accept the mission against Anzu, the assembly of Igigi gods is in turmoil (I:154).

#### *Category 2: Source of the Solution*

In Daniel 7, the Ancient of Days has always been an intriguing yet obscure figure, though there is little doubt that in Daniel he can represent none other than Yahweh. He is seated on the throne of dominion (v. 9), grants authority (vv. 13-14), and passes judgment (v. 22). The only mitigation of this identification is that there is grammatical cause to draw a distinction in v. 22 between the “Ancient of Days” and the “Most High” (an epithet generally used for Yahweh).<sup>39</sup> Since the Most High, (עֲלִיּוֹנָיִם)<sup>40</sup> does not occur until after the introduction of the “Son of Man,” it is alternatively possible that as a result of the Son of Man being granted authority (v. 14), he thereby qualifies for the epithet “Most High.” This creates the expected correspondence between the kingdom being given to the son

<sup>39</sup> If the two were the same, it would have been easier to have the Ancient of Days pronounce judgment in favor of *his* holy ones.

<sup>40</sup> For the use of the plural form as an imitation of the Hebrew אֱלֹהִים, see Collins, *Daniel*, 312.

of man in v. 14 and to the Most High and his holy ones in v. 27.

Regardless of what name we attach to the Ancient of Days and of what connections can be drawn between the description of him and descriptions in other biblical or extra-biblical texts,<sup>41</sup> what is important for our study is the role that he plays. The Ancient of Days is the one who is responsible for responding to the threat. He shows no anger, distress, turmoil or confusion, but convenes the assembly (of which he is the head) to address the problem. In this he is most comparable to Anshar in *Ee* and Anu in *Anzu*.

In *Ee*, the solution sequence is mediated first by Anshar, who fails to find a champion, and then by Ea, who selects Marduk to play the role of champion.

In *Anzu*, the solution sequence is mediated first by Anu, who fails to find a champion, but then accepts Ea's offer to find one (I:157-62). Ea selects Ninurta, but enlists Mami (Belet-ili) to persuade her son. Mami is not near as close a match for the "Ancient of Days" imagery as El is in the Ugaritic material, though her status as the ancient creatrix puts her in a similar category.

In Daniel 7, the Ancient of Days rolls all of these into one as the head of the assembly and the one who both mediates the solution sequence and designates a champion.

### *Category 3: The Champion*

In Daniel 7 the champion position is filled by one who is identified as "like the son of man." J. Day has built a convincing case that this individual is best identified as Michael,<sup>42</sup> which is in contrast to the traditional interpretation, which had seen here a Messianic figure. The designation of this individual as a cloud rider (v. 13) has drawn the comparison with Baal in the Ugaritic texts. When Kothar-wa-Ḥasis prepares Baal's weapons, he designates him cloudrider and proclaims his kingship and dominion (*CTA* 2.iv.8-10). An important caveat, however, is that in Daniel 7 the son of man does no battle and is therefore not a champion comparable to those found in the other exemplars. Likewise, in *Baal and Yamm* El is not clearly on the side of Baal, and thus cannot be blended with Baal in the champion role.

<sup>41</sup> All of these options have been thoroughly presented by Collins.

<sup>42</sup> J. Day, *God's Conflict With the Dragon and the Sea*, 167-77. Of Day's many points of evidence, one of the most intriguing (pg. 173) is that in Revelation 12 it is Michael who defeats the dragon, suggesting that this had become part of Jewish tradition and understanding.