

The 12th Planet Study Guide

The 12th Planet by Zecharia Sitchin

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Plot Summary

In *THE 12TH PLANET*, Zecharia Sitchin argues that Sumerian myths of a pantheon of gods are no less than fact and that Earth's solar system includes an additional planet called Shar which comes near Earth every 3,600 years on an elliptical orbit that takes it deep into space. The planet, he claims, is inhabited by advanced alien beings called Nefilim. Based on a Sumerian origin myth, he recounts how the arrival of this planet formed the solar system as we know it, and he credits the Nefilim for advancing humanity and also for the stories of the Great Flood.

Sitchin gives a history of the archeological investigation into ancient societies, tracing the known culture of ancient Greece back to earlier cultures, finally arriving at the earliest known civilization of Sumer. He gives the impression that earlier cultures were more advanced than later ones and that Sumer arose suddenly and was amazingly advanced. In this way, he shrouds Sumer in mystery. Similarly, Sitchin gives the stories of the Greek and Roman gods and traces similar stories through other cultures, arriving at Sumerian mythology.

The main mythological characters are Anu, a distant father god, and two sons, Enlil and Enki, who vie for superiority and power. The gods come from above and travel to Earth, walking among the people. Sitchin interprets the Sumerian myths as being factual accounts of alien beings from an extra planet in Earth's solar system that came to Earth 450,000 years ago to mine for gold and other rare minerals. The aliens had helicopter-type flying devices to move around Earth, powerful weapons, and rockets to travel to their planet.

Sitchin claims that the missing planet, Shar, follows a 3,600-mile elliptical orbit from deep space to the asteroid belt. Coming from outer space, the planet crashed through the solar system, pushing Pluto onto its current orbit and cutting one planet in half, creating Earth out of one side and the asteroid belt out of the debris. It also knocked the moon into place. Sitchin gets his claims from his interpretation of Sumerian myths as factual accounts.

While on Earth, the inhabitants of Shar, which Sitchin calls Nefilim, genetically engineered humans as a slave race to help with mining. Enlil became unhappy because Enki gave humans the ability to reproduce (a reinterpretation of the story of the Garden of Eden). Enlil decided to destroy humans, and so did not tell them of the coming Deluge (the story of Noah.) Sitchin interprets the Deluge as tidal waves from the end of the last ice age. Enki played the role of God in saving "Noah." Mankind survived, and after the Great Flood, the gods gave mankind agriculture and helped humans build civilization. The humans tried to build a rocket ship, though (a reinterpretation of the Tower of Babel), and the gods broke them into three different groups, giving each a different language.



Chapter 1, The Endless Beginning

Chapter 1, The Endless Beginning Summary and Analysis

In *THE 12TH PLANET*, Zecharia Sitchin argues that Sumerian myths of a pantheon of gods are no less than fact and that Earth's solar system includes an additional planet called Shar, which comes near Earth every 3,600 years on an elliptical orbit that takes it deep into space. The planet, he claims, is inhabited by advanced alien beings called Nefilim. Based on a Sumerian origin myth, he recounts how the arrival of this planet formed the solar system as we know it. Sitchin credits the Nefilim for advancing humanity and also for the stories of the Great Flood.

Sitchin argues that life doesn't seem to belong on Earth. The chemical makeup and beginnings of life on Earth imply that life may have come from elsewhere. Sitchin also creates mystery around the evolutionary evidence of man's ancestors, citing the long evolution of Neanderthals and believing that *Homo sapiens* arose all of a sudden "as if from nowhere," complete with tool-making and artistic abilities.

Sitchin also asks why some men have more advanced civilization and technology than others and why technology arose so fast. Sitchin places the appearance of Cro-Magnon man in the Middle East (using the term Near East). He reports that in 1957, Ralph Solecki excavated a cave called Shanidar in Kurdish territory where the 44,000 year old skeletons of a family of seven were found. Solecki found 87,000 years of human archeological records, reflecting a regression of civilization, according to Sitchin, until 11,000 years ago when mankind was mysteriously refreshed.

Farming is the advance that salvaged man's culture, Sitchin states, wondering at man's ability to make this leap and claiming that an unbelievable profusion of domesticated plants came from the Near East. He also cites the Bible to support that farming of many fruits, nuts, and vegetables came from the Near East, placing Eden in the same vicinity. Sitchin states that the domestication of animals also originated in the Near East, at the Mesolithic period, the Middle Stone Age. From 11,000 B.C. to 5,000 B.C., Sitchin credits an incredible advance among humans, isolated to the Near East, which then declined for 500 years before suddenly, mysteriously blooming again.



Chapter 2, The Sudden Civilization

Chapter 2, The Sudden Civilization Summary and Analysis

Sitchin traces the history of Western civilization, relating Greek civilization to Hebrew culture through similarities in language. He notes that Alexander the Macedonian conquered the Persians in 331 B.C., bringing Greek culture in touch with Persian culture. Sitchin notes that while Persian kings Cyrus, Darius, and Xerxes apparently came from Indo-European areas, the Old Testament marks them as followers of God, and Sitchin relates the Jewish God, Yahweh, with a God known as "Wise Lord" depicted as flying in a winged globe.

Sitchin traces the Persians to Babylon and Assyria, this time through cuneiform inscriptions. He points out the grandness of the Assyrian cities Dur Sharru and Nineveh, which he points out is mentioned in the Bible. He claims that archeological digs uncovered inscriptions that support the truth of the Bible's accounts of ancient Nineveh. Sitchin portrays a 1,500 year history of rivalry and glory in Assyria and Babylon, with both territories having nearly identical cultures and leaving behind vast written records in cuneiform.

Wondering about the origin of the Assyrian/Babylonian language Akkadian, Sitchin relates it to the "Akkad" mentioned in Genesis, a kingdom he states predated Assyria by 2,000 years. He says it carries the origins of all later Mesopotamian culture. Again, Sitchin notes a reference to an earlier culture, Kish, both in transcribed tablets and in the Bible as "Kush." He relates biblical mentions to archeological finds throughout Mesopotamia.

In early leaders' names, Sitchin sees evidence of an even earlier language. He says the Akkadian language used borrowed words, especially in areas of science and the gods. He traces this to a language and culture "before the flood," mistakenly mistranslated as Sumerian from the original Shumerian ("Shinar" in the Bible). Sitchin portrays Sumer as an incredibly advanced civilization lasting 650 years. He relates how gods told the rulers to gather rare materials including gold, silver, and cedar from around the world to build a temple, relating it to biblical accounts of God showing Moses, Solomon, and other rulers how to build a temple.

Sitchin credits Sumerians with inventing printing by stamping wet clay and also making cylinder seals. He calls their base-60 number system "celestial" and possibly superior to our base-10 system. He notes the importance of clay for writing and building and credits Sumerians with advanced reinforcing and firing techniques, as well as the development of the kiln and therefore metallurgy, using natural petroleum fuels.

Sitchin cites the uses of petroleum as evidence of advanced knowledge of chemistry and medicine, including brain surgery but also the use of incantations. Still, Sitchin



insists that the medicine was both scientific and advanced. He attributes accepted science, like alcohol used as a disinfectant, to Sumerians, and then relates a ritual for reviving a corpse and wonders if this were medicine in advance of our own, as if the likeliness of some medical claims like the use of alcohol somehow means other accounts are all true. Sitchin interprets squiggled lines on a figure as "radiation" used in medicine.

Next, Sitchin discusses textiles, crediting Sumer with advanced weaving and clothing design. Sitchin also credits Sumer with advanced agriculture and irrigation, as the origin of a long list of fruits, vegetables, and spices. Describing transportation, he credits Sumer with the first boats, advanced shipping, and the first use of the wheel. Sumer also had the first schools, 2-house legislature, historian, written code of law, and legal reform, which Sitchin uses to claim Sumerian civilization must be far more ancient than 4,600 years old and wisely concerned with "Old Testament" justice.

Sitchin traces a Job-like story and pithy proverbs to Sumer, as well as the first song and the origin of Western music. He depicts Sumer as eerily similar to our own, as the first civilization and an incredibly advanced one arising in 3,800 B.C. and leading directly to modern Western civilization. In this chapter, Sitchin creates a great mystery around Sumer, emphasizing its relationship to its gods and using the Christian Bible as a historical source.



Chapter 3, Gods of Heaven and Earth

Chapter 3, Gods of Heaven and Earth Summary and Analysis

Sitchin identifies the gods of Sumer as the reason for the land's rapid development. He recounts the Greek pantheon of gods, rulers from above with specific powers and origins. Zeus won his power by defeating serpentine Typhon in battle and shared power with his brothers. Hades reigned in the underworld, Poseidon in the sea, and Zeus in the sky. Zeus fathered other deities, and his first son was Apollo, a liaison with humanity. Zeus married his sister Hera and fathered Ares, god of war, but his marriage was troubled by infidelity. The gods were subject to injury and death. Hephaestus, god of creativity, was lame.

Aphrodite, goddess of love and war from a generation before Zeus, came across the Mediterranean, and to make room for her in the 12 ruling Olympian gods, Hades was removed from their number. Similarly, when Hestia left the Olympian gods, one more had to be added (Dionysius) to make 12. The Latin names of the Greek gods are associated with the planets: Earth, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Saturn, and Jupiter. Zeus was associated with bulls, and Sitchin traces bull-worship to Minoan civilization on Crete and the legend of the Minotaur. Sitchin associates this with the constellation Taurus and an alignment of the sun with that constellation around 4,000 B.C. The Greek gods, Sitchin emphasizes, did not come from Heaven. Zeus came from across the Mediterranean and others from different directions.

Sitchin discusses the Hindu Vedas, hymns and proverbs of the gods, and claims that analysis of the oldest versions reveals striking similarities to the Greek gods, a turbulent, powerful family representing celestial bodies. Kash-Yappa is portrayed as a prolific father and head of a family of 12 ruling gods. His son Indra, similar to Zeus, slays a monster and then rules the skies, sharing power with two brothers. Sitchin traces the similarity to a group of Indo-Europeans who migrated through both areas around 1,500 B.C., who he relates to the Hittites, a military power in Anatolia, described in the Old Testament.

Sitchin describes an archeological excavation of the Hittite city, interpreting Hittite carvings to show that they worshiped an Olympian-like pantheon of 12 gods associated with celestial bodies and that lesser gods were divided into 12 groups. Tashub was like Zeus, a thunder and lightning god associated with bulls, who battled a monster, Yanka, a serpent. Sitchin interprets these tales as literal events. The Hittite story of Alalu parallels the Greek Uranus, overthrown by his son Cronos, who is then overthrown by his son Zeus. Sitchin relates the battles of Teshub/Zeus to the date of the alignment of Taurus around 4,000 B.C. and the rise of Sumer.

The Hittite gods, Sitchin states, have Sumerian names and Sumerian origins. Sumerian culture was brought to the Hittites by Hurrians, or Horites, who ruled the area between



Sumer and Anatolia. Sitchin relates the name "Harr" to "Aryan," and the Horites to the Indo-Europeans who brought the Vedic tales to the Hindu culture. The Horites, however, were really carrying Sumerian culture, Sitchin argues.

Israel, Lebanon, and southern Syria were occupied by the Canaanites, with gods similar to Greek gods, another way the Sumerian pantheon found its way to Greek culture. El is a fatherly, kind, distant deity. Sitchin notes the recurrence of a winged globe or star. El's son Baal (or Elyon) fought his brother Yam, dying and then being resurrected by his sister Anat. Sitchin claims that the story was not allegory but intended as truth.

Canaanites had ties to Africa and Egypt, and again Sitchin relates Egyptian gods to Sumerian ones. The number 12 recurs. Ra ruled a party of 12 gods, and Ra was represented on Earth by a winged globe. Ra's sons quarreled, and one daughter resurrected one son. The Egyptian tales told of their gods arriving from other lands, and Sitchin speculates that the gods came from Sumer, as did Egyptian culture. Sitchin states that Canaanites absorbed Sumerian culture from Amorites, who were from Western Asia. He briefly recaps an Amorite pantheon similar to the others, all originating, he states, in Sumer.



Chapter 4, Sumer: Land of the Gods

Chapter 4, Sumer: Land of the Gods Summary and Analysis

Sitchin classifies some Sumerian gods as heavenly and interprets their stories as scientific accounts of the creation of the planets. Another group of gods Sitchin classifies as earthly leaders, in charge of mundane tasks. The other gods "of heaven and earth" were human in their emotions and activities but incredibly powerful and descended to Earth from the skies, and created man.

Anu or Anu was head of the gods, symbolized by a star, and lived in the heavens. Men as well as gods might ascend to heaven. Anu also visited Earth, and a temple was built for him at Uruk, where the gods could descend to Earth. Sitchin describes the pomp and ceremony of one of Anu's visits. All right of rulership and kingship came from Anu.

Enlil was Anu's son and ruler on Earth who created man, brought civilization, and ruled from Nippur. Enlil fell in love (or lust) with Sud (Ninlil) and raped her on a boat ride. He was cast from heaven and married Ninlil. Sitchin ascribed great power to Enlil, who was responsible for the Great Flood and also for knowledge of farming and appointing kings.

Anu's other son, known as Ea or Enki, constructed canals, loved to sail, and ruled the oceans. He is credited with making the rivers bountiful and bringing farming to mankind, as well as advocating for man and allowing "Noah" to escape the flood. Enki was the engineer behind man's creation. He also vied for the throne with his brother, claiming he was first born. Sitchin speculates that like biblical Ishmail, Enki was first born but illegitimate.

Enki decided his son should be the successor to the throne if he couldn't and had sex with his half-sister Ninhursag, which would give his son the right to the throne. Ninhursag, however, bore a daughter. Enki had sex with the daughter, who bore another daughter, and did the same with his granddaughter. Ninhursag inflicted an illness on Enki but was stopped by the gods. Sitchin points out parallels between Enki's created man Adapa and Adam, and also between Ninhursag, also known as Ninti, and Eve.

Enlil, unlike his brother, conceives a son by Ninhursag named Ninurta, a god of lightning married to Bau, a nurse and bringer of life. Ninurta battled the god Zu for leadership of Earth after Zu stole Enlil's magical tablet and other objects. Enki sent Ninurta, hoping his nephew would die in battle and leave the succession open. Ninurta finally fells Zu by destroying his wings.

Sitchin infers that Zu and Ninurta had flying machines, and Ninurta defeated Zu with a missile. Sitchin wonders if Zu could be Enki's son Marduk, hoping to usurp the throne. Marduk came to be primary god in Babylon years later. Texts were rewritten to cast Marduk as the hero, including taking the place of Ninurta to fight Zu. Sitchin takes this



as evidence that Zu was not Marduk. Finally, Sitchin says he believes Zu to be Nannar (Sin), a legitimate son of Enlil/Anu. Enlil apparently destroyed Sin's city of Ur as a punishment, and Sin fled to Haran.

A high priestess of Sin, Adaguppi, made a deal with Sin to restore his power in exchange for helping her son Nabunaid become king, which he did in 555 B.C. He rebuilt Sin's temple. Sitchin mentions the biblical Jacob's ladder as a possible way for the gods to descend to Earth. Nabunaid also restored temples of Sin's twin offspring Inanna and Utu, a god of law. Inanna, also known as Ishtar, was goddess of love and war, equated to Aphrodite, who ruled Aratta in eastern Sumer. She convinced Enmerkar, a ruler of Uruk, to make her goddess of Uruk, and she became Anu's lover. Still ambitious, Inanna visited Enki to seduce his formulas from him, and she successfully acquired a hundred of them. Over time, she moved from being a seductress to being a god of war. Inanna had a rocky marriage to Enki's son Dumuzi.

Enlil also had a son Ishkur or Adad, a storm god associated with Sin, Utu, and Inanna. Ishkur and Inanna might have been lovers, and he may have been involved in fierce battles with other gods because of his father's rivalry with Enki. Enlil sent him away to lands to the North and West. In Sumer, the 12 major gods, 6 male and 6 female, were assigned numbers from 5 to 60, multiples of 10 going to males and the multiples of 5 in between to females.



Chapter 5, The Nefilim: People of the Fiery Rockets

Chapter 5, The Nefilim: People of the Fiery Rockets Summary and Analysis

Sitchin emphasizes that the gods had flight, often depicted with wings. Ishtar, in particular, traveled far. Sitchin, using Inanna's description of preparing to journey to the underworld and the attire of a statue, proposes that the gods wore helmets, earphones, straps, and other gear for travel as astronauts and fliers. Sitchin also proposes that biblical angels were basically airmen, recognizable by their uniforms and weapons. In Sumerian artifacts, he sees goggles, weapons, and earphone, a stretch at least.

Sitchin identifies the term "me," referring to divine objects, as meaning flight gear. Using the story of Jacob's ladder, he infers a hovering spacecraft. He recounts Elijah being lifted to Heaven in a whirlwind and Ezekiel seeing God in a chariot, which Sitchin suggests was some sort of helicopter. Temples were landing pads, protected by death-ray weapons. He presents murals that he suggests show the flying machines and suggests the word "mu," a large conical object housed in temples, referred to flying machines. He sees depictions of rocket ships in oval or phallic shapes in ancient art.

Sitchin says that "mu" is often mistranslated as "name" and implies that "radiant" was often meant literally, as fire from a rocket. He suggests that statues of gods in their rockets became usurped by human rulers and shifted meaning to become indicative of name and legacy. By translating the word "mu" or "shem" as "flying machine," Sitchin reinterprets the biblical story of the Tower of Babel to mean humans tried to build a rocket and were punished by the gods by being made to speak different languages. Sitchin says the tale originated in Sumer, speculating that a god tried to help the Babylonians build the rocket.

Sitchin recounts bible stories of men going up to "heaven" and Sumarian tales like Adapa, a man made by Enki who was sent to Anu to gain eternal life. In the story of Gilgamesh, a half-human, half-god ruler of Uruk sought the Tree of Life in the land of the gods. Sitchin reinterprets the story, in which Gilgamesh finds a rocket and goes to a spaceport guarded by robotic death ray weapons. Gilgamesh retrieves a youth-giving plant but loses it on the way back.

Another ruler, Etana, flies into the sky on an eagle, which Sitchin associates with astronauts. Etana takes fright at the receding Earth and demands to be taken back. Sitchin also describes a pyramidal tower called an apin that he suggests is a multi-stage rocket, with an engine, supply chamber, and capsule. Sitchin points to a bible verse usually translated as "giants," stating that the original "Nefilim" means those who fell to Earth. He states that the bible admitted multiple gods visiting earth.



Chapter 6, The Twelfth Planet

Chapter 6, The Twelfth Planet Summary and Analysis

Sitchin notes that Mars and Venus have no life, and distant stars are too far for godly visits. He details the rule of Anu over a heavenly place sporting a garden of semiprecious stone and a retinue of royals and specialists. The gods' world must be in Earth's solar system. Sitchin interprets decorative rosettes on temples as stylized solar systems. Sitchin presents images of a figure surrounded by eleven stars to argue that the solar system has eleven planets, counting Earth's moon. The Nefilim's planet must have been the twelfth object in the system, along with the sun and moon.

Sitchin briefly recounts the history of knowledge of the solar system, including the discoveries of Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto in the last 300 years and Copernicus's revolutionary identification in the 1500s that the planets move around the sun. Before Copernicus, Greeks and Romans thought the heavens moved around a flat Earth. Sitchin finds evidence in early astronomers, though, of prior knowledge of the solar system, which he links to Mesopotamia, the Hittites, and Babylonia. Even older astronomical knowledge from Uruk (and from Sumer), he says, was more accurate and detailed, with information only observable over long periods of time, but understood by rote instead of by observation.

Sitchin describes a Mesopotamian star map reconstructed by T.G. Pinches in 1900, which ascribes numbers to stars. Sitchin cites the map as proof of advanced Nefilim knowledge, including that the Earth is round. The numbers, he says, assign degrees from the North Pole to the stars' locations. Sitchin states that the Sumerians knew precisely when the houses of the zodiac would shift in ages, an occurrence with several-thousand-year gaps.

Positing that Sumerian knowledge was far beyond their capabilities and needs, Sitchin cites three different types of measurements for the distance between stars. He states that only the Nefilim could need or know such measurements. Because the Nefilim must have been knowledgeable, he says, the Sumerians must have known of Neptune, Uranus, and Pluto. He interprets Sumerian texts as giving locations of planets (lubad) above and below Earth, the order of their orbits. He believes "mulmul," associated by some scholars with Pleiades, meant the solar system and consisted of twelve bodies: the sun, the moon, and ten planets. He asserts that this is why there were twelve gods, signs of the zodiac, months in a year, hours in a half-day, tribes of Israel, and apostles.



Chapter 7, The Epic of Creation

Chapter 7, The Epic of Creation Summary and Analysis

Sitchin cites a seal showing eleven circles around a rayed sun as evidence of a solar system with ten planets plus Earth's moon. It shows an extra planet between Mars and Jupiter, the Nefilim planet, according to Sitchin. Sitchin defends the inclusion of Earth's moon in the model, describing the moon as developing separately as its own planet and being bombarded by asteroids during a cosmic event. Sitchin then discusses Pluto, with its erratic orbit, which crosses Neptune's orbit. He claims Sumerian texts describe Pluto as a moon that escaped its planet's orbit. He also mentions the asteroid belt, concluding "beyond a doubt" that it is the debris of a destroyed planet.

Sitchin relates the Genesis creation story to a Babylonian creation story on seven tablets. Taking the story as literal, he interprets it as a retelling of the creation of the solar system. The prime, father god is the sun, attended by Mercury, and he forms the other planets. Pluto is Saturn's offspring, a moon of the planet. Initially, the planets are unstable, and Apsu (the sun) is displeased. Neptune, however, "pours sleep" across the solar system, quieting the sun—perhaps, Sitchin speculates, affecting the sun through its orbit or radiations.

A new planet, Marduk is drawn into the solar system from deep space by Neptune. Gravitational pull from Uranus tears off chunks of the new planet, creating four satellites. Marduk is still drawn inward, toward Tiamat, the planet orbiting where the asteroid belt is now. Tiamat becomes unstable, and eleven satellites are torn off her. Kingu, one of the satellites, flies off on its own orbit, upsetting the solar system. In the story, Tiamat has become monstrous and dangerous and must be defeated.

Marduk passes Saturn, dislodging Pluto from its orbit. Marduk is heading to "battle" with Tiamat. The other planet-gods promise rulership to Marduk if Tiamat is defeated. Three more satellites are pulled off Marduk as it passes Saturn and Jupiter. The satellites collide with Tiamat, and ten of Tiamat's satellites become comets (in Sitchin's theory). Marduk pulls the last satellite, Kingu, into its orbit, and Maruk heads off around the sun. When it reaches Tiamat again, Marduk collides with the dead planet, splitting it into Earth, which pulls off Kingu as its moon, and the asteroid belt, Tiamat's shattered other half.

Sitchin sees evidence of this story carried into Genesis and identifies the asteroid belt specifically as "heaven." He traces the evolution of Earth's cooling, forming an atmosphere, and developing life. Sitchin recounts the story of rogue planet Marduk restructuring the solar system, making Kingu into Earth's moon, and as its last act, pushing Pluto into its current orbit.



Chapter 8, Kingship of Heaven

Chapter 8, Kingship of Heaven Summary and Analysis

According to Sitchin, Marduk's large, elliptical orbit takes it past the other planets and back to the asteroid belt, as detailed in Sumerian legend. Because of its vast orbit and fast speed, Sitchin equates the planet with images of a winged globe in ancient artwork. He links the symbol for the planet with the modern cross and says that the arrival of the planet was known to be regular and bring with it great change.

Sitchin relates biblical passages describing upheaval in nature to the return of the planet causing physical changes on Earth. The approaching planet is described as bright enough to see in daylight and appearing in Earth's sky to the south as it aligns with Mercury. Sitchin equates biblical anticipation of the coming of God with the return of the planet. He believes the Nefilim planet's orbit is 3,600 years in length, mentioning the association between the number 3,600 and the circle.

Sitchin also notes Babylonian writings of ten Sumerian rulers who reigned for 432,000 years, measured out in "shars," equivalent to 3,600-year increments. He suggests that "shar" is the length of the orbit of the planet Shar, the Nefilim planet. Sitchin (highly questionably) suggests that the length of life on Earth is determined by the length of Earth's orbit. He suggests Nefilim live as many 3,600-year shars as humans live years. During Shar's approach at 11,000 B.C., 7,400 B.C., and 3,800 B.C., Sitchin postulates the Nefilim advanced human beings technologically. He attributes the Deluge of the Old Testament to the Nefilim and reinterprets a biblical reference to 120 years as meaning 120 shar, citing it as proof the Nefilim ruled for 432,000 years. Sitchin estimates the Nefilim's first landing on Earth 450,000 years ago.

Sitchin builds his case by arguing that elements for life exist off Earth, that life does not need the sun, and a planet could generate its own heat energy and keep it with an atmosphere. He reminds readers that the planet-god is described as radiant in Sumerian texts and claims scientists believe life evolved on Jupiter and other distant planets. He infers from Sumerian texts that Shar is a water planet and claims life appeared on Earth too early and too well-formed to have evolved here. He cites scientific hypotheses that biological molecules may have arrived on Earth from elsewhere and perhaps Earth was even purposefully "seeded" for life. Sitchin believes the seeds of life came from collision with Shar.



Chapter 9, Landing on Planet Earth

Chapter 9, Landing on Planet Earth Summary and Analysis

Sitchin speculates that Nefilim's orbit gave the "gods" access to much information about space and the solar system. He identifies the planets with various gods. Ea/Enki is the moon, and Enlil is Earth. Sitchin shows the engraving on the Pioneer 10 showing human beings and planets in the solar system and compares it with Sumerian drawings. Though we consider Earth the third planet counting from the sun out, Sitchin says Nefilim would consider it the seventh, counting from the outside in. He uses his assumption that references to Enlil counted Earth as the seventh planet as proof that the Sumerians must have gained knowledge from the Nefilim. He says Sumerians depicted Venus as the eighth planet, Mars as the sixth, and Saturn as the fourth.

Babylonian new year celebrations, Sitchin suggests, copy Sumerian rituals that depict information about the Nefilim and the solar system, representing Marduk's trip through the planets. A ritual of a "divine boat" and also a series of seven planetary stations are taken to represent the Nefilims' journey from their planet to Earth.

Sitchin suggests the Nefilim group the moon, Venus, Mercury, and the sun together in one zone, and the other planets from Pluto to Earth (as the Nefilim would fly through on their approach) in another (ignoring that the moon is a satellite of Earth). Sitchin claims the four bodies beyond Earth were unsafe to travel near, and the seven other planets were origins of "seventh heaven" and other uses of the number seven. He recreates the journey past Pluto, "swamp-like" Neptune and Uranus, giant Saturn, bright Jupiter, the gateway of Mars, and finally Earth.

A clay tablet from Nineveh, copied from Sumer, contains astronomical symbols and repeated syllables. Sitchin interprets it as a Nefilim map and instructions depicting the way to Earth. One segment he takes to give directions to prepare for a return flight. Sitchin cites another mathematical tablet, which he says makes sense only in terms of the Nefilim. Sitchin describes an approach to Earth where the spacecraft leaves the Nefilim planet on the edge of the solar system and races ahead to an orbit around Earth. The Nefilim had to use careful planning and exact knowledge to take off from Earth and catch up with their planet.



Chapter 10, Cities of the Gods

Chapter 10, Cities of the Gods Summary and Analysis

Sitchin recounts the Nefilim's first landing on Earth, with the intention to create a colony. Earth was at that time in the middle of an ice age, with much lower sea levels than today. Mesopotamia provided a temperate climate, good soil, seas to splash down in, and plentiful fuel from petroleum. Sitchin equates the site with biblical Eden and mythical fish-men with astronauts dressed to splash down in water. The Nefilim named the first Earth settlement Erithu, Sitchin claims, meaning a faraway house and the origin of the word "Earth."

Sitchin records the names and rulers of the first Nefilim cities, headed by Enki, as interpreted from Sumerian texts. The Nefilim raised up land above the marshes to build on and developed irrigation. Enki was reputed to love the water. His brother Enlil arrived later. He was in charge of the mission, and based at a new city named Larsa, he created a command post at Nippur with a communications center protected by mechanical weapons. Enlil put his son Nannar/Sin in charge of Bad-Tibura, an industrial center where Inanna and Utu were born. Ninhursag was put in charge of a medical center. A spaceport was constructed at Sippar. Ninurta took charge of Larak.

The massive Mount Ararat, Sitchin explains, must have been the landmark used to mark the spaceport location directly south on the Euphrates, a location which provided ample space and fuel. Sitchin maps the Sumerian settlements, extending southeast from the spaceport at a forty-five degree angle and supposedly marking the flight path of incoming ships. Sitchin claims that the cities were completely destroyed in the Deluge but that the Mesopotamian cities were rebuilt over them to the gods' specifications. Sitchin describes mysterious Sumerian structures with rings on the top, perhaps radio towers, and mysterious, portable, divine communication boxes, which Sitchin relates to the Ark of the Covenant.

Ziggurats, which are cubical pyramids, held abodes of the gods on top. Ziggurats were raised up for space equipment and communications, according to Sitchin, and provided a 90-degree angle for an observatory. The corners of the ziggurats pointed to the compass points of north, south, east, and west.



Chapter 11, Mutiny of the Anunnaki

Chapter 11, Mutiny of the Anunnaki Summary and Analysis

Anu ruled the Nefilim planet. Enlil controlled the Earth. Enki is sometimes thought of as an ocean god or ruler of the underworld. Sitchin relates tales of Inanna going to the "underworld" for her husband, and Nergal visiting the underworld and falling in love with Ereshkigal. The underworld, Sitchin says, is a distant land over the sea where the gods had another settlement. Sitchin places this settlement in southern Africa and says Enki was in charge of the southern hemisphere, where he mined gold. Gibil, Enki's son, was god of smelting and assisted Enki.

Sitchin describes the bright, fertile lands of the mining region with an inland capital. He notes that pictographs for metals all included "mine shafts," a downward pointing arrow. Using a biblical story of Solomon, Sitchin describes a trade route traveling around the continent of Africa and taking three years to complete. Sitchin tentatively locates the African mining region on the Zambezi River. He relates archeological finds dating mining in Africa as early as 100,000 B.C.

Sitchin speculates that the gods colonized Earth for purposes of mining, relating the Nefilim to a golden age, followed by a silver age, a bronze or copper age, and a heroic age of men and gods together. Perhaps the Nefilim also mined rare platinum and radioactive materials, he suggests.

The Anunnaki were the working class of the gods. Three hundred, called Igigi, stayed on board the spaceship. Landing in groups of 50, eventually 600 Anunnaki settled on Earth, Sitchin proposes. Sitchin wonders if Enki originally tried to mine minerals from the seas. Nonetheless, soon Anunnaki were sent down into mines in the Earth to do hard, punishing labor, Sitchin says, citing Babylonian and Assyrian texts. The overworked Anunnaki rebelled. Enlil consulted Anu, who ordered an investigation. Anu sympathized with the workers, and Enki suggested creating a primitive worker, man, which he accomplished with the help of a mother goddess.

Chapter 12, The Creation of Man

Chapter 12, The Creation of Man Summary and Analysis

Sitchin claims the Nefilim creation of man unites biblical creationism and scientific evolution. All the plants and animals were created before man, and as soon as man was created, he was put in a garden to work and tend. Sitchin points out passages in Genesis where God refers to himself in the plural, implying that the original, Sumerian version had multiple gods. Sitchin admits the validity of evolution for most of Earth's creatures but balks at the idea that Homo sapiens could have evolved "virtually overnight." Sitchin's answer is that Nefilim "gods" helped along evolution, creating Homo sapiens 300,000 years ago from existing Homo erectus.

Quotes from the Epic of Gilgamesh and other Sumerian texts are interpreted to show that the Nefilim encountered Homo erectus, an animal-like version of man. Sitchin also shows a cylinder seal of an "ape-man." Since Earth was seeded with life from the Nefilim planet, Sitchin posits, Homo erectus was like a less-evolved Nefilim. Briefly outlining human advances in genetics and cloning, Sitchin suggests that the Nefilim used genetic engineering to make Homo erectus into Homo sapiens, designed as a slave-race. Citing stories of half-man, half-beast creatures, Sitchin postulates that Nefilim tried other genetically engineered creatures before creating Homo sapiens. He also relates tales of deformed humans created by the gods.

Adapa, related to Genesis's Adam, was the original human, created by Enki, according to Sitchin. Adapa was a mixture of god and man, the biblical Earth clay breathed into life by God. Sitchin relates the word for "breath" in the Bible to blood. From Sumerian legend, Sitchin relates that the manufactured man was carried in Enki's wife's womb, making him Enki's son as well as creation.

Adapa was used as a model to create many male and female humans, using an assembly-line of "birth goddesses" and delivering the children by Cesarean section after 10 months. Sitchin believes that the need for the gods' blood was the need for genetic material, the spirit of the gods. He suggests that the gods' sperm was used to fertilize a Homo erectus egg. Sitchin also suggests that Homo sapiens were created in Africa, where anthropologists suggest man first appeared. The humans were at first only mine workers but soon were brought to Mesopotamia to relieve the workers there.



Chapter 13, The End of All Flesh

Chapter 13, The End of All Flesh Summary and Analysis

Sitchin relates the biblical tale of the Garden of Eden and the Fall. In the garden are a Tree of Life and a Tree of Knowledge. Adam and Eve are told by God not to eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, but Eve is tempted by a serpent. She eats the fruit and convinces Adam to eat, too, and the two become aware of their nakedness. Sitchin emphasizes the knowledge as having to do with nakedness and says that the first humans manufactured by the Nefilim worked naked, illustrating this with Sumerian images of naked people. They had sex similar to or with animals, and Sitchin relates a story of an animalistic man giving up sodomy with animals for sex with a woman and in the process becoming more advanced.

From a reading of the Bible story, Sitchin concludes that the knowledge Adam and Eve gained from the Tree of Knowledge was the ability to procreate. The original humans were sterile crosses between different species. Sitchin notes a tablet depicting a crowd of identical people surrounding Enki, which he suggests depicts early created man all of one mold, not born naturally from human reproduction.

Sitchin notes that mules, sterile animals bred by crossing species, have defective sperm and ovum and suggests that the biblical serpent corrected this problem in the humans. Sitchin postulates that the serpent is Enki. Enlil's takeover of command of Earth created a rivalry between Enki and Enlil. Enlil is portrayed as a disciplinarian and adversary to man, while Enki is man's advocate and maker. Sitchin concludes that Enlil prohibited human reproduction, but Enki engineered it. From the biblical story of Adam and Eve, Sitchin takes that the now-fertile humans were sent out to the Zagros Mountains, east of Sumer.

Sitchin relates the story of Adam's son Cain killing his brother Abel and being banished to the east, and the births and succession leading to Noah, stemming from a second line of Adam's offspring beginning with Seth. During the time of Enoch, Sitchin believes men returned to Mesopotamia's "Eden" to serve the gods. Searching for a reason for the gods' wrath in the Deluge, Sitchin settles on the idea that Nefilim interbreeding with humans coupled with deteriorating genetic purity of the humans themselves, resulting in inferior offspring of the gods. Sitchin describes Noah creating the ark and gathering the animals in seven days, then being swept up in the flood for 150 days before landing on Ararat. The flood waters receded over a year and ten days, and God promised Noah never to flood the Earth again.

Sitchin says that the original Sumerian version eliminates contradictions. Ziusudra, or Utnapishtim, is the Sumerian version of Noah. In the story of Gilgamesh, Utnapishtim relates the tale of the Flood. The gods decide to destroy mankind in the flood, but Enki comes to him in secret to warn him. Utnapishtim gets his neighbors to help build the



boat in seven days, and Utnapishtim boards it with his neighbors and whatever animals he can lay hands on. After the storm, the boat finally lands on a mountaintop. Like in the Bible story, Utnapishtim sends out birds to find out if there is dry land. Then, he roasts a sacrifice, this time attracting all the gods. Enlil is furious, but Enki convinces him that Utnapishtim must be intelligent and capable to survive. Utnapishtim is taken up to the gods' world, and new rules are established for human procreation.



Chapter 14, When the Gods Fled from Earth

Chapter 14, When the Gods Fled from Earth Summary and Analysis

Sitchin recounts archeological finds indicating local flooding in Mesopotamia from 4,000 B.C. to 2,800 B.C., but because of its importance in the Bible and mentions in ancient texts, Sitchin insists on a massive, global flood. He refers to an earlier Sumerian flood story, whose hero is named Atra-Hasis. In it, Enlil becomes upset at man's procreation and decides to destroy mankind with disease, but Enki interferes and stops him. Then, Enlil decides on drought and famine, which lasts for years, finally resulting in cannibalism. Enki finally decides to help. He foments rebellion and clandestinely breaks the imposed famine. Enlil is furious and has a third plan. A terrible flood is coming, and he calls on the gods not to warn the humans but to let them die.

Enki, circumventing his oath, clandestinely reveals the upcoming flood to Atra-Hasis and provides detailed instructions to build what Sitchin believes to be a submarine. Atra-Hasis waits for the gods to launch their ship and flee Earth as the sign to go into his submarine and close it up. The gods witness the flood from their spacecraft, where they lack food and water. Directed to go to their home planet in "heaven," or the asteroid belt, many of the gods lament the destruction of the Earth and its inhabitants. Somehow the gods end up heading back to Earth. Sitchin says that the landing on Ararat was a purposeful meeting place, and the hungry gods were glad of the offering of roast meat, realizing the necessity of the human beings and animals for their own well-being.

Sitchin identifies the Deluge as the Earth's last ice age abruptly ending 13,000 years ago and fastens on the theory of ice sheets dropping into the ocean and causing tidal waves accompanied by massive storms. Sitchin uses biblical and Sumerian description to back up his idea of massive tidal waves. He also asserts that the Nefilim knew precisely when their planet's gravitational pull would cause the Deluge, interpreting texts of a god whose weapon was the Deluge as the planet causing the Deluge. Sitchin concludes with a timetable of the Nefilim occupation of Earth from 445,000 years ago to the end of the last ice age 13,000 years ago.



Chapter 15, Kingship on Earth

Chapter 15, Kingship on Earth Summary and Analysis

The Nefilim outposts on Earth were completely destroyed by the Deluge, Sitchin says. The gods needed men to survive and taught them skills like agriculture and husbandry. Agriculture began in the low-lying mountains because the plains were still swamped from the flood. Sitchin claims that early grains and other plants were brought to Earth from the Nefilim planet. Advances in mankind occur at 3,600 year intervals after the Deluge, as the Nefilim planet passed by Earth, Sitchin maintains, indicating some sort of consultation with the gods of the home world was necessary to proceed. Nefilim retreated to the skies, putting kings in charge on Earth.

According to Sitchin, the Nefilim established three centers of civilization—in Sumer, Egypt, and India on the Indus River. Sitchin attributes the Egyptian pyramids to a Sumerian god and attributes raising up of the swamped lands around the Nile to Enki. He also states that the Indus valley civilization came from Sumer, honoring the same gods of the 12th planet.

The ancient languages, Sitchin states, were all variations of Sumerian. Sitchin attributes the Egyptian and Indus cultures to the story of Babel, saying the gods separated the people after the Sumerians tried to build a rocket. As human culture rose, Nefilim culture declined and jealous rivalries erupted among the gods. Nefilim created temples to keep their subjects in line. In addition to the three lands, the gods created a new spaceport, restricted only to gods. Sitchin ends his book by suggesting that something more than evolution was at work in creating the Nefilim.



Characters

Enki/Ea

Enki, also known as Ea, is a Sumerian god. According to Sitchin, Enki was an alien from a planet on an elliptical orbit with our solar system, one of the Nefilim. Enki was the first Nefilim to arrive on Earth, preparing the way for others to colonize and creating the first city, from which the name "Earth" derives. A scientist, Enki was in charge of mining operations in Africa and head of the southern hemisphere of Earth. He is the master of technologies among the gods. According to Sitchin, Enki was also responsible for the genetic engineering of mankind. Enki also loved water and is associated with water.

When the Nefilim workers rebelled at working in the mines, Enki suggested creating a new race of workers to take over. He used the local primates, *Homo erectus*, as a base and combined Nefilim DNA in the form of sperm with *Homo erectus* ovum, implanting the embryos in Nefilim women. Sitchin relates Enki to the serpent in the Garden of Eden, believing that Enki gave the originally sterile humans functioning reproductive cells, allowing mankind to procreate.

Enki continues to be a friend of mankind and a rival to his brother Enlil when he tells the Sumerian "Noah," Utnapishtim, of the upcoming Deluge in which the gods plan to leave mankind to perish. Enki instructs Utnapishtim to build a boat for survival and take animals with him. After the flood waters recede, Enki convinces Enlil to let Utnapishtim survive, and in fact Utnapishtim is honored for his abilities.

Enlil

Enlil was the brother of Enki. A Sumerian god, Sitchin proposes that Enlil and the other gods were aliens from an elliptical orbit with Earth's solar system. He calls these aliens Nefilim. Enlil was the rightful first in line for the throne, and although Enki was the first god who came to Earth to start a mining colony, Enlil joined him later and took over ruling the lands. Enki took a second place to Enlil, and the two brothers were rivals.

While Enki genetically engineered mankind, Enlil stood in opposition to mankind at almost every turn in Sitchin's theory. Sitchin equates Enlil to the God of the Garden of Eden prohibiting Adam and Eve from eating from the Tree of Knowledge. Enlil at first prevented mankind from having the ability to reproduce, but Enki went behind Enlil's back. Enlil then became angry with mankind's growing population and decided to kill them off through disease, which Enki prevented. Enlil cut humans off from food to kill them with famine, but again Enki intervened. Finally, Enlil, in a meeting with the other gods, decided that the humans should not be warned of the impending Deluge, a flood caused by the breaking off of ice sheets at the end of the last ice age.

Again behind Enlil's back, Enki rescues mankind by instructing one person to build a boat/submarine to survive the flood. After the Deluge, Enlil realizes that the aliens need



mankind to help the aliens on Earth and allows man to survive, even allowing the gods to give agriculture to humans.

Nefilim

The word "Nefilim" comes from a biblical reference that Sitchin translates as those that fell to Earth. Sitchin uses this term to describe the aliens he believe occupied Earth from 450,000 years ago to 4,000 years ago.

Adapa/Adam

Adapa was the first model human created by Enki/Ea, the chief Nefilim scientist, by genetically combining Homo erectus with Nefilim.

Noah/Ziusudra/Utnapishtim/Atra-Hasis

In Sitchin's narrative, Enki gives one man, his servant, the foreknowledge to build a great boat and avoid dying in the Great Flood caused by the end of the last ice age. In myths, this man is known as Noah, Utnapishtim, or Atra-Hasis.

Gilgamesh

Gilgamesh is a hero of Sumerian legend who traveled to the gods' abode, by means which Sitchin interprets as a rocket ship, to find eternal life.

Anu/An

The ruler of all the gods, Anu was an absent god residing in the abode of the gods, the 12th planet. Anu came to Earth for visits and when problems arose.

Ninlil/Sud

Ninlil or Sud was Enlil's wife.

Ninhursag

Ninhursag was Enlil and Enki's half-sister. Both brothers had sex with Ninhursag to try to have sons that would be entitled to the throne.



Marduk

Marduk was Enki's son, third in line for the throne behind Enlil's son with Ninhursag and Enlil's son with his wife. In Babylonia, Marduk became the ruling god; many myths were rewritten with Marduk as the hero. Marduk is the name used for the 12th planet as it crashes through Earth's solar system in the Babylonian legend.

Ninurta

Ninurta was the first in line for the throne and is Enlil's son by his sister Ninhurag.

Nannar/Sin

Sin was the second in line for the throne, Enlil's son by his wife.

Inanna and Utu

Inanna and Utu were the twin children of Sin. Inanna was renowned for her sexuality and later warrior traits, and Utu was a god of war.

Ishkur/Adad

Ishkur/Adad was another son of Enlil.

Dumuzi

Dumuzi was another son of Enki.

Anunnaki

The Anunnaki were the working class of the gods who rebelled against the working conditions.



Objects/Places

The 12th Planet/Shar/Marduk

The planet Shar is the home planet of the Nefilim, which revolves around the sun on an elliptical orbit of 3,600 years.

Agriculture and Husbandry

Sitchin claims that agriculture and husbandry arose suddenly and inexplicably among men and that the best explanation is that the alien Nefilim gave humans the advanced technology to farm and raise animals.

Mesopotamia/Sumer

Mesopotamia is the location of Sumer, the oldest known human culture. Sitchin claims that Sumerian myths are true accounts of aliens visiting Earth.

The Asteroid Belt

Sitchin claims that Sumerian texts reveal the asteroid belt in Earth's solar system is the debris left over from half of a previously existing planet that was hit by Shar. The other half was knocked to a lower orbit and became Earth. He calls the asteroid belt "heaven."

Africa

In Sitchin's account, the Nefilim came to Earth to mine minerals and established mines in Africa, ruled over by Enki. The mines of Africa were the location of the rebellion of the lesser "gods" and where Enki created humans as slave workers.

The Winged Globe

Sitchin identifies winged globes or winged stars in ancient art as symbols of Shar, which travels quickly along its orbit.

The Tower of Babel

Sitchin interprets the Bible story of humans raising a high tower which angered the gods as referring to humans trying to build a rocket ship like the ones the Nefilim gods had.



Mu/Shem

Sitchin interprets the Sumerian "mu" and the later word "shem" to mean "rocket."

Eagles/Birdmen

Sitchin interprets myths of eagles flying people to far-off places as stories of astronauts, marked as such by their distinctive uniforms and equipments. He associates pictorial images of birdmen with the eagle-astronauts.

Mulmul

Sitchin interprets the word mulmul, considered by others to mean Pleiades, as the solar system.

Tiamat

In the origin story that Sitchin accredits as a scientific account of the formation of the solar system, Tiamat is the name of the planet that is cut in two by Marduk. Half of Tiamat becomes Earth and half is scattered as debris in the asteroid belt.

Kingu

In the origin story that Sitchin accredits as a scientific account of the formation of the solar system, Kingu is the name of the satellite of Tiamat that becomes a rogue planet and later becomes Earth's moon.

Erithu

The first landing site of the Nefilim in Sumer, Sitchin equates Erithu with the Garden of Eden.

Mount Ararat

The Nefilim use the towering Mount Ararat as a landmark for their landings from space. It also becomes the place where the ark lands after the Great Flood.

Ziggurats

Ziggurats are cubical pyramids built as houses of gods. Sitchin claims the ziggurats housed the gods' flying machines as well.

Themes

Mythology as Evidence

Throughout Sitchin's book, he uses mythology as evidence for his findings. The stories that he references are tales passed down over many generations, with many variations and changes in casts of characters. They are also subject to many different interpretations as well as translations from the original languages. In many manuscripts, sections are missing or illegible. Still, Sitchin chooses versions of tales and places his own interpretation on them. Though he refers to the stories as being factual accounts, he reinterprets named gods given human actions as literal planets following physical forces. Sumerian myths are ancient and therefore the most incomplete and little-known, leaving them open for Sitchin's interpretation and reconstruction.

While Sitchin interprets one myth's gods as the solar system planets, he interprets others as Nefilim. He hones in on specific words and gives them his own interpretation. What others see as "reputation" or "name," he interprets as "rocket," changing the entire context. How reliable is this type of reliance on individual terms to convey whole new meanings? Why do other scholars discard it?

Sitchin also constantly associates his conjectures to Bible stories, which appeals to readers who are familiar with traditional biblical myths. He tries to walk a line arguing that the Bible is both literally true and in accord with known science by interpreting both science and Bible stories to his own ideas, including reinterpreting words and focusing on minor passages and wording. He claims the Bible is succinct and specific, but in reality, the Bible is so obscure as to allow many different interpretations, as evidenced by the numerous religious factions and theological debate. Sitchin's mythological evidence is highly questionable.

Alien Design

Sitchin insists that humanity could not have evolved on its own as it has. He emphasizes "sudden" appearances of changes and new technology and the "advanced" nature of ancient society. Both of these claims are questionable. Certainly, Sumerian society had fascinating technologies, but few complex machines and nothing remotely resembling rocket technology. "Suddenness" is an imposed characteristic, an idea that Sitchin creates through reiteration. Ultimately, both the ideas of suddenness and advanced technology are Sitchin's basic arguments for the Nefilim's existence. Because humans could not have evolved on their own, someone must have interfered, and that must have been the Nefilim.

Sitchin even hints at the end of the book that the Nefilim themselves were designed by some further removed alien or supernatural entity. At one point, Sitchin claims the slight head-start in time the Nefilim had to evolve on their planet gave them enough time to



become more advanced than humans, while arguing elsewhere that humans did not have enough evolutionary time to evolve to thinking creatures. Of course, adding a progenitor before the progenitors addresses this problem (perhaps creating the need for a further progenitor, and on and on.) The existence of the Nefilim is at least as hard to believe in as the existence of human evolution, considering the fact that there is no physical evidence of them. Of course they could not have evolved on their own.

The idea that alien design is necessary is founded in the idea that human accomplishments are impossible tasks. Contrast, though, the Sumerian accomplishments of irrigation and the wheel with the modern development of atomic power and computers over only a few hundred years. Mankind's modern technological advancement seems far more unbelievable than the Sumerian ones, and yet it is evidenced by our own memories and detailed records. Is it truly necessary to insert an entire planet and alien race in the solar system to explain Sumer?

Personification

Personification is the attribution of human characteristics to inanimate things. Sitchin proclaims that Sumerian origin myths are facts and truths as understood to Sumerians, but at the same time, he interprets them, not literally, but as metaphors for astronomic events. He personifies the planets as gods, relating 12 celestial bodies to 12 ruling gods. Why are there 12 ruling gods among the Nefilim in the end? Is their society structured to coincide with the number of bodies in the solar system? As in Sumerian legend, the 12 planets and the ruling Nefilim are confused in Sitchin's account.

While embracing personification when interpreting one myth to be about the solar system's development, attributing motives and desires to planets, Sitchin at the same time denies the human drive to personification. Weather gods, gods of love and war, and gods of light are all personifications of natural events and aspects of human society. At every turn, Sitchin denies that this is true. Human beings don't need personifications of nature or society, he implies. Instead, the aspects of gods are not personifications but literal interpretations of the reality of the Nefilim. A goddess of love is a sexually active Nefilim female. A god of light is really a god of rocket ships, with radiant blasters. The radiance of the 12th planet god is a literal radiance, since the planet generates its own heat and light. The god of the oceans is literally a maker of canals. The creative element of human myths is discarded in favor of a complex attempt at literal interpretation.

At the same time, Sitchin personifies the "gods." They are not gods, but powerful humans. Humans are created in the gods' image, and therefore the gods are the image of human beings, with all their faults and passions. Personification is the application of a human image to inhuman things, the exact formula Sitchin refers to for the creation of man (the application of the gods' image to *Homo erectus*). He sees a "godification" of humans, when in reality, his tale is the personification of gods, creating something more advanced and above us that is actually just a reflection of us.



Style

Perspective

Sitchin approaches his narrative as a researcher convinced that there is truth behind Sumerian legends and looking for an overarching explanation of everything in the world, a teleology. He is eager to unite science and myth into one truth that explains it all. In doing this, Sitchin cherry-picks scientific information, choosing facts and theories that will seem to support his conclusions while ignoring others that won't, such as the possible effects of gravity of a 12th planet on the solar system's stable orbits or the unlikelihood of life evolving on a planet orbiting in deep space most of a 3,600 year period and then emerging into the hot radiation of the sun, causing intense climate change. Similarly, he reinterprets myths to suit his ideas.

Sitchin's scientific inconsistencies and use of mythology as evidence are not likely a planned misinterpretation, but instead a methodology that is driven by placing the hypothesis above the evidence. Sitchin sees an elegant way to explain the cosmology of the Earth and understand mysteries in science and myth. He wants it to be true, and he gathers evidence to prop up his ideas, instead of trying to come to the most straightforward conclusions based on all the evidence, critically weighed. Sitchin often relies on broad statements about what anonymous scientists or scholars believe, and just as often he picks a single, minor study or event to highlight. By doing this, he avoids both the true big picture and the myriad of conflicting details.

Tone

The tone of Sitchin's book is ostensibly scientific, but in reality the tone is more like a myth or a fantasy story, one that excites and entices the reader. The story spans the history of the solar system from its beginnings to the rise of Sumer, the first human civilization. It is the story of pre-history. In fact, it's the story of everything that human beings don't know. While Sitchin's account claims to be a true story of the origin of the solar system and also of the years from 445,000 to 13,000 B.C., at the same time Sitchin's story is not a story of the real, physical world at all. It is instead a story of human mythology, set in mythical worlds of gods.

The mythical stories take the reader to Shar, a planet on a bizarre elliptical orbit of the sun. The alien/god abode includes a wondrous garden where the trees and plants are fashioned of semiprecious stones. The reader visits alien spacecraft that hover, pouring out bright, vivid radiation and yet allowing gods to ascend and descend from their fiery bellies. The gods are involved in a soap-opera-type drama, and their entire planet, which would likely have millions of inhabitants, is distilled down to one ruling family and their infighting, to make the story easily consumable.



Even the story of the early solar system is stylized and mythological. The planets move about in whirlwinds, and satellites are magically pulled out of their "bodies" by the gravitational pulls of their neighbors. Smaller planets are knocked around, almost like pinballs, but somehow wind up in stable orbits. The mixture of the retelling of the Babylonian/Sumerian myth with the "scientific" development of the planets imbues the planets with the motives and desires of humans. Throughout Sitchin's tales of a time before human knowledge, he imparts a larger-than-life, mythological tone.

Structure

Sitchin draws the reader into his tale by starting with known ideas and then pulling the reader backwards in time, putting new interpretation on ancient, distant stories. By starting with the known and moving to the unknown, Sitchin makes his tale plausible even as it grows ever wilder. He begins by creating a mystery around the fascinating, first known civilization of Sumer, tracing modern Western culture back to ancient Mesopotamia. Then, he does the same thing with tales of gods, tracing well-known Greek myths back to Sumer.

Once ensconced in Sumer, Sitchin first relates the Sumerian mythology and then reinterprets it to his "factual" account, changing the gods into aliens and stories of flight into helicopters and rockets. Then, Sitchin credits Sumer with advanced astronomical knowledge that must come from the Nefilim, and he uses this as a jumping off point to give his story of the origin of the solar system and the 12th planet, based on a Sumerian creation myth.

Having established the story of the planet with its 3,600-year orbit, Sitchin begins to explain his account of the gods' colonization of Earth. He presents a detailed history of what gods landed at what sites and their purpose in colonizing Earth. Sitchin even recounts their love affairs of hundreds of thousands of years ago with perfect confidence in his accuracy. He tells the tale of the gods' genetic engineering of mankind and finally of the Deluge, which he interprets as the catastrophic end of the last ice age. He hits all the major, popular Bible stories, including the Garden of Eden, the Tower of Babel, and the Great Flood, seeking to combine popular stories with scientific-sounding ideas to create a full teleological history of man.



Quotes

"Then—suddenly, unexpectedly, inexplicably—the Near East witnessed the blossoming of the greatest civilization imaginable, a civilization in which our own is firmly rooted." —Chapter 1, page 11

"There were also references to efforts to resurrect the dead, especially if they happened to be gods:

Upon the corpse, hung from the pole, / they directed the Pulse and the Radiance; / Sixty times the Water of Life, / Sixty times the Food of Life, / they sprinkled upon it; / And Inanna arose.

Were some ultramodern methods, about which we can only speculate, known and used in such revival attempts?" —Chapter 2, page 35

"Who were these Gods of Heaven and Earth, divine yet human, always headed by a pantheon or inner circle of twelve deities?" —Chapter 3, page 87

"And all the corridors of all the temples have led us to one source: Sumer." —Chapter 3, page 87

"The Old Testament called the 'angels' of the Lord malachim—literally, 'emissaries,' who carried divine messages and carried out divine commands. As so many instances reveal, they were divine airmen: Jacob saw them going up a sky ladder, Hagar (Abraham's concubine) was addressed by them from the sky, and it was they who brought about the aerial destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah." —Chapter 5, page 133

"But that is not what the Sumerians said. They claimed that our system was made up of the Sun and eleven planets (counting the Moon), and held steadfastly to the opinion that, in addition to the planets known to us today, there has been a twelfth member of the solar system—the home planet of the Nefilim." —Chapter 6, page 178

"It was determined that the chemical and mineral makeup of the Moon was sufficiently different from that of Earth to challenge the 'breakaway' theory." —Chapter 7, page 206

"...to date, nearly 3,000 asteroids have been counted orbiting the Sun is what is now called the asteroid belt. Beyond any doubt, this is the debris of a planet that had shattered to pieces." —Chapter 7, page 209

"But why not take the epic at face value, as nothing more nor less than the statement of cosmologic facts as known to the Sumerians, as told them by the Nefilim? Using such a bold and novel approach, we find that the 'Epic of Creation' perfectly explains the events that probably took place in our own solar system." —Chapter 7, page 211

"The gravitational pull of the large approaching planet soon began to tear away parts of Tiamat. From her midst there emerged eleven 'monsters,' a 'growling, raging' throng of



satellites who 'separated themselves' from her body and 'marched at the side of Tiamat.'" —Chapter 7, page 220

"But what is a year? Our 'year' is simply the time it takes Earth to complete one orbit around the Sun. Because life developed on Earth when it was already orbiting the Sun, life on Earth is patterned by this length of orbit. (Even a more minor orbit time, like that of the Moon, or the day-night cycle is powerful enough to affect almost all life on Earth.) We live so many years because our biological clocks are geared to so many Earth orbits around the Sun." —Chapter 8, page 250

"The basic molecules of living matter have also been found 'floating' in interplanetary space, and the belief that life can exist only within certain atmospheres or temperature ranges has also been shattered." —Chapter 8, page 253

"Life, scientists have concluded, evolved not upon the terrestrial planets, with their heavy chemical components, but in the outer fringes of the solar system." —Chapter 8, page 255

"Were these objects antenna attached to broadcasting equipment? Were the pairs of rings radar emitters, placed in the fields to guide the incoming shuttlecraft? Were the eyelike pillars scanning devices, the 'all-seeing eyes' of the gods of which many texts have spoken?" —Chapter 10, page 305

"But in fact, the information contained in the Sumerian texts—and only that information—can affirm both the validity of the theory of evolution and the truth of the biblical tale—and show that there really is no conflict at all between the two." —Chapter 12, page 336

"For without the creativity of the Nefilim, modern Man would still be millions years away on the evolutionary tree." —Chapter 12, page 341

"Enki's advice to his faithful servant was to build a waterborne vessel; but when the latter said, 'I have never built a boat...draw for me a design on the ground that I may see,' Enki provided him with precise instructions regarding the boat, its measurements, and its construction." —Chapter 14, page 395



Topics for Discussion

Compare Sitchin's explanation of the formation of the solar system to the accepted scientific explanation.

How would life be affected by a planetary orbit that received light and heat from the sun during part of its orbit and existed in the darkness of space during most of its orbit?

How would the elliptical orbit Sitchin describes for the Nefilim planet affect the orbits of other planets in the solar system?

How would new discoveries about the outer reaches of the solar system and the reclassification of Pluto as one of many "dwarf planets" affect Sitchin's explanation of the solar system's origins?

Is it possible for the gravitational pull of a nearby planet to "pull off" sections of a planet to make moons, or satellites?

Considering the number of moons orbiting other planets in Earth's solar system, is Sitchin's explanation for including Earth's moon among the system's planets convincing? Is Earth's moon important to the whole solar system, or just to occupants of Earth?

How does Sitchin's argument that the moon was not separated off from Earth fit in with his contention that the moon (Kingu) was separated off from the planet (Tiamat) that later broke apart into Earth and the asteroid belt?

Was the development of Sumer really as sudden and inexplicable as Sitchin claims? Are there simpler explanations than an advanced civilization from a missing planet?

Sitchin claims humans would have needed millions more years to evolve to Homo sapiens. If human beings required an advanced civilization to genetically engineer them and teach them astronomy, mathematics, and other advanced concepts, how could the Nefilim arise without an advanced civilization to help them?

Sitchin claims that scientists are mystified by the presence of life on Earth and believe it might have developed on an outer planet, and also that scientists are convinced the asteroid belt is debris from a missing planet. Are either of these truly a scientific consensus?

Civilizations throughout the world have many myths and legends. Why does Sitchin consider Sumerian myths, among all the world's myths, true accounts of alien visitors mistaken for gods?

How likely is it that the advanced alien civilizations Sitchin describes could be completely destroyed in a flood or lost to time, leaving no evidence behind, while humans regularly unearth evidence of dinosaurs from a period much earlier?



How credible is the Sumerian version of the Deluge story? Could the boat/submarine have been built in seven days by unknowledgeable humans following the plans of an alien/god? Could the humans and animals that fit aboard the boat have repopulated the Earth after the ice age?