

of the other deities of the divine council over their respective national purviews. Interestingly, the same domains are activated by several other psalms from around this time period that are directed at YHWH's own perceived neglect, so there is clear conceptual overlap (translatability) between YHWH and the deities of the divine council.

The references to the *dal* ("weak"), *yātôm* ("orphan"), *ʿānî* ("lowly"), *rāš* ("destitute"), and *ʿebyôn* ("needy"), evoke conventionalized symbols of social justice and the related notion of cosmic stability, which are most directly associated with the KINGSHIP and DEITY domains (Fensham 1962). Isaiah 1:17 uses *šp̄t* in describing YHWH's pleading to their own people for the *yātôm*, as well as for the *hāmôš* ("oppressed") and the *ʿalmānâ* ("widow"). The victims here and in Ps 82 were "much less real-world social groups than intellectual constructs. That is, the terms refer to the *ideal victim*" (Silver 1995, 182–83). For the societies that produced the Hebrew Bible, social monitoring was rationalized as a matter of cosmic stability. Social injustices were conceptualized as manifestations of the chaos which deities, rulers, and cultic specialists were responsible to mitigate. The reference to the inhabitants of earth wandering in darkness and the foundations of the earth shaking (verse 5) demonstrates the failure of the council to uphold the cosmic order, of which social justice was a weight-bearing pillar.⁶¹ By this point, FAILURE TO ACT comes front and center. The deities are failing to live up to their primary responsibilities as deities.

Verses 6 and 7 represent the sentence passed on the deities. Verse 6 first affirms the divine status of the deities of the council as *ʿēlōhîm* and *bānē ʿelyôn*, which places the most common term for deity in the Hebrew Bible parallel to a unique phrase that appears to be a variation on the somewhat more common *bānē ʿēlōhîm*, "deities" (Gen 6:2, 4; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7).⁶² *Elyôn* is particularly prevalent in the Psalms, and here it invokes the "high deity" profile (and perhaps "patriarchal deity") within the DIVINE COUNCIL domain.⁶³ It is possible, given the likely Neo-Babylonian or Achaemenid context of the psalm, that this verse serves to clear up any misunderstanding about the divinity of the members of the council, but the main function is to set up a contrast for the deities' consignment to mortality in verse 7 (activating the PUNISHMENT and IMMORTALITY domains). This effectively rescinds their responsibilities over the nations and expels them from the divine council, revoking their status as prototypical deities and hurling them into

⁶¹ These figures are frequently misunderstood as the deities that are being tried, but the verse fits far better within the complaint genre's feature wherein the complainant describes the lamentable outcomes of the deity's failure to act (McClellan 2018, 843–44).

⁶² As Reed (2020, 74 n. 122) notes, *bānē ʿelyôn* especially resonates "with early Enochic traditions about angels."

⁶³ *Elyôn* is not explicitly identified with the ruling deity, but their conflation by this time with YHWH was likely established enough to be understood without contextual nudges.