Pharaoh and the armies of Egypt.[10] The text asserts in verse 3 that, "YHWH is a man of war" (*YHWH ʾîš milḥāmâ*). The rest of the poem describes the Egyptian army being slung into the sea, having the sea piled up and then cast over them, and having the earth swallow them up. Similar to the Song of Deborah's depiction of Sisera's army being swept away by the river Kishon, the Song of the Sea describes natural phenomena under the control of the deity defeating the enemy, sidestepping the need to describe an individual warrior somehow singlehandedly destroying an entire army—a counterintuitive narrative that would be cognitively costly to produce, remember, and transmit.[11]

The Song of the Sea's description of the deity's manipulation of the sea for destructive purposes may reflect , at least in part, the "storm-deity" profile, which is known from across ancient Southwest Asia.[12] Generally speaking, the storm-deity was responsible for sustaining agriculture (and thus civilization and cosmic order) through the provision of rain and other terrestrial sources of water (as a result there was a natural conceptual overlap with fertility).[13] There was also a violent dimension to such deities, however, and they could devastate peoples and/or their crops and animals through violent storms, lightning, hail, floods, and drought. These were the media for the storm-deity's conceptualization as warrior, although the mythological narrativization of the deity's battles with other deities also involved other more traditional weapons and warrior motifs.[14]

Apart from 2 Kgs 3:27, one of the most conspicuous examples of war between divine combatants in the Hebrew Bible is the so-called *Chaoskampf* motif, which pits YHWH against a divine sea monster of some kind that is generally

[10] See Flynn 2014, 47–58. Ronald Hendel (2015) has suggested that the Song of the Sea represents the accretion of poetic tradition to social memories regarding the collapse of Egypt's hegemony over the hill country in the Late Bronze Age.

[11] Although note Isa 63:1–6 describes the deity returning from battle, covered in blood, castigating those who failed to show up in support and boasting of their singlehanded victory. The actual means of the victory are elided, however, and the hearer/reader is left to imagine the scene themselves.

[12] Pantoja 2017, 56–62. See also Green 2003; Schwemer 2008a, 2008b. On YHWH as storm-deity, see Dion 1991; Müller 2008.

[13] In places like the Southwest Asian hill countries, where rainfall was the central lifeblood of agriculture and, thus, civilization, the balance between prosperity and destruction became increasingly delicate as the size and complexity of a society increased. It is no wonder the storm-deity began to predominate in these regions after the development of the secondary states of the tenth century BCE.

[14] For instance, in the Ugaritic stories of Baal's battle with Yamm, the craftsman deity Kothar-wa-Hasis fashions two maces that Baal uses to defeat Yamm (*KTU* 1.2.iv.10–30). Mark Smith and Wayne Pitard (2009, 57) suggest, however, that these weapons represent Baal's lightning.