Start with a basic introduction to: Gunkel, Enuma Elish, Tiamat, the Raquia, and Genre. The connection between six literal days and ancient expectations. John Walton. We can only scratch the surface.

**Enuma Elish (sometime between 1700 and 600 BC):**

“When on high the heaven had not been named, Firm ground below had not been called by name, When primordial Apsu, their begetter, And Mummu-Tiamat, she who bore them all, Their waters mingled as a single body, No reed hut had sprung forth, no marshland had appeared, None of the gods had been brought into being, And none bore a name, and no destinies determined-- Then it was that the gods were formed in the midst of heaven. Lahmu and Lahamu were brought forth, by name they were called. Before they had grown in age and stature, Anshar and Kishar were formed, surpassing the others. Long were the days, then there came forth. Anu was their heir, of his fathers the rival; Yes, Anshar's first-born, Anu, was his equal. Anu begot in his image Nudimmud…. (lots of gods are born) “:

The story goes on for several pages. Tiamat, the Sea, gets upset for creating all the annoying, lesser gods, so she decides to kill them all. So they create Marduk, who agrees to kill her. Here’s a summary of the rest of the story:

“The council of the gods tests Marduk’s powers by having him make a garment disappear and then reappear. After passing the test, the council enthrones Marduk as high king and commissions him to fight Tiamat. With the authority and power of the council, Marduk assembles his weapons, the four winds as well as the seven winds of destruction. … Marduk kills her with an arrow through her heart and takes captive the other gods and monsters who were her allies. He also captured her husband Kingu. After smashing Tiamat’s head with a club, Marduk divided her corpse, using half to create the earth and the other half to create the sky complete with bars to keep the chaotic waters from escaping. The tablet ends with Marduk establishing dwelling places for his allies.” (from Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts…*) At the end, Marduk creates human beings out of the blood of his slain enemies, and has them take over the work that the gods don’t want to do.

**The Uniqueness of the Biblical Creation Account** (<http://www.equip.org/article/creation-accounts-ancient-near-eastern-religions/>)

Creation accounts served important functions in ancient cultures, telling people what their purpose in life was, justifying their political structure, and establishing their local god as the head of the pantheon. Outside of Israel, the purpose of humans was clear and simple: to supply the needs of their gods through the leadership of their king and priests. Beyond this universal theme, however, these creation accounts show such great variety and imagination that it does not appear their authors are intending to present as history the creative steps that their gods took to form the world: the creation story only serves as a backdrop to justify and establish the current sociological setting.30

The secular scholar views Genesis in a similar way, noting that it is an eclectic text, strangely borrowing themes from Egyptian, Mesopotamian, and possibly Canaanite sources (the Canaanite documents that would confirm this melting-pot thesis are conveniently lacking) to weave a monotheistic creation myth. However, reading these other creation accounts with an eye to spot their differences and not merely their similarities paints a different picture: Genesis tells of one transcendent God, who alone made and rules the heavens and the earth, and all that is in them; there is nothing left for any other god—if it exists—to do. And far from mankind being made to relieve God of work He did not like doing, they are dignified with His image, and with the task of ruling the creation in a wise and benevolent way. The painful toil people now experience is not a proper part of the creation; it results from human disobedience, which requires divine redemption. By affirming human unity in Adam and Eve, Genesis lays the foundation for Israel’s calling to bring light to the world.

The goal of early Genesis is not to entertain its listeners nor to justify the political status quo, but to convey a history of God’s actions in creating the world for man, its caretaker, to enjoy in fellowship with his Creator. Of course Genesis uses language and imagery that made sense to the original audience, but these images are universal, timeless, and transcultural, conveying a sequence of creation events both to primitive cultures and to modern scientific ones. It is only the presumption that Genesis cannot be relating history and revelation from God that leads many to seek other ways to account for the text. For those who do not have these biases, the uniqueness of Genesis is readily apparent if they read the other ancient accounts for themselves. Ancient near eastern parallels provide some helpful cultural insights, but they do not explain the Genesis creation account away. (C. John Collins)