**Appendix 2‎**

**Additional Sources on the Storm-God’s Descent into the Netherworld**

This appendix focuses on three sources from Mesopotamia, Hatti, and Israel that are claimed to describe the descent of the storm-god into the netherworld. The first two sources are also purported to relate, in their broken surviving fragments, about the storm-god’s subsequent ascent, although no evidence of this remains. The purpose of this appendix is to therefore discern whether these sources can expand our understanding of the affinity between the storm-god and the netherworld in the ancient Near Eastern literature in general and the Levantine literature in particular.

‎1.‎*Iškur and Enlil* (Ni 12501)‎

A fragmentary text from Nippur, dating to the pre-Sargonic period (Old Sumerian or early Old Akkadian periods), points to the existence of a Mesopotamian tradition regarding the imprisonment of the storm-god Iškur in the netherworld.[[1]](#footnote-2) This tradition, so it appears, has no further occurrences in contemporary or later Mesopotamian texts.[[2]](#footnote-3)

The first two columns of the text are very fragmentary, but parts of the third and fourth columns are less damaged.[[3]](#footnote-4)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| áb-né [kur]-ra | III 7‘His cow, in the underworld, |
| ú mu-na-kú-e | 8’eats grass for him. |
| DIŠ enkur-ra | 9’The lord, in the underworld, |
| šè-mu-ti-la-e | 10’dwells. |
| diškurkur-ra | 11’Iškur, in the underworld, |
| šè-mu-ti-la-e | 12’dwells. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| den-líl | IV 4‘Enlil |
| a-nun-ke4-ne | 5‘to the Anunna |
| gù mu-ne-dé-e | 6‘said: |
| dumu-gu10kur-ra | 7’“my son, to the underworld |
| bar ba-tab | 8‘ was banished; |
| [a-ba m]u [g]i4-gi4 | 9‘[who will brin]g him back? |
| diškur | 10‘Iškur |
| kur-ra bar ba-tab | 11’to the underworld was banished, |
| a-ba mu gi4-gi4 | 12’who will bring him back?” |

As these two fragmentary columns indicate, Iškur the storm-god dwelled in the netherworld against his will, and his father Enlil sought to release him at the assembly of the Anunna (the great gods). It also turns out that Iškur’s cow—about which we know nothing—was with him in the netherworld, eating grass.[[4]](#footnote-5)In the fifth column, a fox also appears:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ka5kur-šè | V3’Fox, to the underworld, |
| ḫé-du | 4’went. |

The remainder of the column is unclear. Kramer and Alster suggest that Fox is mentioned here because it is the one who responded to Enlil’s call and brought his son Iškur out from the netherworld.[[5]](#footnote-6) They learned this from a later Sumerian work, *Enki and Ninḫursaĝ*, in which Fox volunteers to bring Ninḫursaĝ from her location to Enlil (ETCSL 1.1.1 222-227):[[6]](#footnote-7)

The Anunna sat down in the dust, and Fox spoke to Enlil: “If I bring Ninḫursaĝ to you, what ‎will be my reward (ĝe26-e dnin-hur-saĝ-ĝá mu-e-ši-túm-mu-un a-na-àmníĝ-ba-ĝu10)?” Enlil answered Fox: “If you bring Ninḫursaĝ to me, I shall erect two ‎birch? trees for you in my city and you will be renowned.”‏

Alster presumes that Fox’s repeated responses to Enlil’s call stem from the fact that this figure is considered to be a cunning and greedy creature who knows how to exploit any situation for his own gain.[[7]](#footnote-8) However, Fox appears in other Mesopotamian texts, and not necessarily in this role.[[8]](#footnote-9) It is therefore difficult to speculate, based on the mention of the fox figure alone, that the above text refers to the release of Iškur from the netherworld. It is hoped that additional fragments from this work will be discovered, thereby enabling a more complete understanding thereof.

‎2.‎*The Song of Release* (CTH 789)‎

*The Song of Release* (Hittite: SÌR *parātarnumar*) is a bilingual, Hurro-Hittite text written on at least six tablets (in probably at least two editions) and incorporating both mythical and epic parts, though the relationship between them is unclear.[[9]](#footnote-10) While the text is of Hurrian origin, it tells the story of two cities in the Syrian region—Ebla and Ikinkali—and was therefore undoubtedly composed after the Hurrians had already settled in Syria.[[10]](#footnote-11)

The epic part of *The Song of Release*, which spans several tablets, narrates how the storm-god Teššub demanded from Meki, the king of Ebla,[[11]](#footnote-12) to free the denizens of Ikinkali who were enslaved by the Eblaites. In return, the storm-god would bless the city of Ebla; if they refuse–he would destroy it. When Meki brought this demand to Ebla’s assembly of elders, their spokesman Zazalla rejected it and insisted on keeping the people of Ikinkali under their yoke. In light of the proem of the work—which implies the destruction of Ebla—and the presence of the word ‘release’ in the title, scholars surmise that since the Eblaites continued to enslave Ikinkali’s people, the storm-god eventually fulfilled his warning: He destroyed Ebla and thus released the people of Ikinkali.

The mythical part of the work, of which only one fragmentary tablet was found (KBo 32.13), describes the storm-god Teššub’s descent into the netherworld together with his brother, in order to attend the feast of his sister Allani, the mistress of the netherworld. The tablet is broken immediately after the description of the beginning of the feast, and several suggestions were therefore raised regarding the end of the scene. Before discussing this further, here are some quotes from the Hittite version of this scene:[[12]](#footnote-13)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| II 9The storm-god and Šuwaliyatt | d10*-aš=kan*d*Šuwaliaz=zašš=a* |
| 10went down to the Netherworld. | *kattantatankuwaitaknīiyannier* |
| 11The Sun-goddess of the Earthgirded herself. | *nu=z=(š)an andaišḫuzziyaittaknāš*dUTU-*uš* |
| 12She walked back and forthbefore the storm-god. | *n=ašANA*d10 *piranweḫatta* |
| 13She made a fine feast, | *nu šanizzin* EZEN4-*an iēt* |
| 14the Sun-goddess of the Earth, in the Bolts of the Earth.[[13]](#footnote-14) | *taknāšḫattalwaštaknāš*dUTU-*uš* |
| 15She slaughtered 10000 bulls; | *nu* SIG7-*an* GU4ḫi.a-*unḫatteš*d10-*unni* |
| 16In front of the great storm-god she slaughtered 10000 bulls; | *šallaipiran* SIG7-*an* GU4ḫi.a-*unḫatteš* |
| 17she slaughtered 30000 fat-tailed sheep. | III SIG7uduGUKKAL+KUN ḫi.a-*na ḫatteš* |
| 18There was no counting regarding | *kappūwauwar=ma kuedani* NU.GAL |
| 19the kids, lambs and billy-goats;such (many) | MÁŠ.TUR*-i* SILA4-*i* MÁŠ.GAL-*yanu apiniššuwan* |
| 20was slaughtered. | *ḫattat* |
| … |
| 24The meal’s time | *nu adannašmeḫur* |
| 25arrived, and the storm-god the king, sat for meal | *tiyet nu=za* dIM-*aš*LUGAL-*ušadanna* |
| 26while the Primeval Gods, | *ešat karuliuš=ma=za* DINGIRmeš-*uš* |
| 27she seated (them) to the storm-god’s right. | dIM-*aš* ZAG-*azašašta* |
| 28The Sun-goddess of the Earth, in front of the storm-god | *taknāš=ma* dUTU-*uš*dIM-*unni piran* |
| 29she arrived like a cupbearer. | lúSAGI-*aš iwar tiyet* |
| 30The fingers of her hand (are) long, | *kišraš=ma=ššigalulupēš=šeštalugē*[*š*] |
| 31and only (her) four fingers | *n=at=kanmiyawēš=pat galulupēš* |
| 32lie under the [rh]ython. | [*ANA B*]*IBRI kattantakiyantari* |
| 33And [the rhytho]ns,[from] which to drink | [*IŠTU ḫalwan*]*it=ma kuezakuwanna* |
| 34[she gave (him), in tho]se (rhytons) lies goodness. | [*piškizi aped*]*aš=aandaaššuwatarkitt*[*a*-…] |

At this point the tablet is broken, offering no clue with respect to the aim of the feast or its conclusion. Yet its colophon has survived, confirming that this tablet also belongs to *The Song of Release*. This abrupt break in the mythical scene and its unexplained relationship to the other tablets has led scholars to wonder: Why does *The Song of Release* include a description of the storm-god’s descent to the netherworld? At which section of the plot is the scene recounting the feast situated? And how should one interpret the feast of Allani and the Primeval Gods? Of the various suggestions presented, two are particularly relevant to our subject:[[14]](#footnote-15)

The first explanation, held by Haas and Wagner, places the feast of Allani before the storm-god’s demand to release the people of Ikinkali (following Neu’s edition), and links the storm-god’s descent into the netherworld to this demand.[[15]](#footnote-16) According to these scholars, the storm-god descended to the netherworld because he wanted to reign there, but he was then captured by its mistress, Allani. When he was finally released, he demanded that his people likewise release their slaves. The feast thereby enabled the mistress of the netherworld to capture the storm-god, as she cunningly led him to taste the food of the netherworld.

Haas and Wagner’s interpretation rests on the plots of well-known Mesopotamian and Greek works, such as *Inana’s Descent* (Haas even suggested that Šuwalliy at remained in the netherworld as a substitute for the storm-god), *Nergal and Ereškigal*, *Adapa*, and Ovid’s *Metamorphosis* 5.525-539.[[16]](#footnote-17) This interpretation is further supported, according to Haas and Wagner, by a scene in *The Song of Release* of an argument between the king of Ebla and the city elders, during which Meki portrayed the storm-god as poor and in need of money, grain, clothing, and oil (KBo 32.15). In their view, this is a portrayal of the storm-god at the point when he emerged from the netherworld, bereft of all possession. Haas was so confident that the storm-god was indeed captured in the netherworld and then released, that he even proposed to reconstruct the colophon of the first tablet: “First tablet: Song of the Release o[f Teššub].”[[17]](#footnote-18)

A different opinion is put forth by Wilhlem, who objects to Haas and Wagner’s explanation for two reasons:[[18]](#footnote-19) First, he maintains that the tablet recounting the feast of Allani should be placed *after* the destruction of Ebla, and therefore the descent of the storm-god should not be linked to the debate about the liberation of the people of Ikinkali, but to the destruction of Ebla. Second, in the debate between the king of Ebla and the assembly, the portrayal of the poor storm-god does not constitute part of the king’s statement, but rather belongs to the speech of Zazalla, who opposes the liberation of the slaves. Instead of pitying the “poor” storm-god, Zazalla mocks him, saying that he would give Teššub anything he wants *except* the release of the people of Ikinkali.[[19]](#footnote-20)According to Wilhelm, the storm-god therefore descended to the netherworld because he was angry with Ebla and destroyed it. This act, so Wilhelm claims, is reminiscent of the Hittite *mugawar* rituals, which relate to the descent of the gods’ wrath to the netherworld.[[20]](#footnote-21) Upon entering the netherworld, its inhabitants honoured the storm-god with a feast symbolizing his joining them, similar to the *Rpˀum* feasts attested in Ugaritic texts.

Due to the unknown location of the feast scene in *The Song of Release* and its conclusion, these suggestions cannot be completely accepted or refuted. It should be noted, however, that not only do they rely on traditions that are neither Hurrian nor Syrian in origin, but both add information that is not found in either of the extant fragments of the work– whether it is the storm-god’s captivity in the netherworld and his release, or his anger amid his descent. Moreover, both proposals largely ignore the feast as described in the text: A glorious feast held in the nether world whose participants exhibit no apparent anger, fear, or distress (as would be expected according to both suggestions above).

At the same time, Wilhelm is right in pointing out the closeness between the description of Allani’s feast and the *Rpˀum*’s feasts attested in the Ugaritic literature (*KTU* 1.20-1.22, 1.108). In those feasts, the inhabitants of the netherworld, named *Rpˀum*, *ˀIlnym* and*(Mt-)Mtm*[[21]](#footnote-22)are described as happily eating and drinking in the company of well-known heavenly gods such as El, Koṯar, Anat and Baal. As opposed to the Mesopotamian view of the netherworld as a place that no one can leave, or the Hittite view of it as the abode of anger and other evil qualities that cannot be escaped; the feasts of the *Rpˀum* seem to rely on the view that any divine being can visit and leave the netherworld without difficulty. In other words, entering the netherworld was not necessarily a sign of death or of an evil act.

For example, here are a few lines from a feast where the *Rpˀum* and other gods enjoy many dishes, and in the end, Baal the storm-god also joins them (*KTU* 1.22 I 8-26):[[22]](#footnote-23)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 8’There, *Ṯmq*, the *Rpʾu*of Baal, the warrior(/s) of Baal, | *ṯm . ṯmq . rpˀu . bˁl .mhrbˁl* |  |
| 9’and the warrior(/s) of Anat. There, *Yḥpn* the fighter, | *W mhr . ˁnt .ṯm . yḥpn . ḥyl-* |  |
| 10’the prince, the king *ˁllmy.*[[23]](#footnote-24)As when she goes, | *-y . zbl . mlk . ˁllmy . km . tdd* |  |
| 11’Anat, to hunt, sets to flight the birds of heavens. | *ˁnt . ṣd .tštr . ˁpt . šmm* |  |
| 12’They slaughtered oxen; sheep as well. They felled bulls | *ṭbḫ . ˀalpm . ˀapṣˀin . šql . ṯrm* |  |
| 13’and fatted rams,year old calves, | *w mrˀi . ˀilm .ˁglm . dt . šnt* |  |
| 14’lambs, (and) a heap of suckling lambs.… | *ˀimr . qmṣ . llˀim ….* |  |
| 17’Lo, all day long they poured wine of *Ṯmk*, | *hn . ym .yṣq . yn . ṯmk* |  |
| 18’must, wine of *Srnm …* | *mrṯ . yn . srnm . …* |  |
| 21’Lo, a day and a second, the *Rpʾum*eat | *hn . ym . w ṯn .tlḥm . rpˀum* |  |
| 22’(and) drink; a third (and) a fourth day; a fifth | *tštyn .ṯlṯ . rbˁ . ym .ḫmš* |  |
| 23’(and) a sixth day,the *Rpʾum*eat | *ṯdṯ . ym .tlḥmn . rpˀum <<t>>* |  |
| 24’(and) drink (in the) banquet hall, on the summit (or: the first fruit of) | *tštyn . bt . ˀikl . b prˁ* |  |
| 25’on the peak, in the heart of Lebanon. Behold, on the seventh | *b ṣq . b ˀirt . lbnn .mk . b šbˁ* |  |
| 26’day,in that (day), Mighty Baal | [*b*]*ymm . ˀapnk . ˀalˀiyn . bˁl* |  |
| 27 [arrives?] | [*mġy*?] |  |

Unfortunately, the tablet is broken exactly in the place where Baal appears. However, according to the literary pattern that precedes the mention of his name,[[24]](#footnote-25) the text seems to be reconstructed in this way.

In addition to the feasts of the *Rpˀum*, it is worth mentioning, following Wilhelm, the ritual meals from Emar (another city in Syria), which were also attended by the heavenly gods, including the storm-god, along with the gods of the netherworld. Here is an example quote from the NIN.DINGIR ritual:[[25]](#footnote-26)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 4 giš*paššurī ana pāniilāniišakkanū*1 giš*paššuri ana* d10 1 giš*paššuri*<*ana*>d[… 2?giš*paššurīi*]*naqaqqari* | 24 They will set up four tables before the gods. They will set up one table for the storm-god, one table for […], (and) [two? tables o]n the ground |
| *ana ilānišaplūtiišakkanū* | 25 for the gods of the netherworld.[[26]](#footnote-27) |

Further on in this ritual is a description of twelve portions of bread to be distributed, possibly to those gods of the netherworld who, according to the Hurro-Hittite tradition of the Primeval Gods, are twelve in number.[[27]](#footnote-28) In another ritual from Emar (the *Kissu* festival), the heavenly gods Dagan, Isḫara and NIN.URTA, sit down at two tables to feast while two additional tables set on the ground are designated for the gods of the netherworld, Alal and Amaza.[[28]](#footnote-29)

The interpretation of the feast of Allani in the *Song of Release* in light of the feasts of the *Rpˀum* and the ritual feast from Emar explains well the presence of the storm-god and his brother at a feast in the netherworld without casting it in a negative light that does not exist in the surviving text. It further clarifies why the Primeval Gods are also mentioned as participants in this feast. Rather than a climactic encounter between enemies,[[29]](#footnote-30) the Hittite expression “Primeval Gods” appears to serve as a cultural translation of the Syro-Levantine *Rpˀum*, similar to its use in relation to the Mesopotamian Anunnaki – all of them denizens of the netherworld.[[30]](#footnote-31) In fact, the meaning of the Hurrian term (in which the *Song of Release* was first composed) for the gods of the netherworld –“the Grandfathers Gods”*(ammati-naene*) –corresponds even better to the status of the *Rpˀum* in Ugarit (and the same is true also for the later רפאם in Phoenician and Biblical Hebrew).[[31]](#footnote-32)

*The Song of Release* thus probably reflects a Syro-Levantine tradition related to the netherworld. However, it stands neither in relation to the storm-god’s death nor to his captivity in the netherworld, as some have argued, but to a unique aspect of the netherworld, i.e., the *Rpˀum* feasts that are open to all gods. As I have noted elsewhere, ‏although the *Rpˀum*, like Mot, ‎are permanent residents of the netherworld according to the Ugaritic texts, each belongs to a ‎different branch. While the *Rp’um* are not mentioned in the Baal Cycle’s narrative at all – ‎neither in the description of the road to the netherworld, nor within it (1.4 VIII 1–14; 1.5 V 11–17), Mot does not appear in ‎any of the texts relating to the *Rpˀum*.[[32]](#footnote-33) This distinction, which is manifested in Ugaritic texts, is probably also true of the present Hurro-Hittite text, whose plot was dedicated to two Syrian cities.[[33]](#footnote-34)

‎3.Zechariah 12:10-11‎

A section of the Book of Zechariah, which is usually dated to the end of the Persian period or the beginning of the Hellenistic period, records the mass lamentations over the death of the storm-god that took place in the Megiddo Valley:[[34]](#footnote-35)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| וְשָׁפַכְתִּי עַל-בֵּית דָּוִיד וְעַל יוֹשֵׁב יְרוּשָׁלִַם רוּחַ חֵן וְתַחֲנוּנִים וְהִבִּיטוּ אֵלַיאֵת אֲשֶׁר-דָּקָרוּ וְסָפְדוּ עָלָיו כְּמִסְפֵּד עַל-הַיָּחִיד וְהָמֵר עָלָיו כְּהָמֵר עַל-הַבְּכוֹר. | 10And I will pour out on the House of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of pity and compassion, so they will look to me concerning the one they have pierced, and they will wail over him as the wailing over the ‘only one’, and mourn over him, as the mourning over a first-born. |
| בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִגְדַּל הַמִּסְפֵּד בִּירוּשָׁלִַם כְּמִסְפַּד הֲדַדְרִמּוֹן בְּבִקְעַת מְגִדּוֹן. | 11On that day, the wailing in Jerusalem will be as great as the wailing of Hadad-Rimmōnin the plain of Megiddo. |

Seeking to illustrate the deep sorrow over the dead in a future war, the prophet draws a parallel among the mass mourning rituals to be held in Jerusalem and the wailings over the only one/ the firstborn (כְּמִסְפֵּד עַל-הַיָּחִיד... כְּהָמֵר עַל-הַבְּכוֹר) and for Hadad-Rimmōn (כְּמִסְפַּד הֲדַדְרִמּוֹן בְּבִקְעַת מְגִדּוֹן). While the last two wailings (i.e., over the only one/firstborn and for Hadad-Rimmōn) are connected here together, each originated in a separate Levantine tradition.

The second wailing (v. 11) is associated with the death of the storm-god Hadad Rammān,[[35]](#footnote-36) known elsewhere in the Bible and in extra-biblical texts as an Aramaic deity.[[36]](#footnote-37) In contrast to the lamentation over the death of Tammuz--an event that occurred in the Jerusalem Temple (Ezekiel 18: 14)--according to these verses the lamentation over the death of the storm-god took place outside the Judahite territory, in the Megiddo Valley.[[37]](#footnote-38) This tradition, reflected in Ugaritic and Hittite texts of the second millennium BCE, thus continued to exist in the Levant in the second half of the first millennium BCE, even after other traditions of dying gods, such as Tammuz/Dummuzi, were adopted in this area.

The first wailing in the verses quoted above is associated with the death of the only one / firstborn (vs. 10). The title “only one” (Hebrew: יחיד) used to serve as a unique terminology for a sacrificed child, a custom that apparently was also prevalent in the ancient Levant. Similar to the mythologem of the storm-god’s descent to the netherworld, however, most of the Levantine sources attesting to the custom of sacrificing children are literary, not ritualistic or economic. Therefore, scholars disagree about whether this custom actually existed in the Levant. Nevertheless, there is no question regarding the familiarity of the Levantine peoples– Phoenicians and Israelites – with this custom.[[38]](#footnote-39) Since a discussion of this is beyond the scope of the present study, it may be sufficient to quote Philo of Byblos’s account of the birth of the Phoenician tradition of that practice. Writing his work in Greek, he used the Phoenician word (in Greek letters) ᾽Ιεοὺδ (“the only one”), its Hebrew equivalent being יחיד, as the appellation for the first sacrificed child (FGrH 790 F 3b = PE 4.16.11):[[39]](#footnote-40)

Now Kronos, whom the Phoenicians call El (῍Ηλ), had ruled the land and after the end of his ‎life had been deified as the star Kronos. By a local nymph named Anobret he had his only son ‎‎(μονογενῆ) who, on account of this, was called Ieoud (᾽Ιεοὺδ). For this is what the Phoenicians ‎called and still call only sons (μονογενοῦς).‎[[40]](#footnote-41) When the land incurred the greatest military ‎dangers, he adorned his son in the regalia of kingship and, preparing an altar, sacrificed him.‎

According to Philo, the son of El (῍Ηλ) was called ᾽Ιεοὺδ, and during wartime he was sacrificed by his father. Further biblical writers (Jer 6:26 and Amos 8:10) attest to the familiarity with the ritual of mourning for theיחיד/ ᾽Ιεοὺδ held during a war.[[41]](#footnote-42)

The Jerusalemite prophet has thus merged two different Levantine traditions concerning death and lamentation: The death of the storm-god and that of the “only one.” The context paralleling the mourning of the victims of the future war appears to create the affinity between these two separate traditions. However, in light of Philo’s indication that the father of ᾽Ιεοὺδ was El (῍Ηλ), the latter also being considered the father of the storm-god Baal (according to the Phoenician tradition preserved by Philo: FGrH 790 F 2 = PE 1.10.26), it cannot be ruled out that these two traditions were combined in other places as well.

Of the three sources discussed in this appendix, Zechariah 12 is the closest to the traditions of the dying gods documented in Mesopotamia and Egypt texts, as well as to those found in the writings from Late Antiquity. This source can therefore be cited as further evidence of the existence of the ancient mythologem of the dying god in the Levantine region. However, since the account from Zechariah appears to be given in passing, merely for the purpose of making a specific comparison to a certain lamentation, it is yet to be determined whether the people of the Megiddo Valley also commemorated the resurrection of the storm-god later in the year, or like many others in the ancient Near East, told only about his death.

1. For the dating of the text based on its palaeography and for the few other literary texts from this early period, see E.I. Gordon 1960, 123­-124 and n. 19; Sjöberg and Bergmann 1969, 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Cf. Hallo 2010, 68 and n. 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. The transliteration and translation follow Schwemer 2001, 179-180 (cf. PSD B 130b]for lines IV 7-12[); cf. Kramer 1956, 106, fig, 6a. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Although it is ostensibly possible to link this cow to the one with which Baal mated before descending to the netherworld (KTU 1.5 V 18-21; cf. KTU 1.10; see above, Chapter C1), this is unlikely due to the enormous time gap between the textual evidence of these two plots. As argued above, the plotline of *Iškur and Enlil* has no confirmed continuity in Mesopotamian literature. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Kramer 1956, 280; Alster 1976, 125, n. 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. For the text, see also Katz 2008, 332-333. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Alster 1976, 125, n. 52; cf. also Katz 2008, 333-334. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Cf. *The Series of the Fox* and *The Fox, the Wolf, and the Hyena* (Jiménez 2017, 39-57). In both, Fox is portrayed as cunning and clever, while in the latter Enlil too takes part. Cf. Schwemer’s note regarding the discussed text above: “Von einer Deutung dieses mythologischen Textes, von dem wir nur wenige Zeilen zu verstehen meinen, muß man Abstand nehmen” (Schwemer 2001, PP). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. It was assumed at first that the work included alsothe animal proverbs (KBo 32, 14) that were found along with the fragments of *The Song of Release* (thus in the 1996 edition of Neu, following Otten and Rüster 1990, and followed by many), but Wilhelm (1997; 2001; 2012; 2013) claimed that these are two completely different works, and he was also echoed by scholars (as von Dassow 2013). For the different suggestions for the order of the tablets in the work, see the summary of von Dassow 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. The dating of the work is influenced by both its Hurrian register, which is earlier than 1400 BCE, and the destruction of Ebla. Most scholars suggest that this destruction took place around 1600 BCE, and thus attribute the work to this period. However, an earlier destruction than this can be also considered. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Meki is the name of the Eblaite king in the work, but is originally the *title* of the Eblaite king rather than a personal name. The additional names in the work are unattested in other texts, and therefore they are also of no help in dating the work. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. For transliteration, see Neu 1996, 221-227. The translation follows Neu, ibid; Hoffner 1998, 72-73; Bachvarova 2016, 125 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Although the Bolt of the Earth usually serves as Allani’s epithet (REF), here it is used as the name of Allani’s palace, and therefore includes a Dat-Loc pl. case (cf. Neu 1996, 221; Hoffner 1998, 73; CHD S 177, 254, HDL K 329. *Contra* Bachvarova 2016, 125). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. For additional suggestions, see the survey inWilhlem 2013; von Dassow 2013 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. Haas 1994, 336, 551-552; Haas and Wagner 1997, 442-443; Haas 2006, 181-182; cf. Neu 1996. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Haas 1994, 552. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. Haas 2006, 179. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. Wilhelm 2001; 2009; 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. See also Hoffner 2002, 74; von Dassow 2013, 133-134; Bachvarova 2016, 120-121. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. For such rituals, see, e.g., Asan 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. For a discussion of the various names of the groups inhabiting the netherworld in the Ugaritic texts, see Spronk 1986, 195-196, though he probably includes too many groups under this category. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. The translation follows Lewis 1997; Wyatt 2002, 321-323; Pardee 2011; Yogev 2021, 23-33. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. Many have translated this term as “eternity,” interpreting it as *ˁlm* in light of the occurrence of *mlkˁlm* (“king of eternity”) in *KTU* 1.181, a text that also includes a *Rpˀum* feast. However, the unique spelling *ˁllmy* here does not fit this translation (cf. Pardee 2011, 45, 54-55). The same spelling also occurs in *KTU* 1.161 7 (in which the *Rpˀum* appear too) in relation to *ṯrˁllmn*, which can be translated as “the bull of *ˁllmn*.” [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. Cf., for example, *KTU* 1.20 II 5-7/ 1.22 II 24-25:

    |  |  |
    | --- | --- |
    | *tlknymwṯn* | They went for a day, and a second. |
    | *ˀaḫ*r*š*[*pšm*]*bṯlṯ* | After su[nrise], on the third, |
    | *mǵyrpˀum* | the Rpˀum arrive… |

    [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. Emar 369 (the NIN.DINGIR ritual) ll. 24-25; Fleming , 15, 51; Wilhelm 2009, 62 [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. The reconstruction follows Emar 385, 7-9, below. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. This is according to the Hittite treaties (in other lists their number varies); cf., Archi 1990, 116; Rutherford 2020, 160. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. Emar 385, ll. 7-9. Cf. Arnaud 1986, PP; Fleming 2003, 442; Wilhelm 2009, 62. It should be noted that in contrast to the *Rpˀum* feasts of Ugarit, these feasts emphasize the distinction between the heavenly gods and those of the netherworld by placing the tables in different locations. Nevertheless, these still differ from the divine feasts of the Mesopotamian literature (such as in *Nergal and Ereškigal*), which do not at all allow a joint feast for the heavenly gods and those of the netherworld. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. As might be surmised in light of the Hurro-Hittite historiola (CTH 446) depicting the casting of the Primeval Gods to the netherworld by their enemy, the Storm-God:“He offers two birds to the netherworld deities (*ANA*dAN.NUN.NA.KE4) … He says as follows: ‘For you, ancients (*karuileš-*), neither cattle nor sheep will be laid out. When the storm-god (d10-) *drove you down to the netherworld* (GE6-*i takni*) he established for you this offering’” (KBo 10.45 + ABoT 2.30 III 41-47; the translation follows Gilan 2021, 31, with modifications). For the expulsion of the gods to the netherworld in the *Song of Going Forth* and its suggested relation to the citation above, see the discussion in Gilan, ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. For a comparison between the Primeval Gods and the Anunnaki in the Hurro-Hittite literature, see Reiner and Güterbock 1967, 266-267. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. For the Hurrian term see, e.g., Archi 1990, 114. For a discussion of the *Rpˀum* see, e.g., Spronk 1985, PP; Rouillard 1999; Yogev 2021. Note that both the Hurrian Primeval Gods and the Ugaritic *Rpˀum* (in particular the group known as *Dtn*) have been suggested as possible origins of the Greek Titans, due to their similar descriptions, residence, and appellations (cf. Burkert 1992, 204, n. 28; Annus 1999; Oettinger 1989-1990; Rutherford 2020, 159-162). In light of this, the analogues between the *Rpˀum* and the Primeval Gods might also be reflected in the classical literature. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. Ayali-Darshan, forthcoming… [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. Although this suggestion neither clarifies the place of the feast in *The Song of Release* nor explains its connection to the debate over the release of the Ikinkali people, there is still no reason to claim, as stated above, that the feast carries a negative connotation. In fact, since only parts of the plot are known to date, numerous explanations for the feast can be further submitted. In any case, the aforementioned discussion suggests that the descent of the storm-god to the netherworld here has apparently no relationship to the mythologem of the dying gods, let alone to the dying and rising gods. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
34. The translation follows Meyers and Meyers 1993, 307, with modifications. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
35. This is the Aramaic pronunciation of the name, as deduced from Akkadian sources (cf. Greenfield 1976). In the Septuagint, the name Rimmōn is written similarly to the spelling of the Akkadian sources—Remmān. Regarding the MT, it is difficult to conclude whether the spelling ofRimmōn reflects a local pronunciation of the Aramaic name (i.e., with a Canaanite shift), or if it is a mispronunciation of an unfamiliar name, influenced by the Hebrew lemma רימון (pomegranate). [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
36. According to 2 Kgs 5:18, Rimmōn (who is the Aramaic Rammān) had a temple in Damascus, but this information has no further documentation. The other occurrences of this deity (in Aramaic, Akkadian, and biblical texts) are mostly theophoric names and a few gods-list; Cf. Greenfield 1976 for references. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
37. Following the ancient translations (such as the Peshitta and the Targum) and the Church Fathers (such as Jerome), some scholars suggest that this mourning is not over the god Hadad-Rimmōn, but over King Josiah, who was allegedly murdered at a place called Hadad-Rimmōn in the Megiddo Valley (cf., e.g., Mitchell 1912, 332; Meyers and Meyers 1993, 343-344). This suggestion, however, has no support in Scriptures. It is possible that the verses in 2 Chron 35, to which these scholars refer, imply that the Chronist had thought to relate the mourning customs in the Megiddo Valley to the death of Josiah, but even this is doubtful. The first modern commentator who deviated from the traditional interpretation and understood Hadad-Rimmōn as the name of a deity was Hitzig 1852, 376, who compared the mourning of Hadad-Rimmōn to the mourning of Adonis. Many have also followed him (for a discussion and further bibliography, see Wolters 2014, 420-421). [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
38. For an in-depth discussion of all the epigraphic and material sources, see Vainstub 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
39. The translation follows López Ruiz 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
40. The explanatory sentence is probably not by Philo of Byblos, but by Eusebius (of Caesarea), who quoted the writings of Philo and interpreted them for his Christian readers. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
41. In biblical literature, two sacrificed children, Isaac and the daughter of Jephthah, are also referred to with the term יחיד (“the only one”; Gen 22; Jud 11:34), which seem to be intentional. As Vainstub 2010, 169 noted, biblical Hebrew expresses the conception of exclusivity with the term אחד/אחת rather than יחיד/יחידה. Regarding the son of the Moabite king, about whom it is said that he was sacrificed at the time of loss in the war (2 Kgs 3:26-27), it is stated that he was בכור (“the eldest son”) of the Moabite king. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)