**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 parts about the storm-god’s subsequent ascent, although no evidence of this has survived. 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 storm-god Iškur’s imprisonment 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)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | III 7‘His cow, in the underworld, |
|  | 8’eats grass for him. |
|  | 9’The lord, in the underworld, |
|  | 10’dwells. |
|  | 11’Iškur, in the underworld, |
|  | 12’dwells. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | IV 4‘Enlil |
|  | 5‘to the Anunna |
|  | 6‘said: |
|  | 7’“my son, to the underworld |
|  | 8‘ was banished; |
|  | 9‘[who will brin]g him back? |
|  | 10‘dIškur |
|  | 11’to the underworld was banished, |
|  | 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 (a group of 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:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | V3’Fox, to the underworld, |
|  | 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 the fox volunteers to bring Ninḫursaĝ from her location to Enlil:[[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?” Enlil answered the 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 its being considered a cunning and greedy creature who knows how to exploit any situation for his own gain.[[7]](#footnote-8) However, (the) 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 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 of it.

‎2.‎*The Song of Release* (CTH 789)‎

*The Song of Release* is a bilingual, Hurro- Hittite text written on at least six tablets and incorporating both mythical and epic parts.[[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) While a number of fragmentary tablets of the text (and probably at least two editions) are extant, very little remains of the complete work, and there are only a few cases of continuity between the fragments on the tablets.[[11]](#footnote-12) As a result, scholars disagree as to the order of the tablets in the work.

The first, epic portion of the *The Song of* *Release*, which spans several tablets, narrates how the storm-god Teššub demanded from Meki, the king of Ebla,[[12]](#footnote-13) to free the denizens of Ikinkali who were enslaved in Ebla. In return, the storm-god he would bless the Eblaites; 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 of the literal meaning of release in the title, scholars surmise that the Eblaites continued to enslave Ikinkali’s people, and that the storm-god fulfilled his warning: He destroyed Ebla and thus released the people of Ikinkali.

The mythical part of the work, of which only? one tablet survives, 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 (in the Hittite translation of the work she is called “the Sun-goddess of the Earth,” i.e., 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 translation of this scene:[[13]](#footnote-14)

|  |
| --- |
| II 9The storm-god and Šuwaliyatt |
| 10went down to the Netherworld. |
| 11The Sun-goddess of the Earth girded herself. |
| 12She walked back and forth before the storm-god. |
| 13She made a fine feast, |
| 14the Sun-goddess of the Earth, in the Bolts of the Earth.[[14]](#footnote-15) |
| 15She slaughtered 10000 bulls; |
| 16In front of the great storm-god she slaughtered 10000 bulls; |
| 17she slaughtered 30000 fat-tailed sheep. |
| 18There was no counting regarding |
| 19the kids, lambs and billy-goats; such (many) |
| 20was slaughtered. |
| … | |
| 24The meal’s time |
| 25arrived, and the storm-god the king, sat for meal |
| 26while the Primeval Gods, |
| 27she seated (them) to the storm-god’s right. |
| 28The Sun-goddess of the Earth, in front of the storm-god |
| 29she arrived like a cupbearer. |
| 30The fingers of her hand (are) long, |
| 31and only (her) four fingers |
| 32lie under the [rh]ython. |
| 33And [the rhytho]ns,[from] which to drink |
| 34[she gave (him), in tho]se (rhytons) lies goodness. |

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 to scholars to wonder: Why does *The* *Song of Release* include a description of the storm-god’s descent to the netherworld? At which point in the plot is the scene recounting the feast situated? And how should one interpret the feast of Alani and the Primeval Gods? Of the various suggestions presented, two in particular should be examined:[[15]](#footnote-16)

The first explanation, held by Haas and Wagner,[[16]](#footnote-17) places the feast of Alani before the storm-god’s demand to release the people of Ikinkali (following Neu’s edition)[[17]](#footnote-18) and links the storm-god’s descent into the netherworld to this demand. 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, Alani. When he was finally released, he demanded that his people likewise be released. 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 Šuwalliyat remained in the netherworld as a substitute for the storm-god), *Nergal and Ereškigal*, *Adapa*, and Ovid’s *Metamorphosis* 5.525-539.[[18]](#footnote-19) 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 described the storm-god as poor and in need of money, grain, clothing, and oil. 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 that he even proposed to reconstruct the colophon of the first tablet: “First tablet: Song of the Release o[f Teššub].”[[19]](#footnote-20)

A different opinion is put forth by Wilhlem,[[20]](#footnote-21) who objects to Haas and Wagner’s explanation for two reasons: First, he maintains that the tablet recounting the feast of Alani 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.[[21]](#footnote-22)According to Wilhelm, the storm-god therefore descended to the netherworld because he was angry with Ebla and destroyed it. This act, according to Wilhelm, is thus reminiscent of the Hittite *mugawar* rituals, which relate to the descent of the gods’ wrath to the netherworld.[[22]](#footnote-23) Upon entering the netherworld, its inhabitants honoured the storm-god with a feast symbolizing his joining them, similar to the *Rpˀum* banquets from Ugarit.

Due to the unknown location of the feast scene in *The Song of Release* and its conclusion, these suggestions cannot be completely 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 the extant work– whether it is the storm-god’s captivity in the netherworld and his release or his anger amid his descent. Moreover, both largely ignore the description of the feast: A glorious feast held in the netherworld whose participants all attend freely and who exhibit no apparent anger, fear, or distress, including the goddess of the netherworld. Had the storm-god intended to rob Alani of her reign, she surely would have been angry.

At the same time, Wilhelm is right in pointing out the closeness between the description of Alani’s feast and the feast(s?) of the *Rpˀum* in Ugaritic literature, in which the denizens of the netherworld meet with the gods. Whether these feasts take place in the netherworld or elsewhere, they illuminate the differences between the conception of the netherworld in Mesopotamia and the Hittite and Syro-Levantine views of the same. While in Mesopotamia the netherworld was considered as a place that no one could leave, and in Hatti, as the abode of anger and other evil qualities; the textual evidence from Syria and the Levant reveals the netherworld as a realm that any divine being could visit and leave without difficulty. In other words, entering the netherworld was not necessarily a sign of death.

In the feasts of the *Rpˀum*, as evidenced by the Ugaritic texts, the inhabitants of the netherworld (named *Rpˀum*, *ˀIlnym*, *(Mt) Mtm*, with some bearing first names)[[23]](#footnote-24) happily eat and drink in the company of well-known heavenly gods such as El, Koṯar, Anat and Baal. For example, here are a few lines from such a feast, where the *Rpˀum* and other gods enjoy many dishes, and in the end, Baal the storm-god also joins them:[[24]](#footnote-25)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 8’There, *Ṯmq*, the *Rpʾu*of Baal, the warrior(/s) of Baal, |  |
| 9’and the warrior(/s) of Anat. There, *Yḥpn* the fighter, |  |
| 10’the prince, the king *ˁllmy.*[[25]](#footnote-26)As when she goes, |  |
| 11’Anat, to hunt, sets to flight the birds of heavens. |  |
| 12’They slaughtered oxen; sheep as well. They felled bulls |  |
| 13’and fatted rams,year old calves, |  |
| 14’lambs, (and) a heap of suckling lambs.… |  |
| 17’Lo, all day long they poured wine of *Ṯmk*, |  |
| 18’must, wine of *Srnm …* |  |
| 21’Lo, a day and a second, the *Rpʾum* eat |  |
| 22’(and) drink; a third (and) a fourth day; a fifth |  |
| 23’(and) a sixth day,the *Rpʾum* eat |  |
| 24’(and) drink (in the) banquet hall, on the summit (or: the first fruit of) |  |
| 25’on the peak, in the heart of Lebanon. Behold, on the seventh |  |
| 26’day, in that (day), Mighty Baal |  |
| 27 [arrives?] |  |

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,[[26]](#footnote-27) the text should be completed in this way: “Mighty Baal arrives.”

Apart from the feasts of the *Rpˀum* that belong to the mythological level, it is worth mentioning, following Wilhelm, the ritual meals from Emar, which were 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:[[27]](#footnote-28)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | 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 |
|  | 25 for the underworld gods.[[28]](#footnote-29) |

Further on is a description of twelve portions of bread to be distributed to the gods, possibly intended for those gods of the netherworld who, according to the Hurro-Hittite tradition of the Primeval Gods, are twelve in number.[[29]](#footnote-30) In another ritual from Emar (the *Kissu* festival), the heavenly gods Dagan, Isḫara and dNIN.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.[[30]](#footnote-31)

The suggestion to interpret the feast of Alani in the *Song of Release* in light of the feasts of the *Rpˀum* thus 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 text. It further clarifies why the Primeval Gods are also mentioned as participants in this feast. Rather than a climactic encounter between enemies, [[31]](#footnote-32) then, 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.[[32]](#footnote-33) It should be mentioned that the literal meaning of the Hurrian term for the gods of the netherworld, *ammati-naene*, is “the Grandfathers Gods,” a term that in many ways corresponds even better to the status of the *Rpˀum* in Ugarit (the same is true for רפאם in Phoenician and Biblical Hebrew), who include human forefathers.[[33]](#footnote-34)

Although *The Song of Release* probably reflects a Syro-Levantine tradition related to the netherworld, 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 different 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, Mot does not appear in ‎any of the texts relating to the *Rpˀum*.[[34]](#footnote-35) This distinction, which is manifested in Ugaritic texts, is probably also true of the present Hurro-Hittite text, which reflects an old Syrian tradition that has nothing to do with captivity in the netherworld or with death.[[35]](#footnote-36)

‎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:[[36]](#footnote-37)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | 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. |
|  | 11On that day, the wailing in Jerusalem will be as great as the wailing of Hadad-Rimmōnin the plain of Megiddo. |

The prophet, seeking to illustrate the deep sorrow over the dead in a future war, draws a parallel among the mass mourning rituals to be held in Jerusalem, the wailing over the only one/ the firstborn, and the eulogies for Hadad-Rimmōn. Although the author connected the last two eulogies (i.e., the wailing over the only one/firstborn and the eulogies for Hadad-Rimmōn) together, each originated in a separate Levantine tradition.

The second eulogy (v. 11) is associated with the death of the storm-god Hadad Rammān,[[37]](#footnote-38) known elsewhere in the Bible and in extra-biblical texts as an Aramaic deity.[[38]](#footnote-39) In contrast to the lamentation over the death of Tammuz, an event that occurred in the Jerusalem Temple (Ezekiel 18: 14), the lamentation over the death of the storm-god took place - according to the testimony of Second Zechariah - outside the Judahite territory, in the Megiddo Valley.[[39]](#footnote-40) The tradition of the “dying storm-god,” 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 eulogy in the book of Zechariah is associated with the death of the only one / firstborn (vs. 10). The title “only one” (Hebrew יחיד) serves as an appellation for sacrificed children, a custom that was apparently 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.[[40]](#footnote-41) Since the practice of sacrificing firstborn children is beyond the scope of the present study, it may be sufficient to quote Philo of Byblos’s explanation of this custom. While writing in Greek, he mentions the Phoenician word (in Greek letters) ᾽Ιεοὺδ, its Hebrew equivalent being יחיד (“the only one”), as the appellation for the first sacrificed child:[[41]](#footnote-42)

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).‎[[42]](#footnote-43)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 was sacrificed by his father during wartime. In addition to Philo and Zechariah 12, further biblical writers (see Jer. 6: 26 and Amos 8:10) attest to the familiarity with the ritual of mourning for the יחיד/ ᾽Ιεοὺδ' held during a war.[[43]](#footnote-44)

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 same 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 the same author), it cannot be ruled out that these two traditions were combined in other places as well.

Of the three sources discussed in this appendix, verses from the Book of Zechariah are the closest to the traditions of the dying gods documented in Mesopotamia and Egypt texts, and to those found in the writings from Late Antiquity. The testimony 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 the lamentations, 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, observed only 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… [↑](#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 3), this is unlikely due to the enormous time gap between the textual evidence of these two plots. As argued above, the plot line of *Iškur and Enlil* had no continuity in Mesopotamian literature. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Cf. *The Series of the Fox* and *The Fox, the Wolf, and the Hyena*. 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.” [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. It was assumed at first that the work included the animal proverbs 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. [↑](#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. See a short summary in... [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. 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 unknown, and therefore they are also of no help in dating the work. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Although the Bolt of the Earth usually serves as Allani’s epithet, here it is used as the name of Allani’s palace, and therefore includesa Dat-Loc pl. case. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. For additional suggestions, see the survey in.... [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. For a discussion of the various names belonging to 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-24)
24. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. 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 may be translated as “the bull of *ˁllmn*.” [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. This is according to the Hittite treaties (in other lists their number varies). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. 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-31)
31. As might be surmised in light of the Hurro-Hittite historiola depicting the casting of the Primeval Gods to the netherworld by their enemy, the Storm-God:

    “He offers two birds to the netherworld deities … He says as follows: ‘For you, ancients, neither cattle nor sheep will be laid out. When the storm-god drove you down to the netherworld he established for you this offering.’”

    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... [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. For a comparison between the Primeval Gods and the Anunnaki in the Hurro-Hittite literature, see... [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. 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. In light of this, the analogues between the *Rpˀum* and the Primeval Gods might also be reflected in the classical literature. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
34. Ayali-Darshan, forthcoming… [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
35. 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-36)
36. The translation follows Meyers and Meyers 1993, 307, with modifications. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
37. 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 of Rimmōn 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-38)
38. 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 few gods-list; Cf. Greenfield 1976 for references. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
39. 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. 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 chroniclists 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
40. For an in-depth discussion of all the epigraphic and material sources, see Vainstub 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
41. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
42. 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-43)
43. 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 does not seem to be unintentional. 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-44)