

The forked lightning bolt

In Ancient Mesopotamia

مركز البحوث
والدراسات التاريخية

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Introduction:

We have two terms that indicate the same supernatural weapon used by the storm god, the one with the shape of a fork -which is considered an emblem representing him, and in many cases it even replaced him- The lightning bolt and the thunder bolt.

When many archaeological sources talking about the same cylinder seal they use one of those terms, the obvious fact is that the term "lightning bolt" is the closest to righteousness. The god of the storm, thunder and lightning in most of the scenes appear with two divine weapons, one of them is the fork (the trident or three-pronged) and the other is a hammer or axe. The fork was most likely issuing the lightning while the hammer issued the thunder.

The forked lightning bolt is a common symbol in Mesopotamian art, the trident or three-pronged is represented on seals of Early Dynastic, Akkadian, Old Babylonian /Old Assyrian and Neo-Assyrian date. It may occur in a group with other, more familiar,

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symbols of gods, or as an attribute held by a god. On one seal from the time of the Old Assyrian trading colony in Anatolia, a god on a bull holds the triple fork of lightning while another god on a lion holds the trident. The two symbols should certainly, therefore, be distinguished. The trident has been explained as the Old Assyrian *maztagum*, 'fork'. Which Mesopotamian deity the object symbolized, however, is unknown⁽¹⁾

Many forms of the lightning fork (fig. 1) The simplest one which looks like a tuning fork or snake's tongue .it has two arms mounted on a handle .usually the termini of the fork are pointed, jagged ,or flaring out in lotus like petals .if the handle is elongated to scepter or staff length this lightning fork resembles a two-tined pitchfork . A triple-pronged fork, has a central extension (the core) flanked by two prongs .in some cases the central extension may be different than the two flanking it

The fork is usually held in the right hand of the storm god, but may also be seen in association with a picture of a temple or an animal associated with the god. ⁽²⁾

A variant of the lightning fork is a crossed bolt in which two lines (straight, wavy, or jagged) are laid over each other in saltier and are held

At the cross over node by the wielder. A full keraunos appears during the early Bronze Age, either as three crossed bolts or as a triple -pronged fork on either end of a central node or handle⁽³⁾

The terms used for the lightningbolt:

The Old Babylonian term wr. niĝ₂-ĝir₂ "lightning bolt"



niĝ₂-ĝir₂ (niĝ₂-ĝir₂) as follow:

*Ud gal-la u₅-a niĝ₂-ĝir₂-da du₇-du₇ (Enki and the world order

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"Who rides on the great storms, who attacks with lightning bolts"⁽⁴⁾

*^dnin-urta i-lim u₅ {su niĝ₂-ĝir₂ ud ĝar A /MUŠ₃(*the other ms.has instead*) su-lim gur₃-ru udĝar erim₂ X X} (Hymns to Ninurta)

"A flood which frightens the rebel lands, without rival! Ninurta, deathly hush, {..... bolt of lightning} .⁽⁵⁾

* niĝir appears also on kudurrus as the divine weapon of Adad .⁽⁶⁾

The storm gods:

As is known from inscriptional evidence, the lightning fork was at all times and in all regions a symbol of the storm god Adad (Iškur) in Assyria. Sometimes it was held as an attribute by the god. On a famous monumental relief carving of the Neo-Assyrian Period, the god Ninurta also holds triple-lightning symbols, perhaps because he has taken over a mythical role once attributed to Adad.⁽⁷⁾

So we only concern here about the storm gods who's portrayed with the lightning fork or the fork used to be their emblem.

***Ninurta (Ningirsu):**

The prototypical Enlil-son embodies the type of the young god who takes over the kingship from his father after having proved his supremacy by defeating the land's enemies and forces of chaos. The same basic mythological motif is also connected with various storm-gods in different ways, just as conversely Ninurta, in his role as warrior has power over storm and flood as weapons. Unlike Iskur-Adad whose rule over storms and flood includes his responsibility for rain and the growth of vegetation, in the hands of Ninurta storm and lightning are devastating weapons only, and his characterization as a 'storm-god' is restricted to his acting as a warrior. That both, Ninurta and Adad, were envisaged as young storm- and lightning-wielding warriors was as obvious to the Babylonian scholars as it is to us.⁽⁸⁾

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Ninurta is shown chasing the Anzu bird, represented by the bird tailed, horned lion-dragon that stole the tablet of destinies from Enlil. He portrayed in an active pose within a composition conveying movement, strength and tension not unknown in contemporary glyptic renderings. is engaged here in a rare monumental mythological combat, raising his two arms , holding two Forked lightning bolts in each hand, which is not held by minor protective divinities. This depiction of Ninurta is the sole representation of a major deity among the other slabs found at the temple of Ninurta. (fig.2)⁽⁹⁾

The specific type of forked lightning bolt carried by the god, typified by its central pointed bolt, is also shown within the mouth of Ninurta's subdued hybrid, on a cylinder seal attributed to Nimrud ⁽¹⁰⁾ and also seen on Neo-Assyrian cylinder seal in BM. N89589 called (Tiamat as a dragon)show the body of Tiamat runs around the bottom of the seal and supports three figures; there are no hind legs. A bearded god (Ninurta) runs along the reptile's body towards the left; His arms are stretched out on either side, and in his right hand he holds a six-pronged lightning bolt(fig.3)⁽¹¹⁾

**The Sumerian god Iškur*

Iškur is first directly attested in the mid-third millennium, when he is mentioned in god lists and was worshipped at Lagaš, Adab and Karkar ⁽¹²⁾.

The god particularly responsible for storms, lightning, thunder and rain in texts written in the Sumerian language is called Iškur. His name is written with the same word-sign that also stands for the Sumerian word /im/ “wind, storm” (the oldest attestations have the form ni₂).⁽¹³⁾

The etymology of the name is unknown. Iškur could be a case of an old polysyllabic Sumerian word that was no longer used apart from the name. At least just as probable, however, is that the name Iškur is of non-Sumerian (and non-Semitic) or ‘pre Sumerian’ origin; speculation about a foreign origin of the god, however, brings us no further. Iškur is indirectly attested as early as the Uruk period city list in the writing of his cult centre, Karkar, with the sign ni². Iškur is also already attested in the Early Dynastic god-lists from Fara and Tell Abū ṢIalābīḥ.⁽¹⁴⁾

While the worship of Iškur in Babylonia thus reaches back into the prehistoric period, explicit evidence for the god’s cult can only be demonstrated in the pre-Sargonic period, namely for the cities Lagas and Adab.⁽¹⁵⁾

A fragmentary text that has been dated to near the end of the Early Dynastic Period refers to Iškur as the son of Enlil who was appointed to be in charge of “the silver lock of the heart of heaven”⁽¹⁶⁾

This deity therefore apparently functioned as the lord of winds. Iškur was also metaphorically identified as the protector of the flock, carefully tethering his cows in upland pastures. In one fragment he is actively engaged as the herdsman’s god of thunderstorms and is called the whirlwind and a bull⁽¹⁷⁾.

Iškur’s important fecundating function is emphasized in Temple Hymn no. 27 and other early literature.⁽¹⁸⁾ He is described as a “devastating flood,” “the south and seven raging winds,” and “the water warden of heaven and earth who bestows life upon the numerous people.” Under the general symbolism of a bull, Iškur keeps the moisture of the clouds together so that it can provide rain for the parched soil instead of evaporating into the intense heat.

In his inscription from the Gutian Interlude, Gudea likens the deep,

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reverberant sound of the cedar door in the temple to Iškur bellowing from Heaven ⁽¹⁹⁾

Among historical references to the role of Iškur in the events leading up to the Ur III period, the single most important statement is found in an inscription by Utuhegal of Uruk. As he prepared to march northward to engage the Gutians in battle, in a speech to the people of Uruk and Karkara he stated that he had offered a prayer to Iskur, and in the middle of the night Iskur caused a storm to blow that ravaged the country northward. These early sources also seem to indicate that Iskur's home, and the site of his temple, was the city of Karkara, near Uruk. ⁽²⁰⁾

There is little that can be said about the further development of the cult in the course of the third millennium, due to the scarcity of sources, which is at least partly due to Iškur's secondary significance within most of the local pantheon of Babylonia. The Ur III period Iškur shrines are attested in a larger number of cities, without these having had a pre-eminent significance within the religious life of the individual settlements or for the religious politics of the kings of Ur⁽²¹⁾.

Only the queen Sulgisimtum, who hailed from the long since Akkadian-speaking area of North Babylonia, seems to have propagated the cult of Iškur (Adad) in any particular way, along with those of other deities from her homeland. ⁽²²⁾

A series of administrative documents attests special field rituals that were carried out for Iškur, as the divine storm, when a storm threatened or in case storm-damage.⁽²³⁾

The Semitic Storm-God Adad:

Adad was the Akkadian counterpart of the Sumerian god

Iškur, both sides of Iškur/Adad's character are explored in Sumerian and Akkadian literature⁽²⁴⁾. There are as yet no certain attestations for Adad before the Old Akkadian period, so it seems to be most plausible, as things stand, to assume that the spread of the cult of Adad over the whole of Babylonia and the associated assimilation of the god into the transmitted pantheon of southern Babylonia, which found its most pregnant expression in the actual merging of Iškur and Adad into a single deity, is to be dated to the Sargonic age⁽²⁵⁾

Our earliest evidence for the Semitic god Adad prior to Ur III exists only in theophoric pre-Sargonic names such as Il-Addu⁽²⁶⁾

By the Ur III period a sharp distinction between Iškur on the one hand and Adad on the other is no longer possible, even if the regional differences in the local cult traditions were certainly still visible. Indeed, the greater significance held by the cult of Adad in the Diyala and Middle Euphrates regions of old appears to have stimulated the cult of Iškur-Adad in Babylonia from time to time. Also one can observe a significant shift in the iconography of the Babylonian storm-god during this period. Whereas Iškur-Adad's accompanying animal was traditionally the lion-dragon, a storm demon, the bull is increasingly found also in Babylonia as the symbolic animal of the god, a motif that in all probability has its roots in the North Mesopotamian and Syrian area and can only very occasionally be found in Babylonia during the Old Akkadian period. One can interpret this change in the iconography as an indication that traditions connected with the Semitic-Akkadian name Adad were increasingly merging with old traditions associated with Iškur during the Ur III period⁽²⁷⁾

The fact that the earliest pre-Sargonic and Sargonic Sumerian documents identify Adad with Iškur, the son of Enlil, and not with

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Enlil himself strengthens the argument that Adad was alien to the south Mesopotamian scene. Later, however, in the Old Babylonian Myth of Ninurta and the Anzu Bird, Adad is called the son of Enlil. In this way, the later Semites placed their Storm-god almost on the same level with the great Sumerian Storm-god. Even though the evidence seems to indicate that Adad's attributes paralleled those of Enlil in many respects, he could not completely qualify for Enlil's task as the greatest among the gods or acquire a definitive place in the Sumerian pantheon.⁽²⁸⁾

After old Babylonian times, the cult of Adad became so widespread that it led to the frequent use of his symbol in a variety of scenes all over Mesopotamia. His cult centers have been found, among other places, in Assur, Babylon, Dilbat, Dur-pad.da, Dur-Rimush, Eshnunna, imki, Isin, Lagaba, Larsa, Kish, Lagash, Nippur, and Sippar.⁽²⁹⁾

Iškur-Adad is portrayed at least from Ur III through the Kassite Periods as a powerful deity of the wind, rain, and storms. He is a gentle and beneficent deity on the one hand, and a powerful and violent force on the other, reflecting both the blessings of the timely fertilizing rains and the destructive violence of the thunderstorms and lightning which could cause desolation and hunger because of excessive flooding. The literature reflects a progressive change in the ancients' concept of this deity from the earlier emphasis on Iškur as the beneficent god of the herdsman, to the later violently thundering Iškur-Adad who destroyed everything in his path.⁽³⁰⁾

He is lauded as the august bull and the great lion, mounting the seven storms like donkeys.⁽³¹⁾

He is also the roaring storm, thunder, and lightning. The mythic

picture is that of the Storm-god Iškur galloping in his frightful war-chariot, drawn by his steeds, the lion, and the bull.⁽³²⁾

In this context, the imagery of the Storm-god is portrayed by different symbols. The Sumerians made no explicit distinction between the vehicle, its team, and the Storm-god himself in terms of descriptive terminology.

Iškur-Adad's personality was mythically portrayed during the Old Babylonian Period. There are glimpses of his beneficence and fatherly care, but the Storm god who emerges in Babylonia during the period of Amorite hegemony is more commonly perceived as a devastating force. He is "thunder," "lightning," god of the "clouds" and of the "storm-wind"; he is the one who "controls the storm" and the "destructive winds"⁽³³⁾

The Neo-Babylonian and later sources bear witness to the god's continual worship in Babylon, Sippar, Borsippa, Uruk and Larsa, even into the Hellenistic period for some cases. Yet everywhere Adad (and with him Sala) belonged to the lower-ranking deities.⁽³⁴⁾

The later mythological themes of Assyria are essentially Sumerian and Babylonian in origin and character. In political and religious texts, no meaningful conceptual change regarding the Storm-god Adad is apparent, since these texts were essentially constructed on Old Babylonian models. The political representations of the Storm-god Adad continue to emphasize the martial side of his nature, in keeping with the overriding militaristic focus of the Assyrian kings.⁽³⁵⁾

Adad associated with many gods but the most important one was the divination and justice god. Paired with šamaš, he is addressed as 'lord of prayers and divination', and invoked to preside over a witness in legal contexts⁽³⁶⁾

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Iconography to Iškur/Adad

Iškur/Adad is typically represented brandishing the forked lightning bolts and standing on or beside a bull or lion-dragon. The lion-dragon is the symbolic animal of the storm god in third-millennium art, supplanted though not entirely replaced by the bull from the Ur III period onwards⁽³⁷⁾

The iconography of the forked lightning bolt:

The lightning bolt appears among certain iconographical composition either on cylinder seal or in kudrru as follow:

1-Independent in the image field:

In many seals and stamps the lightning fork appears as independent emblem in the image field not connected to stander or god's hand(fig.4)

* Cylinder seal shows god with turban, beard, short shawl, and club. Emblems in the field are the sun-disk, crescent, and lightning-fork. (Larsa period)⁽³⁸⁾ (Fig4-A).

* Old Babylonian cylinder seal in BM.n 89821 the king with a mace faces a god. Before the god are a star-disc and crescent, a monkey facing left and a small goddess in a flounced robe, behind him two stars; a lightning fork.⁽⁴⁰⁾ (Fig4-B)

*Old Babylonian seal in BM n 89177 show the king with a mace faces the goddess Shala. Between them are a scorpion above a small nude goddess. The first line of four-line inscription was erased and a figure was cut instead. The inscription panel is un-inscribed and a star-disc and crescent, forked lightning symbol and tortoise were cut instead.⁽⁴¹⁾

* Old Babylonian cylinder seal in BM n. 89230 show a deity with one hand raised, faces a god in a square-crowned, brimmed

head-dress and kilt, who holds a crook and places one foot on a couchant gazelle; before him is a lightning fork. ⁽⁴²⁾

* Neo-Babylonian Cylinder seal in MFA n.36.210 show bearded god, wearing a round cap, a short skirt, and a mantle, and holding a mace to his chest is approached by a goddess who wears horned crown and a long garment and has both hands raised. Between them appears a snake standing on its tail and a lightning fork. ⁽⁴³⁾

*Old Babylonian Cylinder seal Sippar in BM n. 89376 Show lightning fork; a dog supporting a crook; nude goddess; a kilted figure in royal posture facing a god with extended arm; between them is a fish. ⁽⁴⁴⁾

* Old Babylonian Seal in Morgan Library n.447 show the God with mace (mace omitted) facing suppliant goddess Between god and goddess, lightning fork ⁽⁴⁵⁾

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal the lightning fork stands without either its god or the bull, and we have no figure except that of Adad , a later owner has erased one line of inscription and part of the design, and on the erased part put the lightning fork and the crescent. ⁽⁴⁶⁾ (fig4-C)

*A seal show the god Shamash and the god Adad in front of him behind adad a big two -pronged lightning fork. ⁽⁴⁷⁾ (fig4-C)

*cylinder seal show a god wearing a long skirt and a horned crown .faced by a worshiper wearing a round cap carrying a small animal .behind the god second person in long garment between them two pronged lightning fork ⁽⁴⁸⁾(fig4-D)

*Cylinder seal show a bearded man with short skirt, holds a horse by its ears and swings a sword with the other hand above the back of the horse. Two-pronged lightning bolt ⁽⁴⁹⁾ (fig4- E)

* Cubic seal the four sides of this seal show the following designs:

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The lightning fork of Adad planted on a square base. A worshipper before the emblems of Marduk and Nabu. A pointed jar before a stepped altar.

A wingless dragon and the emblems of Nabu and Marduk.⁽⁵⁰⁾
(fig4-F)

*Another Cubic seal the lightning fork on one of its sides in Vorderasiatisches Museum VA Bab 01651⁽⁵¹⁾

* Old Babylonian cylinder seal in louver muse. n. MNB, 1951 show worshiper faces the god shamsh and three inscription lines to the right and the lightning fork between them.⁽⁵²⁾ (fig4-J)

* Old Babylonian cylinder seal in louver muse .n. AO7255, Two nude goddess and two lightning forks on both sides.⁽⁵³⁾ (fig4-H)

* Old Babylonian cylinder seal in BM n. 89542 show lightning fork; nude goddess; monkey above a tree; crescent on a tripod; a kilted god holds a crook and faces a king who pours libation before him.⁽⁵⁴⁾

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal in louver muse .n. AO2611. Show worshiper faces the god šmaš and two line of inscriptions the two pronged lightning fork behind them⁽⁵⁵⁾

*Two old Babylonian cylinder seals in louver muse .n AO 2104. AO 7237, showing shamsh in front of adad and shala the two pronged lightning fork between goddess shala and god adad in the field of the image.⁽⁵⁶⁾

*Babylonian Stamp seal in Louvre muse.n.AO 6226 shows the god adad with his horned crown stands in front of his symbol⁽⁵⁷⁾

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal in louver muse .n. AO 4700, show in center the gods adad and shamsh and on both sides the Nude goddess behind shamsh is the two pronged lightning fork above

branches among other symbols in image field.⁽⁵⁸⁾

* Old Babylonian cylinder seal in Louvre Museum .n MNB,1214 shows in the center a male god and two nude goddesses and the two pronged lightning forks on both sides.⁽⁵⁹⁾

* Cylinder seal shows a bearded worshiper in a long robe in front of a godseat or altar, on which one of a crescent moon stands. Behind it a lightning bolt and a rooster, too standing on a godseat or altar.⁽⁶⁰⁾(fig4-I)

* Old Babylonian seal shows two goddesses, each wearing an elaborate horned crown facing each other with both hands raised. Behind the other a two-pronged lightning fork.⁽⁶¹⁾

* Cylinder seal nude goddess, her hands resting on her breasts, turns her head toward three symbols, a staff with triangular head, two pronged lightning fork, crescent.⁽⁶²⁾(fig4-D)

Independent among other symbols:

* Late Babylonian cylinder seal in BM n.132978 shows a priest standing facing right with divine symbols, all but one on stands or altars before him. Before him are a double lightning fork, symbol of Adad, on a square stand, the seated dog of Gula, the ram-headed scepter of Ea in the upper field, and the wedge of Nabu and the spade of Marduk rising from a horizontal line above a rectangular stand.⁽⁶³⁾

* *Neo Assyrian royal reliefs* (fig.5):

a) "Broken Obelisk" dated to the reign of Ashur-bel-kala in which the king is shown facing four pleading enemies. Above the enemies, a little higher than the king's head, are five divine symbols: a horned miter, a crescent, a winged disc, a lightning fork and a star or a rosette.⁽⁶⁴⁾(fig5-A)

b) Stele of the King of the Aššurnasrpal II show the divine symbol⁽⁶⁵⁾(fig5-B)

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- c) Stele of King of Šalmanassar III in BM.n.118884 ⁽⁶⁶⁾(fig5-C)
- d) Stele of King of Adad-nirari III ⁽⁶⁷⁾(fig5-d)
- e) Fragmentary stele of Adad-Nirari III in BM, n 131124. ⁽⁶⁸⁾(fig5-E)
- f) King of Sargon II from Larnaka. ⁽⁶⁹⁾ (fig 5-F)
- g) 2 King stones of the Sennacherib of Nineveh ⁽⁷⁰⁾ And 11 similar royal reliefs of the Sennacherib near Bawian. ⁽⁷¹⁾
- h) Royal Relief of Asarhaddon ⁽⁷²⁾
- I) King of Assurnasirapli II from Nimrud ⁽⁷³⁾
- j) Statue of šalmanassar III. ⁽⁷⁴⁾. The lightning bolt as a necklace pendant.
- K) King of Šamši-Adad V. ⁽⁷⁵⁾
- L) Relief of Sanherib ⁽⁷⁶⁾
- M) Lamaštu reliefs Lamaštu-Amulet ⁽⁷⁷⁾

2-The storm God with lightning bolt and Bull (fig.6):

The lightning bolt and the bull associated with Adad , are among the more frequent symbols used in the seals' imagery. The bull and the lightning bolt depicted on Old Babylonian cylinder seals can be divided into three groups according to their position and role within the scene. The first group, dating mainly from the second half of the nineteenth century' and the first half of the eighteenth, consists of seals on which the symbols appear as secondary elements, not necessarily associated with the main anthropomorphic deity portrayed on the seal. The second group includes seals on which the bull and the lightning bolt serve as attributes, carried by the human-shaped storm god, or displayed in close proximity to his body. On the seals comprising the third group, the bull and the lightning bolt function as symbols of the storm god in the absence of his anthropomorphic representation. The two symbols are either depicted

among other emblems, or appear as the main focus of worship towards which the worshipper gestures,⁽⁷⁸⁾ where the worshipper gestures towards symbols of the storm god, a lightning bolt and a bull, placed in the centre of the scene and serving as a replacement for anthropomorphic Adad. On seals of this type, the lightning bolt-like in scenes portraying the human-shaped storm god-was often shown alongside a nude woman, the suppliant goddess Lama and a divine figure carrying a scepter, identified as the Uduq spirit.⁽⁷⁹⁾

Seals from the time of Sin-iddinam of Larsa during the Isin-Larsa Period Are rather revealing. They show a worshiper being introduced to a divinity seated on a bull, or the deity clad in a long garment with one leg protruding standing on the bull.⁽⁸⁰⁾ This motif has been noted throughout this period and up to the time of Mari.⁽⁸¹⁾ The principal character in these scenes is the deity,⁽⁸²⁾ who may or may not carry a battle-mace or other weapon in his right hand but almost always carries a double or triple lightning fork in his left hand. The motif of the bull as a constant attendant of this important deity will be an intrinsic part of the scene in the succeeding Old Babylonian Period.⁽⁸³⁾

* seal from the time of Sin-iddinam by Larsa the God stands On a bull in a slit skirt, the head and hand absence⁽⁸⁴⁾

* stamp seal from the 14th year of Samsu-iluna in Louvre AO1726b⁽⁸⁵⁾

* Terracotta relief from Tell Harmal⁽⁸⁶⁾

*stele of King of Asarhaddon in Zincirli⁽⁸⁷⁾ (fig6-A)

*two Old Babylonian cylinder seals in louver muse .n. NIII586.N3528 ;AO2356, showing a worshiper in front of the god adad who steps his leg on an animal might be a bull and Hold with his left han a lightning fork and a mace with the right hand⁽⁸⁸⁾

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- *seal with the god standing on the back of the bull holds up a lightning bolt in each hand, and the cord which holds the bull seems to end in a ring. There is also a second deity, in a square hat and carrying two crooks.⁽⁸⁹⁾
- *Old Babylonian cylinder seal BM 89007 show the god Adad in a ladder-patterned robe faces a weather god who stands on a bull and holds its leash and a lightning fork in his right hand. Before him are stretch marks behind him are traces of erasure (a monkey) and the small figure of a nude goddess.⁽⁹⁰⁾
- *seal show a god with a long garment standing on the back of the bull holds a two-pronged lightning fork in front of bearded god ,between them are traces of a small nude goddess.⁽⁹¹⁾(fig6-B)
- *old Babylonian seal shows a human in a long garment approached by another wearing short skirt ,behind the second a god in a long garment standing on the back of the bull holding a two-pronged lightning fork.⁽⁹²⁾(fig.6-C)
- * seals with the god carries in his right hand the lightning bolt and the leash by which he leads the bull, and folds the other arm to his breast. With him is a second similar god with his foot on a different kind of animal and carrying a peculiar scepter.⁽⁹³⁾
- * Seal with the god with a lightning bolt leading the bull, with the goddess (Shala) and three lines of inscription. But before the god's lightning bolt is the character for god and the inscription gives the worshiped god as Adad.⁽⁹⁴⁾
- * Old Babylonian cylinder seal in BM n. 89235 shows a king faces storm god who holds a lightning fork and rests his foot on a bull.⁽⁹⁵⁾
- *Old Babylonian cylinder seal BM.n 89705.shows a god wearing a flounced robe with hands clasped, and a robed king with one hand

raised face and sun god who holds a ring .A storm god holds a lightning fork, and rests his foot on a bull.⁽⁹⁶⁾

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal in BM n.139208 show a deity in a flounced robe with hands clasped, before whom stands a bull supporting a lightning fork, and a figure with an animal offering, face the god.⁽⁹⁷⁾

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal in BM 119200 n. Show a figure in royal posture, faces a deity in a long robe. A bull-man with an animal offering is turned towards a weather god in ascending posture on the back of a bull, who holds a lightning fork in his right hand and whose left fist is clenched.⁽⁹⁸⁾

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal from Sippar in BM,n 8937 show The robed king with an animal offering faces a sun god who holds a ring and rests his foot on a mountain, a god on the back of a bull holds a lightning fork⁽⁹⁹⁾ (fig6-D)

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal show suppliant goddess with long ribbon, and horned crown stands before a three line inscription, at the other side Adad appears stepping with one foot upon a bull and holds a rope and carrying a lightning fork⁽¹⁰⁰⁾

*A seal shows god, in profile on the left,dressed a vertical striped shawl tight at the waist; he carries his hand a two-pronged lightning fork; standing on a bull passing to the left.⁽¹⁰¹⁾

*Goddess wearing the horned crown and along garment in front of god. Behind the deity, a bull to the left another god holds by an attached link tight on the waist, the left hand on the chest and the right hand holds a lightning fork.⁽¹⁰²⁾

*A seal shows god, above a horned bull, passing to the left, which he places his right foot; and in his right hand he holds a lightning of which only the stem remains.⁽¹⁰³⁾

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- *A seal shows god, wearing turban and wearing a long shawl, above a bull, of which he places his foot, he carries with the left hand a lightning, in face to the left, a deity wearing a crown, and an inscription of three lines gives the name of the owner ⁽¹⁰⁴⁾
- *A seal shows a worshipper introduced to a seated goddess. Her throne is built like a gateway. Crescent above. At the back of the scene stands a figure of Adad on the bull, lightning bolt and crook in hands. He wears Horned crown.⁽¹⁰⁵⁾
- *A seal show Adad and Martu. Adad holds the lightning-fork. His foot rests on a bull. He wears homed crown and pleated shawl. Martu holds a club and wears only a short tunic. Sun-disk, crescent on pole, spread eagle, bandy-legged man, fill the background.⁽¹⁰⁶⁾
- *stamp seal shows Adad in a short skirt and horned crown stands on the back of a bull and holds the lightning fork .a pair of winged lions with hind quarters stands on the scene⁽¹⁰⁷⁾(fig.6-E)
- * stamp seal shows a bearded worshiper saluting a god whose his feet –rest on a bull and holds a lightning fork on one hand and a dagger in the other hand.⁽¹⁰⁸⁾(fig6-f)

The forked lightning bolt over the bull (fig.7):

Sometimes the god is designated by the forked lightning bolt over the bull, while the god himself is not represented. This iconography through the Old Babylonian and subsequent periods portrayed the bull as the god's mount bearing the divinity on its back or occasionally in its standing or crouching position it carried only the god's dual or triple lightning fork emblem.

As Kupper has suggested, the bull with the lightning fork symbol was not Merely accompanying the deity, nor can it be considered a secondary motif. Rather, it was a veritable symbolic representation of

a god, a sort of substitute divinity, whose origin may not have been Mesopotamian at all ⁽¹⁰⁹⁾

* cylinder seal show a god with the mace and suppliant goddess and behind them a bull carrying on his back the lightning fork ⁽¹¹⁰⁾(fig7-A)

* In the triple weapon is over the bull, and the conventional goddess is repeated for symmetry. ⁽¹¹¹⁾

* Old Babylonian cylinder seal show a bearded god wearing a round cap ,and holds a maces to his chest ,he is approached by a god wearing horned crown behind the second a bull with three-pronged lightning fork on its back ⁽¹¹²⁾(fig7-B)

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal show a bearded god wearing a horned crown Holding a ring stands between two worshipers .a statue of a bull supporting a lightning fork upon its back stands on the ground. ⁽¹¹³⁾(fig7-c)

* Old Babylonian seal in louver muse .n NIII,588;N3521 .show in the middle a group of Ishter scepter and the arched-legged figure and the bull with the lightning fork behind them a god and in front of them two worshiper one of them naked and kneeling. ⁽¹¹⁴⁾

*seal shows a standing god with long garment is approached by a worshiper wearing round cap .between them are a crescent and small monkey behind the worshiper is a walking bull supporting a two pronged lightning fork. ⁽¹¹⁵⁾(fig7-D)

* seal in louver muse .n AO 2495 show a worshiper in front of god might be Adad between them the lightning fork supporting in the back of the bull. ⁽¹¹⁶⁾

* Old Babylonian seal in louver muse .n AO2596 show two worshiper in front of the god and on both sides the lightning fork supporting on the back of the bull ⁽¹¹⁷⁾ (fig7-E)

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- * Old Babylonian cylinder seal in BM.n89094 show the king with a mace faces the suppliant goddess on a base-line; between them are a star-disc and crescent above a couchant bull, facing right on a base-line, supporting a lightning fork. ⁽¹¹⁸⁾
- *Old Babylonian cylinder seal BM 89163 show the king with a mace faces the suppliant goddess whose hands are raised, on a base-line; between them stands a bull, facing right, with a lightning fork above its back, ⁽¹¹⁹⁾(fig7-F)
- *Old Babylonian cylinder seal BM 102412 Show The king with a mace, wearing a tiered and horned head-dress, faces the suppliant goddess between them is a couchant, hump-backed bull, facing right, supporting a lightning fork on its back. ⁽¹²⁰⁾
- *Old Babylonian Cylinder seal in MFA n. 34.1443 show A bearded figure wearing round cap and turban, a short skirt, and holds a mace to his chest. He faces a goddess with a horned crown, bracelets and a flounced garment and has both hands raised. Behind the goddess is the lion-demon, a bull supporting a three pronged lightning bolt on its back ⁽¹²¹⁾.
- *Old Babylonian seal Show Suppliant goddess before kneeling bull carrying lightning fork, fish above latter -Nude goddess facing two deities, first holding staff - In field: mongoose above bowlegged dwarf; fly above fish⁽¹²²⁾
- *Old Babylonian seal in Vorderasiatisches Museum VA 03301 Show A man in a long robe raises his arm in prayer in front of his face. In front of him standing on a bull, the figure of the weather god Adad can be seen. The weather god is dressed in a short robe and holds the reins of his bull and the lightning bolt in his right hand ⁽¹²³⁾

3-The God Adad with lightning fork and the dragon(fig.8):

At Warka of the Uruk IV Period In later examples, it is evident that the concept of the dragon had become iconographically fixed by the Early Dynastic Period. Glyptic from the later phases of this era usually shows a god holding the triple-forked lightning in each hand and sitting or standing on the back of a dragon. The divinity of the dragon is suggested by the pointed horns on its head, a forked tongue, the forked tongue and undulating tail could be symbolic of lightning. This creature is equipped with the forked lightning of pre-Sargonic times and at times also carries the god's lightning bolt emblem. These render evidence of a continuing tradition from the Akkadian era of the Storm-god with a triple lightning bolt symbol seated on the back of a leonine dragon.⁽¹²⁴⁾

In these scenes there is an unmistakable similarity between the triple lightning bolt and the flames protruding from the mouth of the dragon, on the one hand, and on the other, the earlier Ur III seals depicting the same god on a bull-like creature. This suggests that the motifs go back at least to the Akkadian Period. Several seals feature this dual representation of the lightning associated with the Akkadian *usumgal* and the Babylonian lightning bolt.⁽¹²⁵⁾

*Old Babylonian Cylinder seal in Metropolitan Museum of Art, N. 1987.96.6 Weather god brandishing a scimitar and lightning fork stands on the back of a winged fire-breathing dragon approaching a worshiper holding an animal offering. A goddess stands frontally clasping both hands at her waist.⁽¹²⁶⁾(fig 8.A)

* a seal shows two dragons carry their heads to the ground; and, instead of having a forked tongue, a stream of three lines is vomited from their mouths. The god is on the front creature and lifts his bare leg, like Shamash, on the wing of the dragon. He carries a serpent rod. The nude goddess on the second dragon holds what appear to

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be lightning bolts in each hand. Between the two dragons is a standing figure carrying a weapon.⁽¹²⁷⁾(fig8-B)

* Seal with the god standing on a dragon, and holding the lightning bolt in his hand.⁽¹²⁸⁾(fig8-c)

* seal show a god clothed with a short garment, exactly like Adad, holds trident lightning bolt in his right hand and stands on a winged monster that might be patterned after a lion but for its short tail. ⁽¹²⁹⁾

* a seal show a bearded god stands on the back of dragon ,in his left hands holds a two-pronged lightning fork ,there is another in his right hand a well dragon neck ,he faces a god and behind him there is another one ⁽¹³⁰⁾

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal from Nineveh in BM . n 89807 show the king with a mace faces the suppliant goddess behind whom is a bearded god in a flounced robe, who is seated, facing left and holding forked lightning, on the back of a dragon which is pacing towards the right.⁽¹³¹⁾(fig8-D)

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal in BM n.89476 Show worshipper being led by a goddess before a deity who sits on a throne beneath a crescent moon; all the figures wear caps; behind the worshipper is a lion-griffin holding a trident and in front of the seated figure are a star and a head.⁽¹³²⁾

* A Neo-Babylonian cylinder in Vorderasiatisches Museum Nr. VA Bab 00647 show the storm god Adad, standing on a stylized pedestal, is shown with the lightning bolts in his hands, lion-dragon on a leash lying at his feet. His garment is decorated with the image of a ziggurat and three star-discs one below the other, which are depicting gold or silver pendants. ⁽¹³³⁾(fig8-E)

Sometimes the god Adad appears with the lightning fork only

without the bull or the dragon.(fig.9)

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal in BM ,n 22417 show Adad engraved as kilted god in smiting posture, with his hair in a curl and holding a lightning fork, standing to the left of a three-line inscription.⁽¹³⁴⁾

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal in BM n.89256 show suppliant goddess and the king with a mace face the ascending sun god whose foot rests on a mountain. In the upper field before the god is a lightning fork.⁽¹³⁵⁾

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal from Nimrud in BM n.89607 shows a king with a mace, and a robed king with one hand raised, face the storm god who holds a lightning fork.⁽¹³⁶⁾

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal in Metropolitan museum.1983.314.7 show a frontal nude goddess .two gods with a triple mace or plant? And weather god with a lightning fork stand in ascending posture wearing open robe.⁽¹³⁷⁾(fig9-A)

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal in BM n. 21209 show a king with a mace faces an ascending god who holds a lightning fork, and a god in a short, garment similar to his own who holds a crook above a small fish.⁽¹³⁸⁾

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal in Vorderasiatisches Museum VA 00823 show. A man in a long robe turns to the right towards a bearded god, who props his leading leg on a small pedestal. He holds a two-pointed lightning bolt in his outstretched right hand. The god is clothed with a long robe. Between deity and prayers a fly has been introduced in the lower part of the picture.⁽¹³⁹⁾

* Old Babylonian cylinder seal in BM n.86264 Shows a nude goddess to the right; the king with a mace faces a bearded god who wears a striped robe and holds a forked lightning in his right hand;

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in the field between them is a monkey.⁽¹⁴⁰⁾

*Two Old Babylonian Cylinder seals in Metropolitan mus.nos 1999.325.44; 1999.325.52 shows the storm god Adad with a lightning fork stand in ascending posture wearing open robe. In front of worshipers.⁽¹⁴¹⁾

*Old Babylonian cylinder seal in BM n. 132849 shows the king with a mace faces a robed deity who holds a lightning fork. Both figures wear pointed head-dresses; stand on a base-line. In the field are a pot and a ball-and-staff; a monkey.⁽¹⁴²⁾ (fig9-B)

*Middle Assyrian cylinder seal in BM n. 85486, a bearded god sits on a high-backed chair with a fringed seat; He wears a horned crown. The god raises a lightning trident in his left hand and rests his right hand on his knee. A table depicted before him. And a flaming incense burner, and beyond it stands a worshipper who may throw incense on the flame.⁽¹⁴³⁾ (Fig9-C)

4-Occurrence on the Kudurru(fig.10):

The lightning bolt is shown on all the complete Kudurru. Allocation by the inscription (*dingir*) on the Kudurru the lightning bolt set as a symbol of the storm god. It always depicted as a symbol on the kudurru. Several times it is an attributive Bull, never accompanied by a dragon. The regular occurrence of the lightning fork on the Kudurru shows the storm god as an important; the position of the symbol in the lower registers as an inferior god, in only three cases the honor of a symbol socket.⁽¹⁴⁴⁾

- The lightning bolt fork floating freely in the image field.⁽¹⁴⁵⁾
- The lightning bolt fork Standing on the line or floating freely in the image field.⁽¹⁴⁶⁾
- The lightning bolt fork standing on the line⁽¹⁴⁷⁾

- The lightning bolt fork standing on a symbol base ⁽¹⁴⁸⁾
- The lightning bolt fork held by a god who stands on a bull ⁽¹⁴⁹⁾
- The lightning bolt fork standing on a symbol base with a bull ⁽¹⁵⁰⁾
- The lightning bolt fork standing behind or on a bull ⁽¹⁵¹⁾
- The lightning bolt fork in unexplained context ⁽¹⁵²⁾
- The lightning bolt fork With the exception of the two stones with the fewest icons. ⁽¹⁵³⁾

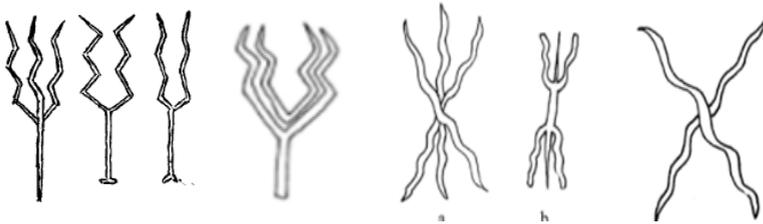
As revealed by the above examples and as has been pointed by Seidl, Adad is the most commonly represented god among divinities on Babylonian *kudurrus*. His allegedly prominent role among these renderings does not, however, fit the representations of the lightning bolt, when it appears on its own, replacing the deity's human-shaped image, as often portrayed in lower registers of the *kudurru* relief, implying his proportionally low status. Similarly, his anthropomorphic renderings do not accord with the deity's role as conveyed through the *kudurrus'* inscriptions.⁽¹⁵⁴⁾

Conclusion:

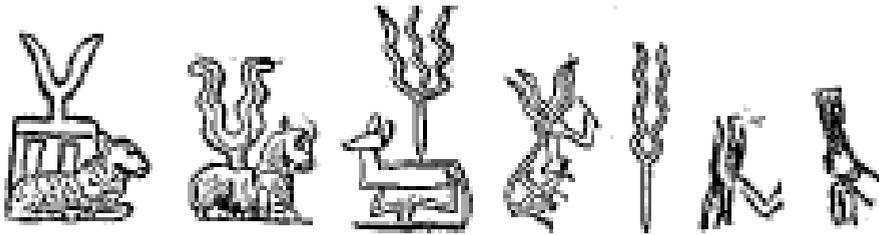
The dating of the emergence of the belief in 'lightning bolt' is definitely complicated. When talking about 'lightning bolt' as these are known and perceived on the basis of the text or iconography

The ancient Near East knew the lightning bolt fork as a mythical supernatural weapon linked to the gods of weather and storms and in Ancient ages the weapon has the power to defend against evil (Tiamat) (anzu) , Not only defense against evil but also the ability to protect, so we see it among the amulets to be placed by the Assyrian king It has the power of the God Adad so it can sometimes replacing him.

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Sibley, the Divine Thunderbolt .figs 4.1- 4.5



Ward, The seal cylinders, p399

Fig1



(Fig 2)Neo-Assyrian Relief Nimrud BM n. 124572



(fig.3) Collon Cylinder Seals V, n 285



(A) Legrain. Seal Cylinders, n. 540



(B) Collon, Seals III, n525



(C) Ward, The seal cylinders, n 469-470



D) Von der Osten, Newell, n196



(E) Von der Osten, Newell, n685



(F) Legrain. Seal Cylinders, n. 653



(G) Delaporte, Louvre, I, A304



(H) Delaporte Louvre, I, A.346



(I) Von der Osten Altorientalische n. 14



(J) Von der Osten, „Newell, n. 261

(fig4)

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(A) Ornan, *The Triumph*, fig 5



Relief of Assur-nasir-pal II.

(B) Wiseman, *A New Stela of Aššur-našir-pal II*



(C) Smith, *Assyrian Sculptures*, pl 1



(D) Unger, E., *Reliefstele Adad-niraris III Taf. 1. VII*



(E) Millard, *Adad-nirari III*



(F) Sargon II. Von Luschan, *Ausgrabungen Abb 5*

(Fig 5)



(A) Asarhaddon Von Luschan, Ausgrabungen a. 4



(B) Von der Osten Newell, n. 249



(C) Von der Osten, Baldwin, n. 71



(D) Collon Cylinder Seals III, n. 458



(E) Gordon, Western Asiatic Seals, n. 23



(F) Gordon, Western Asiatic Seals, 24

Fig6

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(A) Frankfort, *Cylinder Seals* pl29f



(B) Von der Osten, *Baldwin*, n.70



(C) Eisen, *Ancient oriental cylinder*, n.63



(D) Von der Osten *Newell*, 184



(E) Delaporte *Delaporte, Louvre, LA458*



(F) Collon, *Cylinder Seals III*, 246 pl.XX

(fig7)



(A) Pittman, *Ancient Art*, n32



(B) Ward, *The seal cylinders*, fig. 132



(C) Ward, *The seal cylinders*, fig. 464



(D) Collon, *Cylinder Seals III*, 108 pl.XI



(E). VA Bab 00647



Ward, *The seal cylinders*, n1275
(fig.8)

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(A) Pittman, *Ancient Art*, n33 (B) Collon *Cylinder Seals III*, 240, pl.XX



(C) Ward, *The seal cylinders*, n721

(fig9)



Seidl, Kudurru, 6 plate 4 c



Seidl, Kudurru, 86 Plate 29 b



Seidl, Kudurru, No. 50 plate 22 a



Seidl, Kudurru, Taf 10 b



Seidl, Kudurru, 37 Taf 16b



Seidl, Kudurru, Nr. 48 Taf. 19c

Fig.10

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The Margins

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 - *Several attempts to connect the whip with a lightning fork and find links but all seem to have failed (Frankfort , H. Cylinder Seals: A Documentary Essay on the Art and Religion of the Ancient Near East. London, 1939.,p127note 3)
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- 4- Bottéro E,J, and Kramer, S N.. Lorsque les dieux faisaient l'homme rev.1989 p. 165-187; Kramer, S and Maier,Myths of Enki, the Crafty God. NY/Oxford: 1989, p. 38-56 ; Benito, C.A. "Enki and Ninmah" and "Enki and the World Order". Philadelphia1969. , p. 77-160
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- 12- Schwemer, Die Wettergottgestalten, p129-31; Schwemer, The storm-gods1, p131.
- 13- In southern Mesopotamia, Sumerian and Akkadian written sources combine the gods Iškur and Adad together under the logogram ^dim (See, e.g., Edzard D. O., “Mesopotamien: Die Mythologie der Sumer und Akkader,” *WdM* 1.136; Doyle W. W, *The Storm-God Iskur-Adad: Texts and Studies* (Ph.D.Dissertation, Harvard University, 1976) 1–2. Iškur as the reading for ^dim was initially demonstrated by B. Hrozný, *ZA* 20 (1907) 424–26); to denote the deity primarily responsible for the rains. (a good assemblage of early material on ^dim during the Old Babylonian Period in Doyle, *The Storm-God Iskur-Adad: Texts and Studies*.) However, a conclusive equation of the Semitic Adad and the Sumerian Iskur as ^dim is not evident in extant sources until the Ur III Period. Prior to this time, the earliest Early Dynastic references to ^dim in Sumerian mythic texts appear to focus on Iškur. During the following Sargonic Period, the identity of ^dim is not at all conclusive; depending on the context, either the Sumerian Iškur or the Semitic Adad or both may be intended. (Roberts, *The Earliest Semitic Pantheon*, London 1972., p153, 163 n. 98.)
- 14- Schwemer, Die Wettergottgestalten, p11-12, p29-31, p129.
- 15 -Schwemer, Die Wettergottgestalten, p129-131.
- 16-Green,A.R The Storm-god in the Ancient Near East Biblical and Judicial studies from the university of California, san Diego volume 8, Indiana 2003, p50
- 17- Published by Kramer S. N., *From the Tablets of Sumer* (1956) 160ff.; A. Falkenstein, “Die Anunna in der sumerischen -berlieferung” in *Studies in Honor of Benno Landsberger on His Seventy-Fifth Birthday*, 1965(AS 16; Chicago, 1965) p127–40. It has been dated to as early as the latter part of

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Early Dynastic III but not later than 2400 b.c.e.

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- 20- Green, a.r *The Storm-god*, p50
- 21- Schwemer, *Die Wettergottgestalten*, p135-163 on the evidence for Iškur’s cult in Karkar(136ff.), Girsu (140ff.), Umma (145ff.), Nippur (150ff.), Ur (158ff.) and Uruk (161f.)
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- 23-Schwemer. *The Storm-god* 1, p132 ; Schwemer, *Die Wettergottgestalten* , p163-165).
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- 25-Roberts, *The Earliest Semitic Pantheon*, p153; Schwemer, *The Storm-god* 1, p137; Green, *the Storm-God*, p51)
- 26- Roberts, *The Earliest Semitic Pantheon*, p 13–14.
- 27-Schwemer, *Die Wettergottgestalten*, p124-125 with fn. 862 and 196-197; Schwemer, D. *The Storm-god* 1. p137
- 28-Green , *the Storm-God*., p52-53; Ebeling, “Adad,” in *RIA* 1.22–26
- 29- Green , *the storm god* p53- Schwemer, *The Storm-god* 1. p139
- 30- Green , *the storm god* p54
- 31-Basically, Iškur is here the god of all storms; or “Seven storms” = “all storms”; see Finkelstein J. J., “Untersuchungen zur sumerischen Grammatik,” *ZA* 45 (1954), p187
- 32- This earliest metaphor of the Storm-god “mounted on the storm” was initially restricted to Iškur alone in a Sumerian context. However, the same idea is

- expressed regarding Adad at a later date in *Atrahasis: dAdad i-na sar erbetti ir-ta-kab pa-reaeo-[su]* ‘Adad mounted upon the four winds, [his] asses’. See Lambert and Millard, *Atra-Hasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood* (Oxford: 1969) p122, rev. 5. Even though the word ‘chariot’ never appears in texts dealing with Iškur- Adad, as has been pointed out by Doyle (*The Storm-God Iškur-Adad*, 81), it is commonplace in compositions dealing with Ninurta. Foster, *Before the Muses*, “Atrahasis” II.39, 1.158–74.
- 33- Green ,the storm god,p57; also E. Ebeling, “Adad,” in *RIA* 1.22–26.
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- 35 -Green ,the storm god,p59
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&sp=0&sp=F&sp=T&sp=0
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