

Success, Protection and Grace: Three Fragments of a Personalized Magical Handbook*

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Introduction

The Cairo Genizah has yielded a vast assortment of amulets designed for a variety of purposes, including amulets designed to promote good health, apotropaic amulets, and amulets intended to bestow love, favor and grace on their wearers.¹ The languages in which these amulets are written are also varied.

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1 For collections of magic literature found in the Genizah see: L. H. Schiffman & M. D. Swartz, *Hebrew and Aramaic Incantation Texts from the Cairo Genizah: Selected Texts from Taylor-Schechter Box K1* [Semitic Texts and Studies 1] (Sheffield 1992; henceforth *HAITCG*); J. Naveh & Sh. Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity*, third edition (Jerusalem 1998; henceforth *AMB*); eadem, *Magic Spells and Formulae: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem 1993; henceforth *MSF*); P. Schäfer & Sh. Shaked (eds.), *Magische Texte aus der Kairoer Geniza* [Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum 42, 64, 72], (3 volumes, Tübingen 1994–1997; henceforth *MTKG*). For overviews of the subject see: P. Schäfer, “Jewish Magic Literature in Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages”, *Journal of Jewish Studies* 41 (1990), pp. 75–91; S. M. Wasserstrom, “The Magical Texts in the Cairo Genizah”, in J. Blau & S. C. Reif (eds.), *Genizah Research after Ninety Years: The Case of Judeo-Arabic* (Cambridge 1992), pp. 160–166. On specific issues see: M. D. Swartz, “Scribal Magic and its Rhetoric: Formal Patterns in Hebrew and Aramaic Incantations from the Cairo Genizah”, *Harvard Theological Review* 83 (1990), pp. 163–180; G. Bohak, “Greek, Coptic, and Jewish Magic in the Cairo Genizah”, *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 36 (1999), pp. 27–44; idem, “Reconstructing Jewish Magical Recipe Books from the Cairo Genizah”, *Ginzei Qedem* 1 (2005), pp. 9*–29*.

Most texts use more than one language, usually a combination of Hebrew with Aramaic or with Judeo-Arabic. As a rule the amulets were produced for specific users, who were named in the text. Sometimes we encounter a generic amulet, characterized by the formula “for the wearer (or: for any wearer) of this amulet” “ל(כל) נושא קמיע זה”.²

Amulets were usually written by professionals, on behalf of clients who commissioned them for specific purposes.³ The persons responsible for writing amulets may have been magicians, scribes or rabbinic scholars, and their true identity is a matter of debate. One thing is certain: these professionals frequently employed magical manuals or handbooks in order to produce the amulets they wrote. Fragments of many such handbooks have been preserved in the Cairo Genizah, and scholars of Jewish magic are familiar with much earlier examples.⁴ These manuals include recipes designed for a wide variety of purposes — one can find prescriptions for healing, for an easy delivery, for achieving love and for ridding a house of mice, all by magical means. The handbooks provide instructions, usually fairly detailed, as to how to achieve the desired objective in each case. These instructions prescribe action ranging from the manipulation of various “magical” materials, through adjurations of angels, to the production of amulets. Several of the amulets discovered in the Genizah display close textual similarities to one another, since they are based on the same magical recipes.

The format of ancient Jewish magical handbooks resembles that of a modern

2 Examples of generic amulets: *HAITCG*, pp. 131–136 (= Cambridge University Library T-S K 1.137); *MTKG*, vol. 2, text 41(= Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 1177.16). In many modern instances, the text of the amulet is written in advance, with blank spaces left for the name of the client to be inserted.

3 On the practitioners who wrote amulets see *HAITCG*, pp. 49–53.

4 Early Jewish magical literature includes *The Book of Mysteries* (ספר הרזים), *The Sword of Moses* (חרבא דמשה) and *Havdala of Rabbi Aqiva* (הבדלה דרבי עקיבא). See J. Naveh, “On Jewish Magical Recipe Books in Antiquity”, in A. Oppenheimer et al. (eds.), *The Jews in the Hellenistic-Roman World: Studies in Memory of Menachem Stern* (Jerusalem 1996), pp. 453–465 (Hebrew); idem, “Fragments of an Aramaic Magic Book from Qumran”, *Israel Exploration Journal* 48 (1998), pp. 252–261; G. Bohak, “Reconstructing Jewish Magical Recipe Books from the Cairo Genizah” (n. 1 above).

cookbook.⁵ Each recipe is usually preceded by a title describing its purpose: “for sleep”, “to make peace between a man and his wife”, “for a scorpion’s sting”, “for a headache”, etc.⁶ If the handbook contains several consecutive recipes for a single purpose, the headings after the first normally read: “another one”.⁷ The heading is followed by instructions detailing the steps to be taken in order to achieve the desired end.⁸ These instructions are usually formulated in the second person: “Take a freshly-laid egg and write on it...”, “Write on the hide of a deer...”, “Say over a cup of *Havdala* thrice and drink it”. At this point, most recipes indicate a magical formula to be written or recited. The formulae consist of adjurations, Biblical quotations, magical names, letter permutations, magical signs or drawings, etc. To indicate the persons involved in the magical procedure, the recipes employ the phrase “PN son/daughter of PN”, פלוני/ת בן/בת פלוני/ת. This phrase is to be replaced by the name of the client or that of other persons affected by the procedure when the magical formula is written down or recited. The end of a recipe is often indicated by a special sign, or by a remark such as “and this is true/proved”, or “(the recipe is) ended”. Magical handbooks from the Cairo Genizah employ several languages, and often the heading and instructions of a recipe are written in Judaeo-Arabic, while the magical formula to be recited or written is in Hebrew or in Aramaic.

In the Cairo Genizah one can discern two main classes of magical literature: handbooks of recipes and “finished products”, that is, amulets.⁹ However, it appears that a third genre of magical literature is also represented in the Genizah.

5 On the format of magical handbooks see also *MTKG*, vol. 1, pp. 5–8, with further literature.

6 These particular titles, as well as the instructions below, are from one of the magical handbooks published by Naveh and Shaked, *MSF*, text G16 (= Cambridge University Library T-S K 1.91 + T-S K 1.117).

7 See for example *AMB*, text G6 (= Cambridge University Library T-S K 1.73).

8 Sometimes the instructions appear at the end of the recipe, in which case they are preceded by the magical formula to be written or recited; for example: “For (finding) grace and for (achieving) authority. ‘Mercy and truth are met together (...)’. Write (it) and put (it) on your left (hand).” (*MSF*, text G16, 7:13–15).

9 I exclude from this discussion theoretical compositions of a mystical, alchemical or astrological nature, since they are essentially different from texts of “practical magic”.

This genre combines the two classes mentioned above into a single form: that of a personalized magical handbook. In this article I shall present three fragments of a manuscript discovered in the Cairo Genizah. All three fragments, now included in the E.N. Adler collection in the library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, were written by the same hand and share many characteristics (see below). They appear to have been part of a personalized magical handbook, custom-made for a man named Judah son of Josiah, or perhaps written by him.

The manuscript of which these fragments were once part was a small booklet, whose pages contained various sections, at least some of them of a magical nature. In a standard magical handbook, one would refer to each of these sections as an individual recipe. However, since these fragments are not parts of such a handbook, I prefer to designate the units of this text as “sections”. The writer clearly indicated the beginning and end of each of the surviving sections, either by a heading (“for the opening of the heart” — 2a:7, “for an evil eye and an evil person” — 2b:9), or by a concluding word (“ended” — 1a:17, 2b:9, 3a:13). In many respects the contents, style and format of these fragments closely resemble those of magical handbooks found in the Cairo Genizah, as described above. However, they are quite distinctive in two respects: A specific name has been inserted in place of the generic formula “PN son/daughter of PN”; and the surviving fragments of this handbook contain no instructions, only magical formulae, sometimes preceded by headings.

In the following pages I shall present the three fragments and analyze their structure and style. I will discuss several points of interest that arise from them — the beneficiary’s name, the identity of the writer, and the objectives of the magical formulae — and attempt to identify the persons mentioned in the fragments with historical figures known from other sources in the Cairo Genizah. The most significant question I shall address, however, concerns the literary genre of this composition. I intend to show that the three fragments (and possibly the entire manuscript of which they were once part) belong to an unusual literary genre, that of a personalized magical handbook.

The fragments¹⁰

All three fragments are written on paper in dark ink, on both sides. The first fragment, a nearly complete page, measures approximately 10.5 x 15.5 centimeters; the other fragments are torn and their original dimensions cannot be determined precisely. Wherever they are preserved the left, right and upper margins are approximately 1 centimeter wide and the lower margin 1.5 centimeters. In all three fragments, the name of God is indicated by two *yod*'s and accompanied by a distinctive design. Other features shared by all three fragments include boxed and overlined magical words and angelic names, and the repetition of certain words (*qdwsh*, 'l, 'h etc.). The writer uses an overline also to indicate abbreviated words. A preliminary paleographic examination of the three fragments, kindly performed by Prof. Edna Engel, suggests a date in the 12th century.

I doubt that the location of each fragment in the original compilation can be established with certainty. Some clues suggest a certain order, while other clues suggest another. The numbering of the fragments in the present article should therefore be regarded as arbitrary.

Fragment no. 1¹¹

ENA 2124.28

This is a complete page, fairly well preserved. The recto contains 25 lines and

10 The first reading of the texts from microfilm was done by Ms. Shani Levi, as part of an extensive research project entitled "Jewish Magical Recipe Books from the Cairo Genizah", conducted by Dr. Gideon Bohak of Tel Aviv University and funded by the Israel Science Foundation (Grant No. 725/03). My own reading is based on scans kindly provided by the Jewish Theological Seminary Library. I have not examined the fragments themselves.

I am grateful to Dr. Gideon Bohak, Prof. Mordechai Akiva Friedman, Prof. Edna Engel, Prof. Alexander Fodor, Dr. Yoram Erder, Dr. Miriam Frenkel and Prof. Meira Poliack for reading the texts and for their helpful remarks and suggestions.

11 Biblical quotations have been translated according to the New International Version. Text written in Arabic characters is translated in italics. Names of angels have not been transliterated.

the verso 24 lines. The text is partly in Aramaic, partly in Hebrew, and includes one phrase written in Arabic.

	א1
מבואו מהלל שם יי רם על ג[וי]ים יי וג' מי כיי	1
אלהינו וג' המשפילי לראות וג' מקימי מעפר דל וג'	2
להושיבי עם נדיבים וג' מושיבי עקרת וג' בצאת	3
ישראל ממצרים וג' היתה יהודה לקדשו וג' עד [ח]למיש	4
למעינו מים הללויה: יהאות יתיא יאֵמר אינאות	5
אאות מר[א]ות בראות איות אהאית איות	6
אאבי אֹת א[א]ית אמנתב אתליתי יאות אנת	7
שמֵהֵאות קדאות אצפאל קמיאל קנינאל קדיאל	8
קֵתמֵאל קדסיאל יהוה הי אה ואֵהוא יה יה וא י[ן] ה	9
הו הו יה יה הו יה יה אהה יה וה יה יהו אהה יה יה	10
צבאות אלהי איה באות באֵאות איה הוא הוא	11
אמֵרה האו בדת הדרי[אל] והודיאל [י]ה ומיכאל	12
וגבריאל וסמחיאל שמהתא קדישי עזרו ית יהודה	13
בר יאשיה הנולד מן מיאם והצליחוני בכל מעשי	14
בשם שה קדה שקהֵהו ציו יה אה והרויחו	15
אותי במזונותי והפדוני לרוב סרהוב סרהוב	16
ובצלחה תֵמַת בְּחַמְדֵּי רֵבְנָא אֶלְוָחַד וְהוּ חֲסִיבִי וּמַעֲיִנִי	17
הדין חרבא דמשה נבייא בר עמרם עה	18
תהוי זכאה וקשיטא ועשה אותה בטהרה ובקדושה בישרות	19
לבב ונקיות כפים למען יבוא על כל דבר ודבר שמיה קדישה	20
ושמיה יקירא ושמא חביבא ושמא שפירא ושמא גיברא ושמא	21
דֵאמר ועביד וכל מימריה מתקיים שמא <ד>מתחבל ¹² ומשני מיצפי עֵינֵי	22
אנשא ביה ובעירא ורוחתא שפירתא בשם יי צבאות נעשה בשם	23
[] שם רחום וחנן צדיק גדול נורא גבור אהוב חביב נחמד נְעִים	24
אדיר חזק ומתוקן ומ[קוב]ל טוב ויקר ושלום וי[ן] []	25

12 The letter ʾ is written above the line.

ב1

- 1 אלהים אדון מלך עזוז ומעוז ברוך ומבורך צור עושה פלא פועל מוציא
- 2 עמו מאוד הוא גואל ומושיע ממית ומחיה מוריד ומעלה מ[וריש?]
- 3 ומעשיר משפיל ומרים צפון צופן מביט וחובל ומרחם שומר
- 4 אלהינו אמר הוא ועושה גוזר ומקיים מקים מעפר דל מכה
- 5 ומרפא משיב הרוח ומוריד הגשם מרעיף הטל מחיה¹³ מתים
- 6 תמים פעלו מטֹב הוא ומרחם הוא ובוחן לב וחוקר כליות
- 7 אל אדון נושא עון ועובר על פשע עובר חטא טהור ומכלכל
- 8 מזין ומפרנס ועושה ניסין ועושה ישועה טובה סלה יושב
- 9 שדי ובורא חשך נאמן יפה חזק ומציל אש דת אפ גת
- 10 תורה תמימה ישרה נאמ[נה] טהורה אהובה שחורה שנחתמה
- 11 ח[ב]יבה אחת חדשה ישנה ישוֹנֵנֹ דגולה סגלה רחומה אשבעית
- 12 עליכון אתון שמהתא קדישיא שתהיו בכל עת ובכל רגע ובכל
- 13 שעה עם יהודה בר יאשיה דילידת מן מיאם ותתנו אותו לחן
- 14 לחסד ולרחמים בעיני כל מלכ[ים] ובעיני כל בני ישראל ותלמידי
- 15 חכ' ותשמרוני מכף אויב ואורב ושטן וכל פגע רע וכל מה שלבי
- 16 מתרגש ממנו בשם גבריאל מיכאל סרלטן מיטטרון שר הפנים
- 17 גליצור רפאל אליהוא שלתיאל שמשיאל רחמיאל ברקיאל
- 18 ענניאל ערפיאל חכמיאל קמכיאל קספיאל חביביאל
- 19 חסדיאל] אל חנניאל קדשיאל חמיאל קניאל קמואל חקביאל
- 20] קיאל אתיאל תריאל [ת]ציאל חרמיאל חשיאל חסכיאל פלטיאל
- 21] פיאל קנצביאל חליאל גשמיאל מטריאל מחמריאל מניאל
- 22] מיאל רומיאל רומיאל נחמיאל מלכיאל חמיאל
- 23 חֵשב[א]ל אסיאל חמיאל השתיאל הממיאל גריאל גֵדֹאל
- 24 [א]ל מומינא עליכון אתון [מלא]כי השרת שתחיו ותש[]

13 The letter n is written over a כ.

1a

1 []the place where it sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised.¹⁴ The
 Lord is exalted over all the nations, etc.¹⁵ Who is like the Lord
 2 our God, etc.¹⁶ Who stoops down to look, etc.¹⁷ He raises the poor from the
 dust, etc.¹⁸
 3 He seats them with princes, etc.¹⁹ He settles the barren woman, etc.²⁰ When
 Israel came out
 4 of Egypt, etc.²¹ Judah became God's sanctuary, etc.²² until The hard rock
 5 into springs of water.²³ Hallelujah: yh'wt²⁴ yty' y''mr 'yn'wt
 6 ''wt mr[']wt br'wt 'y't 'h'yt 'y't
 7 ''by 'w?t '[']yt 'mntb 'tlyty y'wt 'nt
 8 šmh?'wt qd'wt²⁵ Ašfiel Qamiel Qaniniel Qadiel
 9 Q?atmi?el Qadsiyel yhwh hy 'h w'h?w' yh yh w' y[]h
 10 hw hw yh hw yh yh 'hh yh wh yh yhw 'hh yh yh
 11 Hosts my God 'yh b'wt b'y?'wt 'yh hw' hw'
 12 'mr?h h'w bdt Hadri[el] and Hodiel [y]h and Michael
 13 and Gabriel and Samḥiel. (You) holy names, assist Judah

14 Psalms 113:3.

15 Psalms 113:4.

16 Psalms 113:5.

17 Psalms 113:6.

18 Psalms 113:7.

19 Psalms 113:8.

20 Psalms 113:9.

21 Psalms 114:1.

22 Psalms 114:2. The use of this particular chapter is probably not coincidental. In the Jewish tradition, this chapter is supposed to explain the superiority of the tribe of Judah. See Tosefta Berakhot 4, 18 (J. Neusner & R. S. Sarason [eds.], *The Tosefta Translated from the Hebrew. First Division: Zeraim* [Hoboken 1986], pp. 25–26, sections U–Y): “Why, then, did Judah merit his kingship? (...) He [R. Tarfon] said to them: (...) Scripture states, Judah became his sanctuary. Judah sanctified the name of God at the sea. Therefore, *Israel [is] his dominion*”.

23 Psalms 114: 8.

24 From this point until line 13, “Samḥiel”, all the words are overlined.

25 Perhaps a mutilated version of *šmw't qd'wshwt* שמות קדושות (holy names).

- 14 son of Josiah, born of Myam, and let me succeed in all my deeds,
 15 in the name of šh²⁶ qdh šqhd?hw syw yh 'h, and be generous
 16 to me with regard to my food and protect me thoroughly. Quickly,
 quickly,²⁷
 17 and with success. *Ended. In praise of our Lord, the One. He is sufficient
 for me and He is my helper.*²⁸
 18 This is the sword of Moses the prophet, son of Amram, peace be
 upon him.²⁹
 19 Let it be pure and true, and perform it in purity and in holiness and with
 a pure
 20 heart and integrity, so that on every thing will come His holy name
 21 and His dear name and the beloved name and the good name and the
 strong name and the name
 22 who says and who acts and all He says is fulfilled.³⁰ A name that is
 destroyed and changes, watching, guarding (?)
 23 man in it (?) and cattle and a good spirit, in the name of the Lord of Hosts
 we shall perform,³¹ in the name
 24 [] in the name (of Him who is) merciful and compassionate,³² righteous,
 great, terrible, champion, beloved, agreeable, kind, pleasant (?)

26 From this point until the word 'h all the words are overlined.

27 From the Aramaic root טרַב, טרהב, meaning "to hasten". Cf. the formula ending ancient Greek spells: "Now, now, quickly, quickly".

28 Written in Arabic.

29 This title and the following lines are written in a smaller script. The acronym עה for עליו השלום, "peace be upon him", is overlined.

30 Targum Onkelos, Numbers 23:19.

31 The words "hosts" and "perform" are overlined, perhaps meaning that the writer addressed them as holy names.

32 From this point until 1b:9, the text is highly reminiscent of the Hekhalot literature. See P. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur* [Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum, 2] (Tübingen 1981); P. Schäfer, *Geniza-Fragmente zur Hekhalot-Literatur* [Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum, 6] (Tübingen 1984; henceforth Schäfer, *Geniza-Fragmente*); P. Schäfer, *Konkordanz zur Hekhalot-Literatur* [Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum, 13] (2 volumes, Tübingen 1986–1988).

- 12 you, you holy names, that you shall be in all times and in every moment
and in every
- 13 hour with Judah son of Josiah, born of Myam, and you shall offer him
favor,
- 14 grace and mercy in the eyes of all kings, and in the eyes of all the Children
of Israel and of rabbinic
- 15 scholars,³⁵ and you shall protect me from the hand of an enemy and of an
ensnarer and of a devil and (from) every evil harm and everything that my
heart
- 16 is concerned about, in the name of Gabriel,³⁶ Michael, Sarlatan, Metatron
the Prince of the Presence
- 17 Galişur, Raphael, Elihu', Shaltiel, Shamshiel, Raḥmiel, Barqiel,
18 'Ananiel, 'Arpiel, Ḥakmiel, Qamḥiel, Qaspiel, Ḥabibiel,
19 Ḥasdiel, []el, Ḥananiel, Qadshiel, Ḥamiel, Qaniel, Qamuel, Ḥaqbiel,
20 []qiel, 'Atiel, Tariel, [T?a]şiel, Ḥarmiel, Ḥashiel, Ḥaşiel, Paltiel,
21 []fiel, Qanşabiel, Ḥaliel, Gashmiel, Matariel, Maḥmariel, Maniel,
22 []miel, Romiel, Romiel, Naḥmiel, Malkiel, Ḥamiel,
23 Ḥashavel, 'Asiel, Ḥamiel, Hashtiel, Hamamiel, Gariel, Gad?oel,
24 []el, I adjure you, you ministering angels, that you shall revive and []

Fragment no. 2

JTSL ENA 3677.8

A torn page, about two-thirds preserved. The surviving text (18 lines on the recto, 17 on the verso) is in fairly good condition. The text is partly in Aramaic, partly in Hebrew, and contains one word in Arabic.

א2

[	] אורחיה []	1
[	]א[]א...ד []	2

35 Abbreviated.

36 All the angelic names, from this point until line 24, are boxed.

אשיהו בשם יהו חי הו חי הוה אדיריקון	] 13
ריקון חתים ומחתם יהודה בר יאשיהו בשם יהו	] 14
א חי הוה אדיריקון דדקון ריקון חתים ומחתם	] 15
בר יאשיהו בשם יהו חי הו חי הוה אדיריקון	] 16
קון ריקון חתים ומחתם יהודה בר יאשיהו מן	] 17

2a

- 1 [] his way []
2 [] ?? ????
3 his way Şuriel³⁸ [from]
4 his head to save him and we shall protect him []
5 and evil person and every harmful and evil creature from [this day]
6 []??³⁹ All hyzb' hyzb' t̄twmym yrwt Amen A[men]
7 For the opening of the heart l̄pn⁴⁰ q̄pln qn q??h qn qwsih 'b[]
8 'bdwsyh 'bswsyh 'bswsyh 'yglwn q̄py 'şl d[]
9 'g?y for lament (?) in the name of tr qns⁴¹ in the name of Metatron⁴² in
the name []
10 in the name of Michael in the name of Uziel in the name of Şuriel in the
name of 'Achr[]
11 seven angels who serve in front of the Holy One, Blessed be He,⁴³ in
terror in []
12 [] ?? [] in all kinds of crafts, as it was said:⁴⁴ And I have filled him with
the spirit of God, with [skill]⁴⁵

38 The word is overlined.

39 From this point until the word *yrwt* all the words are overlined.

40 From this point until the word *lmspd* ("for lament"?) in line 9 all the words are overlined.

41 The two words are overlined.

42 This and the following angelic names in line 10 are overlined.

43 Overlined.

44 Abbreviated.

45 Exodus 31:3. "And I have filled him with the spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts."

- 13 One thing I ask of you, Lord, etc.⁴⁶ In the name of yhy⁴⁷ yhy yhy because
yhw[]
- 14 dty dty td?y tytsn h' hy' btly Here, he rejoices (?) []
- 15] 'g⁴⁸ man 'dpt⁴⁹ sgyt ht pz hb hq hk? plylwm y?h?[]
- 16 Amen Amen: Sela: In the name of the Lord of Hosts in the place in which
[the Shechina?] dwelt (?) []
- 17 Moses the righteous on Mount Horeb for the opening of the heart for me,
I, Judah son [of Josiah,]
- 18 born of Myam, I adjure you, the secret of the Torah and the secret of the
doors (?) and the [secret]

2b

- 1 [] words of Talmud []
- 2 [] and I, this is⁵⁰
- 3 [] yh yh⁵¹ 'h 'h 'h 'h 'h
- 4 [] hwh hh hh mš pš ywy of Hosts
- 5 [en]throned over the cherubim and in the name of y?hdd? its
text⁵² is
- 6 [] The Law that Moses gave us, etc.⁵³ Alive complete alive
complete.

46 Psalm 27:4, modified: "One thing I ask of the Lord".

47 From this point until the word *btly* in the next line all the words are overlined.

48 Overlined.

49 From this point until the word *hk* all the words are overlined.

50 Possibly the beginning of Isaiah 59:21: "'As for me, this is my covenant with them,' says the Lord. 'My Spirit, who is on you, and my words that I have put in your mouth will not depart from your mouth, or from the mouths of your children, or from the mouths of their descendants from this time on and forever,' says the Lord."

51 From this point until the word *ywy* in the next line, all the words are overlined.

52 The word *nwsħyh*, meaning "its text", is overlined. The writer may have wanted to emphasize the beginning of the quoted text, or else he perceived the word as a magical name, *Nuṣḥiya*.

53 Deuteronomy 33:4: "The law (Torah) that Moses gave us, the possession of the assembly of Jacob."

The surviving text is in fairly good condition. 22 lines have been preserved on the recto, and 23 lines on the verso. The text is partly in Aramaic, partly in Hebrew, and contains one word in Arabic. The writer is not consistent in the letter forms: the combination "אל" appears sometimes as a ligature (verso, line 15, ברקיאַל) but more often as two separate letters. A grid design (a "magical sign") appears on the verso. / represents the line separating the two fragments.

א3

1	] ה בר /
2	יה] ש[די אהיה/
3	אבג ית[ן] קרע משן נגד י[כ/ש
4	יגל פזק שקוצית ובארבעה/
5	אנקתם פסתם פספסים ודיו[ניסים /
6	אני מכם ומבקש מכם השמות /
7	אני עליכם שתלהיט להודיה / בר [ש]למה []
8	יהודה בר יאשיה מים רבים לא/ יוכלו לכבות את האהבה
9	ונהרות לא ישטפוה אם יתן הו/דיה בר שלמה את כל
10	הון ביתו ליהודה בר יאשיה/ בוז יבוזו לו כאיל
11	תערוג על אפיקי מים כ/ן נפש הודיה בר שלמה
12	תערוג אליך יהודה בר י/אשיה ויבא אליו מהרה
13	קל יבא אאסלה تمت / מזומן הדין רזא רבא להוי
14	כחרבא לטישא ביד יהודה בר יאש/יה הנולד מן מיאם בשם
15	י צבאות יושב הכרובים אה]יה / אשר אהיה אדיררון אכתריאל
16	יהוה יהוה ויהוה יהוה יהוה/ה אה אה אה אה אה
17	אה אה אה קדוש קדוש קדוש/ קדוש קדוש קדוש קדוש
18	קדוש קדוש קדוש קדוש/ אל אל אל אל אל אל אל אל
19	אל אל אל אל אל אל אל/ אל אל אל אל אל אל אל אל
20	אדיר אדיר אדיר אדיר / [א]דיר א[ד]יר אדיר אדיר
21	אדיר אדיר אדיר אדיר[נו/ר]א נורא נורא נורא נורא
22	נורא נורא נורא נורא נורא/נו נורא נורא אלהים אלהים

	ב3
ה/אהי[ה]	1
[יעי /ממונים ב]	2
[שר] / הפנים סנדלפון שהוא	3
[הש]/מות הטובות היאות דגיתי	4
/ד עם יהודה בר יאשיה הנולד	5
[לח]/סד ולרחמים בעיני מלכים	6
/ תלמידי חכ' ותתנו חלקו בתורת	7
ק ות תֹ/רה ולא תחשה מפיו תורה	8
משיבוע אני עליך עזאל / המלאך הממונה על האהבה	9
שתטע אהבתי בל/ב כל רואיו מישראל ועד גויי	10
הארצות ועוד משיבוע / אני עליכם סנוי וסמנגלין	11
שתתנו לי חלק טוב בתור/ה ותשמרוני מכל וכל לשון	12
אויב ואורב על הדרך ות/סכרו את פי כל דוברי	13
הרע עליו אמן אמן סלה / אל אל אל יהוה יהוה	14
אהאיה אה אה נצֹר / הא ברקיאל בריאל גבריאל	15
מיכאל מיכאל עניאל / עניאל עתתיאל עתתיאל	16
שמחזי שמחזי משב[י]/ע אני עליכם באלו השמות	17
המפורשות לעולם ובש/ם הגדול שלא תשנו ולא	18
תשתנו ממה שכתוב ל/עיל אמן אמן נצח סלה	19
/ בשם רחום וחנון <i>magical sign</i>	20
/ לשמך אני עושה מזומן הדין	21
[ר/ז]א והדין קמיעא ליהודה בר	22
יא /שיה הנולד מן מיאם []	23

3a

1 [	Juda]h son [
2 yh [	š?dy ⁶⁰ 'hyh

60 From this point until the word *qr'* in the next line, all the words are overlined.

- 3 'bg yt[š] qr' mshn⁶¹ ngd⁶² y [kš]
 4 ygl pzq šqwšyt and by the four [names]
 5 'nqtm⁶³ pstm ppsym and dyw[nysym]
 6 I [demand] from you and ask of you, the names []
 7 I [adjure] you to inflame Hodiah son of [So]lomon⁶⁴ []
 8 Judah son of Josiah. Many waters cannot quench love
 9 and rivers cannot wash it away.⁶⁵ If Hodaiah son of Solomon were to give
 all the
 10 wealth of his house to Judah son of Josiah, he would be utterly [scorned].⁶⁶
 As the deer
 11 pants for streams of water, so the soul of Hodaiah son of Solomon
 12 pants for you, Judah son of Josiah.⁶⁷ And he shall come to him swiftly
 13 and speedily.⁶⁸ A(men) A(men)⁶⁹ Sela. *Ended.*⁷⁰ This great secret is
 designated to be
 14 as a sharp sword in the hand of Judah son of Josiah, born of Myam,⁷¹ in
 the name of

61 The combination *štn* (which can be read "Satan") has been replaced, probably intentionally, by *mshn*. Furthermore, it is not overlined, as are the adjacent words.

62 From this point until the word *šqwšyt* in the next line, all the words are overlined.

63 From this point until the word *dyw[nysym]* all the words are overlined.

64 Hodaiah's name has been deliberately crossed out, either by the writer or by a different person. The practice of deleting names contained in amulets, prior to casting the amulets into the Genizah, is known from other instances. See for example *MTKG*, vol. 1, pp. 192–198 (= Cambridge University Library T-S AS 142.39).

65 Song of Songs 8:7.

66 A modified version of Song of Songs 8:7: "If one were to give all the wealth of his house for love, he would be utterly scorned."

67 A modified version of Psalm 42:2: "As the deer pants for the streams of water, so my soul pants for you, o Lord."

68 A modified version of Isaiah 5:26: "...here they come, swiftly and speedily."

69 Overlined.

70 Written in Arabic.

71 Overlined.

15 the Lord of Hosts who is enthroned between the Cherubim, I am who I
 am,⁷² Adiraron Aḥatriel
 16 yhwh yhwh whyh whyh wh yh wh 'h 'h 'h 'h 'h
 17 'h 'h 'h holy holy holy holy holy holy holy
 18 holy holy holy holy holy God God God God God
 19 God
 20 mighty mighty mighty mighty [might]ty m[igh]ty mighty mighty
 21 mighty mighty mighty mighty [terri]ble terrible terrible terrible
 22 terrible terrible terrible terrible terrible terrible terrible God God

3b

1 [] h 'hyh []
 2 [] appointed [] ???
 3 [Prince] of the Presence Sandalphon that is (?)
 4 [] the good the proper (names) d?gyt?y
 5 [] with Judah son of Josiah born
 6 [fa]vor and mercy in the eyes of kings
 7 [] biblical scholars⁷³ and may you offer him a
 share in the Torah of
 8 [To?]rah and the Torah shall not be absent from
 his mouth.
 9 I adjure you, 'Azael the angel appointed over love,
 10 to plant my love in the heart of all those who see him, from Israel to the
 peoples
 11 of the lands and I further adjure you, Sanoy and Samangalin,⁷⁴
 12 to offer me a good share of the Torah, and to protect me from each and
 every tongue

72 Exodus 3:14.

73 Abbreviated.

74 Both angelic names are overlined, as is 'Azael in line 9.

- 13 of enemy and ensnarer upon the road, and to shut the mouth of all the
speakers
- 14 of evil about him. Amen Amen Sela. God God God God⁷⁵ yhwh⁷⁶ yhwh
- 15 'h'hy 'h 'h nṣr? h' Barqiel Bariel⁷⁷ Gabriel
- 16 Michael Michael 'Aniel 'Aniel 'Atatiel 'Atatiel
- 17 Shemḥazai Shemḥazai, I adjure you by these names
- 18 forever explicit, and by the great name, that you shall not change and
shall not
- 19 alter from what is written above. Amen Amen Netzach Sela.
- 20 (grid — magical sign) In the name of (the) Merciful and Compassionate
- 21 I do this on behalf of your name. Appointed is this
- 22 [sec]ret and this amulet to Judah son of
- 23 J[o]siah born of Myam []

Contents

The three fragments reproduced above do not share a uniform literary style, or even a uniform language. They contain text written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic. Grammatically, their voice is sometimes in the first and sometimes in the third person singular. The handwriting varies in size, and some passages are written in a smaller script than other, adjacent ones. However, all three fragments were written by the same person, and most probably were part of a single booklet. As will be shown below, this was a personalized magical handbook, intended for the benefit of a single individual named Judah son of Josiah, born of *My'm* (presumably this is his mother's name). Except in fragment no. 3, no drawings or magical signs appear in the surviving texts. On the bottom right verso of this fragment a large design, consisting of a rectangular grid, is drawn. We now turn to an analysis of the contents of the fragments.

75 The last four words are surrounded by a contour line.

76 From this point until the name "Barqiel" in the next line, each word is boxed.

77 From this point until the name "Shemḥazay" in line 17, all the words are overlined.

Fragment no. 1. The first 17 lines on the recto are a continuation from a previous page, which has not survived or has not yet been identified. These lines are written in a larger script than the following ones (1a:18–25). They end with a concluding formula: “Quickly, quickly and with success”, followed by a phrase written in Arabic letters. These features emphasize that one section has ended and a new one, written in smaller script and opening with a title, is to begin.

In what survives of the first section of this fragment (1a:1–17) one may discern several distinct parts. The text begins with a long series of verses from Psalms 113–114, quoted only by their first words, followed by an “etc.,” “וּגְוַמְרָ” (1a:1–5). This part ends with the word “Hallelujah”, followed by a colon. It is followed by a list of magical words and names of angels (1a:5–13), each designated by a horizontal line drawn above it. Some of these appear to be *nomina barbara*, for instance אִתְלִית and אִמְנַחֵב. Others consist of vowel permutations, like אֵה וְאוּ וְאֵי יֵה. Some others are familiar characters, such as Michael and Gabriel. These three classes of names comprise the entities that the writer wishes to subject to his power. In line 13 the writer refers to them as “holy names” (שְׁמֵהֶתָא קְדִישִׁי), and demands that they assist Judah b. Josiah, born of Myam, and bring him success in all his deeds (1a:14). Another adjuration follows, this time in the name of “שֵׁה קְדָה שְׁקֵהֶרְהוּ צִיּוֹ יֵה אֵה”, with the aim of improving Judah’s finances (וְהַרְוִיחוּ אוֹתִי בְּמִזְוֹנוֹתִי) and saving him (וְהַפְדּוּנִי). It should be noted that the writer here uses the first person singular, which, however, does not prove that it was Judah himself who wrote the text. In other instances the third person is used (e.g. 1b:13, 2a:4, 2b:7, 3b:7–8). Alternation between the first and third persons in a single text, or even within a phrase, is fairly common in Genizah magical recipes, as well as in the amulets copied from them (for instance, amulet T-S K 1.163 = *MTKG*, vol. 2, text 42, pp. 246–257).

This fragmentary section ends with an Aramaic formula: “סְרֵהוּב סְרֵהוּב” (quickly, quickly), followed by the assertion “with success” (בְּצִלְחָה) and by several words written in Arabic. The first word in Arabic letters is “tamāt”,

meaning “(the spell / the amulet) is ended”. The presence of this Arabic term strongly suggests that the text was copied from a magical handbook, as this expression (both in Arabic and in Hebrew) is used in Jewish magical texts to designate the end of a recipe, and, as far as I know, does not appear in amulets or other “finished products” intended for practical use. Following it, we find an Arabic sentence: “*Bi-ḥamdi rabina al-wahid wa-huwa ḥasbi wamu‘aini*”, meaning: “In praise of our Lord, the One. He is sufficient for me and He is my helper.”

Line 1a:18 is the beginning of a new section, which continues on the verso. It is written by the same hand but in smaller lettering. This section is a distinct textual unit, bearing the title “This is the Sword of Moses the Prophet son of Amram, peace be upon him” (line 18).⁷⁸ The text is not identical to that of the famous magical compilation by the same name, *Ḥarba de-Moshe*.⁷⁹ Several magical compilations claiming to have been handed down by Moses have survived from the Middle Ages.

On 1a:19–20 the writer directs one to perform the Sword “in purity and in holiness and with a pure heart and integrity”. However, the instructions as to what to perform are lacking. Instead, one finds a series of divine epithets (1a:23–25, 1b:1–9), some of which are known from other sources in the Hekhalot literature. The Lord is described by lists of adjectives and of juxtaposed opposing expressions: He is said to take life and to revive, to raise up and to lower (1b:2), to strike and to heal (1b:4–5).

The writer proceeds by adjuring “holy names” (שמהותא קדישיא) to bring Judah b. Josiah favor and grace (חן וחסד) “in the eyes of all kings and all the people of Israel and scholars”, and to preserve him from any enemy, devil or danger that his heart might fear. It is not entirely clear if the holy names the

78 R. Leicht, “Some Observations on the Diffusion of Jewish Magical Texts from Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages in Manuscripts from the Cairo Genizah and Ashkenaz”, in Sh. Shaked (ed.), *Officina Magica: Essays on the Practice of Magic in Antiquity* (Leiden 2005), p. 225.

79 Y. Harari, *Ḥarba de-Moshe (The Sword of Moses): A New Edition and a Study* (Jerusalem 1997) [Hebrew].

writer refers to are the divine epithets listed above, or the angelic names listed below (1b:16–24). He enumerates no less than 53 “ministering angels” (מלאכי) (השרת) (1b:24). They are adjured in the final line of the page to perform further tasks, not preserved in this fragment. Several of these angelic names are also present in the Hekhalot literature, but not necessarily in the same order, so it cannot be said that the author had a specific Hekhalot passage in mind when creating his composition.

Fragment no. 2. The upper part of the page is missing. It appears that the surviving text contains an adjuration of (several?) angels to safeguard and protect Judah b. Josiah. This is concluded with some unintelligible words, perhaps *nomina barbara*, and with the word “Amen” (2a:6).

Next follows a new section, clearly indicated by an indented paragraph (2a:7), which bears the title “for the opening of the heart” (i.e. to facilitate memorizing the Torah). It contains several magical names, a list of seven names of angels (of which two are now lost), and a biblical quotation from Exodus 31:3, related to increasing one’s wisdom. Following this verse, the writer adjures more magical names, in a sequence which seems to contain traces of a Hebrew phrase (היא בתלי הנה שש). On fol. 2a line 16 appears the “Amen Amen Selah” formula followed by a colon, yet the following lines concern the same topic, that is, the “opening of the heart”. The writer mentions “Moses the Righteous at Mount Horeb”.

It is not clear whether the same section continues on the verso. The expression “words of Talmud” (2b:1) and the verse from Deuteronomy concerning “the Torah that Moses gave us” (2b:6) would suggest this. The following phrase, however (2b:7), deals with the protection of Josiah’s son from various dangers, so it could be that this is part of another section, the beginning of which is lost. The section concludes with the Arabic word “tamat” (2b:9) that we have already encountered in fragment no. 1. After this concluding term, the writer left a small blank space, thus clearly indicating the beginning of a new section.

The first phrase of this section (2b:9) appears to be the title of a magical

recipe: “For an evil eye and an evil person. Effective. Proved”. Such affirmations attesting to the efficacy of recipes are fairly common in Jewish magical handbooks.⁸⁰ The title is followed by “an amulet for the health of Judah son of Myam” (2b:10), so that “he may be protected from all severe illnesses” (2b:11). However, while an ordinary magical recipe would offer instructions for the user, such as “write...” or “recite...”, followed by a magical formula, our fragment contains only the magical formula (that is, the text of the amulet), personalized by the insertion of Judah’s name. This peculiar blending of characteristics of two literary genres, recipes and amulets, reinforces my assumption that we are dealing with a distinct genre, that of a personalized magical handbook.

The surviving portion of the “amulet” consists of a series of four phrases, each beginning with the formula “sealed and countersealed” (2b:12, 14, 15, 17),⁸¹ and containing various divine names and vowel permutations. The end of the amulet has not been preserved.

Fragment no. 3. The upper part of the page is missing, and the surviving text begins with the divine 42–letter name (אבג יתץ), followed by the 22–letter name (אנקתם פסתם פספסים ודיוניסים).⁸² The writer appeals to these names, demanding that they “inflamm Hodaiah son of Solomon” (3a:7). The petition proceeds with a quotation from the Song of Songs 8:7, into which the writer introduces the names of Judah and Hodaiah, thus turning the nonspecific biblical verse “If one were to give all the wealth of his house for love, he would be utterly scorned” into a personalized appeal: “If Hodaiah son of Solomon were to give all the wealth of his house to Judah son of Josiah, he would be utterly scorned” (3a:9–10). Similarly, a verse from Psalm 42 which describes the yearning of the Psalmist’s

80 Cf. *MSF*, text G14 (= Cambridge University Library T-S K 1.58, 4: 12); *MTKG*, vol. 1, p. 135 (= Cambridge University Library T-S K 1.28, fol. 1a:2).

81 Cf. the formula “sealed and countersealed” found in a Babylonian magic bowl: J. A. Montgomery, *Aramaic Incantation Texts from Nippur* (Philadelphia 1913), bowl 7, lines 2–3, p. 145.

82 On the divine names see J. Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition: A Study in Folk Religion* (New York 1939; reprinted Jerusalem 2004), pp. 90–97.

soul towards God is transformed into a personalized plea, in which Hodaiah's soul yearns towards Judah b. Josiah (3a:10–12).⁸³ The adjuration concludes with another biblical quotation, from Isaiah 5:26. The phrase “May he come to him swiftly and speedily” (3a:12), replaces the original wording: “Here they come, swiftly and speedily”. This sentence is obviously meant to describe the objective of the adjuration.⁸⁴ This section concludes with the phrase “A(men) A(men) Selah”, followed by the Arabic word “tamāt”, explained above.

The insertion of personal names into biblical verses may be found in Jewish amulets, such as one designed for implanting the love of ‘Ashyr b. Waṣ’ayf in the heart of Dallal daughter of Ṣy’a.⁸⁵ This amulet, also uncovered in the Cairo Geniza, uses the same technique and the same verse as fragment 3a:8–10 (Song of Songs 8:7): “Many waters cannot quench the love of Dallal son⁸⁶ of Ṣy’a for ‘Ashyr son of Waṣ’ayf, and rivers cannot wash it away. If a m(an) were to give all the wealth of his house for l(ove), he would be utterly scorned.” In this amulet, the first part of the biblical verse is modified and the second part left intact, while in our fragment the reverse is true.

The second section of the fragment (3a:13) begins with the statement: “This great secret (i.e. amulet) shall be like a sharp sword in the hand of Judah son of Josiah”, and proceeds with a list of holy names and divine epithets (holy, mighty, terrible) repeated several times. While the word “sword” might

83 The verse from Psalms 42:2, “as the deer pants for streams of water”, is quoted also in *MTKG*, vol. 3, text 81 (= Cambridge University Library T-S NS 216.23 + British Library Or. 5559 E 26–27 + Cambridge University Library T-S NS 322.56, fol. 2a:11–12) as part of a *Shimmush Tehillim* sequence.

84 In other magical or mystical texts, the verse from Isaiah is used to confer a sensation of urgency; see Schäfer, *Geniza-Fragmente*, text 14, pp. 146–149 (= Cambridge University Library T-S K 21.95t, fol. 1a:14; 1b:10); *ibid.*, text 15, pp. 150–151 (= Cambridge University Library T-S K 1.144, fol. 2a:17–18). See also R. M. Lesses, *Ritual Practices to Gain Power: Angels, Incantations and Revelations in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Harrisburg 1998), pp. 268–269.

85 *AMB*, text G3 (= Cambridge University Library T-S AS 143.403).

86 The scribe mistakenly used “son of” instead of “daughter of” (Dallal is a female name) on lines 6 and 10 of this amulet.

be connected to the Sword of Moses which appears in fragment no. 1, the surviving text presents no clear indication that this is so.

The verso of fragment no. 3 contains an appeal to several angels: Sandalphon, 'Azael, Sanoy and Samangalin. They are requested to confer upon Judah favor and grace, proficiency in Torah knowledge and protection from any speaker of evil. The adjuration concludes with the formula "Amen Amen Selah", this time written in full (3b:14).

Next, the writer presents a list of divine names, vowel permutations and angelic names, some boxed and some with a horizontal line drawn above them. These names are adjured never "to alter or to change what is written above" (3b:18–19). The concluding phrase is "Amen Amen Netzach Selah".

The bottom of the page contains a grid design on its right side, and the beginning of another "amulet" (labeled thus by the writer, 3b:22) on the left. The text of the amulet is in a smaller script, but by the same hand. It is once again written on behalf of Judah b. Josiah. Since the amulet continued on another page, its subject matter remains unknown at present.

Analysis and Discussion

The three fragments presented above show several peculiar features, in terms both of their style and of their content. One of the first questions to arise concerns the name of the beneficiary of the three texts. The expression "born of" (הנולד מן), by which Judah b. Josiah is designated, appears unusual. The customary term used in medieval Jewish magical texts is "son of", either בן or בר, followed by the mother's name. However, our three fragments mention both of Judah's parents' names. They employ the expression "born of" often enough (seven times, six in Hebrew and one in Aramaic) for us to wonder about it. It seems that *My'm*, a highly unusual name, is the name of Judah's mother, since in fragment 2b:10, Judah is referred to as "son of My'm". The expression "born of" appears in several contexts. It is used in the Tosefta and in the Babylonian Talmud, where it refers not to human progeny, but to pure

and impure animals (Bechorot 6b).⁸⁷ Closer to the period of our texts, Rabbi Abraham Abulafia, in his *Sefer Imrei Shefer (Words of Beauty)*, part 3, states: “And it is known that the first son born of Adam and of Eve was called Cain and the second, Abel”.⁸⁸ In modern amulets, dated to the 19th and 20th centuries, this expression is fairly common.⁸⁹ One can only speculate about the reason for its almost complete absence in Genizah (magic) literature.⁹⁰

This brings us to a second question arising from the fragments, regarding their authorship. While it is clear that all three fragments were written by the same hand, it is far from clear whether they were written by the person they were meant to benefit, Judah b. Josiah, or whether he had the magical booklet written for him. The person who compiled the booklet obviously copied it, at least in part, from several sources. This may explain why the fragments do not exhibit a textual or linguistic uniformity. Yet what can be inferred about the writer from the texts, besides the fact that he obviously was familiar with the Arabic language, since he uses it to write a whole phrase (fragment 1a:17)? As mentioned above, in some instances Judah is referred to in the first person singular (e.g. 2a:17), and in others in the third person singular (e.g. 3b:7–8). This is not inherently surprising, since scribes sometimes committed such copying mistakes. It could be that Judah copied the text himself and in some cases forgot to replace generic formulations with personalized, first person, language. However, if this is so, it is surprising that the name of Judah’s father, Josiah, is spelled in two different ways. While it is quite possible that both variants were known and acceptable, it would be strange to find someone

87 “ואין טמא הנולד מן הטהור טמא, אלא טהור”

88 “וידוע כי הבן הראשון הנולד מן אדם ומן חוה נקרא שמו קין והשני הב’ ל”

89 T. Schrire, *Hebrew Amulets: Their Decipherment and Interpretation* (London 1966), p. 163; E. Davis and D. A. Frenkel, *The Hebrew Amulet* (Jerusalem 1995), pp. 117, 136, 138, 139.

90 The expression “born of” appears in a magical recipe for obtaining love, *MSF*, text G17 (= Cambridge University Library T-S K 1.132, 1:15): “אהבת פל’ הנולד מן פל’”. A Yemenite manuscript of the 15th century (British Library Or. 4104, fol. 93) also preserves this expression, in what appears to be a recipe for writing an amulet. However, in this case it seems that “born of” refers to the place of birth, and not to the mother’s name: “born of Yaman”, “הנולד מן ימן”.

spelling his own name inconsistently in the course of a single composition. This makes it appear likely that the booklet was written on Judah's behalf by someone else, who did not mind spelling Judah's patronymic in two correct, but distinct, ways.

The objectives sought in the three fragments partially overlap, and can be summarized as follows:

Objective	Fragment no.
Protection from various perils	1, 2, 3
Favor and grace	1, 3
General success	1, 2
Proficiency in studying the Torah	2, 3
Financial security	1
"Inflaming" a man named Hodaiah b. Solomon	3

Some of these objectives may prove useful in providing additional information about the beneficiary of the texts, beyond his and his parents' names. While the request for protection, be it from the evil eye, from speakers of evil, or from "every enemy and ensnarer", is extremely common in medieval Jewish magical texts, the wish to succeed in Torah studies was only relevant for a specific class of people: the scholars or תלמידי חכמים mentioned in texts no. 1 and 3, whose occupation was the study of the Torah and the exegetical literature.⁹¹ It would seem that Judah belonged to this class, hence his aspiration to be proficient in Torah studies. The request for "favor and grace" is a common one in magical texts, yet the specification "in the eyes of all kings and in the

91 On mystical and magical techniques to acquire proficiency in Torah studies, see M. D. Swartz, *Scholastic Magic: Ritual and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton 1996); Y. Harari, "To Perform the Opening of the Heart: Magical Practices for Knowledge, Understanding and Memorizing in Judaism during Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages", in Z. Gris et al. (eds.), *Shefa Tal: Studies in Jewish Philosophy and Jewish Culture, Presented to Bracha Zack* (Beer-Sheva 2004), pp. 303–347 [Hebrew].

eyes of all the Children of Israel and of Torah scholars” (1b:14–15), or “in the eyes of kings [...] Torah scholars” (3b:6–7) is hardly usual. It is possible that Judah had dealings with the social and intellectual elite, hence his need to be well liked by these particular people. Otherwise, the request to “have my love implanted in the hearts of all those who see him (sic), from Israel to the peoples of the lands” (3b:10) would presumably have sufficed.

In Jewish magical literature, the aspiration to find “favor and grace” may apply both in a wide social context and in a personal one, that is, being liked by a specific person. Some amulets written on behalf of a person, and intended to gain the love of another, contain the phrase: “...bring favor and grace to X in the eyes of Y, and in the eyes of all sons of Adam and Eve”.⁹² The texts we have presented here show a somewhat similar intention. Judah b. Josiah wishes to be viewed favorably by all those surrounding him, be they kings, rabbinic scholars or simply “all the Children of Israel”. In one instance, the writer uses the term “love” to indicate social esteem (3b:9–10). The angel adjured in this case is “Azael, the angel appointed over love”.⁹³ Judah also yearns for the love or appreciation of another person, Hodaiah b. Solomon. The term used in this case is “to inflame”, which I have not encountered thus far in other Jewish magical texts, whether intended to induce love or to promote social success.

An intriguing question arising from the three fragments presented above concerns the identity of the individuals mentioned in them. Can we identify Judah b. Josiah, born of Myam, with a person appearing in other texts from the same period? As stated above, the fragments have been tentatively dated to the 12th century. Genizah scholars are familiar with a Judah b. Josiah who was active in this period. He is usually referred to as Judah the Nasi (i.e. Patriarch), the Exilarch of all Israel, son of Josiah the Nasi, the Exilarch of all Israel (יהודה הנשיא, הנשיא, נשיא גליות כל ישראל, בן יאשיה הנשיא, נשיא גליות כל ישראל). Judah b. Josiah

92 *MTKG*, vol. 1, pp. 160–170 (= British Library Or. 1080.15.81, 1a:91–94).

93 The angel ‘Azael is known from various magical texts, serving in different functions. He appears also in an erotic amulet: *MTKG*, vol. 1, pp. 192–198 (= Cambridge University Library T-S AS 142.39, 1a:25).

not only held an important social position in the Jewish community, he was also a rabbinic scholar who countersigned several responsa of Maimonides.⁹⁴ As for Hodaiah b. Solomon, a person by this name appears in an unpublished Genizah document, where he is referred to as “Hodaiah the Nasi, the Exilarch, son of our lord Solomon” (הודיה הנשיא, נשיא הגולה, חמוד אדוננו שלמה).⁹⁵ Can the two persons mentioned in fragment 3a be identified with the two historical figures, Judah b. Josiah and Hodaiah b. Solomon, both leading public figures in the Jewish community of the time? If so, what was the relationship between the two? And what can such texts teach us about the use of magic in the elite circles of medieval Jewish society?⁹⁶ These questions remain to be explored in future research.

- 94 Apart from the instances in which the name Judah b. Josiah is mentioned in the responsa of Maimonides (for which see J. Blau, *The Responsa of Maimonides* [3 volumes, Jerusalem 1958], vol. 2, no. 73, p. 653; no. 80, p. 661 [Hebrew]), a letter addressed to him from a leading member of an Egyptian community has survived (Cambridge University Library T-S Misc. 35.20). For this letter see J. Mann, *Texts and Studies in Jewish History and Literature* (2 volumes, Cincinnati 1931), vol. 1, pp. 396–398, 404–408; M. Ben Sasson, “The Axis of Eretz-Israel — Syria: The Formal Aspect (Testimonies from the Genizah)”, *Pe’amim* 66 (1996), p. 7 [Hebrew]. Additional information about Judah b. Josiah comes from the chronicle of Joseph Sambari (17th century). Sambari quotes Judah’s counter-signature, and states that he was of Davidic descent and a resident of Damascus; see A. Neubauer (ed.), *Medieval Jewish Chronicles*, vol. 2 (Oxford 1895), pp. 116, 133 [Hebrew]. See also: S. Poznanski, *Babylonische Geonim im nachgaonäischen Zeitalter* (Berlin 1914), p. 115; E. Ashtor, “Main Characteristics of the Jewish Community in Egypt during the Middle Ages”, *Zion* 30 (1965), p. 146 [Hebrew]; M. A. Friedman, “Maimonides, Zutta and the Muqdamim: The Story of Three Excommunications”, *Zion* 70 (2005), p. 490 [Hebrew].
- 95 The name Hodaiah son of Solomon appears in the card index prepared by S. D. Goitein. See *The S. D. Goitein laboratory for Geniza research at Princeton (card indexes on microfilm)* (Princeton 1988), reel 1, card no. 101034. It is found in a small fragment preserved in the Jewish Theological Seminary Library, ENA 4011.25.
- 96 The use of magic by Jewish sages and scholars has long been known. The Talmud openly describes magical techniques employed by several sages. Centuries later, closer to the time of our fragments, Hai Gaon strives in one of his responsa to combat the popular belief that some Jewish religious personalities engage in such practices. See S. Emanuel, *Newly Discovered Geonic Responsa* (Jerusalem 1995), pp. 121–146 (§ 115) [Hebrew]. A more profound investigation of the use of magic and its impact upon the Jewish religious leadership is still a desideratum.

One of the most fascinating questions with regard to the three fragments presented in this article concerns their literary genre. It appears that all three fragments are part of a single booklet, but the exact function of this composition is not entirely clear. The contents of the fragments match those of Jewish amulets from the period, yet their form does not. The vast majority of the textual amulets uncovered so far, in the Cairo Genizah and elsewhere, consist of a single sheet of paper, parchment, metal or cloth. They were usually folded or rolled, so as to allow them to be carried on the body of the beneficiary. However, the texts discussed above show no sign of having been handled in this way, unless we assume that Judah carried the entire booklet on his person. This is not inconceivable, since the size of the pages is quite small; but in any event, such a personalized magical booklet is rather exceptional in the context of medieval Jewish magical literature.

There are a few instances in which a personal name has been inserted into a magical composition. One of these occurs in a fragment from *The Sword of Moses*, preserved in the Cairo Genizah.⁹⁷ In the Jewish Theological Seminary manuscript, ENA NS 2.11, fol. 43b, we encounter the name Mariut b. Nathan.⁹⁸ Mariut's name is inserted into one of the sentences of *The Sword*:

“...you swift messenger, do not tarry and do not frighten (me), and come and do for me, I, Mariut son of Nathan, all my needs, in the name of...”⁹⁹

Yuval Harari maintains that the replacement of the formula “PN son of PN” by a specific name indicates that the composition was put to practical use.¹⁰⁰ I would like to point out that in this case, as in the three fragments pertaining to Judah b. Josiah, the beneficiary, Mariut, is designated by his patronymic.

The three fragments presented above can also be compared to a section from the Bodleian manuscript MS Michael 9.¹⁰¹ This voluminous manuscript contains

97 I am grateful to Dr. Gideon Bohak for this reference.

98 Harari (n. 79 above), p. 109 n. 132 and pp. 153–154.

99 “...את סרא קלילא לא תתעכב ותרעיש ותיתי ותעביד לי אנא מריות בר נתן כל צרכי בשם...”

100 Harari (n. 79 above), p. 153.

101 See A. D. Neubauer, *Catalogue of the Hebrew Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library and in*

183 pages, of a liturgical, mystical, and magical nature. Folios 115a–116a contain a personalized section, in which someone by the name of Yedidyah bar Yitzhak ha-Levi records an extensive list of adjurations, designed to bestow upon him protection, the accomplishment of all his deeds, health, success to him and his sons, and, not surprisingly, grace and favor.¹⁰² This section of the manuscript begins with a title: *Sheva' Zutarti*,¹⁰³ followed by the text of the composition (115a:3–116a:28). However, at 116a:15 the writer reverts to the generic “PN” (פנ).

It is interesting to note that Yedidyah b. Yitzhak is also designated by his patronymic, just like Mariut b. Nathan and Judah b. Josiah. I would not venture to speculate on the reason for this odd feature of the three compositions, since the surviving fragments are far from providing enough statistical material.¹⁰⁴

Somewhat similar examples of magical manuscripts, containing both instructions and personal names, are found in a different milieu, that of medieval Christianity. In his book on textual amulets, Don Skemer asserts

the College Libraries of Oxford; including mss. in other languages, which are written with Hebrew characters, or relating to the Hebrew language or literature; and a few Samaritan mss. (2 volumes, Oxford 1886–1906), vol. 1, MS no.1531, cols. 537–538.

102 The text is mentioned by Schäfer, *Geniza-Fragmente*, text 17, pp. 154–158. The full text (Bodleian Library MS Michael 9, fol. 115a–116a), with commentary and translation, is edited by Lesses (n. 84 above), pp. 381–388.

103 *Sheva' Zutarti* is a mystical composition, consisting of adjurations and angelic names, based on the configuration of the seven benedictions of the *'Amidah* prayers recited on the Sabbath.

104 I am familiar with several other Genizah fragments that may possibly belong to personalized magical handbooks. One is *MTKG*, vol. 3, text 75 (= Cambridge University Library T-S NS 91.53), where on fol. 1b:10 one finds the phrase “protect me, I, Darkut son of Jepheth”, followed by a request for grace and favor in the eyes of all (fol. 1a:12). The second is an unpublished fragment, Cambridge University Library T-S K 1.81, whose writer adjures several angels: “and you shall come to Jacob son of Joseph who stands in front of you, and you shall perform his desire and his wish” (fol. 1a:10–11). The form of both fragments is reminiscent of magical handbooks, not individual amulets. A third manuscript that seems to belong to the genre of personalized magical handbooks was kindly brought to my attention by Dr. Gideon Bohak shortly before this article was submitted. It is New York Public Library Heb. MS 190.

that during the Middle Ages entire magic rolls were put to practical use.¹⁰⁵ A personalized magical manuscript dating to early 16th century Italy may be compared to the three fragments presented in this article. The manuscript (British Library Additional MS 15505, fol. 22r) comprises magical texts for various purposes, such as protection from demons, enemies, fire, flood and other such misfortunes.¹⁰⁶ It contains the name of its user, Francesco, yet the text states that it would be similarly beneficial for any other person carrying it.¹⁰⁷ Like the fragments belonging to Judah b. Josiah, Francesco's amulet contains rubrics describing the efficacy of the various sections or images (seals) in the text: "This pentacle is useful against fire and against water", "If one carries this sign upon him, the demons cannot harm him", etc.¹⁰⁸ In this sense, it resembles a magical handbook more than a proper amulet. Even though this Italian amulet was quite a voluminous one, a parchment sheet measuring about 45 x 31 centimeters, it was folded and most likely carried on Francesco's person. There are other Christian examples demonstrating the dual use of a magical manuscript both as an amulet and as a magical handbook or manual.¹⁰⁹ One interesting example

105 D. C. Skemer, *Binding Words: Textual Amulets in the Middle Ages* (University Park, PA 2006), pp. 212–214.

106 *Ibid.*, pp. 214–217.

107 "franciscus vel illa persona qui istam orationem super se portabit" (*ibid.*, p. 214).

108 *Ibid.*, p. 217 n. 93.

109 A possible example of such a dual-use item is the "Canterbury amulet" (Canterbury Cathedral Library Additional MS 23), dating to the mid-13th century. This Latin compilation (measuring 51.2 x 42.7 centimeters) contains several magical texts. The Canterbury amulet gives instructions for performing different tasks and contains no personal names but only the generic "N", standing for *nomen*, name. This would seem to indicate that it is in fact a magical manual. However, it is possible that it was used as an amulet as well as a magical manual. According to Skemer (*ibid.*, p. 210): "The Canterbury amulet was certainly compact enough to be worn on the body for personal protection. But its text and images were so comprehensive that it could be used as a portable grimoire, perhaps in an ecclesiastical context, providing magic rituals and exemplars for single-purpose amulets." The use of whole magical and religious books as amulets is known in Judaism, for instance, *The Book of Raziel* (ספר רזיאל) is sometimes carried on one's person. Similarly, miniature versions of the Book of Psalms serve as amulets until this very day. However, these are not personalized booklets.

is a lengthy Armenian prayer scroll (492 x 8 centimeters), dated 1661, which contains liturgical sections as well as magical formulae (Glasgow University Library Special Collection MS Gen. 1498).¹¹⁰ The name of its owner, Ant'ani son of Grigorin, was inserted into the text, with the aim of protecting him against various perils, such as disease and the evil eye.

Scholars of modern magic are familiar with extensive amuletic scrolls and amuletic books originating in Ethiopia, most of which date to the 19th and 20th centuries. They contain Christian prayers and liturgical texts, as well as magical spells for protection, obtaining favor and cursing one's enemies. The name of the book's owner is sometimes inserted into the prayers or spells, much as the name of Judah b. Josiah is incorporated into the texts discussed above. However, this material is too late to provide an applicable parallel to the fragments presented in this article.

Conclusion

The three extant fragments written on behalf of Judah b. Josiah seem to belong to a sort of textual patchwork comprising several sections, each representing an individual text or belonging to a distinct compilation. Thus, we find a coherent section entitled "The Sword of Moses the Prophet", then an amulet that appears to have been copied from a magical recipe, bearing the title "for an evil eye and an evil person. Proven", followed by an adjuration for "inflaming" another man, and another one for favor, grace, and protection from speakers of evil. Such a textual framework suggests a personalized magical handbook.

What could be the function of such a compilation? I assume, as does Harari with regard to the personalized *Sword of Moses* manuscript, that the fragments discussed in this article were put to practical use; that is, they probably served

110 D. Weston, "An Armenian Manuscript in Glasgow University Library", *Armenian Review* 36 (1983), pp. 58–62 (*non vidi*). Electronic source: <http://special.lib.gla.ac.uk/exhibns/month/apr2001.html>

as an extended amulet, comprising several objectives, intended to benefit Judah b. Josiah. This magical handbook may have been carried on Judah's person.

I am not familiar with any Jewish texts belonging to this peculiar genre other than the ones mentioned above, but the rapidly growing research into magical material from the Cairo Genizah and other sources will hopefully bring to light additional examples.

