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# Saadia's Introduction to Daniel: Prophetic Calculation of the End of Days vs. Astrological and Magical Speculation*

It has been more than twenty years since Rabbi Joseph Qāfiḥ published a considerable portion of Saadia Gaon's commentary on the book of Daniel.[1] This publication was a most important event, because in the Middle Ages Daniel was one of the most widely read and studied books of the Hebrew Bible, in both East and West. There are several reasons for this popularity, mostly of a general nature, associated with the

* This article, based on a presentation delivered at the Eighth Conference of the Society for Judaeo-Arabic Studies, held in Jerusalem in 1997, is a revised version of an article published in Hebrew in *Sefunot* 23 (2003), pp. 13–59 (= Proceedings of the Conference). I wish to thank my friend and colleague Prof. Bruno Chiesa of the University of Turin for his generous help and useful suggestions. I read Saadia's text with students at the Hebrew University in 2000 and profited greatly from their insights. They are: Yoel Bin-Nun, Sagit Butbul, Zeev Elkin, Inbal Levy, Ayala Meir, Ephraim Porat, and Zvi Stampfer. Special thanks are due to Prof. S. C. Reif, director of the Geniza Research Unit at the Cambridge University Library, and the staff of the photography department of the Library for their efforts to produce a high-quality photograph and a digitized image of the Cambridge fragment, which was of great use in deciphering it. I am also indebted to my friend and colleague Dr. David Sklare, of the Center for the Study of Judaeo-Arabic Culture and Literature at the Ben-Zvi Institute, who helped

subject matter of the book, the hardships of exile, and the longings for Redemption. Other reasons, specific to Saadia's time and place, will be discussed below. In those circumstances, it is not surprising that Saadia decided to write a commentary on the book, as he did for other biblical books that attracted the interest of the community as a whole or of individual members. It had long been known that Saadia wrote a commentary on Daniel;[2] hence the publication of these fragments was a laudable undertaking and an important contribution to the restoration and study of Saadia's *œuvre*.[3]

In any commentary by Saadia, the introduction occupies an important place. It is where he lays the foundations of the subject that he considers to be the focus of the book in question. In the introduction he also formulates his conclusions, derived from the book, regarding questions that were of topical significance in his own time and place. Unfortunately, the long remnants of the commentary that Rabbi Qāfiḥ published from an Oxford manuscript include only a few disconnected fragments of the introduction, from which it is almost impossible to elicit any systematic theory.[4] Later, Y. Ratzaby published an additional fragment of the introduction.[5] The latter includes some details about the calculation of the End of Days as well as a clear statement of Saadia's division of Daniel into chapters. Nevertheless, these fragments still fail to produce a systematic theory of the type one expects in Saadia's introductions.

Several years ago, in Cambridge, I came across a Geniza fragment that was quite difficult to decipher and read. Ultimately, its title indicated that it is part of the aforementioned introduction (Fragment **ק**, see below). Later, my friend Bruno Chiesa drew my attention to an article that he had written about the manuscripts of Saadia's commentary on Daniel,[6] in which he surveyed numerous fragments of the commentary, preserved in various libraries. At the end of the article,[7] he mentioned a fragment of the commentary, preserved in the Antonin Collection at the Russian National Library (Fragment **ט**, see below). In





me by locating a fragment of Saadia's commentary on Daniel in the Firkovitch Collection and producing a photocopy of it. In addition I am much obliged to Prof. Bernard R. Goldstein and to the anonymous reviewer on behalf of *Aleph*, as well as Dr. Gad Freudenthal, for their remarks and erudite suggestions, which contributed considerably to the improvement of this article. I am also much indebted to David Luvish, who translated the Hebrew version into English. As a rule, translations of biblical quotations are given here according to *Tanakh: A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures According to the Traditional Hebrew Text* (Philadelphia, New York, and Jerusalem: The Jewish Publication Society, 1985), slightly modified where necessary.

1 Saadia Gaon, *Daniel with the Translation and Commentary of Saadia ben Joseph al-Fayyūmī,* [Arabic] edited with Hebrew translation by Joseph Qāfiḥ (Jerusalem, 1981). References below to page and line numbers in the commentary follow that edition.

2 M. Steinschneider, *Die arabische Literatur der Juden* (Frankfurt a. Main, 1902), p. 59; H. Malter, *Saadia Gaon: His Life and Works* (Philadelphia, 1921), pp. 325–326.

3 Suffice it to mention here E. Schlossberg, "Concepts and Methods in the Commentaries on Daniel by R. Saadia Gaon and Karaite Authors," Ph.D. Thesis, Bar-Ilan University, 1988 (Hebrew).

4 Saadia, *Daniel,* pp. 13–15; see below on MS **א**.

5 See below on MS **קו**.

6 B. Chiesa, "Appunti per la Recensio del Commento a *Daniele* di Saadia Gaon," *Annali di Ca' Foscari* 22(3) (1983): 91–99. This article was supposed to be the final word on the manuscripts, but I am not sure that it really was. A doctoral thesis by A. Cameron, "Saadia Gaon's Arabic Version of the Book of Daniel" (University of Utrecht, 1988), mentions (p. 3) at least one fragment, namely RNL, Yevr.-Arab. I:4007, that Chiesa does not mention. I do not know what kind of photocopy was available to Cameron. In any case, he felt free to ignore it, on the grounds that it was mostly illegible. Checking the microfilm now available at the Institute of Microfilms of Hebrew Manuscripts, at the National and University Library in Jerusalem, I found that the manuscript, written in different hands, contains 16 leaves, constituting two consecutive fragments (fols. 1–7, 8–16), and includes large sections of Saadia's translation and commentary on Daniel 2–4. Most of the MS is quite legible, with the exception of damaged parts. While Cameron did mention the Antonin fragment, he did not realize its importance.

the course of his detailed description of the fragment, Chiesa also quoted the beginning of the commentary, which, he remarked, was also mentioned in a list of books published by J. Mann.[8]

Examination of the Cambridge and St. Petersburg fragments made it clear that they contain most of the missing parts of the introduction. Combined with the two earlier published fragments, we now have most of the introduction and thus a clear idea of its contents. Somewhat anticipating, I would like to state briefly at the outset that the introduction reveals a new and hitherto unknown facet of Saadia's thought. In addition to certain details of the calculation of the End of Days and the structure of the book of Daniel, found in the previously known fragments, the almost-full version of the introduction presents Saadia's theory about a subject that he does not discuss systematically anywhere else in his writings: the relationship between various techniques for foretelling the future, mainly astrology, and biblical prophecy. In this paper I shall describe and interpret the introduction and offer a full version of the Judaeo-Arabic text with an English translation. This should make it possible to clarify Saadia's attitude to astrology, based no longer on conjectures and allusions but on unequivocal textual evidence: Thoroughly familiar with astrology, Saadia rejected it and absolutely denied its legitimacy and scientific validity.

## Contents of the Introduction

In keeping with Saadia's usual manner in the introductions[9] to his Bible commentaries, the introduction consists of three parts.

First comes the Arabic title of the Biblical book; this aims to convey the gist of its contents in a few words. The title may be understood as part of the translation of the book, for just as the whole translation is a commentary, the Arabic title is an interpretation of the Hebrew name of the book, which in many cases says nothing of its content.





The second part is a very short introductory paragraph (a few lines), mainly praises of God in flowery language, in a style quite similar to similar passages in Islamic literature.[10] A close reading of these extravagant praises reveals, however, that they are very carefully worded; in positive, laconic, and categorical language, devoid of explanations, they allude to the main ideas of the book of Daniel. There is clearly no room in this part of the commentary for polemics against deviant views; that will find its proper place in the main part.

Last comes the long introduction proper, which points out the main ideas of the book and discusses and explains them, both in themselves and in relation to different or contrary views. Also considered in this part are specific exegetical problems and the structure of the book.

### The Arabic Title

According to the opening phrases of the introduction, the title of the book is "The Book of Kingdoms and Visions [concerning] what will Come to Pass after 1386 Years."[11]

This is perhaps the longest title that Saadia ever gave to a book of

7 Chiesa, "Appunti," pp. 97–98.

8 J. Mann, *Texts and Studies* I (Cincinnati, 1932), p. 645, according to Geniza fragment T-S Misc. 36.149, ll. 27–29. On Mann's erroneous interpretation see Chiesa, "Appunti," p. 98. Indeed, Mann's index lists the work as *tafsīr* (= translation/commentary of/on) *Daniel*.

9 H. Ben-Shammai, "Saadia's Introduction to Isaiah as an Introduction to the Books of the Prophets," *Tarbiẓ* 60 (1991): 371–404 (Heb.), on p. 372.

10 It is generally agreed that such paragraphs are imitations of Islamic models (see recently J. Blau, "The Status of the Classical Arabic Layer of Medieval Judaeo-Arabic," *Teʿudah* 14 [1998]: 47–56 [Heb.]). However, it is no less important to identify the unique subject of every such introductory paragraph.

11 ט, $1^{b}2$; references to the original indicate the page numbers of the manuscript as marked in the edition.

the Bible. That it is the title is indisputable, since it is referred to as such at the end of the introduction.[12] It comprises two parts. The first presents the general idea of the book of Daniel—the kingdoms of the past, present, and future up to the age of Redemption, and the visions, or predictions, of events that will take place then (see below). Saadia considers the order of the kingdoms to be one of the main topics of the book.[13] The second part of the title offers the result of Saadia's own calculation of the End of Days, as inferred from the book of Daniel.[14] The kingdoms will be followed by the eschatological events described in the visions or predictions (*malāḥim*); that will take place after "1386 years." This figure seems to have been so important for Saadia that he included it in the book's title.

The term *malāḥim* (sing. *malḥama*) is a typically Muslim term,[15] perhaps of Hebrew or Aramaic origin. It refers primarily to wars or other calamitous events that will take place before the End of Days or the Day of Judgment and essentially herald it—a kind of parallel to the "birthpangs of the Messiah" in the talmudic and midrashic tradition. Goldziher already noted this connotation of the term, quoting a saying attributed to Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyya[16] concerning the death of Ḥusayn, which he refers to as a *malḥama* that happened to him—that is, a severe ordeal heralding the Redemption.[17] In time, the meaning of the term expanded to cover primarily not the events themselves but the prediction of their occurrence, or even the literary genre in which they are described or recorded (see below).

The relevant information in M. Ullmann's *Wörterbuch* essentially reflects this development.[18] The first meanings listed for the term are "fierce struggle, bloody battle, carnage, massacre, battlefield." These resemble the meaning of the cognate term in biblical Hebrew. Ullmann then cites further meanings from the *Adab*, historical, etc., literature, mainly for the plural: "prediction, eschatological prophecy, apocalypse, vision of the future."[19] The latter refer to semantic fields quite distinct from those of the term in biblical Hebrew, relating primarily to





"historical" predictions: eschatological visions, magical divination, and astrology. The genre of Muslim literature that goes by this name is concerned exclusively with such subjects and relies on a variety of sources (see below). It developed to a significant degree from the end of the Umayyad period (mid-eighth century) and after, concurrently with frequent political upheavals in the Muslim world. It was associated largely with the name of Daniel.

It is no accident that Saadia used a term so pregnant with meaning. Significantly, the word *malāḥim* is used again at the end of the introduction, in Saadia's summary of the book's major concerns.[20] It may also be found in others of his works. For example, in his introduction

12 Saadia, *Daniel*, p. 31. Qāfiḥ translated *ʿunwān* as "the beginning of the book," since the title was not at his disposal and he presumably did not think that such a long, detailed sentence could be the title of the book.

13 Ibid., pp. 190–191; see Schlossberg, "Concepts and Methods," pp. 147–151.

14 The title is a response to the alternative interpretive approach of the Karaites; see ibid., pp. 147–195.

15 See T. Fahd, "Malḥama," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition (hereafter *EI*²), vol. 6 (Leiden: Brill, 1991): 247; "Djafr," *EI*², vol. 2 (1965): 375–377 (much of "Jafr" literature is concerned with *malāḥim*, apocalypses). The author discusses primarily astrological calculations or visions of the End of Days (in Islam: the advent of the *mahdī*), entirely ignoring the importance of the term in the *ḥadīth* literature.

16 ʿAlī's son by a woman of the Ḥanīfa tribe, that is, Ḥusayn's half-brother. He was venerated by certain groups in the early Shīʿa. See F. Buhl, "Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyya," *EI*², vol. 7 (1993): 402–403.

17 I. Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien* II (Halle, 1890), p. 73 (= *Mohammedan Studies*, trans. S. M. Stern, vol. 2 [Oxford, 1971], p. 77).

18 M. Ullmann, *Wörterbuch der klassischen arabischen Sprache* II (Wiesbaden, 1970), p. 370.

19 Ibid., p. 371; see also "Malāḥim," *EI*² 6: 216.

20 1ר, verso, line 5.

to Psalms[21] he uses it in the sense of "historical wars," albeit wars that were supposed to herald a kind of ideal peace, after David had completed the conquest of the Land of Israel. A similar association emerges in his commentary on Psalms 60:3,[22] in relation to David's wars with his foes outside Israel, after he had consolidated his kingdom. We find the term again, in a different and perhaps eschatological context—pertaining at any rate to a prediction of the future—in Saadia's translation of Isaiah 3:25: "Your men shall fall by the sword, your fighting manhood in battle"—"By the fall of their men by the sword, and their heroes in the *malāḥim.*"[23]

An interesting insight into the transformation in Saadia's understanding of the meaning of Hebrew *milḥamah* from "war" to "eschatological event" (or perhaps to "political changes/upheavals") is found in his commentary on Daniel. Commenting on chapter 10, specifically on v. 13, he discusses, among other things, the role of the angels referred to in that verse:

> The combat (*muḥāraba*) between the angels is not a contest for control, so that one party gains victory over the other. Rather, one of them removes the other by God's command, so that the displaced nation is left without an angel to support it, its affairs finished and its government abolished. This is called "war" (Heb. *milḥamah*) only in a figurative manner, as a borrowing from the actions of kings and rulers. Know that similar things have been said of God's actions, some of them in Egypt, as "The Lord will battle for you" (Ex. 14:14); and in Joshua's time, "For the Lord fought for Israel" (Josh. 10:14). Nehemiah said, "Our God will fight for us" (Neh. 4:14); and Zechariah said, "Then the Lord will come forth and make war on those nations as He is wont to make war on a day of battle" (Zech. 14:3). God said about the time of our expulsion from the Land [of Israel], "and I Myself will battle against you with an outstretched mighty arm, with anger and rage and great wrath" (Jer. 21:5). Just as these wars that are ascribed to the Creator do not constitute fight or combat, but the essence of their meaning is rather discarding one people and establishing another firmly, so too those wars (Heb. *milḥamot*) that are ascribed to the angels are merely discarding one nation and establishing another one firmly, as we have made plain.[24]





Quite typically, Saadia here extends the literal meaning of the biblical Hebrew *milḥamah*, in order to bring it as close as possible to its Arabic cognate as used in his day. At any rate, it is clear from all these examples that Saadia's use of the term is quite deliberate and calculated. Below, when I discuss the historical background of the introduction, I shall try to determine his exact intention in so doing.

### *The Short Introduction*

Saadia enunciates two principles in this brief, flowery introduction.[25] The first is the existence of esoteric knowledge, concealed from human eyes, which only God possesses: knowledge of what will happen or of what will be before it actually happens or is. The second principle is

[21] Saadia Gaon, *Psalms with the translation and commentary of Saadia ben Joseph al-Fayyūmī*, edited with Hebrew translation by Joseph Qāfiḥ (Jerusalem, 1966), p. 26:33.

[22] Ibid., p. 150:4 (in the commentary).

[23] Saadia on Isa., p. 10: במא יקע רהטהן באלסיף ודו גברותהן פי אלמלאחם. The Hebrew singular form (battle) is translated into Arabic as a plural, to emphasize that the text is concerned with a series of events, spread over a whole period, not with a single, isolated event. The plural is the usual form in this specific connotation of the word in Arabic. The second-person singular feminine suffixes ("your men") are turned in the translation into the third-person plural feminine ("their men").

[24] Saadia, *Daniel*, p. 187.

[25] ט, $1^{b}$4–6.

that God may reveal some of that hidden knowledge to His favorites or His followers if such revelation is likely to be of use or benefit (*ṣalāḥ*) to them. Saadia uses the Arabic word *awliyāʾ* (plural of *walī*) for God's favorites or followers—a term that in his parlance is a synonym for "prophets." The interchangeable use of the terms *walī* and *nabī* in Saadia's works is so common as to need no demonstration here.[26] Without Saadia's having to go into detail, the reader adept at deciphering the secrets of his style will understand that the hidden knowledge (that is, knowledge of the future), God's exclusive possession of that knowledge, and prophecy as the exclusive channel for its revelation to humanity are the main subjects to be discussed in this long introduction and that they are the focus of the book of Daniel. The experienced reader will also presumably be able to guess that the book of Daniel is the sole prophetic revelation of that knowledge to the Jewish nation—or, more precisely, to that part of the nation for which the knowledge is of use.

### *The Long Introduction*

As is Saadia's custom, this introduction presents an extended, systematic exposition of the brief allusions in the short introduction. This is where he sets out his definitions and expounds his lengthy arguments against other theories, which, he claims, are refuted by the prophetic message of Daniel. The main targets of these arguments are astrological predictions (*malāḥim*).

Let us first summarize the content of the long introduction.

Knowledge of the future (*al-kāʾināt;* lit. "things that come into being"—the participle is used here as a present tense implying an inevitable imminent event) is concealed from human beings, that is, from their knowledge and their ability to acquire knowledge. Human knowledge is based primarily on sense perception in the past or the present.[27] Since the future is not accessible to the senses, it cannot be categorized as human knowledge. Many humans endeavor to discover





the future; when their efforts are in vain, they wax apologetic rather than admit that this realm of knowledge is beyond their apprehension.

The various human methods for predicting the future may be ranked hierarchically. The most inferior is observation of earthly things, such as the liver (hepatoscopy), the shoulder blade, eggs, letters randomly inscribed in the sand, various random sights and sounds, and different kinds of oracles (see below regarding *hšmrgʾt*). Saadia sees no point in disputing such techniques at any length. The same holds true for the next level: predicting the future from the speed of the planets' motions, the shape of the halo around the moon or of the rainbow, and so on. Saadia's principal argument is with the astrologers, who are well acquainted with the course of the stars and their influence on natural phenomena on earth, such as heat or cold, dampness or dryness, and draw conclusions from this knowledge concerning the fate of human beings. It is these "conclusions" (judgments, sentences, *aḥkām*) that constitute Saadia's main bone of contention with the astrologers, for he does not deny what he considers to be the real scientific aspect of astronomy, namely, knowledge of the stars' courses and their influence on nature (mainly meteorology and all its related bodies of knowledge). On the contrary, a familiarity with astronomy itself is conducive to true

[26] At any rate, examples may be found in the introduction itself: ט, $1^{b}25$ (referring to the messiah of the House of David, who will surely be a prophet); $2^{a}28$ (referring to David himself as the author of Psalms; David's status as a prophet is an important topic in Saadia's introduction to Psalms; see H. Ben-Shammai, "On a Polemical Element in R. Saadya's Theory of Prophecy," *Shlomo Pines Jubilee Volume* (Jerusalem, 1988), pp. 127–146 (Heb.).

[27] This is a familiar principle in Saadia's thought, repeated frequently in his works. See, e.g., Saadia Gaon, *(al-Mukhtār fī ʾl-) Amānāt wa-ʾl-iʿtiqādāt*, edited with Hebrew translation by Joseph Qāfiḥ (Jerusalem, 1970) pp. 77:29 ff., 112:9–20 (= Saadia Gaon, *The Book of Beliefs and Opinions,* translated from the Arabic and the Hebrew by Samuel Rosenblatt [New Haven, 1948] pp. 89, 132).

piety (ט, 2a:26–28). What Saadia rejects is astrologers' predictions of human fate and behavior. Elsewhere he complains that people ignore the correct scientific aspect of astronomy because the astrologers entice—or "force"—them to concentrate on their predictions, which are nothing but "things that they have created and they have no evidence thereof."[28] In this context Saadia reveals his acquaintance with the various techniques. He has clearly read at least introductory texts or general surveys, such as Abū Maᶜshar's *Introduction* (see below). He is familiar with the terms defining the different techniques of prediction: *mawālīd*, *ikhtiyārāt*, *masāʾil* (nativities, elections, questions).[29] The astrologers foretell the future not only of individuals, but also of nations and kingdoms: here is the link with the book of Daniel.

In the latter context, astrologers base their predictions primarily on the cycle of conjunctions of the orbs of Saturn and Jupiter and on a complete theory, cited by Saadia in their name, of the fixed relation between the length of the conjunction cycles and predictions relating to individual kings, entire dynasties, or the fate of nations. He is concerned essentially with "historical astrology," that is, the attempt to reproduce the fixed relationship between the cycles of the celestial bodies' movements in the past and political events of the past, and on that basis to predict a similar relation in the future and its implications for future political events (mainly the succession of rulers, dynasties, and world powers). More specifically, the theory of astrological history[30] is based on cycles of recurrences of these conjunctions every twenty years. During eleven such conjunctions, they reoccur in the same triplicity. These conjunctions determine the fate of individual political leaders. The cycle is completed every 240 years (according to Saadia, 238 or 258 years), with the twelfth recurrence, when the conjunction shifts to another triplicity. At that point the fate of dynasties or ruling nations (i.e., empires), or rather their change, is determined. The sum of four such cycles—about 960 years (according to Saadia, 944 or 964 years)—makes the "largest cycle," during which the conjunctions





pass through all four triplicities. The completion of this cycle signifies or determines the coming of a "new prophet"—i.e., a new religion or revealed law. The "largest cycle" may be associated with the notion of the millennium. In short, this theory could ostensibly serve as a basis for predicting "future history," which, in Jewish terms, could include the coming of the Messiah and the ultimate Redemption.

According to Saadia, though, these theories, despite their scientific trappings, have no more authority than hepatoscopy or the like, since all these techniques essentially base their supposed validity and justification on empirical rather than rational proofs. Only God knows the future, just as He is alone in His ability to create *ex nihilo*. The link between the two topics follows from Isaiah 44:24–26:

28 Saadia Gaon, *Job with the Translation and Commentary of Saadia ben Joseph al-Fayyūmī*, [Arabic Text] edited with Hebrew translation by Joseph Qāfiḥ (Jerusalem, 1973), pp. 194:29 ff. (in the context of his summary of chapters 38–39; for an English translation see L. E. Goodman, *The Book of Theodicy: Translation and Commentary on the Book of Job by Saadiah ben Joseph al-Fayyumi* [New Haven, 1988], p. 394). On this statement, in the more general context of the negative attitude of most Jewish thinkers in the Middle Ages towards astrology, see Ron Barkai, "L'astrologie juive médiévale; aspects théoriques et pratiques," *Moyen Age* 93 (1987): 323–348, on p. 327. The Karaite commentator Yefet b. ᶜEli, who lived one generation later than Saadia Gaon and Qirqisānī, considered even astronomy to be a technique of divination; see G. Vajda, *Deux commentaires Karaïtes sur l'Ecclésiaste* (Leiden, 1971), p. 131 n. 2. As in many other cases, Saadia thus occupies an intermediate position, between those who utterly reject any science, "true" or otherwise, and the convinced advocates of the secular sciences.

29 For the meaning of these terms see below, in the notes to the translation of the Introduction.

30 For the following explanation see B. R. Goldstein and D. Pingree, "Levi ben Gerson's Prognostication for the Conjunction of 1345," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 80(6) (1990), esp. p. 1.

> Thus said the Lord, your Redeemer, Who formed you in the womb: It is I, the Lord, who made everything, Who alone stretched out the heavens and unaided[31] spread out the earth; Who annuls the omens of diviners and makes fools of the augurs; Who turns sages back and makes nonsense of their knowledge; but confirms the word of His servant and fulfills the advice of His angels.

The connection is obvious: knowledge of the future is likened to creation. Both abilities are unique to the Creator, Who acts according to His angels' advice; all the predictions of the diviners and augurs come to naught. The fates of individuals, nations, and kingdoms are in God's hands, not determined by the stars or, *a fortiori*, by sorcerers. God, explains Saadia, reveals some of this knowledge to make us fully aware of His power and His abilities, to give us the ability to face the nations and demonstrate that our knowledge is superior to theirs; and to assure us that, just as past prophecies of our ascendancy and restored honor came true, so will similar prophecies in the future. This knowledge can help us endure our present hardships. There follows a list of a whole series of future events revealed to us through prophetic revelations in the past, beginning with the "Covenant between the pieces" [Genesis 15]. At this point, Saadia begins the calculation, which will occupy him in much of the commentary, of the time that must elapse from Daniel's vision until the Redemption is complete. The narrative in Daniel is not a detailed account of future events, but only a forecast (*namūdhaj*), or perhaps rather a model,[32] of this kind of event. When similar predictions came true in the past, they buttressed our faith and confidence that as-yet unfulfilled prophecies will still come to pass.

In sum, Saadia erects an interesting classification of the "sciences" that links astrology with a variety of magical techniques; the criterion underlying the classification is not the sophistication of a particular technique (or branch of science) but its purpose. Since prophecy is the





only way to arrive at knowledge of things that are normally concealed from human beings—although they themselves are not concealed—it follows that any other method, however clever, that attempts to uncover this hidden knowledge is doomed to failure. Prophecy is the only way to attain correct knowledge of things that are not accessible to the senses. Astrology seems to be scientific, because it is allegedly based on observations of measurable natural phenomena or events (hence on things accessible to the senses). But only the numbers that the prophet received from God through the angel Gabriel—who occupies a central place in the book of Daniel—will enable one to apprehend the End of Days, provided those numbers are properly interpreted.

The introduction ends with a list of the general and detailed lessons to be learned from the book, for which Saadia uses the term *manāfiᶜ*, "benefits." There are ten of these, providing Saadia with the basis for his division of the book into ten parts.[33]

31 See below in the notes to the translation, ט, 3ᵃ6.

32 For the perception of biblical narratives of past events as a model of future events, see H. Ben-Shammai, "Prognostic *Midrash* in the Works of Seʿadya Gaon as Exemplified in his Introduction to the Commentary on the Song of David (2 Sam. 22)," in E. Fleischer et al., eds., *Me'ah Sheʿarim: Studies in Medieval Jewish Spiritual Life in Memory of Isadore Twersky* (Jerusalem, 2001), pp. 1–19 (Heb.). It may be suggested that the word *namūdhaj* is really *namūdhār/namūdhār*, an astrological term of Persian origin, for a technique of calculating a birth-horoscope when the client does not know the exact time and date of his birth. This would seem to be an appropriate term for an 'approximate technique' for working out a horoscope for historical events, as in Daniel. On the *namūdhār,* see al-Bīrūnī, *al-Tafhīm li-awāʾil ṣināᶜat al-tanjīm—The Book of Instruction in the Elements of the Art of Astrology*, facsimile reproduction with English translation by R. R. Wright (London, 1934), pp. 328–329, #525.

33 There is a similar list of "benefits" at the end of Saadia's introduction to his commentary on Isaiah. See Ben-Shammai, "Introduction."

## Background of Saadia's View of the Relationship between Astrology and Prophecy

As already noted, the main topic of Saadia's introduction to Daniel is the relationship between astrology and prophecy. His practice in all the introductions to his biblical commentaries was to point out the main ideas of the book, discussing and explaining them both in themselves and in relation to other, possibly conflicting, ideas. These discussions generally relate to important issues that were of interest to Jewish intellectuals of the time, and especially to controversial questions. Saadia considered it necessary to present an authoritative Rabbanite position on such issues, in language and terms comprehensible to anyone well versed in the surrounding Arabic culture. Such discussions introduce many of his commentaries. His main subject in the opening sections of his commentary on the Torah, for example, is the authority of talmudic tradition (*contra* the Karaite position).[34] At the beginning of his commentary on Psalms he deals with the role of the psalms in the Temple ritual and the synagogue liturgy (here, too, in opposition to the Karaite position).[35] His commentary on Job is introduced by an exposition of the problem of theodicy (a central issue in theological debates in Saadia's time).[36] And his commentary to Isaiah begins with a discussion of the educational and political role of the prophet (against the background of early stages in the development of Islamic political philosophy).[37]

The introduction to Daniel presents Saadia's most concentrated and focused argument against astrology, though his standpoint on that question is clearly expressed elsewhere as well. An explicit condemnation of astrology may be found in his commentary on Daniel 11:35, where he shows that the astrological explanation of the poverty of scholars may be refuted on the basis of historical experience.[38] Saadia explicitly deplores any kind of divination, adducing rational and halakhic reasons for his objections, in two fragments of his commentary





to Isaiah. One relates to 2:6, where the different forms of divination are categorized as equivalent to the most serious forms of heresy and idolatry.[39] The other fragment comes from the commentary on chapter 49, where, in addition to his rational argument, he refers briefly to the major techniques of divination and the main biblical grounds for their prohibition: Deut. 18:10 and Ezek. 21:26. Saadia explicitly forbids use of these techniques, though he permits their theoretical study (*al-wuqūf ᶜalayhā faqaṭ*).[40] Biblical arguments against divination, relating to biblical proponents of such techniques—false prophets, the astrologers of Egypt and Babylon—are cited in his commentary on Proverbs 27:1.[41] I have already mentioned Saadia's explicit reference to astrology in his commentary on Job.[42]

In the introduction to Daniel, however, he proceeds differently. Nowhere in this text does he explicitly mention the halakhic prohibition of astrology, but only the prophets' scorn for it and denial of its

34 Saadia Gaon, *Saadia's Commentary Genesis*, ed. with introduction, [Hebrew] translation, and notes by M. Zucker (New York, 1984), esp. pp. 13–17 (Hebrew translation: pp. 181–184).

35 See Uriel Simon, *Four Approaches to the Book of Psalms*, trans. Lenn J. Schramm (Albany, 1991), esp. chaps. 1–2.

36 See Goodman, *Theodicy*, pp. 28–92. Goodman, however, digresses considerably, discussing topics that are hardly relevant.

37 See Ben-Shammai, "Introduction," pp. 372–379.

38 Saadia, *Daniel*, p. 205.

39 Saadia Gaon, *Saadia's Translation and Commentary on Isaiah*, ed. with [Hebrew] translation by Y. Ratzaby (Qiryat Ono, 1993) p. 161; Hebrew translation, p. 258.

40 Ibid., p. 218; Hebrew translation: p. 329.

41 Saadia Gaon, *Proverbs with the Translation and Commentary of Saadia ben Joseph al-Fayyūmī*, ed. with Hebrew translation by Joseph Qāfiḥ (Jerusalem, 1976) p. 218 (and see below, nn. 68 and 276).

42 See above, n. 28.

validity. This contrasts with Maimonides' approach in his anti-astrological epistle, where he delineates the halakhic position at the very beginning, referring the reader to the relevant section in his *Mishneh Torah,* before proceeding to a discussion of astrology *per se*.[43]

The main point of the introduction seems to be a rational refutation of the magical substitutes for prophecy and a rejection of the scientific pretensions of methods for foretelling the future in general, and calculating the End of Days in particular, based on observation of the stars or other techniques of divination or sorcery. Saadia is willing to admit that there are different levels of magical techniques; he even ranks different types of "scientific" astrology according to the proportion of "nonsense" in the beliefs of their adherents.[44] But some techniques are superior to others only in respect of their sophistication, not their ethical level. Prophecy itself teaches us that magical techniques are unfounded. Here Saadia incorporates a commentary on the long passage in Isaiah 44 in which the prophet ridicules magical techniques and stresses the exclusive nature of prophecy.[45] According to the Jewish faith, as expressed by the prophets, *malāḥim*, predictions of the events at the End of Days, are special prophecies devoted to such matters; of these, Daniel's prophecy is particularly important.[46]

The polemical nature of Saadia's writing here is unmistakable. As a point of departure for understanding the argument, we may assume that it was directed against Jewish proponents of astrology, especially as they related to the book of Daniel and the prediction of a timetable for the ultimate Redemption (as Abraham bar Ḥiyya did later; see below). Thus we must consider the following questions: What is known of a Jewish *malāḥim* literature and of Jewish advocates of astrology in or just before Saadia's time? What is the connection between such concerns, or contemporary astrology in general, and the book of Daniel or the figure of Daniel?

Saadia's Karaite contemporary, Abū Yūsuf Ya$^{c}$qūb al-Qirqisānī, devoted a whole chapter of his great halakhic work, in the section dealing





with idolatry, to astronomy and astrology,[47] following a chapter on sorcery.[48] Some of the techniques mentioned by Qirqisānī are also discussed by Saadia and can also be found in the literature on divination.[49]

43 A. Marx, *The Correspondence between the Rabbis of Southern France and Maimonides about Astrology* (New York, 1926), p. 43; Maimonides, *Epistles,* ed. Y. Shailat (Maaleh Adumim, 1988), 2:478 (English translation in R Lerner, "Maimonides: Letter on Astrology", in R. Lerner and M. Mahdi [eds.], *Medieval Political Philosophy: A Sourcebook*, [Glencoe 1963], p. 228 [repr. in I. Twersky (ed.), *A Maimonides Reader* (New York, 1972) 464], and see the comments of R. Lerner, "Maimonides' Letter on Astrology", *History of Religions*, 8 [1968]; 144); Maimonides returns to his Halakhic justification for rejecting astrology on p. 49 (Marx), p. 487 (Shailat). See also: Y. Tzvi Langermann, "Maimonides' Repudiation of Astrology," *Maimonidean Studies* 2 (1991): 123–158; S. Sela, "The Fuzzy Border Between Astronomy and Astrology as Reflected in the Thought and Work of Three Twelfth-Century Jewish Intellectuals," *Aleph* 1 (2001): 59–100.

44 ט, 2$^{b}$5 ff.

45 ט, 3$^{a}$4–22.

46 As far as Saadia is concerned, Daniel is unquestionably a prophet, for all books of the Bible are prophetic; see Ben-Shammai, "Polemical Element," esp. pp. 127–131. For a special discussion of Daniel's status as prophet in Saadia's teachings, against the background of talmudic-midrashic tradition, see Schlossberg, "Concepts and Methods," pp. 196–215.

47 Ya$^{c}$qūb al-Qirqisānī, *Kitāb al-Anwār wal-Marāqib: Code of Karaite Law*, ed. L. Nemoy, vols. 1–5 (New York, 1939–1945), chap. 11, pp. 590–593. This chapter was surveyed in a brief discussion of the attitude of the *Mutakallimūn* to astrology by G. Vajda, "Une réfutation inédite du déterminisme astral," *Mélanges d'Université Saint Joseph* 50 (1984): 721–729. The Karaites may have been interested in astronomy for calendrical calculations based on observation, but that was no reason for them to believe in astrology, actively or otherwise; see B.R. Goldstein, "Astronomy and the Jewish Community in Early Islam," *Aleph* 1 (2001): 17–57, on 34–36. This is precisely Qirqisānī's distinction between the two fields.

Since Qirqisānī's work is concerned with halakhah, he combines his account of the halakhic prohibitions with his own polemic against the scientific value of astrology. Like Saadia in his commentary on Isaiah 49 (see above), Qirqisānī writes that there is nothing wrong with studying astrological divination; what is forbidden is using it. But why, he asks, should one waste one's time on such nonsense, instead of devoting all efforts to studying the Torah? While Qirqisānī's terminology is somewhat different from Saadia's, the similar thrust and content of his writing is obvious. Even were there no evidence other than these parallels, they clearly attest to their authors' polemical position and objection to what was presumably a fairly common phenomenon among Jews. In fact we possess more direct evidence of Jewish astronomers and astrologers—predating Saadia (that is, from the early stages of Judaeo-Arabic culture), contemporary with him, and after his time.

Before reviewing some of the evidence, I would like to point out that this profession was not unique to Jews. On the contrary, the number of people engaged in astrology was very large and Jews accounted for at most a small part.[50] Astrology enjoyed considerable prestige; it was supported by rulers for their own needs, widely believed to be a legitimate science, and developed on the basis of translations from classical literature in parallel to the development of general science and philosophy. Al-Kindī, the so-called "philosopher of the Arabs" (mid-ninth century), who was proficient in almost every branch of science, wrote many astrological treatises, as indicated by the known titles.[51] Several astrological works were attributed to Ptolemy,[52] including two entitled *malḥama;* one of these was said to have been transmitted in Daniel's name.[53] The *Epistles of the Brethren of Sincerity*, one of the most typical representatives of Neoplatonist thought (in a syncretistic sense, with links to Ismaᶜīlī thought) in Saadia's era, assign a prominent place to astrology,[54] although its authors, too, conduct a debate about its religious validity and try to limit its study to prophets and saints.[55]





In the middle of the ninth century, astrology was a major philosophical issue in Baghdad. While some contemporary philosophers set

48 Not sorcery in the sense of causing changes or miracles, but as a technique for prediction of the future; Qirqisānī, *Anwār*, pp. 587–589: *fī ʾl-faʾl wa-ḍurūbihī.*

49 As follows from T. Fahd, *La divination arabe* (Leiden, 1966; repr. Paris, 1989). Since its publication, however, important sources and studies relevant to our subject have been published; some of them will be mentioned below.

50 Cf. the impressive extent of the section devoted to the subject in F. Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums* (Wiesbaden, 1967–1984), vol. 7. See also: M. Ullmann, *Die Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften im Islam (Wiesbaden, 1970), pp. 271–358; the survey in K. Yamamoto and C. Burnett, eds. and trans. Abū Maᶜšar on Historical Astrology* (Leiden, 2000), 1: 573–609; T. Fahd, "Aḥkām al-Nudjūm," *EI*², vol. 8 (1995): 105–108.

51 Sezgin, *Geschichte* 7: 130–134; one of al-Kindī's astrological works was published in Yamamoto and Burnett, *Abū Maᶜšar,* 1: 527–543.

52 Sezgin, *Geschichte* 7: 49–41, defines their subject as "astrological geography." Ptolemy was a major authority for astrologers as well as astronomers. His authentic work, the *Tetrabiblos*, is an extensive treatise on astrology.

53 Ibid., p. 46.

54 The last epistle in *Rasāʾil Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ* (Beirut, 1983), 4: 283–463, is devoted to magic in general but treats mainly astrology; see I. R. Netton, *Muslim Neoplatonists* (London, 1982), pp. 50–52. *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* (I, Epistle 3, pp. 114–157) contains many sections on astrological topics. Note especially the last chapter: "The astrologer does not claim, by announcing future events, to know what is concealed" (pp. 153–157). The polemic aim of this chapter becomes clear in the concluding paragraph, where the authors mention that "the jurisprudents, the scholars of tradition, the pious, and the ascetics have prohibited the study of the science of the stars." They argue, however, that this prohibition is due to the fact that "the science of the stars is part of the science of philosophy." The concluding chapter is thus aimed against thinkers like Saadia and ignores the fact that a majority of the philosophers (*falāsifa*) had also been opposed to astrology.

great store by it, others (such as al-Fārābī) were undecided whether it should be entirely rejected or credited with at least some scientific value. It should be noted that most scientists and thinkers since the time of Ptolemy had agreed, though with varying degrees of emphasis, that the scientific validity of astrology was inferior to that of astronomy.[56] The rational theologians—the Muᶜtazilites—decried astrology, but not astronomy.[57] In what follows, I would like to show that the Jews were no strangers to this subject; they were fully involved in the various currents within their cultural environment and even left an imprint on them.

One of the first astronomers and astrologers to write in Arabic, and one of the most important, was an Iraqi-born Jew named Māshāʾallāh (d. ca. 810).[58] He was probably well versed in ancient astrological sources in Persian and Syriac, and perhaps also in translations from the Greek. He is said to have placed his knowledge at the service of the government, among other things helping the second ᶜAbbasid caliph, al-Manṣūr, decide upon the most auspicious date for founding the city of Baghdad (in 762).[59] Two of his works concern us directly: *Kitāb fī ʾl-qirānāt wa-ʾl-adyān wa-l-milal* (*Book of conjunctions [of the stars],*[60] *religions, and faiths*); and *al-Mawālīd* (*Nativities*). The first book has survived in an abbreviated version by Ibn Hibinta; a manuscript was recently published with an English translation and commentary.[61] It is directly relevant to our subject, as it links the movements and location of the planets and the constellations with religions and religious groups, as representatives of political entities, and also treats of the lifespan and political power of those entities. It is a perfect example of what Saadia calls an "astrological history" (see above). This was a highly respectable branch of astrology, to which the most important astrologers devoted substantial attention in their works. Saadia could well have been thinking of works like those of Māshāʾallāh—if not indeed of this particular one.

The second book is an exposition of one of the most popular branches of astrology[62]—predictions of the future based on the posi-





55 *Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ, 4:369.*

56 See G. Saliba, "Astronomy and Astrology in Medieval Arabic Thought," in R. Rashed and J. Biard, eds., *Les doctrines de la Science de l'antiquité à l'âge classique* (Leuven, 1999), pp. 131–164, with an emphasis on al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, and others. This agreement included even practicing astrologers like Abū Maᶜshar and al-Bīrūnī; on the latter, see S. Pines, "The Semantic Distinction between the Terms *Astronomy* and *Astrology* according to Al-Biruni," *Isis* 55 (1964): 343–349 [=S. Pines, *Studies in Arabic Versions of Greek Texts and in Mediaeval Science* (Jerusalem and Leiden, 1986), pp. 387–393].

57 J. L. Kraemer, *Humanism in the Renaissance of Islam* (Leiden, 1986), pp. 150–162. See also above, n. 47. For the exceptional case of al-Ghazālī see Saliba, "Astronomy and Astrology," pp. 150, 154–156. For an important contribution to the general and Jewish background of Saadia's introduction to Daniel, see Goldstein, "Astronomy and the Jewish Community."

58 Steinschneider, *Die arabische Literatur,* §18; Sezgin, *Geschichte* 7: 102–108; Ullmann, *Die Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften,* pp. 303–306; J. Samsó, "Māshāʾ Allāh," *EI*², 6: 710–712. For a brief account with an extensive bibliography see M. Gil, *In the Kingdom of Ishmael* (Tel Aviv, 1997), 1: 294–295; Goldstein, "Astronomy and the Jewish Community," p. 24.

59 See also H. Ben-Shammai, "Jerusalem in Early Medieval Jewish Bible Exegesis," in L. I. Levine, ed., *Jerusalem: Its Sanctity and Centrality to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (New York, 1999), pp. 451–452. There I suggested that when Saadia chose to translate "Jerusalem" as *Dār al-salām* he was reacting to al-Manṣūr's messianic pretensions as reflected in the establishment of Baghdad or, at least, in al-Manṣūr's choice of the name *Dār al-salām* for his new city.

60 For this term see below in the translation.

61 E. S. Kennedy and D. Pingree, eds., *The Astrological History of Mashaʾallah* (Cambridge, MA, 1971). Fragments or reworked versions of other works are included in that edition as appendixes, including *Kitāb al-mawālīd.* A fragment of another work by Māshāʾallāh was published in Yamamoto and Burnett, *Abū Maᶜšar,* 1: 545–553.

62 See ט, 2ᵇ6 ff.

tions of the heavenly bodies at the time of a person's birth. Such predictions were concerned primarily with individuals' fates and plans. Māshāʾallāh himself is an intriguing phenomenon, as he attests to the degree to which Jews were integrated into the surrounding culture at the very earliest stage of Islamic rule. We do not possess clear-cut evidence of other Jewish astrologers contemporary with him, but the long list of those active a short time later is sufficient indication that he was no exception. While his contribution to astrology does not seem to have any distinctly Jewish characteristics, the fact that he and his colleagues were involved in this area must have influenced or left some imprint on the Jewish community.

Sahl ibn Bishr was an Iraqi Jew who lived in the first half of the ninth century.[63] The titles of his works all relate to astrology and different predictive techniques, most of which Saadia mentions in his introduction: *Masāʾil al-aḥkām* (*The questions of judgments*),[64] *al-Mawālīd* (*Nativities*), *al-Ikhtiyārāt* (*Elections*), *al-Awqāt* (*Times*), *al-Masāʾil wa-ʾl-aḥkām* (*Questions and judgments*).[65]

Another Jewish astronomer-astrologer was Ibn Saymūya, who probably lived in the ninth century.[66] The names of two of his works are known. One is *al-Madkhal ilā ʿilm al-nujūm* (*Introduction to the science of the stars*), which presumably combined astronomy and astrology. The other is *al-Amṭār* (*Rain*), whose subject was apparently astrological prediction of rain in the context of what is known as "astro-meteorology" (see below).

A particularly interesting figure is the astrologer Abū Daʾūd, who was also probably Jewish.[67] As reported by the historian of science Ibn al-Qifṭī, he was active in Baghdad, where he was killed in the year 300 AH (912/3 CE). He was proficient in *ʿilm al-ḥadathān*[68] *wa-ʾl-akhbār al-kāʾināt* (the science of future happenings and events). His predictions were quoted and people expected them to be fulfilled.[69] Ḥājjī Khalīfa, the famous Turkish bibliographer, mentions a certain Abū Daʾūd who wrote a book entitled *Kitāb al-malāḥim*.[70] Steinschneider





suggests identifying the astrologer mentioned by Ibn al-Qifṭī with the author of that book,[71] thus creating an explicit connection between astrology and the *malāḥim* literature through a Jewish intermediary. Steinschneider's proposal is quite attractive and ingenious; moreover, a study of general histories of Arabic literature reveals that such titles are specifically associated with our present area of interest, almost never with some other topic. Nevertheless, conjectures, however plausible, cannot replace proper bibliographical or textual proof; in the absence of

63 Steinschneider, *Die arabische Literatur,* §19; Sezgin, *Geschichte* 7: 125–128; Ullmann, *Die Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften,* pp. 309–312. For a brief account with an extensive bibliography see Gil, *Kingdom*, 1: 311–312; Goldstein, "Astronomy and the Jewish Community," p. 26.

64 For all these terms, see below in the translation.

65 Perhaps the same as the first work in this list.

66 Steinschneider, *Die arabische Literatur,* §63. Sezgin, *Geschichte* 7: 172, classifies him as an astronomer, based on the first work listed here; but on p. 326 he calls him an "astro-meteorologist," on the basis of his second work. See also Gil, *Kingdom*, 1: 328.

67 Steinschneider, *Die arabische Literatur,* §27; Sezgin, *Geschichte* 7: 330, also p. 18, concerning the astronomer "Daʾūd al-yahūdī," mentioned in a ninth-century work as an important astrologer.

68 For this term in the sense of "future events, visions of the future, apocalypses" (i.e., synonymous with *malḥama/malāḥim*) see R. Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes* (Leiden, 1881), 1: 258b. Dozy notes that de Sacy, the first scholar to point out this meaning, read the term as *ḥidthān*. Dozy himself held that the correct reading is *ḥadathān*. In addition to the sources cited by Dozy, one might cite also Saadia, *Proverbs*, p. 218:27 (in the commentary).

69 Jamāl al-Dīn b. al-Qifṭī, *Tarīkh al-ḥukamāʾ*, ed. J. Lippert (Leipzig, 1903), p. 407.

70 Ḥājjī Khalīfa Kātib Chelebī, *Khashf al-ẓunūn ʿan asāmī ʾl-kutub wa-ʾl-funūn,* ed. G. Flüge) (London, 1850), 5: 157, no. 10521.

71 Steinschneider, *Die arabische Literatur,* §27; see also Gil, *Kingdom*, 1: 341–342 (where there is a reference to Sezgin, *Geschichte* 5: 337–338; 6: 170–171).

such proof, we must leave the question in abeyance.[72] Steinschneider sought to link the whole affair with an astronomer named Daʾūd who was active at the time of Buwayhid rule in Iraq; that is, after Saadia's time.[73] This Daʾūd died, as Ibn al-Qifṭī reports, in the year 430 AH (1038/9 CE). He was an expert (*muqaddam*) in the science of the meanings of the planets, in the solution of (astrological?) tables, in the courses of the planets and their judgments (*aḥkām;* may be rendered as "decrees" [of the stars]), and in predictions of the future (*ḥadathān*). However, Ibn Qifṭī does not say that he was Jewish. Steinschneider associates him with Judeo-Arabic literature on the basis of a reference to "David the Jew" in a manuscript source.[74] Since a person of this name was indeed referred to as a ninth-century astrologer,[75] perhaps he was the author mentioned in the manuscript, in which case the eleventh-century astrologer Daʾūd would be of no interest here. It is clear that much material remains to be studied and many questions to be researched in this area, but the existing proven information provides sufficient evidence of Jewish interest in astrology during the Geonic period and of the prominence of Jewish astrologers in general society.

A list of books from the thirteenth century (?) discovered in the Geniza includes the title *Kitāb al-malāḥim*.[76] This may be a reference to Saadia Gaon's commentary on Daniel, however, so it cannot be considered further evidence of Jewish works of this type. There is also evidence from the Cairo Geniza of astrological materials, mainly horoscopes or predictions. Several such Geniza documents have been published and interpreted.[77] Others have not yet been fully discussed.[78] These, along with various documents in daily or literary language, testify to a widespread acquaintance with, reliance on, and appreciation of astrological predictions and practices,[79] even among members of the rabbinic establishment.[80] However, the Geniza materials and terminology refer mostly to Muslim dates and concepts and do not have specifically Jewish associations.[81] Sometimes they even reflect some skepticism towards astrology.[82]





72 Nowhere does Ḥājjī Khalīfa state that this Daʾūd was Jewish. Suffice it to note here that a celebrated compiler of *ḥadīth*, Abū Daʾūd al-Sijistānī (d. 889), called the section of his book (*Sunan*) dealing with eschatological visions and related matters *Kitāb al-malāḥim* (see above, n. 15). Other compilers of canonical *ḥadīth* did not choose that title.

73 Steinschneider, *Die arabische Literatur,* §64.

74 MS Leiden 1108 (III, f. 117:5), referring to his own article in *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 24 (1870): 386.

75 Above, n. 67.

76 Cambridge University Library, T-S 16.19, published by S. Assaf, "Ancient Book Lists" (Hebrew), *Kiryath Sefer* 18 (1941–42): 277–280 (to be published again by the Ben-Zvi Institute, Jerusalem, in N. Alloni, *The Jewish Library in the Middle Ages* [Hebrew], list 8:100). The book is listed there on p. 278, 51. Assaf, ibid., n. 34, translates the title into Hebrew as "Book of Wars at the End of Days," referring to Mann, *Texts and Studies*, 1: 645:28. As remarked above, however (n. 8), the work in the list that Mann published is different and is indubitably the commentary on Daniel by Saadia Gaon.

77 See the following articles by B. R. Goldstein and D. Pingree: "Horoscopes from the Cairo Geniza," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 36 (1977): 113–144; "More Horoscopes from the Cairo Geniza," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 125 (1981): 155–189; "Astrological Almanacs from the Cairo Geniza," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 38 (1979): 153–175, 231–256; "Additional Astrological Almanacs from the Cairo Geniza," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103 (1983):673–690. On these documents see further S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967–1993), 5: 625, n. 28.

78 See ibid., 292, about a booklet of horoscopes written by the "experienced and highly esteemed court clerk Hillel b. Eli"; see also the preceding note.

79 See ibid., pp. 329–332, and the publications quoted in n. 77.

80 See ibid., pp. 420–421, on the prestige of astrology and astrologers in the "Geniza society." Goitein's statement (ibid., p. 422), "Only Maimonides condemned this science as a fake," may be qualified in line with the present discussion.

81 An instructive exception is quoted in ibid., p. 421.

82 As in the case of Hillel b. Eli, see n. 78.

Mention should also be made of the many contemporary works linked with Daniel, as a character or ostensible author.[83] These works, which constitute a major category in the *malāḥim* literature, are concerned primarily with the relationship between meteorological (and astronomical) phenomena and predictions of the future. The relationship is quite clear: The End of Days will be heralded by unusual natural events, mostly of a meteorological nature, such as torrential rains, variations in the regular seasons, and eclipses. Sezgin lists all such books in the section on "Astro-meteorology." Several bear titles like *Malḥamat Dāniyāl*[84] or just *Malḥama*.[85] Many persons involved in astrology contributed works linked with Daniel, some exclusively so. Among them were the philosopher Al-Kindī (see above)[86] and, of course, Abū Ma$^{c}$shar, perhaps the most famous astrologer of his time (d. 886).[87]

A few terminological remarks are in order. I have already mentioned Saadia's thorough acquaintance with the relevant professional terminology. He used it freely even where no polemical motives were involved and it proved necessary, as in his commentary on *Sefer Yeṣirah*, which includes a horoscopic diagram of the positions of the planets and the constellations (describing a horoscope for a specific date), with all the relevant technical terminology.[88] Saadia's works often provide an early and reliable source for the use of important terms and concepts in the sciences and in religious thought, thereby making an important contribution to the history of Arabic culture in general. Two good examples of this can be found in the introduction being published here.

One of the terms that Saadia uses to denote techniques of divination is *hšmrgʾt*.[89] Some Arabic dictionaries list the root *ŠMRJ* with the meaning "loose stitches, improperly sewn clothes."[90] This evolved into the meaning of a mixture of truth and falsehood, or false and senseless words.[91] Fahd, in the chapter on Persian divination in his *La divination arabe*,[92] mentions the Persian term *hasmirœ*, which, he says, refers to divination based on various oracles, such as randomly leafing through





83 Sezgin (*Geschichte* 7: 312–317) devotes five pages to Daniel literature. See also G. Vajda, "Dāniyāl," *EI*$^{2}$ 2: 112–113.

84 Sezgin, *Geschichte* 7: 312–317, Nos. 5 and 15. A new popular Shi$^{c}$ite edition of a book of this type was published in a facsimile edition and translated into English by A. Fodor, "Malhamat Danial," in Gy. Káldy-Nagy, ed., *The Muslim East: Studies in Honour of Julius Germanus* (Budapest, 1974), pp. 85–159. For some important comments on this work and the genre as a whole, see G. Vajda, "Quelques observations sur la Malḥamat Dāniyāl," *Arabica* 23 (1976): 84–87.

85 Sezgin, *Geschichte* 7:312–317, No. 6.

86 Ibid., 7:326–327.

87 J. M. Millás, "Abū Ma$^{c}$shar," *EI*$^{2}$, vol. 1 (1960), pp. 139–140; Sezgin, *Geschichte* 7: 139–151; ibid., pp. 328–329 for his astro-meteorological works, including, as expected, *Kitāb al-malāḥim*. On meteorological divination, see also Fahd, *La divination arabe,* pp. 407–417.

88 Saadia Gaon, *Sefer Yeṣira [Kitāb al-mabādiʾ] with the Translation and Commentary of Saadia ben Joseph al-Fayyūmī*, [Arabic Text] ed. with Hebrew translation by Joseph Qāfiḥ (Jerusalem, 1972), pp. 86–87; for an English translation of the passage see Goldstein, "Astronomy and the Jewish Community," pp. 50–54. Saadia's close familiarity with the relevant techniques and his ability to compose a passage that is astrologically sound do not necessarily mean that he was favorably inclined towards astrology or that he was opposed to it. What is relevant to the question of his position on astrology is his consistent opposition to it in other works as well (his commentaries on Isaiah and Job as mentioned above), probably over a long period of time. In addition, notwithstanding his high esteem for *Sefer Yeṣira*, he was also critical of it: he considered the doctrine of creation expounded in the book to be second only to the true doctrine of the Torah (Introduction, pp. 30–31). Like many serious medieval authors, Saadia thoroughly studied the theories and doctrines he wrote against, so there is nothing unusual about it. As mentioned above, he, like al-Qirqisānī, was not opposed to the theoretical study of astrology (perhaps in order to combat it effectively), but only to the practical application of it to divination.

89 ט, 2$^{a}$12; ק: *ʾštmrgʾt*. The reading of ט is closer to the Persian form, so that manuscript may be closer to the original work.

books by epic poets (such as Homer or Virgil) or the Holy Scriptures.[93] Fahd notes the corresponding Arabic terms *al-qarᶜa* and *al-faᵓl*, terms treated in detail by Qirqisānī (see above), as well as games of chance whose outcome is determined by drawing lots (*musāhama*). That is probably the meaning intended by Saadia, rather than nonsense in general. To the best of my knowledge, this meaning is not documented in Arabic dictionaries. Fahd found the term in a work by al-Jāḥiẓ, entitled *al-Tarbīᶜ wa-ᵓl-tadwīr*.[94] In the glossary that the editor, Pellat, appended to that work,[95] he states that the term also occurs in a book about divination attributed to al-Jāḥiẓ, *Bāb al-ᶜirāfa*, 5:12: *ḥisāb al-hismīrj wa-hiya ᵓl-qarᶜa* ("calculation of the *hsmyrj*, that is, belomancy"). Pellat cites Ibn al-Nadīm's *al-Fihrist*, which lists numerous works about belomancy, including some attributed to Daniel.[96] As it turns out, Saadia is one of our earliest and few sources to use this term; his use of it provides interesting evidence of the sources of divinatory techniques among the Arabs. Saadia's familiarity with the term may indicate that he found it in one of the professional works on the subject that he had read prior to writing the introduction to Daniel.

The second term involves an emendation of the manuscripts, but I believe the emendation is quite sound. The term *nawbahrāt*[97] (sing. *nawbahar*) is found in the astrological literature, but not very frequently.[98] The word, of Persian origin, is apparently a compound of *nw*, "nine," and *bahr*, "brightness, sunrise," etc. Drawing on an Indian method of calculation, it denotes one of the nine equal divisions of a zodiacal sign, assigned in turn to the seven planets; the figure or manifestation of inanimate matter (such as metals) or a thing (such as animals) observed in each of these allows predictions to be made.[99] According to Ullmann, the term reflects the Persian (inter alia) origins of early Arab astrology.[100] Like *hšmrgᵓt*, this term attests to Saadia Gaon's proficiency in the subject and the importance of his works for the general history of Arabic thought and science.





## Conclusion

As additional new fragments of Saadia's works come to light, he continues to astonish us. In his introduction to Daniel he classifies and discusses divination techniques, arranges them in a hierarchy, and then refutes their validity. The technical terminology he employs indicates

90 Thus *Lisān al-ᶜArab* and subsequently *al-Munjid*. Lane does not cite the word at all.

91 In *al-Munjid*: المخلّط من الكلام بالكذب, لأباطيل.

92 Fahd, *La divination arabe*, p. 32.

93 Possibly this produced the sense "meaningless words" found in the dictionaries. Divination by leafing through the Qurᵓān is known in Arabic as *istikhāra*.

94 al-Jāḥiẓ, *al-Tarbīᶜ wa-ᵓl-tadwīr,* ed. Charles Pellat (Damascus, 1955), p. 81:1.

95 Ibid., p. 207.

96 See also s.v. "*qarᶜa*" in the index of works in Sezgin, *Geschichte* 7.

97 ט, 2ᵇ3; see note to Arabic text.

98 For example, *Ikhwān al-Ṣafāᵓ*, 4: 350–351, 361. I have not found it in general texts of Arab astrology such as Abū Maᶜšar, *The Abbreviation of the Introduction to Astrology: Together with the Medieval Latin Translation of Adelard of Bath*, ed. and trans. by Charles Burnett, Keiji Yamamoto, and Michio Yano (Leiden, 1994); see next note. Neither have I found it in this form in Persian dictionaries. I have found *nawbahār* with the meaning of the beginning of spring, as well as *bahr* alone in the sense of spring, sunrise, or brilliance, and the like, as noted here in the text.

99 See: *Ikhwān al-Ṣafāᵓ*, 4:350–351, 361; and al-Bīrūnī, *al-Tafhīm,* pp. 266–267, #455. The latter has the form *NHBHR*, vocalized by Wright *nuhbahr*. The Latin version of the *Abbreviation of* Abū Maᶜšar's *Introduction* (pp. 138–139, chap. 7, VII, §§22–24) mentions a ninefold division of the houses of the zodiac and includes the Persian term in a corrupt and Arabized form: *elnowarat*. The term may be related to the "ninth power" mentioned by Abraham Ibn Ezra, *Sefer ha-Ṭeᶜamim,* ed. N. Ben-Menaḥem, (Jerusalem, 1941), p. 13. Various other astrological systems that Ibn Ezra discusses also use the term "ninth house"; see Sela, "The Fuzzy Border," p. 295.

100 Ullmann, *Die Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften,* p. 297, transcribing *nawbahrāt*.

that he had read at least the basic literature on the subject. This is the main topic—or, more precisely, the main polemical topic—of the introduction. As noted above, his argument against all forms of divination is not based on halakhah. He does not associate the techniques discussed with the Torah's prohibitions of mantic practices, some of them quite detailed. His object is to prove that, in the conflict between science and prophecy, prophecy is victorious. The Torah prohibitions are irrelevant to his argument. On the other hand, Isaiah's prophecy (chap. 44) is relevant, because for Saadia it can be interpreted as expressing a philosophical system. His argument is aimed most probably at Jews who were attracted to those techniques of divination, especially astrology, which they considered to be well-founded scientific methods. Saadia set out to prove that these Jews' efforts were worthless and hopeless and had nothing to do with science: the sciences deal with knowledge that can be observed and corroborated by the senses, a condition that the future clearly cannot fulfill. Saadia contrasted astrology with a philosophical-Rabbanite theory whose similarity to Muᶜtazilite or philosophical positions of his time is presumably no accident. In other words, Saadia's message to educated Jews who had absorbed much of Arab culture and were eager to follow the scientific fashions of their time was that astrology should be rejected not only from a religious standpoint, but also from a theoretical and scientific one. This is the central polemical thrust of the introduction and the main interest of Saadia's commentary on the book of Daniel.

We may assume that Saadia was also interested in disassociating the man Daniel, the prophet sent to the Jewish people, from all the dubious theories that had been linked with his name, most of them somehow related to astrology. All the non-Jewish books predicting the events of the End of Days and explicitly associated with Daniel or other persons, and which belonged to the genre known as *malāḥim*, were worthless. The Jews had only one book of *malāḥim*, whose association with Daniel could not be stronger: the biblical book of Daniel; there was no





other. There are, indeed, other polemical motifs in the commentary, such as the argument against the view that Redemption had already occurred in the time of the Second Temple[101] and various anti-Christian and anti-Karaite claims.[102] These arguments, however, are not unique to the commentary on Daniel and can be found in other works by Saadia that deal with the Redemption.

The introduction to Daniel reveals a motif or aspect that is unique to it and which made it for later generations, too, a kind of definitive summary of the Rabbanite position on calculations of the End of Days. This is why it was important in, for example, the thought of the twelfth-century Spanish philosopher Abraham bar Ḥiyya. We should note that Bar Ḥiyya created a mistaken impression of Saadia's attitude to astrology. Because he referred to Saadia, explicitly citing the commentary to Daniel (presumably also its introduction) as part of his justification of the study of astrology and its use to calculate a "timetable for the ultimate Redemption,"[103] many thought that Saadia supported such a position in the commentary.[104] The introduction to

[101] A view explicitly mentioned in Saadia's introduction.

[102] These motifs have all been discussed at length by Schlossberg, "Concepts and Methods."

[103] Abraham bar Ḥiyya, *Megillat ha-megalleh,* ed. A. Z. Poznanski, (Berlin, 1924), p. 110. On Abraham bar Ḥiyya's astrological oeuvre see Barkai, "L'astrologie juive médiévale," 332–334. An epistle defending the legitimacy of astrology attributed to Abraham bar Ḥiyya, published by Z. Schwarz in S. Krauss, ed., *Festschrift Adolph Schwarz* (Berlin and Vienna, 1917), Hebrew section, pp. 23–36, discusses the matter only in relation to talmudic statements and does not mention Saadia at all.

[104] As understood by Poznanski, see his introduction to *Megillat ha-megalleh*, p. xix. An interesting parallel is worthy of note here: Sezgin, *Geschichte* 7: 151–152, classifies the well-known scientist Thābit ibn Qurra (d. 901) as an astrologer (though most of the writings he lists are certainly astronomical). Sezgin (ibid., p. 329) refers to this classification as a fact and adds Thābit ibn Qurra to the "astro-meteorologists" (I doubt

that commentary, published here, proves conclusively that this was not the case. Moreover, it is one of the earliest documents from the *milieu* of medieval Arabic culture that attests to the systematic rejection of astrology by a religious thinker.

The inclination to astrological divination evinced by many of Saadia's contemporaries is probably "the many opinions and distortions" that almost brought about the loss of the Torah and that, in Maimonides' view, justified Saadia's eschatological computations.[105] Maimonides must have been familiar with the astrological literature that was the butt of Saadia's attack. He may even have known Saadia's introduction to the book of Daniel; if so, this may well explain why the great sage of Fusṭāṭ upheld Saadia's position in relation to eschatological calculations.

Any future account of the history of Jewish astrology[106] in the Middle Ages should begin with its earliest stage—Saadia Gaon[107] and his predecessors, from whom he derived the inspiration for the essay published here. The fact is that information to that effect has long been available. Saadia's introduction to the book of Daniel will no doubt contribute to the formulation of a complete, coherent chapter in the aforesaid history.





whether the one work mentioned there fits the definition of this term, strictly speaking). Qirqisānī, in his anti-astrological chapter (*Anwār*, p. 591; see above, n. 47), quotes Thābit as explicitly rejecting the scientific validity of *al-aḥkām* (the judgments inferred by astrologers from the positions of the planets and the constellations). Whom should we believe? Other scholars have concluded, from other statements by Saadia, that he did believe in astrology. Goldstein, "Astronomy and the Jewish Community," pp. 39–40 and 50–54, bases that conclusion on Saadia's commentary to *Sefer Yeṣira* (ibid., n. 80). Alexander Altmann also held that Saadia believed in astrology; see A. Altmann, "Astrology," *Encyclopedia Judaica* 3:791, quoted by Goldstein, "Astronomy and the Jewish Community," p. 41 n. 57.

105 *Epistle to Yemen*, ed. Shailat, 1:100 (Arabic text); pp. 144–145 in Samuel Ibn Tibbon's Hebrew translation; Engl. tr. in Abraham S. Halkin, ed., *Moses Maimonides' Epistle to Yemen*, with an English translation by Boaz Cohen (New York, 1952), pp. xii-xiii (repr. [slightly revised] in D. Hartman and A. Halkin, *Crisis and Leadership: Epistles of Maimonides* [Philadelphia, 1985], p. 117). It should be mentioned that the addressee of the *Epistle*, which was written in reply to his query, was especially interested in astrology and favorable towards it. Therefore the *Epistle* includes a detailed discussion of astrology, see Halkin, *Epistle*, pp. xxi–xxvi; and see I. Twersky (ed.), *A Maimonides Reader* (above, n. 43), p.23.

106 And indeed of the history of magic—but that would be beyond the scope of the present discussion. Goldstein indeed took up the challenge as formulated here, but lacking precise documentation there was no way he could reach the same conclusions.

107 As did Barkai very briefly; see above, n. 28. See also above n. 80.

## Saadia's Introduction to Daniel: The Judaeo-Arabic Text

The Manuscripts

**ט** = St. Petersburg, Russian National Library, Antonin 476; identified by Bruno Chiesa.[108] Six large parchment leaves, 32 lines per page; a few lines are missing at the bottom (hence I have not indicated textual variants in these lines; the text has been restored here, as far as possible, according to **ק**). Very fine square script. The first three leaves are from the Introduction. There is an interesting feature in this passage, which recurs several times: the scribe divided words between two lines, splitting them in the middle: 1b17–18 (אלמס מאה׳); 2a29–30 ([חרכ]את); 2b3–4 (אחכ אמהם); 2b7–8 (ואלאכ׳תי אראת); 2b10–11 (ות נחל); 3a10–11 (אלמת וחדון); 3a11–12 (אצ חאב); 3a14–17 (אלמחת אלין, ואכ תיאר, אלק ראנאת). A similar phenomenon is known in Arabic manuscripts written by Muslims.

As stated on fol. 1a, the manuscript was in the possession of one Joseph b. Yeshuᶜah.[109] We know of several persons of that name in the eleventh century, all associated with the history of the Land of Israel in that period.[110] Another Joseph b. Yeshuᶜah served as a judge in Alexandria for many years in the first half of the century, as amply documented in the Geniza.[111]

**ק** = Cambridge T-S Ar. 33.33.[112] One parchment leaf, of an unusual shape: its width (direction of writing in the line) exceeds its height. A noteworthy feature of the script is that the *alif al-wiqāya/al-fāṣila* is preserved as a rule, while in **ט** it is not written at all. This may attest to the date when it was copied.[113] Other leaves of this manuscript are in MS Oxford, Bodl. 2629, fols. 42–43; but they are from the body of the commentary, not the introduction.[114] They are not the same size as fragment **ק** and differ from each other as well. From this, as well as the unusual shape of the first leaf, we may conjecture that the scribe used





leftover scraps from a parchment workshop to write his own copy of Saadia's commentary on Daniel.

**א** = Oxford 2486; published in Saadia, *Daniel*, pp. 13–15.

108 See above, Introduction, n. 6.

109 The words "*šemaro ṣuro*" after his and his father's name probably indicate that his father was still alive.

110 See M. Gil, *Palestine during the First Muslim Period (634–1099)* (Tel Aviv, 1983) (Heb.), index.

111 On this Joseph see M. Frankel, "The Jewish Community of Alexandria in the Fatimid and Ayyubid Periods: Portrait of a Leadership Elite" (Hebrew), Ph.D. dissertation, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2002, pp. 63–66. The index of J. Mann, *History of the Jews in Egypt and Palestine under the Fatimids* (Oxford, 1922; repr. 1969 and New York 1970), contains several more references to Joseph b. Yeshuᶜah; all the documents involved were republished in Gil, *Palestine*. One particularly interesting document was also published by S. D. Goitein, *The Jewish Community in Palestine around the Beginning of Islam and in the Crusader Period in Light of the Geniza Documents* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1980), p. 114; but its writer signs as "Joseph *bar* Yeshuᶜah." The matter requires further study. For the date of the manuscript see further above, n. 89.

112 This identification is already recorded in the new catalog, C. F. Baker and M. Polliack, *Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic Manuscripts in the Cambridge Genizah Collections: Arabic Old Series [T-S Ar. 1a–54]* (Cambridge, 2001), no. 3240.

113 See J. Blau, *A Grammar of Judaeo-Arabic* (Hebrew), (Jerusalem, 1961; 2nd ed., 1981) §§42–44.

114 The two leaves are part of a group described briefly in the Bodleian catalog (and by Chiesa, "Appunti," p. 95) as coming from the commentary on Daniel. Fol. 37 is not relevant, being a commentary on Isaiah 10:15 published by Y. Ratzaby in *Sinai* 109 (1992): 97–99 (and see Saadia, *Isaiah*, pp. 169, 268). The remaining leaves belong to various manuscripts of Saadia's commentary on Daniel.

**קו** = Cambridge, T-S Ar. 26.54; 2 leaves, 22 lines per page. Fine square script.[115] Part of this fragment was published in Saadia, *Genesis*, p. 174 n. 44. The whole fragment was published by Y. Ratzaby, "R. Saadia's Commentary on Daniel (Supplements and Addenda)" (Hebrew), *Sinai* 104 (1989): 98–101. The first leaf includes the end of the introduction (to verso, l. 8).

After the completion of the editorial work on the article Mr. Ephraim Ben-Porat brought to my attention an additional Geniza fragment of the Introduction. He identified it recently in the course of his work on Biblical exegesis in the Geniza, in association with the Friedberg Geniza Project (at the Center for the Study of Judaeo-Arabic Culture – Ben-Zvi Institute). It is Cambridge University Library, T-S NS 182.66. It consists of one leaf, 16 lines per page. It is written in square oriental script. All numbers indicated in the text by Hebrew letters, and also abbreviations, are given on the margins (by a different hand?) in full Arabic words. I gave it the sign **קב**. It parallels in **ט** fol. 3b, ll. 8-29. It has several variant readings. All of them are already documented in **ק**. None of them offers any significant new meaning.

### *Text of the edition and translation*

None of the manuscripts seems to be better than the others. **ק** was copied for his own use by a reader (perhaps a scholar), who made numerous alterations and "emendations" in the text. It includes many linguistic changes that do not affect the meaning (see, e.g., *v.l.* in **ט**, fol. 1b7–14). There are a fair number of omissions, but this is also true of **ט**. The latter is surely earlier, so that wherever it exists I have taken it as my copy-text, emending it in accordance with **ק** when that seemed necessary. The text is therefore somewhat eclectic where there is more than one MS. Wherever **ט** is my copy-text but that MS is defective, I





have filled in from **ק** (or **א**), indicating this by square brackets (see above in the description of **ט**).

The following textual variants are ignored in the apparatus: full or abbreviated quotations of biblical verses (except where the change is significant); formulas used to introduce quotations (כמא קאל, כ׳ק׳, כק׳, וכק׳). Diacritical points are always indicated by apostrophes, whatever the notation used in the manuscripts. For technical reasons, my notes to the Arabic text are in Hebrew.

My own additions in the English translation (for linguistic and contextual clarification) are enclosed in parentheses. Restored text, marked in the original text by square brackets, is similarly indicated in the translation; the same applies to biblical references.

[115] Recorded in Baker and M. Polliack, *Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic Manuscripts,* as no. 2023.

## ט

### 1א

תפסיר דניא[ל ב]מעאני
לרבינו סעדיה . . .
ליוסף בן ישועה ש׳צ׳
יחיה ויזכה

### 1ב

[1] [. . . . . .] נעשה ונצליח ° [. . .][116]ן טוב [. . [117]]ישראל °
[2] [ק ע״א] [כתאב אלמ]מאלך ואלמלאחם מא יכון פי [אלף] ש׳פ׳ו׳ סנה׳[118] קאל אלמעני
[3] [באכ׳ראג׳] אלפאט׳ה אלי אלמסתעמל[119] ומעאניה אלי אלאיצ׳אח°
[4] [תבארך אל]לה אלאה אסראיל אלמנפרד בעלם מא יכון קבל כונה אלכאשף
[5] [לאולי]אה מנה מא פי אלוקוף עליה צלאח ותסבח[120] ותמג׳ד סרמדא
[6] [אבדא.] אמא בעד תע[ט׳]ימנא לה בהד׳ה[121] אלאוצאף פאנא נקול
[7] [אן אל]כאינאת אנמא[122] יק[אל ל]הא גיבא[123] באלאצ׳אפה׳ אלי אלנאטקין וד׳לך
[8] [למא] וג׳דנאהם לא יעלמונהא חקקנא אן אלעלם בהא גאיב ענהם
[9] [וא]מא עלי אלאשארה׳ אלי אלכ׳אלק פלא גיב בתה׳ ענדה וכ׳ק׳ הנה אני י׳י
[10] [א]להי כל בשר המ[מני] יפלא כל דבר. ואנמא יקאל איצ׳ ללעז[אים]
[11] [אלת]י פי אלנפוס כ׳פיאת באלנסבה׳ אלי אלמכ׳לוקין למא שאהדנא[124] כל ו[אחד]
[12] [לא] יעלם במא פי נפס אלאכ׳ר. ואמא באלאשארה׳ אלי רבנא פלא
[13] כ׳פיה׳ ענדה בתה׳ וכ׳ ק׳ כי אתה לבדך ידעת את לבב ב׳ האדם

116 השלם [סימ]ן?
117 אפשר להשלים [ל], או [על].
118 ק ליתא.
119 ט אלמתסעמל.
120 ק תסבח.
121 ק בהדא אלוצף.
122 אנמא: ק לא.
123 ק+אלא; על ״גיבא״ ראה בלאו דקדוק, §219.
124 שאהדנא כל ו[אחד לא] יעלם במא: ק שאהדנאהם לא יעלם מנהם אחד מא.





[14] ואנמא[125] יקאל איצ׳ למא גשיה אלט׳לאם ומא תחת אלת׳רי[126] מסתורא[127] ענד[128]
[15] אלערץ׳ עלי עלם אלמחדת׳ין ואמא עלי[129] אלערץ׳ עלי עלם אלקדים
[16] פלא מסתור בוג׳ה[130] וכ׳ ק׳ גם חשך לא יחשיך ממך. וקאל איצ׳ ערום
[17] שאול נגדו ואין כסות לאבדון. ובעד תקדימנא הד׳ה אלג׳זויאת אלמסמאה׳
[18] גיבא ענד אלנאס לא ענד כ׳אלקהם נאתי באלעלה׳ פיהא ופי[131] ג׳מלה׳
[19] ג׳נסהא ונקול למא כאן אלמכ׳לוקין אנמא יעלמון באלשי[132] מן אג׳ל אנהם
[20] אדרכוה בואחדה׳ מן חואסהם אמא בסמע או בבצר או בגירהמא
[21] אמתנע ענהם עלם אלגיב אד׳ ליס להד׳ה אלכ׳מס[133] פיה[134] מעמל[135] ולכן אלכ׳אלק ג׳ל
[22] גלאלה אלד׳י ליס[136] בסבב מן[137] הדה אלאסבאב ולא גירהא עלם[138] באלאשיא פלא ימתנע עליה[139]
[23] [עלם] מא יכן[140] אד׳ ד׳אתה עלי אלתעביר ד׳את עאלמה׳ אעני אד׳ הו עאלם
[24] [לעינ]ה ולמא[141] לם יצלח אן תנפיה[142] אלאנביא ען עלמה באלאמור הד׳ה אלחואס נפתהא

125 ק ואמא.
126 ק אלתרא.
127 ראה בלאו דקדוק, §219.
128 ט ענד ענד.
129 ק ליתא.
130 ק [ענה?] בתה (ואולי הוא עיקר).
131 ק והי; ק אחרי מלת ״ג׳מלה״ בין השטין מלים בלתי קריאות.
132 ק בשי.
133 ק אלכמסה.
134 פיה מעמל: ק פיהם עמל
135 לא מצאתי תיעוד במילונים לצורה זו; לכאורה גירסת ק ״עמל״ עדיפה משום שהיא מתועדת יפה, או אינה אלא תיקון של מעתיק ק; וממילא ״פיהם״ שיבו או גררה.
136 ט ליתא.
137 מן הד׳ה אלאסבאב: ק הדה ולא גירהא.
138 ק יעלם.
139 ק עליהא.
140 ק יכון.
141 ק ואדא.

[25] [בעץ׳] אוליאה פימא ילקנה הו[143] פקאלת[144] והריחו ביראת ייי׳ ולא למראה עיניו
[26] [ישפט] ת׳ם נקול וקד ג׳אהד[145] כת׳יר מן אלנאס[146] פי אן יקפו עלי עלם מא
[27] [יכון קבל] כונה פלא יצלו אלי ד׳לך וכאנת חאלהם פי ד׳לך כחאל מן קאל
[28] [ ואחשבה לדעת זאת]. ולד׳לך אמתנע כ׳ואצהם מן אלתערץ׳
[29] [לה עלי מא נהאהם אלחכי]ם פקאל[147] אל תתהלל ביום מחר וגעל [. .]
[30] [. . . . . אד׳א נזל פיה אד׳ ] כאן אל אנסאן לא יערף[148] מקדאר מא סי[גלב]
[31] [מן ענאצר מזאג׳ה עלי באקיהא] ולא מא סיצ׳עף מן קואה או [ יקוא כמא . . . .]
[32] [. . . . . עלי תדביר רב]ה ומא יחדת׳ פי ע[אלמה עלי מד אל זמאן]
[33] [וד׳אך קולה כאשר אינך יודע] מה [דרך הרוח וגו׳ פאראד בקולה כעצמים
[34] [. . . . . ר]קה׳[149] אלמתפרעה׳ מן אל[. . ] ותצריף אללפט׳ה׳ מן ועצם
[35] [כחו ואראד בקולה דרך הרוח אלנפס ד׳אתהא פחררתהא פהולא. . . . ]

**2א**

[1] עלי צ׳רבין אלאול אד׳ תרכוא עלם אלגיביאת ואלכ׳פיאת לצ[אחבהא]
[2] תבארך.[150] ואלב׳ אד׳ לם יתשאגלו בהא פתקטעהם עמא י[רג׳א]
[3] וצולהם אליה וכ׳ק׳ יי לא גבה לבי ולא רמו עיני וג׳. לכן גיר הו[לא]
[4] קצד אלוקוף עלי מא יכון קבל כונה פראמו מנה אצעב מראם
[5] ורכבו פיה אכ׳שן אלטרק[151] פלמא אסתפרגו מג׳הודהם פלם ינאלוה
[6] אחאלו באלעג׳ז עלי זלל יג׳רי פי חסאבהם או[152] תחריראת לם תתם
[7] פי מתאמלהם פקנעו באחאלתהם[153] ואקאמו מעאד׳ירא[!]: פאמא

142 ט תנפי.
143 ק ליתא.
144 ק פקאל (לכאורה גירסה עדיפה, שכן מובא רק פסוק של נביא אחד).
145 ק אגהד.
146 ק +אנפסהם.
147 ק ליתא.
148 ק יעלם.
149 השלם [אלקוי אלמתפר]קה?
150 ק +אסמה.
151 ק טריק.
152 או ... מתאמלהם: ק אן אלתחריכאת לם תתם פי מתאמלאתהם.





[8] אלדנאה׳ אלדעוא מנהם אלד׳ין תצרפו לד׳לך פי אלאמור אלארצ׳יה׳ מן
[9] אלנט׳ר פי אג׳זא מן אלחיואן כאלכבד[154] ואלכתף ואלביץ׳[155] בלא עדד
[10] ופי חרוף[156] יכתבונהא כיף מא אתפקת ופי אצואת יסמעונהא
[11] כיף מא ג׳אאת[157] ופי מראיאת יבצרונהא[158] כיף מא אקבלת. ופי
[12] השמרגאת[159] יבתדונהא עלי פנון שתא פלא נרי[160] אלתשאגל בשרח
[13] צנאיעהם הד׳ה ומא עליהא:[161] וכד׳לך אלקום אלד׳ין הם אעלי טבקה׳
[14] פי אלדעוי מן האולי פהם ינט׳רון פי אלאת׳אר[162] אלעלויה׳ מן חאלאת
[15] אלקמר ושעאע אלכואכב מא מנהא סריע אלאנקצ׳אץ׳ ומא מנהא
[16] לה לבת׳ ומקאם ויתפקדון[163] שכל קוס נור אלקמר ושכל קוס
[17] קזח[164] ואשכאל אלעצא ואלחמרה׳[165] ואצואת אלהדאת
[18] ולהם פי כל פן מן הדא אכ׳באר יקולונהא ואחכאם
[19] יחכמון בהא פליס בנא חאג׳ה׳ איצ׳ אלי רסם מא
[20] יקולון ולא את׳באת מא עליהם פיה ולכנא[166] נצרף
[21] קולנא אלי אלקום אלאעליין[167] פי דעואהם אנהם אפנו

153 באחאלתהם ואקאמו מעאד׳ירא: ק בחאלתהם וקאמו קאעד ראי.
154 כאלכבד ואלכתף: ק כאלכתף ואלכבד.
155 ק + ומא נחא נחוהא ופי חבאת מן אלנבאת כאלשעיר ואלנוא ומא אשבההא ופי כטוט יכטונהא פי אלארץ׳ (אפשר שנשמט מט מחמת הדומות: ואלביץ׳ ... אלארץ׳).
156 ק +שתא(?).
157 ק גאשת.
158 ק ידרכונהא.
159 ק אשתמרגאת (ראה מבוא).
160 ק נרא.
161 ק עליהם (גרירה לכינוי שבסוף המלה הקודמת; הטענות שרס״ג אינו רוצה לעסוק בהן הן נגד האומנויות ולא נגד האנשים).
162 ט אלחאלאת (לעדיפות גירסת ק ראה 12:3א; ואולי צ״ל: חאלאת אלאתאר).
163 ויתפקדון שכל קוס: ק ויפתקדון שיל קרץ. לא נתברר לי מובן המלה ״שיל״.
164 ק קזאח.
165 ק ואלאחמראר.
166 ק לכן.
167 ק אלעליין.

[22] כת׳ירא מן אעמארהם פי צנאעה׳[168] אחכאם
[23] מסיר אלנג׳ום. פנצף אלמתמסכין מנהם במערפה׳
[24] היאת אלאפלאך ותרכיבהא וחרכה׳ כל כוכב פי
[25] אלטול ואלערץ׳[169] ואלרפע ואלעמק באלמד[ח][170] אלתאם
[26] אד׳ הד׳ה אלצנאעה׳ אלעג׳יבה׳ ת[ב]הר[?][171] אלעבאד [פינ]
[27] קאדון אלי עבאדה׳ צאנעהא וטאעתה [וכ׳ק׳]
[28] אלולי[172] ע׳אלס׳ כי אראה שמיך מע׳ אצ׳. וילל[יהא]
[29] איצ׳ פי אלמדיח אלד׳י תכלמו פי תאת׳יר [חרכ]
[30] את אל[כואכב בוג׳ה אלטבע אע[ני אלאסכ׳אן]
[31] ואלתבריד ואלתרטיב ואלתג׳פיף [חד[173] לא בד
[32] [מן אלאקראר באחמא אלשמס ותרטיב]
[33] [אלקמר ואמא תאת׳ירהא פי חיאה׳ ומות או רזק ואחראר]
[34] [. . או ולאדה׳ ועקמה׳ וסעאדה׳ ונחאסה׳ פאן הד׳ה]

**2ב**

[1] אלקצ׳איא בעינהא אלתי ננברהא מן אלוג׳הין אלג׳לילין: אולא
[2] מן אנה לא דליל[174] להם עלי קואנינהא אעני אלביות[175] ואלאשראף ואלהבוט
[3] ואלחרד[176] ואלוג׳וה ואלמת׳לת׳את ואלמבחראת[177] אלתי מנהא יסתמדון אחכ
[4] אמהם בוג׳ה אכת׳ר מן אן יקולו כד׳י[178] ג׳רבנא ואמתחננא והו כקול מן

168 ק צנעה.
169 ק ליתא.
170 ק ואלמדח (ברור שגרסת ט היא הנכונה; "באלמדח" מוצרך על ידי הפועל "פנצף" הפותח את המשפט; מעתיק ק תפס את המלה בטעות כהמשך לשורת מימדי תנועות הכוכבים).
171 המלה קשה לקריאה בשני כה"י; הקריאה המוצעת כאן היא של תלמידי מר אפרים בן-פורת.
172 ק ליתא.
173 כך ק; צריך להיות אד?
174 ט דלילא (ראה בלאו דקדוק, §219).
175 ט אלמות.
176 כך כנראה בכה"י, ונראה שצריך להיות: ואלחדוד (ראה הערה לתרגום).
177 כך בבירור בכה"י, ונראה שצריך להיות: ואלנובהראת (התהוות השיבוש בכתב העברי פשוטה; ראה הערה לתרגום).





[5] דונהם ממן ד׳כרנאה פימא תקדם: ווג׳דנאהם פי נפוסהם ג׳ אקסאם
[6] קום ית׳בתון אחכאם אלמואליד ויסקטון אחכאם אלאכ׳תיאראת ואל
[7] מסאיל והם אקלהם חשוא ואכ׳רין ית׳בתון אחכאם אלמואליד ואלאכ׳תי
[8] אראת ויסקטון אלמסאיל וחשוהם אכת׳ר: ואכ׳רון ית׳בתון אלכל
[9] ותכ׳ליטהם יכת׳ר בד׳לך נעם ובלגת אמורהם אלי אן זעמו אן אלאמם
[10] פי דולהא[179] ואהל כל ממלכה׳ פי סלטאנהם אנמא תנעקד אמורהם ות
[11] נחל באחכאם אלנג׳ום ועוולו פי ד׳לך אג׳מע עלי אלתקא אלכוכבין אל
[12] עלויין אעני זחל ואלמשתרי פאנהם[180] יג׳דונהמא [ק ע"ב] יקתרנאן פי כל
[13] מדה׳ הי חואלי אלכ׳ סנה׳ ולמא לם יקפו בתה׳[181] עלי אלטאלע פי דקיקה׳
[14] אקתראנהמא אכ׳ד׳ו באלג׳ליל פג׳עלו ד׳לך טאלע אלסנה׳ אלתי פיהא
[15] יקתרנאן פיזעמון אנהם יסתמדון מן הד׳א אלקראן אלצגיר
[16] ללמלוך[182] אלפראדי.[183] ומן קראן אכבר מנה יכון מקדארה ר׳ל׳ח׳[184]
[17] סנה׳ ורבמא ר׳נ׳ח׳[185] ליכון אלמלך פי אהל בית בעינהם[186] והו
[18] אנתקאל מוצ׳ע לקא אלכוכבין מן מת׳לת׳ה׳ אלי מת׳לת׳ה׳:
[19] ומן קראן הו אכבר מנה יכון מקדארה ת׳ת׳ק׳מ׳ד׳
[20] סנה׳ ורבמא[187] ת׳ת׳ק׳ס׳ד׳[188] או אכת׳ר לאנתקאל אלמלך מן
[21] אמה׳ אלי אמה׳ וד׳לך מדה׳ מא תדור אלקראנאת
[22] פי אלברוג׳ כלהא וג׳מיע ד׳לך מע מא אלתעלק
[23] פיה[189] במא קדמנא ד׳כרה מן אלקואנין ומן אלברוג׳

178 ק הכדא.
179 ט דולהם.
180 ט פאנהמא (גרדה).
181 ק אלבתה.
182 ק ללמלך.
183 ק אלפראד?
184 ק מאיתין ותמאניה ותלתין.
185 ק כאן ר׳ וח׳ ונ׳ סנה (סדר המלים הערבי של המספר הועבר כמות שהוא לאותיות).
186 ק בעינה.
187 ק +כאן.
188 ק +סנה.
189 פיה במא: ק בהא כמא.

[24] אלת׳ואבת ואלמנקלבה׳ ומא שאכל ד׳לך אלתי לא
[25] [י]סתנד אליהא אלעקל פיתכ׳ד׳הא דלילא ואנמא
[26] [יעו]לון פיהא עלי אלתג׳ארב אלתי חאלהם פיהא
[27] [וחג׳ה׳] אצחאב[190] אלכתף ואחדה׳ פאן רבנא גל
[28] [ועז קד אכ׳בר פי כתבה אן ג׳מיע אלעלמא לא
[29] [יעלמון] ען את׳באת אלדול ואנקצ׳אהא שיא
[30] [וכמא תחסא] חכמא מצר באנהם לא יעלמון[191]
[31] [באי שי במלכהם כמא קאל איה איפוא חכמיך]
[32] [וגו׳ ומא תהדד אלבבליין פאן חכמאהם]
[33] [ומנאג׳מיהם לא יפידון פאידה׳ פי אמר]
[34] [ממלכתהם ולא ינפעונהם[192] נפעא פי חאל סלטאנהם ]

**3א**

[1] בקו׳ נלאת ברב עצתיך וג׳ ולמא קצד אכ׳באר קומה[193] בתמליך
[2] כורש צדר אול אלנבוה׳ באנה לא סביל אלי מערפה׳ עלם גיב[194] אלא מ[ן]
[3] ענדה כמא אן[195] אלאג׳ראם אלעט׳ימה׳ אעני אלסמא ואלארץ׳ אבתד[עת]
[4] מן ענדה וד׳אך קולה כה אמר י׳י׳ גאלך ויצרך מבטן אנכי י׳י׳[196] ולם
[5] יד׳כר פי[197] הד׳א אעני באב אלכ׳לק מֵאִתי אלא ההנא יעני בה
[6] אן אלאכ׳תראע[198] הו מן ענדה לא יקף אחד[199] עליה כיף כאן כד׳אך[200]
[7] תמליך[201] אהל אלדול מן ענדה לא יקף עליה אחד כיף יכון°

190 בגליון ק יש כנראה נסיון לתקן מלה זו וניתן להבחין רק באותיות "חאב".
191 ק יערפון.
192 ק יפעונהם.
193 ק ליתא.
194 ק אלגיב.
195 אן... קולה: ק קאל (השמטה מחמת הדומות).
196 ק +מפר אתות בדים (זהו הפסוק הבא באותו הפרק, אולם הוא נדון בהמשך לגופו ואינו נחוץ כאן).
197 פי ... אעני: ק ליתא.
198 ק +כמא.
199 אחד עליה: ק עליה אחד.
200 ק כדך.





[8] ת׳ם נפי[202] בעד ד׳לך אן יכון אחד אלג׳ פרק אלתי ד׳כרנאהא יעלם ד׳לך
[9] וערפנא אנהם אן ג׳סרוה[203] פחכמו בשי מנה פסכ׳ה ואבטלה כקו׳
[10] מפר אתות בדים וקס׳ וג׳ פיסתקים אן יכון קו׳ בדים והם[204] אלמת
[11] וחדון[!] יתצרף מן לבד ולבדם ישיר בה אלי אלמתוסטין אעני
[12] אצחאב[205] אלאת׳אר אלעלויה וקסמים יהולל ישיר בה אלי[206] אצחאב אלכבד
[13] ואלסהאם ואלתמאת׳יל אלמטבועה׳ כ׳ נץ פיהם לקסם קסם קלקל
[14] בחצים שאל בתרפים ראה בכבד: משיב חכמים אח׳. אלמחת
[15] אלין[!][207] אלמתחאמלין עלי צנאעה׳ אלנג׳ום באחכאם אלמואליד ואכ׳
[16] תיאר[!] אלאבתדאאת ואלמסאיל. ודעתם יסכל פי אחכאם אלק
[17] ראנאת[!] אלג׳ ומא יזעמון אנהא תות׳ר פי מלך אלפראדי[208] ולאהל
[18] בית ואלאמה׳. ת׳ם אתבעה באן הד׳ה אלאמור לא יוקף עליהא
[19] אלא מן ג׳הה׳ אלנבוה׳ אד׳ קאל מקים דבר עבדו ועצת מל׳ ישלים
[20] וג׳על תעריפה להם זואל באבל[209] ואקבאל מלך אלפרס[210] נמוד׳ג׳א
[21] לסאיר אלממאלך אד׳ קאל בעד ד׳לך האמר לצולה חרבי ונהרו׳
[22] אוביש האמר לכורש. וליס דול אלאמם וחדהא מן ענדה
[23] בל אלאחיא ואלאמאתה׳ לקו׳ י׳י׳ ממית ומחיה: ואלגני ואלפקר
[24] לקו׳ י׳י׳ מוריש ומע׳: ואלולאד ואלעקם לקו׳ אם אני [המוליד]
[25] וכל[211] סעאדה׳ ונחאסה׳ לקו׳ כי יש כח באלהים לע[זור . . . ]
[26] באלג׳מלה׳ כל מא תוג׳בה חכמתה כל אש׳ חפץ יי ע[שה תם נקול מא]
[27] וג׳ה אלחכמה׳ פי אטלאענא עלי בעץ׳ מא [יכון קבל כונה פנג׳ד]

201 ק ליתא.
202 ק נפא.
203 ט גברו (אולי מן: תג׳ברו=התגאו, התייהרו).
204 ק הם אלמתוחדין.
205 ק ליתא.
206 ט ליתא.
207 ק ליתא.
208 אלפראדי ולאהל בית: ק אלפראד ואהל אלבית.
209 ק מלך בבל.
210 ק פרס.
211 וכל סעאדה׳ ונחאסה׳: ק ואלסעאדה ואלנחאסה.

[28] להא וג׳והא מנהא זיאדתנא שרח [ה ותעריף קדרתה אד׳א]

[29] שאהדנא[212] אלחואדת׳ כאנת חסב מא [תקדם בה בלא זיאדה׳]

[30] ולא נקצאן ומנהא אן ישרפו [. . . . . אמרהם ענה ונהיהם]

[31] [ומנה לנחתדי[213] אלאמם ומעבודאתהם ותנביהם[?] אד׳ ליס ענדהם]

[32] [מן עלם אלוג׳וב[214] שי וכמא קאל להם הגידו האותיות לאחור וכמא]

[33] [כאן נתבאשר במא קד חכם בה לנא פי תלך אלחואדת׳ מן צלאח]

[34] אמור ובסט יד ועלו ג׳אה ומא שאכל [א דף 1 ?] ד׳לך [ואלי אן יכון ד׳לך נחתמל מא חכם בה עלינא מן קצר יד]

## 3ב

[1] וצ׳עף חאל ומא[215] אשבהה וכ׳ק׳ ענא[216] זעף י׳י׳ אשא כי חטאתי לו עד אשר יריב ריבי ועשה משפטי יוציאני לאור אראה בצדקתו. ואד׳ קד

[2] וג׳הנא הד׳ה אלוג׳וה פינבגי אן נבסט[217] מא ג׳אנא מן עלם אלגיב מן אול

[3] אמרנא אלי אכ׳רה: ונקול אול ד׳לך תעריף אברהם אנא נקים ת׳

[4] סנה׳ פי גרות ועבדות ועינוי כ׳ שרחת[218] פי קצה׳ ידע תדע ת׳ם תעריף

[5] יעקב רג׳וענא אלי אלבלד ותכ׳ציץ כל סבט בריאסה׳[219] מא וחוזה ג׳הה׳ מא

[6] מן אלארץ׳ כ׳ שרחת פי קצה׳ ויקרא יעקב לבניו. ת׳ם[220] אלאסראר אלי

[7] משה רבינו אנא נקים פי בלד אלשאם ת׳ת׳נ׳ סנה׳[221] מנהא ת׳ סנה׳ ע[רצ׳א מן] סני עבדות[222] מצר ומנהא ת׳נ׳ אלמחכום[223] לנא אלבלד[224] מן קבל

212 ק שהדנא.

213 =לנתחדי (ראה בלאו, דקדוק, §78).

214 מן הסתם צ״ל אלגיב (וכך תרגמתי).

215 ומא אשבהה: ק ואשבאהה.

216 ק ליתא.

217 ק אבסט.

218 ק שרח (השווה להלן בסמוך).

219 בריאסה מא: ק בריה סהמה.

220 א ומנהא (אבל לכאורה יש כאן מניין לפי הסדר, ולפיכך גירסת ט,ק נראית עדיפה).

221 סנה ... ת׳נ׳: ט בגליון.

222 סני עבדות:א סנין עבודת.

223 ק אלמחכם.





[8] דכ׳ולנא אליה והו מא קאל בהנחל עליון גוים. פמן ד׳לך אלוקת אלי אן

[9] כ׳רג׳נא מן מצר ת׳נ׳ב׳[225] פאד׳א נחן אכ׳ד׳נא ללמחכום עלי חדה׳ וללמעוץ׳,[226]

[10] עלי חדה׳ צאר אלג׳מיע ת׳ת׳נ׳ סנה ולד׳לך קאל פקד פקדתי אתכם ואת הע׳

[11] לכם. ת׳ם אכ׳בר משה באן[227] מקאמנא בעד ד׳לך פי גלות בבל ע׳ שנה[228] והו

[12] במקדאר שמטין ויובילין[229] אלתי פי סני מכ׳אלפתנא וכאן[230] סני מכ׳אלפתנא

[13] ת׳ל׳ו׳ סנה׳ כ׳ שרח[231] יחזקאל[232] שני עונם למספר ימים ש׳צ׳[233] יום: ואיצ׳ עון

[14] בית יהודה מ׳ יום יום לשנה יום לש׳. ובעד ד׳לך סת סנין מד׳ קיל

[15] לה הד׳א אלקול אלי כ׳ראב אלבית פאד׳א אֶכיִיד לכל ק׳ סנה׳ י׳ו׳ סנה׳.

[16] שמטה ויובל וכד׳לך ל׳[234] ל׳ו׳ סנה׳ בקסטהא צאר ע׳ סנה׳ סוא וכמא[235]

[17] שרחנא פי תפסיר ואם בחקתי תלכו ולד׳לך קאל פי[236] פסוק אז

[18] תרצה הארץ מרתין[237] שבתותיה[238] אחדיהמא[239] ללשמטה ואלאכ׳רי[240] לליובל

[19] ופי נבוה׳ ירמיהו אתי בהד׳א[241] נצא כי לפי מלאת לבבל ע׳ שנה אפק׳[242]

224 ק באלבלד, א באלבר.

225 א +סנה.

226 ק וללעוץ׳.

227 א רבנו.

228 ק סנה.

229 א,ק ויובלות.

230 וכאן ... סנה׳: ק ועדתנא ת׳ סנה ל׳ו׳ סנה.

231 ק +פי.

232 א +על׳ אלס׳.

233 ק שלש מאות ותשעים.

234 הגר להפרדה מן המספר; ק לסתה ותלתין; א ל״ו.

235 א כמא רבמא.

236 ק אל.

237 מרתין שבתתיה: א את שבתותיה מרתין.

238 ט שבתיתה.

239 ק אחדאהמא.

240 כך א; ט ואלאכר; ק ואלתאניה.

241 ק בהמא.

242 אפק׳ ... שנה: ק ליתא (השמטה מחמת הדומות).

[20] אתכם ובעד תקציהא את׳בתהא אלנבי משרוחה׳ כל ימי השמה
[21] שבתה למלאות ע׳ שנה. תם אכ׳בר באן רג׳עה׳ תכון[243] לנא אלי[244] אלבלד
[22] וחאל סכני תחת ידי[245] מלוך כחאל אברהם ויצחק ויעקב פי וקתהם
[23] מחכום להם[246] אלבלד גיר מסלם אליהם כ׳ק׳ פיהם בהיותם[247] מתי מספר
[24] לד׳לך[248] קאל וזכרתי את בריתי יעקב. יעני אג׳על להם חאלא כחאל
[25] [ג׳ אבות] וכד׳אך קאלו[249] אהל בית שני אנהם פי גלות ופי שעבוד
[26] [ואנמא[250] הי רחמה׳] יסירה׳ רחמהם רבהם בבנא אלבית[251] כי עבדים
[27] [אנחנו ובעבדתינו לא] עזבנו. וכל מא אטנבו פי הד׳א אלבאב ואת
[28] [סעו כאן אטיב לאנפס]נא נחן אד׳ נרי[252] אהל בית שני ישהדון
[29] [אנהם[253] פי אלגלות ואן אליש]ועה לם תאת בעד פהי מעדה׳ לנא והם
[30] [אערף באחואלהם כמא קאלו[254]] הנה אנחנו היום עבדים: וינט׳א[255]
[31] [ואסר אלינא מ]שה רבינו אן מדה מקאם[256]

**א**

בית שני ת״כ סנה׳ וד׳אך בעד[257] סני עהד יעקב ויצחק ואברהם ולד׳לך נסק אסמאוהם מן אכ׳רהא אלי אולהא סני יעקב כאנת כלהא ברית והי קמ״ז סנה׳ וסני יצחק כאנת כלהא ברית

[243] ק ליתא.
[244] ק פי.
[245] ק יד אלמלוך.
[246] ק +פי.
[247] בהיותם (תה׳ קה:יב): ק בהיותכם (דה״א טז:יט).
[248] לד׳לך (ק ולדלך) קאל: א וקאל.
[249] ק ליתא.
[250] כך ק; ט ואנה.
[251] ק +כקולהם.
[252] ק ליתא.
[253] ק באנהם.
[254] ק כקולה איצ׳א.
[255] כך ט בסוף שורה קרועה; אולי: וינט׳אף [=וינצ׳אף] אלי ד׳לך כשף מא אסר וכו׳.
[256] עד כאן ט.
[257] צריך להיות: בעדד.





והי ק״פ סנה׳. ואמא סני אברהם פלם תך כלהא ברית אד׳ לם יד׳כר לה ברית פי קצה׳ לך לך ולא פי קצה׳ ויאמר לזרעך ולא פי קצה׳ הפרד לוט ולמא[258] כ׳וטב במחזה בין הבתרים פקאל ביום ההוא כרת ייי את אברם ברית לאמר וג׳ [. . .[259]] ישמעאל אד׳ נראה יקול פי תלך אלקצה׳ הן לי לא נתת זרע[260] וג׳ וכאן לאברהם פ״ו בלדת הגר את ישמעאל לאברם וסנה׳ אלחמלה׳ פתכון הד׳ה אלקצה׳ קבל ד׳לך בסנתין. פיבקא מן עמר אברהם צ״ג סנה׳ אלי קע״ה סנה׳. פאד׳א נחן ג׳מענא ברית אברהם צ״ג סנה׳ וברית יצחק ק״פ סנה׳ וברית יעקב קמ״ז סנה׳ כאן ד׳לך ת״כ סנה׳.

ותכון הד׳ה אכבר אלעלל פי עכס נט׳אם אלאבא לאן אלברית אנמא הו מנקסם פי עמר אברהם לא פי גירה פאבתדי במן זמאנה כלה ברית וצ׳ם אליהמא אכ׳ר עמר אברהם אלד׳י הו ברית עלי מא בינא.

ת׳ם אן משה אסר אלינא אן בעד בית שני גלות וכ׳לא אלבלד אד׳ קאל בעד וזכרתי את בריתי יעקוב וג׳ והארץ תעזב מהם וג׳ ורמז מן [ . . .] ד׳לך תתצ״ו סנה׳ אד׳ קאל יען וביען אד׳ לפט׳ה׳ יען ג׳זא פערפנא[261] אן אלמדה׳ כמקדאר סני מכ׳אלפה׳ אלאולי והי תל״ו . . . ומעהא ש״פ סנה׳ ואלמכ׳אלף אלב׳ והי ש״פ סנה׳ מן אכ׳ר בית שני אד׳ ל׳ סנה׳ מן אול עמרה מצ׳ת [. . .]עה כק׳ עד שנת ל׳ב׳ לארתחשסתא . .

**ק1, ע״א**

[1] ישראל ומשיחם אד׳ קאל כה אמר ייי למשיחו לכורש וג׳
[2] וסאיר אלקצה׳. פלמא מלך כורש ואמר בבנא אלבית וג׳ב
[3] עליהם אלתצדיק בכל פנון אלישועה כד׳אך אכ׳באנ[ר] מלך
[4] הצפון ומלך הנגב וסאיר מא אנצ׳אף אליהא איאת לנא
[5] באלג׳מלה׳ עלי אלישועה ובאלתפציל בעצ׳הא עלי בעץ׳
[6] פכאן אד׳א ג׳אזת אלחאדת׳ה׳ אלאולי כמא קאל אלמלאך דלת
[7] עלי צחת׳ באקי[262] אלחואדת׳ ואלישועה ואדא ואפת אלחאדת׳ה׳
[8] אלת׳אניה׳ במא קאל איצ׳א חצל לנא דלילין עלי באקי
[9] אלחואדת׳ ואלישועה ואדא אנקצ׳ת אלחאדת׳ה׳ אלג׳ צח לנא

[258] ק אלי אן.
[259] כאן ראוי להשלים: וכאן ד׳לך קבל ולאדה׳ (או כיוצא בו).
[260] עד כאן ק.
[261] א פרפענא.
[262] צחת באקי: ק1 באקי צחת.

[10] ג׳ דלאיל עלי באקי אלחואדת׳ ואלישועה וכל מא מר אלזמאן
[11] כת׳רה׳[!] אלדלאיל עלי אלישועה אלי אן תואפי הי בעינהא
[12] פיך׳ ג׳מיע מא תקדם ואלישועה אדלה׳ עלי מא
[13] יך׳ פי דאר אלאכ׳רה׳ מע אלאיאת אלחאדת׳ה׳ פי זמאן אליש
[14] ועה[!] כמא קאל השמש יהפך לחשך והירח לדם לפני בא
[15] יום ייי הגדול והנורא. פקד תביין אן מנאפע הד׳א
[16] אלספר לא תחצא בסרעה׳ והי[263] פי נצה ינקסם י׳ אקסאם
[17] ה׳ מנהא פי אמור אלמלכות.[264] ואלה׳ אלאכ׳ר פי מנאפע
[18] ומצאלח ללאמה׳ ולד׳לך ג׳עלנאהא י׳ אג׳זא. אלג׳ז אלאול פי
[19] כיפיה׳ אלגלות ופי אלמאכל ואלמשקה מן יד אלגוים. ואלג׳ז אלב׳
[20] פי מא כשף לנבוכדנצר מן ד׳ מלכיות ותמת׳ילהא בצורה
[21] קבל אן יכשף לדניאל מ;א יכ׳צה[?] הו[?] נ׳ב׳ סנה׳. ואלג׳ז אלג׳
[22] פי אלאמתנאע מן עבאדה׳ אלאצנאם. ואלג׳ז אלד׳ פי כיפיה׳

**ע״ב**

[1] אלאפה׳ אלתי חלת בבלשאצר. ואלג׳ז אלה׳ פי כיפיה׳ קתל
[2] בלשצר. ואלג׳ז אלו׳ פי אלתמסך פי אלצלואת פי אלגלות. ואלז׳
[3] ג׳מל מן אלקול פי תמת׳יל אלממאלך באלוחש. ואלג׳ז אלח׳ ג׳מל מן
[4] אלקול אלמוצוף. ואלג׳ז אלט׳ תפציל אלסבעין אסבוע אלתי לבין[?]
[5] אלב..ן ואלעמר אלת׳אני. ואלג׳ז אלי׳ פי מלאחם אלמלוך ומקדאר
[6] אלקץ אלאכ׳רין. פהד׳ה אלד׳ אג׳זא אלאכ׳רה׳ מן אלג׳ז אלב׳ הי אלה׳
[7] אלתי ללמלכיות. ואלה׳ אלבואקי פי אסתעבאראת ומצאלח לנא
[8] ואד׳ קד קדמת אסמאהא אכ׳ד׳ פי נצוצהא ובאללה אסתעין.

263 צ״ל והו?

264 צ״ל אלמלכיות? (כך נראה על פי ההמשך).





## Saadia's Introduction to Daniel: English Translation

**ט**

1a
Translation of Daniel with the interpretation of its topics[265]
by our Master Saadia…
[property] of Joseph son of Yeshu$^{c}$ah, may his Rock protect him[266]
may he live and be granted merit

1b
[1] [In the name of the Lord] may we do and succeed, a good [sig]n[267]
[…[268]] Israel
[2] The book of kingdoms and apocalypses concerning what will come to pass after 1,386 years. Says he who is engaged in
[3] the rendering of the words (of the book) into the language (currently) used[269] and in clarifying its topics:
[4] Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, Who alone knows what will be before it is, Who reveals
[5] to those close to Him (that part) of (the future), knowledge of which will benefit (them), and praised and magnified be He for ever

265 "*Tafsīr* with the interpretation of its topics" is a common term in book lists for works that include both a translation (in the strict sense of the word) and a full and detailed commentary.

266 See above in the description of MS ט.

267 See note to original text.

268 See note to original text.

269 That is, the language used in practice, Arabic. The entire sentence means that the author intends to translate the book into Arabic and then to add a commentary on its content.

[6] and ever. So after we have extolled Him with these attributes, we say
[7] that events that will take place in the future are called "concealed things" in relation to those who speak (= human beings), for
[8] since we find that they do not know them (= the events), we state confidently that they (= those events) are precisely those knowledge of which is concealed from them (= the speakers).
[9] But in relation to the Creator nothing whatsoever is concealed, as it is said, "Behold I am the Lord,
[10] the God of all flesh. Is anything hidden[270] from Me?" [Jer. 32:27]. Similar, one calls the decisions
[11] that are in (people's) minds concealed in relation to created beings, since we see that no man
[12] knows what is in his fellow's mind. However, in relation to our Lord, nothing
[13] whatsoever is concealed for him, as it is said, "for You alone know the hearts of all men" [2 Chron. 6:30].
[14] Similarly, one does not call what darkness hides or what is buried underground concealed, save
[15] in relation to the knowledge of created beings; but when it is in relation to the knowledge of the Eternal,
[16] there is nothing concealed (from Him) in any way, as it is said, "darkness is not dark for You" [Ps. 139:12]. And it is said further, "Exposed is
[17] Sheol[271] before Him, Abaddon has no cover" [Job 26:6]. Now that we have prefaced these details, which are said to be
[18] concealed in respect of people's knowledge but not in respect of their Creator's knowledge, we shall mention that which causes them (= the details) and all
[19] their kind, and say: Since people do not know something unless
[20] they have perceived it through one of their senses, whether through hearing or through sight or through another sense,





[21] it is impossible for them to know what is concealed, since the five senses have no connection to it (or: effect on it). But as for the Creator,
[22] may He be magnified, Who does not know things by means of one of these agencies[272] or by other (agencies), it is not impossible for Him
[23] to know the future; for, according to the accepted terminology, His essence is a knowing essence, that is, He knows
[24] by virtue of His own essence.[273] And since it was not appropriate for the prophets to speak of His knowledge of things as if it did not involve these senses, they spoke as if it did not involve these senses (of the knowledge)
[25] of one of those close to Him in relation to what [He]
(= God) taught him, and [Scripture] says, "He shall sense the truth by his reverence for the Lord: He shall not [judge] by what
[26] his eyes behold, [nor decide by what his ears perceive]" [Isa. 11:3].[274] We further say: Many people have tried to discover what
[27] [will be before] it is and have not been successful at that. Their state in that respect is like the state of the person who said,
[28] "[So I applied myself to understand this,] but it seemed a hopeless task" [Ps. 73:16].[275] Therefore, the most important among them have avoided dealing

[270] Saadia probably understood Heb. *yippaleʾ* according to the Aramaic translation *yiṯkasseʾ* = covered, hidden; *Tanakh* has here "wondrous."

[271] As Saadia understands it, "Sheol" refers to anything or anyone buried underground.

[272] I.e., the senses.

[273] See Saadia, *Amānāt*, p. 91= *Beliefs*, p. 104.

[274] Cf. Saadia, *Isaiah*, p. 26: "The Lord will reveal His worship to him through prophecy, and he (=the prophet) will be such that he shall not judge by the sight of his eyes alone, nor by what his ears hear." Instead of "the Lord will reveal to him" one might also translate, "the Lord will inspire him." The word *yulhimuhū* is fraught with controversial meanings; see Ben-Shammai, "Polemical Element."

[275] Cf. Saadia, *Psalms*, p. 175: *wa-in kuntu fakkartu fī maʿrifat dhālika min al-khaṭār* [sic;

[29] [with this, as the sage forbade them them,] when he said, "Do not boast of tomorrow, for you do not know what the day will bring" [Prov. 27:1].[276] He made […]
[30] […when it happens to him, for] man does not know the extent to which
[31] [one of the elements of his temperament] will [prevail over the others], nor which of his powers will grow weaker or stronger, just as [. . .][277]
[32] [. . . concerning the guidance of his Lord] and what He will generate[278] in His world in the course of time,
[33] [as he said, "Just as you do not know] the way of the spirit, like the faculties(?) in the physical body" [after Eccl. 11:5]. In saying "like the faculties" he meant
[34] [….][279] which branch off from the […]. The word *ka-ᶜaṣamīm* (faculties)[280] is derived from "He will have great
[35] strength (*we-ʿaṣam*)" [Dan. 8:24]. And when he says "the way of the spirit" he meant the soul itself. I have investigated those matters precisely. And these […][281]

2a
[1] in two ways: (1) because they left the knowledge of the concealed and unknown to its O[wner],
[2] blessed be He; (2) because they did not concern themselves with it, and so it did not distract them from what it is to be hoped
[3] that they will achieve, as it is said, "O Lord, my heart is not proud nor my look haughty; I do not aspire to great things or to what is beyond me" [Ps. 131:1]. But others besides these (persons)
[4] proposed to know what would be before its being, and strove in that respect for the most difficult,
[5] and took thereby the most difficult path. When they had exhausted their efforts and failed to achieve their goal,





[6] they attributed their inability to an error in their calculations or (made the excuse) that (adequate) precision was not
[7] followed in their observations. They were content with these attributions[282] and with making excuses. Those
[8] whose pretensions were more modest, who used for that purpose terrestrial things, that is,
[9] observation of the organs of animals, such as the liver and the shoulder blade,[283] of eggs,[284] [and the like], without number,

read *al-khāṭir*?] *fa-idhā bihī taᶜb wa-shaqāʾ* = Indeed, I thought to know this through my thought, but it involves labor and difficulty.

276 One of the meanings Saadia associates with this verse (Saadia, *Proverbs*, p. 218) is the refutation by history of the astrologers' pretensions, as attested by Scripture in Isa. 47:13 and 19:12; see above, n. 41.

277 The words missing here probably also refer to human ignorance of the areas of knowledge enumerated below.

278 Understanding the verb as the fourth form; it may also be read in the first form, meaning "what will take place/occur." For the verse quoted from Ecclesiastes, see Saadia, *Sefer Yeṣira*, p. 101. Is there some connection between his interpretation there and the quotation here?

279 As suggested in the note to the text, perhaps the text may be restored as "[the separate faculties] (of the soul)." The comment in Saadia, *Daniel*, p. 159, is of no help here.

280 *ka-ᶜaṣamīm*.

281 One should presumably restore here some clause like "the prophets/those close to God are worthy of praise" or "had the correct intention," etc.

282 Of the error to the method of calculation, etc.

283 On scapulimancy, see C. Burnett, "Scapulimancy (Divination by the Shoulder-blades of Sheep)," in C. Burnett, *Magic and Divination in the Middle Ages* (Aldershot, 1996), article XII.

284 MS ק adds here: "and the like, and of plant seeds such as (grains of) barley and date stones and the like, and of drawings that they draw in the earth."

[10] and of letters that they write in random fashion, and of sounds that they hear
[11] as they happen, and of sights that they see as they come.[285] And (they use) methods of
[12] divination that they invent in various ways. We do not see fit to concern ourselves with explaining
[13] their crafts and refuting them. So too with regard to people whose pretension is at a level
[14] higher than that of the aforesaid: they observe meteorological phenomena,[286] that is, the positions
[15] of the moon and the rays of the stars, to see which of them ends quickly and which of them
[16] tarries and endures. They examine the shape of the arc[287] of the moon's light and the shape of the rain-
[17] bow, and the shape of the staff,[288] redness,[289] and the sounds of thunder.[290]
[18] From all these kinds (of divination) they have historical information that they relate[291] and judgments
[19] that they make, and we have no need to record what
[20] they say, nor to commit to writing[292] the counter-arguments. But we shall direct
[21] our discussion to the people who have the highest pretensions. They say that they have spent
[22] many of the days of their lives in the art of judgments (that they deduce
[23] from) the course of the stars. We describe with the utmost praise those of them who have devoted themselves to the knowledge
[24] of the shapes of the spheres[293] and their composition, and the motion of each planet
[25] in longitude, latitude, depth and altitude,
[26] insofar as this wondrous art overpowers people with its light and they





285 On the last two techniques, see C. Burnett, "A Note on Two Astrological Fortune-Telling Tables," *Revue d'histoire des textes* 18 (1988): 257–262 (= *Magic and Divination in the Middle Ages*, article XVIII).

286 MS ט: "the celestial positions."

287 MS ק: "the circle."

288 According to Dozy, *Supplément* 2: 135b, this is a star in the constellation *Boötes* (the Herdsman).

289 A red color was observed on the bodies of certain people born in years that had a certain nativity; in this case it might symbolize a certain sign of the zodiac in males; see Abū Maᶜšar, *Introduction*, p. 38, §7. A red color in the air symbolizes future wars between the Arabs and Byzantines; ibid., p. 132, §14.

290 I have not found any documentation for the Arabic word "*hadāt/haddāt*" as "thunder(s)." The closest equivalent seems to be the form *hādda* in Hava's *Dictionary*. There is an interesting parallel in the table of contents of a work on "The Apocalypse of Daniel" reported by Fahd, *La divination arabe,* p. 408, which also refers to thunder in close proximity to the halo around the sun and the moon.

291 These are the "experiments" (or "experiences") treated below; that is, the historical precedents that prove their calculations.

292 *Or* to establish.

293 If the spelling *HYAT* represents the plural *hayᵓāt*, then this would mean the configurations of the orbs; it may also indicate a singular form, as a non-classical spelling (Blau, *Grammar*, pp. 40–41). At any rate the reference here is to the science of astronomy; cf. D. Pingree, "*ᶜIlm al-Hayᵓa,*" *EI*², vol. 3 (1971), p. 1135. Saadia's term is thus a kind of abbreviation. In Saadia's contemporary works *ᶜilm al-hayᵓa* may refer specifically to certain branches of astronomy, i.e. the arrangement (*tarkīb;* lit. composition) of the orbs (*aflāk*) and their configuration (*hayᵓa*), to the exclusion of mathematical astronomy and astrology. By the first half of the eleventh century, with Ibn Sīnā, the term had come to designate a wider range of meanings that had been covered previously by *ᶜilm al- nujūm*; see F. J. Ragep, *Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī's Memoir on Astronomy* (New York and Berlin, 1993), esp. 1: 29–35. According to the conclusion of Saliba, "Astronomy and Astrology," p. 163 (see also p. 137) the term *hayᵓa* was first used "sometime during the tenth century," as a result of the "separation of

[27] are guided (by it) in the worship of their[294] Creator and the observance of His commandments, in keeping with the
[28] prophet's saying, "When I behold Your heavens, the work of Your fingers"[295] [Ps. 8:4]. Next to them
[29] in respect of praise[296] are those who discuss the influence of the motions of
[30] [the stars in the realm of nature, I mean heating]
[31] and cooling and wetting and drying, [since[297] of necessity]
[32] [one must admit the heating (effect) of the sun and the wetting]
[33] (effect) of the moon, but their influence over life and death, or over one's livelihood and liberation]
[34] [...or birth or barrenness, or happiness and misery: now]

2b
[1] it is precisely these judgments[298] that we reject,[299] for two weighty reasons.[300] First,
[2] because they (i.e. the diviners) have no (rational) proof of (the truth of) its (their craft's) laws, that is, the houses[301] and exaltations and dejections (or: falls) of the stars[302] and their perigees
[3] and the terms[303] and the faces[304] and the triplicities[305] and the ninths,[306] from which they deduce
[4] their judgments—other than their argument "so have we tried and examined"—but that is like the argument of those
[5] inferior to them in level, whom we mentioned above. And we have found that they themselves are divided into three:
[6] (a) Those who maintain the judgments of the nativities and reject the judgments of election[307]
[7] and of questions[308]—they are the ones who speak the least nonsense.[309] (b) Others maintain the judgments of the nativities of elections
[8] and remove the questions; and their absurd words are more numerous. (c) Others maintain everything





astronomy as a distinct discipline" (i.e., distinct from astrology). It may thus be that Saadia's use of the term is one of its earliest attestations.

294 I.e. of the stars.

295 Saadia, *Psalms*, p. 64, translates "the work of Your fingers" as *ᶜamalak al-bāhir*, which Qāfiḥ renders as "Your wondrous work." Here Saadia is using the Arabic root *bhr* to describe astronomy's influence on human beings: it floods them with light and thus overpowers them and enhances their piety.

296 That is, one level lower than the previous ones.

297 According to the emendation suggested in the note to the original text. For the matter discussed here cf. Saadia, *Sefer Yeṣira*, p. 60:20–22, regarding the beginning of the zodiacal circle from the sign of Aries, "because the plants begin to grow when the [heat of the] sun resides in it (= under the sign of Aries, in the month of Nisan)."

298 *Or* decisions, observations, matters.

299 *Or* deny, condemn.

300 The text that follows seems to present only one reason. Possibly the second reason is that discussed on f. 3ᵃ18, according to which concealed (or future) things can be known only through prophecy, as may be proved from Scripture. Two reasons are mentioned in very similar wording, but incompletely, in a fragment of a commentary on Isaiah 49; see above in the introduction. Explaining the first reason, Saadia expands at length while describing and refuting details of astrology, concluding with the superiority of prophecy in f. 3ᵃ2. He then goes back to the same subject from the start, as stated.

301 For the astrological terminology in this passage, see W. Hartner [& P. Kunitsch], "Minṭaḳat al-burūdj," *EI*² 7: 81–87. For Saadia's use of this terminology elsewhere, see above in the introduction, text at n. 88. The "houses" refer to astrological houses along the ecliptic, set up in a horoscope by one of several methods, starting from the point where the ecliptic crosses the eastern horizon. See al-Bīrūnī, *al-Tafhīm,* pp. 149–150, #246–248. Another possibility is that they refer to the domiciles of the planets: see ibid., p. 256, #440. According to MS ט: "death."

302 See Fahd, *La divination arabe,* p. 489—chapter headings from an astrological text, including one referring to the astrological meaning of the positions of the stars. The term used here is *ašrāf*, the plural of *šaraf*, which is a synonym of *ṣuᶜūd*; see also *ᶜAbd al-Ḥaqq al-Tahānawī, Kaššāf iṣṯilāḥāt al-funūn* (Cairo, 1963–1977), II: 1736–1737.

[9] and their confusion in this matter thereby increases. Indeed, things have come so far as the claim that the nations
[10] in their countries and the people of every kingdom they rule—their fate is determined
[11] by the judgments of the stars. They have relied in all this on the conjunction of the two superior
[12] planets, I mean Saturn and Jupiter. For they find that both of these (planets) [ק verso] are in conjunction once
[13] in a period of approximately twenty years.[310] Since they have not succeeded in determining the ascendant[311] at the very moment
[14] of their conjunction, they took the easy way and determined the "ascendant" of the (whole) year in which
[15] the conjunction occurs. From this minor conjunction they claim to deduce
[16] (knowledge) about individual kings. And a larger (cycle) of the conjunction, which amounts to 238
[17] years, or perhaps 258 years, in which governance will be in the hands of a certain family, is
[18] the period in which the position of the conjunction passes from triplicity to triplicity.
[19] And from one (cycle) larger than that, which amounts to 944
[20] years, or perhaps 964 years or more, (they deduce) the passage of governance
[21] from one nation to another. That is the period in which the conjunctions go around
[22] all the constellations of the Zodiac. (They rely upon) all this, together with what they appeal to
[23] that we have already mentioned above, that is to say, the principles and the signs of the Zodiac,
[24] whether fixed or variable, and the like, which it is not possible for
[25] the (rational) mind to rely upon as a proof.





303 The translation is based on the emendation suggested in the note to the original text. In each sign of the zodiac there are "terms" (the medieval Hebrew term was *gevulim*) that divide the sign into five unequal divisions, each assigned to a planet (without the Sun and the Moon). There were different methods of dividing the signs into terms; see A. Bouché-Leclercq, *L'Astrologie grecque* (Paris, 1899), pp. 206–215. One of them was used by the Egyptians; see Abū Maᶜšar, *Introduction*, p. 12, §1; p. 50, §§52–54. This source indicates that the term was part of the basic terminology of this discipline and may therefore figure in introductions to the field or general accounts thereof (see also al-Bīrūnī, *al-Tafhīm* p. 265). For example, depending on the position of the stars relative to such a border at the time of a ruler's birth, one could predict whether he would rule justly or unjustly; see Yamamoto and Burnett, *Abū Maᶜšar,* p. 76, §11. Other methods were used by the "Chaldeans" and by Ptolemy.

304 The astrologers divided the section of each sign of the zodiac into three "faces" (or "decans"), each of 10 degrees. Each one of the 36 faces/decans is assigned to a planet in order (including the Sun and Moon). The presence of these bodies in the faces possessed significance in astrological calculations; see Dozy, *Supplément* 2: 785b.

305 Arab astrology divided the zodiac into four triplicities, each containing three signs and each associated with one of the four elements. These three signs were situated in the plane of the triplicity (تثليث). The term was also used in astronomy (كوكب المثلث), somewhat like the "North Star," but that was presumably not the intention here. For the terms see Dozy, *Supplément* 1: 162–163; W. Hartner, "Muthallath," *EI*$^2$ 7: 794–795.

306 Translated in accordance with the emendation suggested in the note to the original text; for the meaning of the term see above in the introduction.

307 One of the most important branches of divination is known in Arabic as "elections," that is, election or choice of the most suitable time for some action, mainly on the part of a ruler; see Fahd, *La divination arabe,* pp. 483–495; al-Tahānawī, *Kaššāf*, 1: 121; T. Fahd, "Ihktiyārāt," *EI*$^2$ 3: 1063–1064. This choice of course involved observation of the positions of the stars, particularly in the position of exaltation (see above). The medieval Hebrew term for this branch was *mivḥarim*. For Abraham Ibn Ezra's writings on this subject and about "questions," see Sela, "The Fuzzy Border," pp. 374–375.

308 Another branch of the art of divination; see Ullmann, *Die Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften,* p. 358.

[26] They rely upon them solely on the basis of experiences in which their status
[27] equals the status of the proof of those who divine according to the shoulder blade. However, the Lord, may He be exalted
[28] [and magnified, has made it known in His books that none of the wise men
[29] know] anything about the duration of the kingdoms and their ends,
[30] [and just as He tested the] the sages of Egypt, who did not know
[31] [anything about their king,[312] as it is said, "Where, indeed, are your sages? Let them tell you, let them discover what the Lord of Hosts has planned against Egypt"] [Isa. 19:12].
[32] [And as He threatened the Babylonians, for their sages]
[33] [and astrologers learned nothing in the matter of]
[34] [their kingdom, and were of no avail to them[313] concerning the situation of their rulers,]

3a
[1] as it is said, "You are helpless, despite all your art. Let them stand up and help you now, the scanners of heaven, the star-gazers, who announce, month by month, whatever will come upon you" [Isa. 47:13]. And when He wanted to announce to His nation the enthroning of
[2] Cyrus, He said, before the beginning of the prophecy,[314] that there is no way to know concealed things[315] save
[3] through Him, just as the large bodies, that is, the Heavens and the Earth,[316] were created
[4] by Him, as He said, "Thus said the Lord, your Redeemer, Who formed you in the womb: It is I, the Lord, who made everything, Who alone stretched out the heavens and spread out the earth from Myself" (Isa. 44:24). He did not
[5] use in this context, that is, the Creation, (the expression) "from Myself" anywhere but here, and He meant to say thereby





309 The term *ḥašw* has numerous meanings, generally of a derogatory cast. Its literary meaning is "filling," either as the action or as a material (in pillows, cushions, saddles, or mutton used as a stuffing); see E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon* (London 1863–1893), p. 578a, s.v. This led to the meaning "things of secondary importance" or "things lacking real content," such as "filling words" in the technical terminology of the rhetorical arts; Lane, ibid., also cites the use of the term to denote a particularly inferior person. In Islam, adherents of tradition (*ahl al-ḥadīth*) are known to their rationalist rivals, particular the Mu$^{c}$tazilites, but also the Ash$^{c}$arites, as *ahl al-ḥašw* or *ḥašwiyya* (see "Ḥashwiyya," *EI*$^{2}$ 3:269). Saadia uses the term in its rhetorical connotation. See Y. Blau, "A Remark on G. Vajda's 'Glane d'exégèse Karaïte'," *Tarbiẓ* 42 (1973): 502 (Hebrew), who cites examples from Saadia's introduction to Job, p. 20:2–7 (where one finds the rhetorical terms *kalām mu$^{c}$tariḍ, tashbīb wa-tashyī$^{c}$ wa-ḥashw $^{c}$alā $^{\circ}$l-kalām*). These terms are mentioned again in the Introduction to Job, p. 21:6–7; see R. Drory, *The Emergence of Jewish-Arabic Literary Contacts at the Beginning of the Tenth Century* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv, 1988), pp. 115–116. The reference to "Hashwiyite astrologers" in al-Bīrūnī, *al-Tafhīm,* p. 259, probably reflects the fact that the term, which originated in the controversy between rationalist theologians and orthodox followers of *ḥadīth*, had been adopted as a derogatory term by scholars who engaged in other branches of knowledge,.

310 See D. Pingree, "Ḳirān," *EI*$^{2}$, vol. 5 (1986), p. 130; Saadia's description of historical astrology is discussed above in my introduction.

311 The part of the zodiac that is above the eastern horizon on a certain day. If this is the time of birth of a certain person, or at an important time for an individual, family, or the like, this is their *ṯāli$^{c}$* or "ascendant"–their sign of the zodiac; see al-Tahānawī, *Kaššāf* 2: 1139. Saadia argues that precise knowledge of the correlation between the conjunction of the two and the appearance of the "ascendant" is a difficult matter.

312 *Or* their kingdom.

313 They have no further knowledge for the people of the kingdom.

314 That is, Isaiah 45.

315 In a relative sense, as defined previously.

316 The heavens and the earth are contrasted in several of Saadia's proofs that the world was created with "small bodies"; in those proofs, too, one sees that they are con-

[6] that Creation *ex nihilo*[317] is from Him,[318] and no one can understand how it was; just so
[7] the enthroning of rulers is from Him, and no one can understand how that comes to pass.
[8] After that He denied (the possibility) that one of the three groups we have mentioned[319] should know this,
[9] and taught us that if they have the audacity[320] to judge some aspect of it,[321] He nullifies it and brings it to naught, as it is said,
[10] "Who annuls the omens of the lone ones and makes fools of the augurs; Who turns sages back and makes nonsense of their knowledge" [Isa. 44:25]. The truth is that the "lone ones" [Heb. *baddim*], that is,
[11] those who are alone, is derived from "alone" [Heb. *levad*] and "by themselves" [*le-vaddam*], and He was thereby alluding to the middle ones,[322] that is,
[12] those who engage in meteorology. And "makes fools of the augurs" alludes to those who engage in (observations of) the liver
[13] and of arrows and graven images,[323] as Scripture says of them, "to perform divination, he has shaken
[14] arrows, consulted *terafim*, and inspected the liver" [Ezek. 21:26].[324] "Turns sages back" alludes to
[15] the so-called wise men[325] who claim to engage in the art of the stars by judgments based on the nativities and elections of
[16] beginnings[326] and on questions. "And makes nonsense of their knowledge" alludes to judgments based on
[17] the three conjunctions[327] and their assertion that (the stars) influence the governance of individual kings and dynasties
[18] and nations. After that he said that these matters can be understood
[19] only through prophecy, for He said, "(He) confirms the word of His servant and fulfills the prediction of His messengers" [Isa. 44:26].
[20] He made His announcement to them concerning the end of the kingdom of Babylon and the rise of the kingdom of Persia an example





sidered "large bodies." See mainly Saadia, *Amānāt*, pp. 36:6–29, 37:12–25 = *Beliefs*, pp. 41–43.

317 Added here in ק: just as it.

318 Saadia interprets the verse in Isaiah according to the qere *me-ʾitti* rather than the kethib *mi ʾitti* (= "who was with me?"). He offers a similar interpretation in *Amānāt*, p. 35:7 (and see Qāfiḥ's comment, n. 19 to the translation) = *Beliefs*, p. 40. Saadia, *Genesis*, p. 52 (translation, p. 255, with references to rabbinic sources of this interpretation), interprets the same verse in Isaiah according to the kethib. According to Saadia, the point of the latter reading is to stress that the Creator is "Eternal," i.e., not created at any point of time, and that He was alone at the time of Creation.

319 The three classes of diviners.

320 MS ט: if they act with arrogance; see note to original text.

321 Of knowledge of the future.

322 Of the three classes.

323 This is Saadia's interpretation of *terafim*; in Gen. 31:19 he translates in the singular, *timthāl*, without the adjective "graven". Interestingly, David b. Abraham al-Fāsī, the tenth-century Karaite lexicographer of Jerusalem, explains *ʾefod terafim* (Judg. 17:5) as *asṯurlāb al-munajjimīn* (= the astrolabe of the astrologers). See S. L. Skoss, *The Hebrew-Arabic Dictionary of the Bible known as Kitāb Jāmiʿ al-Alfāẓ (Agron)* vol. 2 (New Haven, 1945), p. 753. See ibid., notes and glosses by the eleventh-century Rabbanite commentator Eli b. Israel about the distinction between this term in the sense of idolatrous images and in the sense of the astrologers' instrument.

324 The selection of this particular verse may constitute an allusion to Saadia's interpretation of the current political situation in an eschatological context; see H. Ben-Shammai, "The Judaeo-Arabic Vocabulary of Saadya's Bible Translations as a Vehicle for Eschatological Messages: The Case of Saadya's Usage of the 8th form of Arabic QDR," *Proceedings of the Ninth Conference of the Society for Judaeo-Arabic Studies (Atlanta 1999)*, section D (forthcoming).

325 *Muḥtālīn* may mean those who resort to various kinds of devices, evasions, tricks, deceit, and the like.

326 That is, choice of the precise time for beginning certain actions. See above, n. 307.

327 The three conjunction cycles listed above.

[21] to the other kingdoms, for He said afterwards, "Who said to the deep, 'Be dry; I will dry up
[22] your floods,' Who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd; He shall fulfill all My purposes!' " [ibid. 27–28]. It is not the governance of nations alone that is from Him,
[23] but also life and death, for He says, "The Lord deals death and gives life" [1 Sam. 2:6]; and also wealth and poverty,
[24] for He says, "The Lord makes poor and makes rich" [ibid. 7], and birth and barrenness, for He says, "Shall I [Who bring on labor] not bring about birth?" [Isa. 66:9].
[25] And all happiness and misery (is from Him), for he says, "For in God there is power to help one [or make one fall]" [2 Chron. 25:8].
[26] In sum: (He is the source) for everything that His wisdom requires, as it is said, "Whatever the Lord desires [He does" [Ps. 135:6].[328] And we say further: What is]
[27] the aspect of wisdom[329] in His informing us of some of [the future before it comes into being? We find]
[28] several aspects[330] in that act. One is: To further explain to us [this (future) and His power, when]
[29] we see the events that have been, that indeed took place just [as He announced in advance, no more]
[30] and no less. Another aspect: [that they (= people) should respect . . . His commandments and prohibitions.]
[31] [Another aspect: That we should pose a challenge to the nations and their idols and their prophesying,[331] for they have no]
[32] knowledge of what is concealed, as He said to them, "Foretell what is yet to happen, That we may know that you are gods!" [Isa. 41:23] and just]
[33] as He informed us of what He had prepared for us in those events, that is, concerning the success of
[34] our cause and our power and our prestige and the like. [Until that





should happen we shall endure what He has decreed for us, that is, our inability]

3b
[1] and our wretchedness and the like, and just as he (= the prophet) said of us, "I must bear the anger of the Lord, since I have sinned against Him, until He champions my cause and upholds my claim. He will let me out into the light; I will enjoy vindication by Him" [Mic. 7:9]. And now that we have set out
[2] these reasons, we should set forth which concealed things have come to our knowledge from the beginning
[3] of our existence to its end, and say: The first piece of knowledge is the announcement to Abraham that we would sojourn 400
[4] years as strangers, enslaved and oppressed, as I have explained in the episode of "Know well" [Gen. 15:13].[332] Then came the announcement
[5] to Jacob concerning our return to the land and the apportionment to each tribe of a part in the government and the right of possession in a certain district

328 Here Saadia is identifying God's will and intentions with His knowledge and decision: These all have their source in Him and he cannot have any partners in them.

329 That is, how is God's wisdom revealed in …

330 *Or* purposes.

331 Their pretensions to prophecy.

332 Some of this is expounded in parts of Saadia's commentary on Genesis (Saadia, *Genesis*, pp. 115–116; translation, pp. 359–361), where he says that the calculation of four hundred years begins with the birth of Isaac.

[6] of the land,[333] as I explained in the passage of "And Jacob called his sons" [ibid. 49:1].[334] Then came the revelation
[7] to Moses our Master that we would sojourn in the Land of Israel 850 years. Of those, 400 years were like compensation for the years of slavery in Egypt, and 450 that were decreed to us in the land from before
[8] our arrival therein, and that is what was said, "When the Most High gave nations their homes and set the divisions of man, He fixed the boundaries of peoples in relation to Israel's numbers" [Deut. 32:8].[335] And from that time until
[9] we came out of Egypt (there elapsed) 452 years.[336] If we take what was decreed for us separately, and what was given us as compensation
[10] separately, the total amounts to 850 years. Therefore, He said, "I have taken note of you and of what is being done
[11] to you in Egypt" [Ex. 3:16]. Then He announced to Moses that our sojourn thereafter in exile in Babylon would be seventy years, which
[12] correspond to the number of sabbatical years and jubilees in the years that we rebelled (and did not observe them). The years of our sinning
[13] were 436 years, as Ezekiel explained: "390 days, corresponding to the number of the years of their punishment" [Ezek. 4:5]. And similarly
[14] "forty days … the punishment of the House of Judah, … one day for each year" [ibid. 6]. To this were added six years, for he was told of
[15] this matter before the destruction of the Temple. If one takes for every hundred years sixteen
[16] sabbatical years and jubilees, and a further (number of years) corresponding to the thirty-six in the proper proportion, this amounts to exactly seventy years, just
[17] as we have explained in the passage of "If you follow My laws" [Lev. 26:3[337]]. Therefore, in the verse "Then





[18] shall the land make up for …" [ibid. 34] He said twice "its sabbath years," once for the sabbatical and once for the jubilee.
[19] In Jeremiah's prophecy this was stated explicitly: "When Babylon's seventy years are over, I will take note of
[20] you" [Jer. 29:10]. After (the 70 years) had been completed, the prophet wrote them explicitly in detail: "As long as it lay desolate
[21] it kept sabbath, till seventy years were completed"

333 Jacob (in his blessings?) conveyed to his sons that knowledge he had received, presumably in a prophecy that they should ultimately return to the land, etc.

334 It is thus evident that Saadia wrote a commentary on Jacob's blessings, presumably together with Moses' blessings in Deut. 33. Independent commentaries on the two chapters of blessings (in Genesis and Deuteronomy) constituted a kind of sub-genre of Pentateuch exegesis in the Geonic period and later; but that question is beyond the scope of the present study.

335 See *Sifri* Deuteronomy, ed. L. Finkelstein (Berlin, 1939; repr. New York, 1969), §311, p. 352: "When the Holy One, blessed be He, gave the world to the nations, he defined the territory of each and every nation so that they should not be mixed. Thus he sent the sons of Gomer to Gomer […] so that they would not enter the Land of Israel." A more explicit expression of this idea, with its numerical significance as implied by the words "in relation to Israel's numbers" in the above verse from Deuteronomy, may be found in various midrashim, notably Pseudo-Jonathan on Deut. 32:8. Other homilies are: *Canticles Rabba* 6:15; *Numbers Rabba* 9:12; *Leqaḥ Tov* ad loc.; *Yalquṯ Shimᶜoni* 1:942, on Deut. 32:8.

336 See *Seder ᶜOlam Rabba*, ed. B. Ratner (New York, 1966), text, p. 6: "It turns out that from the Dispersion (of the nations who built the Tower of Babel) to the birth of the Patriarch Isaac there were 52 years." See above, n. 332, for the 400 years of the covenant "between the pieces" as calculated from the birth of Isaac. Thus we find that the verse in Deut. 32:8 alludes (retroactively, as it were) precisely to the Dispersion, when God assigned the nations their territories. Thus the sum total is 452.

337 *Seder ᶜOlam Rabba,* p. 15.

[2 Chron. 36:21[338]]. After that He informed us that we would return to the land
[22] and that the mode of our settlement there would be as subjects to kings, as was the situation of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in their time,
[23] that is, that the land was assigned to them but not (actually) given to them,[339] as it is said, "They were then few in number, a mere handful, sojourning there" [Ps. 105:12].
[24] He therefore said, "Then will I remember My covenant with Jacob" [Lev. 26:42],[340] that is to say, I shall place them in a situation like the situation
[25] of the three Patriarchs. Thus the people of the Second Temple (period) said that they were in exile and slavery,
[26] and that God had had mercy upon them only to a small degree, in the construction of the Temple, "For slaves
[27] we are, though even in our slavery God has not forsaken us" [Ezra 9:9]. And the more that they spoke at length of this matter and expanded upon it,
[28] the better it is for our own souls, for we see that the people of the Second Temple (period) declared
[29] that they were in exile and that redemption had not yet reached them; it is (therefore) ordained for us, for indeed they were
[30] [more knowledgeable about their situation, as they said,] "Today we are slaves, and the land that You gave our fathers to enjoy its fruit and bounty—here we are slaves on it!" [Neh. 9:36].[341] […[342]]
[31] [Moses informed us in secret] that the length of the existence

**א**

of the Second Temple was 420 years, that is the number[343] of years (in the lives of) Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham. He therefore arranged their names in order from the last to the first: Jacob's years were all (subject to) the covenant, and they were 147 years; Isaac's years were also all (subject to) the covenant, and they were 180 years. But Abraham's





years were not all (subject to) the covenant, for there is no mention of covenant with respect to him in the passage "Go forth" [Gen. 12:1–3], nor in the passage "And He said, To your heirs…" [ibid. 7], nor in the passage "[after] Lot had parted …" [ibid. 13:14–17].[344] But when He spoke to him in the chapter on the "Vision between the Pieces," then He said, "On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, 'To your offspring I assign this land,' etc." [ibid. 15:18], […[345]] Ishmael, for we see that he says in that passage "Since You have granted me no offspring, my steward will be my heir" [ibid. 3]. Abraham was 86 years old "when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram" [ibid. 16:16]. There was a year of pregnancy, and this event took place two years before that.[346] So there remain of Abraham's years 93 years to reach 175. If we add (the years of) Abraham's covenant, 93 years, to Isaac's covenant—180 years, and Jacob's covenant—147 years, the total will amount to four hundred and twenty years.

338 The first half of the verse ascribes this prediction to Jeremiah.

339 That is, they did not rule the land.

340 This verse refers to the Jews' return to the land after exile, but says nothing of the renewal of political independence.

341 This is an obvious polemic against those who believed that the Second Temple period was the age of Redemption; see Schlossberg, "Concepts and Methods," pp. 172–173, 323ff.

342 Perhaps one should restore here: To this one should add what Moses informed us … (see note to original text).

343 Translation based on emendation proposed in note to original text.

344 All of these are passages in which God spoke to Abraham but no covenant was mentioned.

345 Restore here: And this was before the birth of …, etc.

346 Thus, according to Saadia, the Covenant "Between the Pieces" was concluded two years before Hagar conceived Ishmael.

That is the most important reason for the inversion in the order of the patriarchs, that the covenant was made only in Abraham's years,[347] not in (the years of) the others. The verse therefore began with (Jacob and Isaac,) in all of whose years there was a covenant, and added to them the latter part of Abraham's life, which was "covenant" as we have explained.
Then Moses revealed to us that after the destruction of the Second Temple there would be exile and the land would be empty, because after (the verse) "Then will I remember My covenant with Jacob," etc., he said, "For the land shall be forsaken of them, making up for its sabbath years by being desolate of them" [Lev. 26:43[348]]. That is an allusion to […] that amounts to 896 years, for he says, "for the abundant reason" [Heb. *yaᶜan u-ve-yaᶜan*, lit.: "because and because"], the word "because" signifying retribution. This is intended to teach us that the length of time shall be equal to our first years of sinning, which are 436 years, […], and with them 380 years, and the second period of sinning is 380 years from the end of the Second Temple period,[349] for thirty years had passed from its beginning […]. As it is said, "until the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes" [Neh. 5:14] …

**קו**, recto

[1] Israel and their Messiah, for he said, "Thus said the Lord to Cyrus, His anointed one," etc. [Isa. 45:1]
[2] and the whole chapter. And when Cyrus became king and commanded that the Temple be built, they were obligated
[3] to believe in all the elements[350] of the Redemption.[351] Similarly, the information about the King
[4] of the North and the King of the South and whatever other (omens) were added to them are signs for us
[5] in a general sense of the Redemption, and as to the details, (they are signs) that attest to that.





[6] And since the first event[352] has taken place in accordance with what the angel said, this attests
[7] to the truth of the other events (in the future) and the Redemption. When the second event too
[8] brings about what (the Scriptures) predicted, we shall have two proofs of
[9] the events and the Redemption. When the third event is completed, this will be evidence
[10] by three proofs of the other events and the Redemption. As time elapses
[11] there will be more (signs) attesting to the Redemption, until it arrives itself,
[12] and everything that has been mentioned, as well as the Redemption (itself), will be proofs
[13] of what will be in the World to Come, together with the signs to take place during the Redemption,
[14] as it is said, "The sun shall turn into darkness and the moon into blood before the coming

347 I.e., split into the first eight-two years of his life, when God had not made a covenant with him, and the last ninety-three, as explained here.

348 This verse occurs after the reference to the covenant in the previous verse, which alludes, as explained above, to the Return to Zion in the Second Temple period.

349 Probably counting the years in reverse from the end of the Second Temple period, that is, 380 years of the total length of the Second Temple period. Since the text is fragmentary, it is not clear where Saadia gets a further eighty years.

350 *Or* modes, etc.; the articles of faith in Saadia's commentary on the Song of David (2 Sam 22) are also defined as *funūn*. See H. Ben-Shammai, "Saadia Gaon's Ten Articles of Faith," *Daᶜat* 37 (1996): 11–26 (Heb.).

351 That is, the fulfillment of that part of Isaiah's prophecy concerning the rise of Cyrus obligates them to believe the other parts of the prophecy, which concern the future.

352 Of the Redemption.

[15] of the great and terrible day of the Lord" [Joel 3:4]. It has been shown, therefore, that the benefits
[16] of this book cannot be fully counted quickly.[353] The text of the book may be divided into ten parts:
[17] Five of them in matters of the kingdom,[354] and the other five in the matter of benefits
[18] and advantages for the nation. We have therefore fixed them in ten parts. The first part concerns
[19] the nature of Exile and food and drink provided by the Gentiles. And the second part
[20] concerns what (Daniel) revealed to Nebuchadnezzar in the matter of the Four Kingdoms and their representation as a figure[355]
21] fifty-two years before [God] revealed to Daniel what concerned him. And the third part
[22] concerns the avoidance of idolatry. And the fourth part concerns the nature

**קו**, verso

[1] of the disaster visited upon Belshazzar. And the fifth part concerns the way of slaying
[2] Belshazzar. And the sixth part concerns the strict observance of prayers in exile. And the seventh—
[3] general conclusions from the likening of the kingdoms to animals. And the eighth part—
[4] general conclusions from that matter. And the ninth part—details of the seventy weeks between [??]
[5] [???] and the second period [?].[356] And the tenth part—concerning the eschatological wars between the kings and the other measures of
[6] the End. The four parts from the second to the fifth
[7] are those of the kingdoms. And the other five concern quests for explanations of (the visions) and the benefits to us.





[8] And since I have already listed their headings, I shall begin to interpret the verses, with the Lord's help.

[353] *Or* easily.
[354] *Perhaps* kingdoms (see note to the original; this conjecture seems probable from the sequel).
[355] I.e., an image or idol.
[356] *Or* and the Second Temple; the text is unclear here. Saadia probably meant all the matters that he discussed in detail in the commentary to Daniel, pp. 172–179.