

I should send it to you, (5) and you need no instructions.⁸ For your information: the unpacking⁹ cost (6) one dirhem.¹⁰

Profuse greetings to you.

[Address]

[Verso] (1) To the Sheikh, the *cantor*, (2) Mevassēr's brother, (3) known as Ibn Yijū.¹¹

(1) From Hajjāj.

⁸ A warning that Joseph Yijū should choose only a very trustworthy man, cf. {II, 55v, line 7} III, 10, line 71; {IV, 3v, lines 12–13} V, 1, margin, line 15, etc. {Arabic *wa-mā tahtāju wašāyā*. Often the singular is used for the last word, *wašāyā*, 'instruction.' From the use of the plural here and other parallel expressions, it is clear that in the phrase *mā tahtāju wašāyā*, in the thirteenth century documents from Quṣayr, the last word is also to be vocalized *wašāyā* and the phrase is to be translated, 'you do not require instruction,' rather than as rendered by Guo, *Commerce*, 50, *wašāhi* (!), 'whatever you need, order it.'

⁹ Arabic *inḥallat*, with which *naḥall* in III, 48, line 33, which refers to our note, is to be compared. While charges for packing (*ta'biya*) are common, I have not yet seen a charge for unpacking, especially a sum as negligible as that mentioned here. Therefore, the interpretation must remain tentative, until parallels are found. {See Goitein, *Med. Soc.*, 1:338, 487, n. 35, where it is translated 'untying' and other examples are adduced.

¹⁰ 'Cost one dirhem' translates *fi dirham wāḥid*. Note that the expression *dirham wāḥid* (without *fi*) also appears with the meaning '(as) one sum': I, 34b, line 6, *wa-jumil dirham wāḥid*; VI, 27, line 22, *wa-taḥaqqaq dirham wāḥid*; VII, 11, line 11: *al-jami' kbūṭa dirham wāḥid*.

¹¹ See the introduction to the document on the way the writer referred to Joseph.}

III, 45 *Short Letter from Perahyā b. Joseph Yijū to His Father in Mazara*

Sicily or southern Italy, most probably June 1154

TS 8 J 36, f. 3

The letter most probably was written in 1154, as it contains a reference to the proposed move to Egypt of the Yijū family. Perahyā is on a journey along the coast, certainly in Sicily or southern Italy, because he speaks here of his brother being sent back to Mazara via Palermo, while he himself had not yet set out on his passage to Egypt. This letter, as III, 43, shows that there still remained assets to be realized for Joseph Yijū, most probably from the time he was a merchant.¹

Translation

[A. Reference to a letter from Egypt expressing doubts as to travel to that country]

(1) I am sending you these few lines² in well-being and health. [We arrived] on Sunday night (2) of the week *Wayiqqaḥ Qōrah*³ and stayed overnight on board. On Monday [...], I disembarked [to take care of] sundry business and was met (3) by a man from Egypt, called Ibn Jāfi,⁴ who gave me a letter from Sheikh Abu 'l-Fakhr (4) Ibn al-Amshāfi,⁵

¹ {Goitein surmises here and elsewhere (e.g., in the introduction to III, 49) that Joseph had previously been a trader. While this assumption is attractive, I have not seen any specific support for it in our texts. Debts owed Joseph are alluded to in III, 43v, lines 4–6. On Joseph's mishandling of pepper sent by Ben Yijū to his brother, see III, 41, lines 30–31, III, 57, line 13.}

² Lit., 'two.' See 694, n. 3. {For 'sending' the original has *'allaqtu*, lit., 'attaching,' because Perahyā attached his letter to the one mentioned in the continuation; see lines 13–14. His brother writes the same in his letter, III, 47a, line 14. *Allaqa* also means 'jot down'; see IV, 4, line 1.}

³ The weeks are called according to the words beginning the Torah reading of the following Sabbath. The section referred to (Num., chaps. 16–18) is normally read in the month of June. {Perahyā was in the habit of dating his letters by the weekly Torah reading; cf. III, 55, line 2; introduction to III, 55a. This dating is not very common in the Geniza letters.

⁴ For this rare name, see Ibn al-Zubayr, *Asmā'*, 1390.}

⁵ Abu 'l-Fakhr Ibn al-Amshāfi was the friend and helper of the Yijū family in Fustat. {See pages 95–101.}

addressed to you, in which he expresses doubt about going there {alt. tr.: reservations about the trip}.⁶

[B. Request to send power of attorney with Moses, who returned to Mazara, and report about a loan not obtained]

My brother Moses had traveled to Palermo⁷ (5) heading for your place, so that you can write him the power of attorney. Please take the matter, namely the legal confirmation of that power of attorney, firmly in hand, with utmost (6) resolution, and send it as quickly as possible.

I tried to get a loan from Sheikh (7) Abu 'l-Rabī' of twenty *rubā'īs*, in order to send them to you (pl). However, I did not find him to have gold, as he had invested it in business.⁸

(8) Again {lit., 'Take notice'}, if the power of attorney is not legally confirmed, you will get nothing, unless you come in person. For, he says expressly in [his letter (?)] "... (9) and send a document, in which your sister approves of the matter."⁹ {Add: I have conveyed this information to you.}

⁶ Arabic *yahtakku bil-majī'*. The definite article is used ('the going'). This is obviously a reference to the desire of old Joseph to follow his son Perahyā on his way to Egypt; cf. III, 48 and III, 49. {*Ihtakka fi* can mean 'argues,' 'touches on.' The def. art. is used also in III, 48v, lines 7, 9, 17, in similar context; also 740, n. 28; 749, n. 2. No reason is supplied for Abu 'l-Fakhr's challenging Abraham Ben Yijū's invitation to his brother to join him. Perhaps this is an allusion to a decline in Abraham's fortunes. On the other hand, this might refer to the collection of the funds, discussed in the continuation, viz. Abu 'l-Fakhr suggested procuring a power of attorney from Joseph, since otherwise, he would have to come in person. Cf. line 8.}

⁷ Arabic *al-madīna*. {Sec 741, n. 34.}

⁸ The *kunya* Abu 'l-Rabī' is invariably connected with the name Solomon' (Goitein, *Med. Soc.*, 5:641, n. 300). It stands to reason that Sulaymān Ibn Siṭlūn was intended here, and this is made almost a certainty by V, 24v, line 2, where he is referred to as Abu 'l-Rabī' Ibn Siṭlūn. He had already promised to help Perahyā financially; see III, 43, lines 19–20 and 738–39, nn. 20–21. On the scarcity of cash, see page 20, n. 43.}

⁹ As the clearly discernible 'your sister,' line 9, indicates, Perahyā's aunt Berākā was also involved in the transaction. One does not see, however, why the personal appearance of his father would remove that legal difficulty. Anyhow, owing to the bad state of the ms., the full import of the passage cannot be made out. {Line 9 may not be a quote from Abu 'l-Fakhr's letter, mentioned in line 3, but Perahyā's own afterthought.}

[C. Detailed greetings]

Do not be remiss in praying for me.¹⁰ Best (10) greetings to you, to my m[other], and to my brothers Moses and Samuel. Please greet (11) my lord, the master¹¹ and Mr. Jacob, his brother, and to Rabbi Zechariah, the best greetings, and to Mr. Solomon, greetings; (12) and to everybody who asks about me, and to my master, R. Ḥayyīm,¹² the father of the rabbi, the best regards. Perhaps {alt. tr.: I hope that} he will not forget me (13) in his prayers. *May your well-being increase more and more, Amen. Selah! And Peace.*

[D. Forwarding of the letter mentioned above, sec. A]

Take w[hat] I [[for]warded, (14) namely the letter sent by Sheikh Abu 'l-Fakhr, together with this letter. *And Peace.*

[E. Address]

[Verso] (1) This letter is sent to my esteemed parent, (2) *his honor my father and master Joseph Melammed (Teacher)*¹³ b. Perahyā (3)—*may he rest in Eden!*—Yijū, may God be his protector and keeper!

(1) (From) His son, who is longing for him, Perahyā. (2) *May salvation be near!*

¹⁰ The prayer of parents or other relatives and, in general, of pious old people was regarded as a most efficacious protection on a dangerous journey; cf. below, lines 12–13. {See page 158.}

¹¹ Arabic *mu'allim*, see 741, n. 35. {Most (or all) of the individuals greeted in the continuation are also mentioned in III, 43v, lines 16–18; see the same note.}

¹² News of R. Ḥayyīm's death is found in III, 48v, line 36, margin.

¹³ See 741, n. 36.}