

01010 I.A.3, III
Aug 1982

A7
TS 24.72++

7. DEATH OF A BELOVED - PUNISHMENT
FOR LEAVING JERUSALEM

Letter of a court physician of the Sultan al-Malik^a
al-ʿAzīz, Saladin's son and successor (ruled 1193-1198)

This letter, which was written at latest in 1198,
is a vivid testimony to the eagerness with which Jews
tried to settle in Jerusalem almost immediately after its
reconquest by Saladin in 1187. But the difficulties were
great, some were not able to carry out their intention
to settle there and others were forced to leave after
a short trial. Emotions ran high, as is proved by the
letter translated below, in which an eccentric court
physician tries to console his parents on the death of
~~his younger brother,~~
~~a son.~~ *how utterly unconsolable he was*
~~his own state of utter disconsolation~~ The letter had two other purposes: by describing
to emphasize his ~~immense love for his deceased younger~~
~~brother,~~ and by enumerating the highest dignitaries of
the state, including a personal envoy of the Sultan, who
came to comfort him, he showed ~~to~~ his parents how ~~high~~ *strong*
a position he had reached at court.

The close connection of this physician with the
Ayyubid court is evident from a passage ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ another letter
of his, sent from Jerusalem: "I am passing the winter in
Jerusalem, for I can travel only on command of al-Malik
al-Muʿazzam and al-Malik al-ʿAzīz, but they are campaigning
these days against Damascus and I cannot reach them."¹