

Letter II

Allān at the Height of his Exploits, Writing from Aden
after his Return from India and immediately Setting out
for India again TS AS 156.237 (4) 238

A. End of ^{the} Introduction TS AS 156.237, ll. 1-4

[Your servant took notice of ... and your yearning] for him, a feeling shared by me. [May God ordain that] prosperity and health prevail in your court and grant in his grace that I be united with you. As to what you have mentioned in your kind letter about your longing to meet me, I have an even larger part and a greater share of this. In God all matters are united.

B. Travel to Sindābūr and other places in India. Because of riots and bloodshed the ship could not sail to Aden. In Fāknūr the captain disappeared, but the ship continued to Kūlam, where it stayed for some time.

TSAS 156.237, 1. 4-238, 1. 5

The reason for writing this letter is to tell you what happened to me on this voyage. In my previous letters to your excellency I informed you about my travel to Sindābūr. ⁴³ God granted me safety, I finally arrived in Al-M., ⁴⁴ and brought what God, the exalted, made available, to the extent reported in my previous letters.

We intended, on our way home, to travel to Aden, ⁴⁵ but riots and bloodshed occurred, and whoever was in the town ⁴⁶ fled. The shipmaster,

namely, ⁴⁷ 'Alī Nāwak, wanted also to flee, but I discovered this ...
(between 156.237 and 238 something, probably less than one line, is missing)
[and informed X. about it], ⁴⁸ but he did not believe me. We loaded the
textiles and the iron during the night, for he (Nāwak) had the power to
keep us back [by refusing to sail]. Finally, we all fled to Fāknūr. ⁴⁹
I had left some of the pepper and many of the smaller items with Jacob
Ibn Thābit. ⁵⁰ We arrived in Fāknūr, where 'Alī Nāwak disembarked and re-
mained, while we went on in the same ship to Kūlam ⁵¹ and stayed there
for some time.

- C. Ten days after leaving Kūlam the ship encountered a
dangerous sea, the captain died, and a vociferous crowd
on board forced the ship back to Kūlam, where it arrived
after another twenty days.

TS AS 156.238, 11. 5-13

When the night of ... arrived, we loaded and set sail, 35 days before
"New Year." ⁵² The captain had been ill while still in town, but we sailed
for ten days. When we encountered a large pusht (a reef, or another under-
water obstacle), water being five fathoms high, and did not know whether
this was the Fal (the northern end of the Laccadive Islands) or not. ⁵³ God
granted us safety, but the captain ^{had} ~~got~~ a stroke and died. We threw his body
overboard into the sea. So the boat remained without a commander and a ...,
and we had no charts. ⁵⁴ A crowd in the ship was afraid the ship would be lost,
if it landed in an Arab country. ⁵⁵ However, if we returned to India, there

Letter II - 3

too, the same might happen. They got the upper hand and returned us to Kūlam. We gave up hope of saving our goods. After twenty days we arrived in Kūlam, the place we feared. But God granted us delivery immediately.

D. In Kūlam the ship was returned to its proprietor.

Another one was provided with water and wood, and its two captains signed documents specifying their obligations towards the passengers.

^{AS}
TS 156.238, 1. 5 - v., 1. 1

The ... , the ... , and the manager ⁵⁶ came on board and took the ship from us, confirming its rights to its proprietor, being afraid of 'Alī Nāwak. ⁵⁷ They provided us with water and wood. Two captains traveled with us, after they had signed documents (confirming their obligations) towards us. ⁵⁸

E. Having set sail earlier than usual, the ship arrived in Aden prior to all others with the result that 'Allān sold his goods for excellent prices. Learning that pepper in Aden cost 35 dinars a sack--a price far too high for the town--'Allān decided to return immediately to India on the same ship and rented storage place for 150 sacks of pepper and other spices for the voyage back.

TS AS 156.238, v 11. 1-9

16
Letter II - 4

We arrived in Aden in the shortest possible time, prior to all others. I sold the iron for a good price, 20 dinars a bahār. ⁵⁹ I had with me 72 bahārs, ^{and} 50 separate pieces, 30 mann saqat, and 40 mann clove. After customs I had obtained 1,500 dinars and a lot in other currencies.

I had planned to travel home, but learned that a bahār of pepper cost 35 dinars in Aden. I could not tarry so long until I could buy pepper in Aden (for a reasonable price). ⁶⁰ Having sought God's guidance, I decided to travel to Fāknūr in the same boat in which we had arrived, for it had been blessed for me. I rented from them storage space for 150 bahārs, 100 for pepper and 50 for various other goods. For the 100 bahārs for pepper, I paid 90 mithqāls of Adenese coinage. ⁶¹ Sheikh 'Alī Ibn al-Kūfī ⁶² and Sheikh Bundār ⁶³ had stipulated with them (the captains) for me that I would not pay them a dirhem until I had bought the pepper myself.

F. Notes about brazilwood, clothing, and ornaments sent to the family. Greetings.

⁵
TS AS 106.238 v 11. 9-14

I sent with Sheikh Abu 'Al-Karam and Sheikh Abu 'Al-Surūr three loads of brazilwood ⁶⁴ and with them 27 less a quarter Maliki dinars for the custom duties and ... made of lālas, ⁶⁵ 50 red furjiyyas (robes open in the front) in mats, ⁶⁶ and ... a necklace made of Sīlī (Ceylon?) beads. Please ^{note} take notice of this. ⁶⁷

Letter II - 5

Also with Sheikh Abu 'Al-Husayn Zayd Ibn Abū Mansūr, the Alexandrian,
ten lālas robes. Take ^{note} ~~notice~~.

note 2

Accept my greetings. ^{eg} And greetings to the family [the writer's
wifel, to Sheikh Abū Ishāq and to Abū Nasr ... and all those you care about.

TS As 156.237 v

1. Sheikh ...

2. ... , ^{at} May your wellbeing
increase and never
diminish.

3. The date of this letter is Wednesday, 29th Āb. ⁶⁹

In a larger script: Right Side:

4. To the illustrious Sheikh, my lord 'Arūs, son of Joseph (may he rest
in Eden)

5. May God prolong his life and make his honored position and welfare permanent.

Left Side:

His servant, may he become his ransom, 'Allā[n], son of Hassūn (may his)
e(nd be) g(ood) ⁷⁰