

# ON THE REVOLUTION OF THE YEARS OF THE WORLD

The book of Māshā'allāh on the revolution  
of the years of the world, begins

May God watch over you, and increase life for you; may God raise you up and lay open for you the revolution of years, the knowledge and disposition of which is that you should know when the Sun enters the first minute of the sign of Aries. And when you know this, you will set up the Ascendant and the four angles, and the rest of the places of the celestial figure by degrees and minutes, and you should set up the places of the planets in the signs by degrees and minutes, and their condition according to the order of the circle (namely by their direct motion and by retrogradation, slowness and<sup>1</sup> quickness, and their elevation and latitude, and the projection of their rays). And know that a retrograde planet has no strength over good, until it goes direct.

After these things, look at the Ascendant and its Lord, and at the Lord of the exaltation of the Ascendant (if there were an exaltation of some planet in that sign), and the Lord of the bound and of the triplicity, and the place of the Lord of the hour from the Ascendant, and see of what kind are their places relative to each other, and what kind they are in the place of the enmity of the Ascendant, and which in a place of friendship. For if the Lord of the Ascendant appeared in an inimical or hostile place from the Ascendant, it signifies the detriment of that same clime, according to the quantity of the hostility or contrariety of the Lord of the Ascendant with the horoscope. And if it were in the sixth place, it will be infirmity; if it were in the eighth, it will be death; if it were in the twelfth, it will be enmity or discord, according to the nature of the sign in which the Lord of the Ascendant is. Likewise if the Lord of the bound, and the Lord of the exaltation and triplicity were in the said places [that are] inimical to the Ascendant—but this will be below what is signified by the Lord of the Ascendant.

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<sup>1</sup> Following BN for the rest of this paragraph.

### Chapter 1: On the places of the luminaries from the Ascendant

After these things, look at the places of the luminaries from the Ascendant, and from the Lord of the Ascendant. Because if the revolution were in the day, and the Sun aspected the Ascendant or<sup>2</sup> its Lord, and the Sun were free from the malefics, it signifies the strength and attainment or victory of the citizens of that clime—and better than that if the Sun ceded his disposition to the Lord of the Ascendant, and if he were received in the place in which he was. Because if it were just as we have said, the wealthy and powerful of that clime will be humbled by and subjected to the master of that clime, and prosperity and peace will be bestowed upon him, and health, with a good condition, by the will of God. And likewise the Moon, if she bore herself toward the Ascendant and its Lord just as we stated regarding the Sun, if the revolution were in the night.

And if the Lords of the luminaries (or one of them) were aspecting them from a strong place, and received them, there will not be detriment in men, nor any disturbance, but they will be secure and calm, seeking justice, and judging by means of it. But if it were the reverse concerning the Sun, Moon, and the Lords of the Ascendant and the Lords of the luminaries, say everything to the contrary, and turn the good things which we have said, into bad. And look at the reception of the planets toward each other, and their hostilities, and pronounce according to what you saw regarding lands and plagues<sup>3</sup> in the areas which they were in charge of.<sup>4</sup>

### Chapter 2: On the triplicities

Know that the signs signify parts of the world through their own natures, not through their places. Wherefore if a part of the world agreed with the nature of its sign,<sup>5</sup> what is signified will be stronger for it.

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<sup>2</sup> Reading *aut* for *ut*.

<sup>3</sup> *Plagis*, reading it in the medieval sense. In the classical sense, “afflictions, wounds, gashes.”

<sup>4</sup> Following primarily BN, and transferring *de partibus* to the end of the sentence.

<sup>5</sup> That is, with the triplicity of the sign on the angle in question. See the following chapters.

Aries and its triplicity (Leo and Sagittarius) are signs of the east; which if they came together with the Ascendant,<sup>6</sup> their signification will be stronger.

Taurus and its triplicity (Virgo and Capricorn) are signs of the south; wherefore if they came together with the sign<sup>7</sup> of the Midheaven, their signification will be greater.

Gemini and its triplicity (Libra and Aquarius) are signs of the west; which if they came together with the sign of the angle of the west, what is signified by them will be stronger.

Cancer and its triplicity (Scorpio and Pisces) are signs of the north; wherefore if they came together with the angle of the earth, what is signified by them will be stronger.

Moreover, these things which we have said are even adapted to the planets appearing in these places.

### Chapter 3: On the division of the earth

Know that the earth has two divisions: the east and the south is one, because they agree in heat; and the west and the north is another, because they agree in cold. After these, the earth is divided by the seven divisions of the seven planets in the climes, according to the order of the circles. Therefore, the climes are known from the circle according to the order of the planets, just as in the Lords of the hours.

For the first clime is Saturn's, the second Jupiter's, the third Mars's, the fourth the Sun's, the fifth Venus's, the sixth Mercury's, the seventh the Moon's. But the climes are according to the nature of the circle; then there is a known thing belonging to each sign, in terms of lands and cities; and likewise in the bounds. Because perhaps there will be a city belonging to some

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<sup>6</sup> *Convenerint*. That is, if one of them *were* the rising sign; and so in what follows.

<sup>7</sup> Reading singular here and in the next paragraph.

sign, and the bound of some planet of that sign conquers in it. Like Iraq,<sup>8</sup> for example, which is said to belong to Cancer, and its planet is Jupiter, since the place of Iraq is in the place of the Jupiterian bound, from the nineteenth degree of Cancer up to its twenty-seventh, which is the bound of Jupiter.<sup>9</sup> And the dismounting of the benefics onto this place signifies fitness around Iraq in particular; and likewise the dismounting of the malefics onto the same place signifies evil around Iraq. Likewise you will know this from the dismounting of the benefics and the malefics in the rest of the bounds, as we have already expounded this to you. Therefore, know them just as I have told you, because if you did this, it will not be concealed to you which sign or which bound belongs to a city.

#### Chapter 4: When it is necessary to revolve the quarters of the years

After this, look to see whether the ascending sign is fixed, movable or common, and look likewise at the Lord of the Year. Because if the Ascendant of the year were a movable sign, revolutions of the quarters in the year will be necessary, and more so if the Lord of the Year were in a movable sign. And if it were a common sign, there will be exactly two revolutions necessary in the year—that is, at the beginning of Aries and Libra—and more so if the Lord of the Year were in a common sign: therefore do even with the entrance [of the Sun] into the first minute of Libra as with the beginning of the year. And with the movable [signs], do likewise through all the quarters of the year. But if the Ascendant were a fixed sign, the revolution of the year will be conquering all the quarters of the year, and more strongly so if the Lord of the Year were in a fixed sign.

But if the Lord of the Year were in a movable sign, the abundance or want which it signified will be only in the first quarter of the year—unless [such a] distinction is even in the second, third, and fourth [quarters]: then it will be according to what that same quarter signified, in terms of abundance or want.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Reading for *Alirac* here and throughout this paragraph. Iraq is traditionally associated with Cancer, perhaps because of its southern marshes and the dominance of the Tigris and Euphrates.

<sup>9</sup> The bound of Jupiter in Cancer runs from 19°—25° 59'.

<sup>10</sup> That is, although the Aries ingress stands generally for the whole year, if the rising sign is movable certain features (like agricultural abundance or want) will only be relevant for

### Chapter 5: On discovering the Lord of the Year

Therefore, if you wished to know the Lord of the Year, look in the hour of the revolution at the planet which was stronger than the rest in its own place, and which had more testimonies, and make that one the Lord of the Year in the clime in which you are. After this, give to the seven climes (from out of the clime in which you are),<sup>11</sup> according to what I told you before, in terms of the seven planets.<sup>12</sup> And I will expound to you the portions of the planets and their testimonies, so you may know the Lord of the Year.

### Chapter 6: On the portions and testimonies of the planets, from which the Lord of the Year is identified

Know that the stronger of the planets is that one which is in the Ascendant, not removed from the angle, nor cadent, or the one which was thus in the Midheaven; but in the setting [angle] and the angle of the earth it will be lower than what I told you regarding strength, by one-fourth. And the eleventh sign is below the setting [angle] and the angle of the earth; and the ninth [sign] below the eleventh, and the fifth [sign] below the ninth, and the third [sign] below the fifth.

If the Lord of the Ascendant were in the horoscope, namely by 3° in front or behind its cusp, not cadent nor removed from the angle of the Ascendant,<sup>13</sup> it will not be necessary with it to look at another planet. Likewise the Lord of the exaltation of the ascending sign, if it were in the degrees of its exaltation. But the Lord of the triplicity, if it were in the Ascendant, will have one-third of the strength of the Lord of the Ascendant; also the Lord of the bound has one-fifth of the strength, and this according to the quantity of their strength in the signs; and the Lord of the hour has one-seventh.<sup>14</sup>

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that quarter; we have to look at the other quarters individually to determine what they predict.

<sup>11</sup> *Ex climate in quo fueris.* The function of this is unclear to me.

<sup>12</sup> Māshā'allāh is probably referring to Ch. 3, in which various cities and peoples receive planetary attributions.

<sup>13</sup> I take this to mean that it is still in the same sign as the cusp—so if the cusp were at 2°, he would not accept its Lord at 29° of the previous sign.

<sup>14</sup> This paragraph could be one source for the later idea that the dignities themselves can be assigned numerical values.

And know that this comes to be if they were in the Ascendant or the Midheaven. But if they were in the west or in the angle of the earth, their strength will be decreased; likewise if they were in the eleventh, the ninth, and the fifth, it will be decreased more.

### Chapter 7: On the luminaries, if they were in the angles

Know that the luminaries, if they were in one of the angles, will be the Lords of the Year—unless the one which was in an angle was impeded. Which if it were so [that it was impeded], it will signify the impediment and weakness of that same clime which is subjected to that sign. And better than that [is] if the Sun in the day were in an angle, and the Moon in the night in an angle. And likewise the nocturnal stars<sup>15</sup> thrive in the night, and the diurnal ones in the day. Therefore, once you have set up the revolutions of the years, begin afterwards with the consideration of the strengths, according to what I have told you.

### Chapter 8: When the Lord of the Year commits dominion<sup>16</sup> to another

And if the Lord of the Year appeared to you, see if perhaps it would be committing its own disposition to another: that is, like if it is in the domicile of another planet, and that planet appeared in an optimal place from the Ascendant, and the Lord of the Year is also conjoined to it. Because if it were so, the one who is the Lord of that sign in which you found the governor of the year, is made the Lord of the Year, because it receives [the original Lord of the Year] from its own domicile; and better than that, if the luminaries aspected it, or [if] the Lords of [the luminaries'] signs (in which they were found) did. But if it did not<sup>17</sup> commit its own disposition to the Lord of its own domicile, look to see whether it has strength in its own place on top of the disposition, and its strength is just as I designated to you in the sixth chapter.

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<sup>15</sup> Planets.

<sup>16</sup> *Dominium*. This words has a special connotation of “ownership,” but it is clearly meant as a synonym for disposition (*dispositio*).

<sup>17</sup> BN lacks this “not” (*non*).

### Chapter 9: On the strength of the Lord of the Year

If planets were joined to the Lord of the Year, and committed their own disposition to it, joy will come to that clime from every direction, according to the disposition and strength of the planets.

### Chapter 10: When the Lord of the Ascendant is made into the Lord of the Year

If the luminaries (or one of them) committed their own disposition to the Lord of the Ascendant, it will not be necessary to look at another with this, because he himself is the Lord of the Year without a doubt.

### Chapter 11: What things must be looked at in judgments about kings and the rustics

You will also look, for the rustics and their condition, from the Lord of the Year and its place, and from the aspect of the planets toward him. But for the king of the clime you will judge from the Lord of the Midheaven and from the Sun (namely from one [of these]), and from the conjunction and the separation of the planets from them. And of the Sun and the Lord of the Midheaven, you will choose the stronger one according to the strength of the places, and you will put down the conquering one as the significator of the king.

And if you knew the significator of the king, his condition with the rustics (in terms of good and evil) and whatever will come out for him in that same year (in terms of difficulty,<sup>18</sup> and abundance and want) will not lie hidden from you, by the command of God—namely, about every matter of his empire: that is, about his rustics, and his substance, about his children too and his women, and about his health and infirmity, about a foreign journey, and his strength and weakness, or about his ruin.

And know that this chapter on the king is clearer than the chapter on the Lord of the Year and the condition of the rustics, because you are looking for the king as an individual, and the rustics as a group.

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<sup>18</sup> Reading *distractione* with BN for *distractione*.

And if you knew the Lord of the Year and the significator of the king of that same region, look to see who aspects it, and what kind of strength belongs to the one aspecting it, and whether they are in their own light or in the light of another, and whether it is necessary that they aspect their own places. Because perhaps the Lord of the Year will be strong, not in need, or perhaps it will be weak and in need.<sup>19</sup> But how this happens, I will expound to you in the following chapters.

### Chapter 12: When the Lord of the Year is cadent

If the Lord of the Year were cadent from the Ascendant, not aspecting the Ascendant (in the eighth, sixth, second, or twelfth sign), then he will be in need, and therefore weakness will befall him, because he fell in a place removed from the Ascendant: and therefore he needs a planet to whom he is being joined, who would render his light to the Midheaven—and [this other planet] would strengthen him. Because if a planet had more testimonies and it were the Lord of the Year, and it were in the eighth place, then it needs a planet who would aspect it from out of the Midheaven. And every planet which does not aspect the Ascendant *does* aspect the Midheaven from a trine or sextile aspect—except for one which was in the third sign, where it is weakened and does not aspect the Midheaven.

And if the planet who was strong out of the Midheaven were the Lord of the sign in which the governor of the year (to whom more testimonies were joined) appeared, and the Lord of the Year himself were joined to him, [the planet in the Midheaven] will receive the disposition of the year and its signification, and it will be the Lord of the Year. But already before I have expounded to you this topic in the beginning of this book, and how the Lord of the Ascendant will be made strong in its own place by the Lord of its domicile, or by another.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> See the next chapter.

<sup>20</sup> See Ch. 6.



### Chapter 13: On the strength and weakness of the Lord of the Year

After this, look at the one who aspects the Lord of the Year, and pronounce what it would signify according to the quality of its place, in terms of good and evil; [and] if it were strong, strongly; and if it were weak, weakly.

Know that the aspect of the opposition signifies discord and contention, and likewise the square; but the trine or sextile aspect [signifies] friendship and concord. If the malefics aspected the significator of the year or the significator of the king from the opposition, the impediment will be from enemies. And if they aspected from a square aspect, it will be from certain people who are thought to be peacemakers, whose enmity was previously concealed. And if it were from the trine or sextile aspect, it will be from friends.

After this, look to see whether the impediment would enter upon the king or over the rustics: which if it entered upon the king, look to see whether the rustics will help him or not. But if it entered over the rustics, see whether the king would help them or not. But whether [they do or not] can be known from the status of their (the king's and the rustics') significators.

### Chapter 14: On the adversary of the king

After this, look at the domicile in which there was a malefic, to see whether the significator of the king or the Lord of the Year had some testimony in it: which if it came out [like that], there will be enmity from that clime, according to the quantity of that testimony. Look even to see if perhaps the Lord of the Year were in charge, and the significator of the king were not in charge:<sup>21</sup> because if it were so, the enemy will be from that same clime, but the king will be weakened, and another will be led into his place. But if the significator of the king were in charge, and the Lord of the Year were not in charge, the enemy will not be from his clime, nor from his kingdom: but the king will bring them under his sway, and he will subjugate them.

Indeed once you have completed this, look at the place of the malefic planet, what kind of direction it is [in]: because the destruction will be from that direction, from the city or clime, or from the clime of that same sign.

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<sup>21</sup> I am not sure what situation Māshā'allāh is imagining.

The age of the general and the princes is also known from the place of the malefic from the Sun: which if it were oriental,<sup>22</sup> it will be a young man; and if it were occidental it will be an old man; and pronounce in this what is between them, according to what the place of the planet was, from the conjunction of the Sun up to its combustion.

Also, if a malefic were in the Midheaven, and it impeded the Lord of the Year, this will enter between all men. And if it were in the east, the evil will be from the direction of the east; and if it were in the west, it will be from the direction of the west; and likewise in the north and south, if it were in the angle of the earth or the Midheaven.

And know that nothing is worse for the status of the citizens of the land, and of a city (which belongs to that same sign in which there was a malefic), than if it is retrograde in the revolution of a year; and more strongly than that if the malefic were in an angle.

### Chapter 15: On the impediment of the king

After this, look at the malefic who aspects the Lord of the Year or the significator of the king: because if it aspected from the Ascendant, it signifies that the impediment is communal;<sup>23</sup> and if it were in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, it will be in connection with substance; if it were in the 3<sup>rd</sup>, it will be in connection with brothers; and if it were in the 4<sup>th</sup> it will be in connection with fathers and real estate; and if it were in the fifth, it will be in connection with children; and if it were in the sixth it will be in connection with infirmities; and if it were in the seventh, it will be because of war and contention; and if it were in the eighth, it will be in connection with death; and if it were in the ninth, in connection with foreign travel; and if it were in the tenth, it will be in connection with the king and his supremacy; and if it were in the eleventh, in connection with friends; and if it were in the twelfth, in connection with enemies. And speak likewise concerning the good which it signified, by the will of God.

And if there were a malefic in a common sign, it is feared concerning the king, if his significator aspected it just as I told you before. And if the Lord of the Year were not the significator of the king, it is feared concerning the rustics, because there will be mortality in them.

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<sup>22</sup> I am not sure what sense of *orientalis* and *occidentalis* is meant here.

<sup>23</sup> I.e., it afflicts all people generally.