

Clavicle Solomons

THE KEY OF SOLOMON THE KING

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PREFACE

***The Key of Solomon* — Between Ancient Wisdom and Eternal Mystery**

There are books that don't belong to a single era. They are born in a time, buried, rediscovered, copied, translated, burned, and copied again, until their very existence becomes legend. The *Clavicula Solomon's* —which is presented here to the reader under the title *The Key of Solomon* —is one such book. A text that has spanned millennia without ever losing its ability to fascinate, disturb, and question.

The Opera and its History

Tradition attributes this work to Solomon, son of David, King of Israel, whose name has become synonymous over the centuries with superhuman wisdom and mastery over invisible forces. According to the story that opens the text itself, Solomon received this knowledge through divine revelation, which was then kept in an ivory casket placed in his tomb, and rediscovered—much later—by a group of Babylonian philosophers unable to understand it, until one of them, the sage Jehoi, discovered it. Grevis did not obtain the interpretation through the intervention of an Angel.

This tale of hidden transmission, of texts incomprehensible to the profane and revealed only to the worthy, is not an ornamental detail: it is the very heart of the esoteric logic that governs the work. The *Key* is not a manual open to everyone. It is, by its very nature, a threshold text—intended for those who have prepared themselves, purified themselves, fasted, and renounced, at least for the duration of the Operation, the miseries of the sensible world.

From a historical-philological point of view, the manuscripts of the *Clavicula The works of Solomon* known to scholars date primarily from the 14th and 15th centuries, with the most elaborate versions appearing between the 16th and 17th centuries. S. Liddell MacGregor Mathers, a scholar and founding member of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, edited the first modern critical edition in English in 1889, drawing on manuscripts held at the British Museum. Since then, the text has been the subject of ongoing study by historians of magic, philologists, anthropologists, and scholars of comparative religion.

The Structure of the Work

The text is divided into two distinct Books, each with a specific function within the system it proposes.

Book I is the book of ritual action: it describes the hours and days propitious for magical operations according to the influence of the seven traditional planets (Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon); it illustrates conspiracies to evoke spirits and demons; and provides instructions for specific experiments ranging from uncovering thefts to achieving invisibility, from finding treasures to winning the love and favor of others. It also contains prayers, confessions, and permission to depart—a complex liturgy that reveals how Solomonic magic, in its profound structure, is inseparable from religious devotion.

Book II is the book of internal and external preparation: the Master of the Art finds the rules for purification, fasting, bathing in consecrated waters, donning white linen robes, constructing the Magic Circle, preparing the tools—the white-handled knife, the black-handled knife, the sword, the wand, the dagger—and finally consecrating quills, inks, incense, and

candles. Every object, every gesture, every word has its *raison d'être* in a symbolic system of extraordinary internal coherence.

The Underlying Cosmology

To understand the *Key*, we must situate it within its conceptual universe. The work presupposes an animated and hierarchical cosmos: at the summit, God—evoked through His multiple Hebrew Names (EHEIEH, YAH, TETRAGRAMMATON, ADONAI, EL SHADDAI, and many others)—and then, descending, Angels, Genies, Elemental Spirits, and finally Demons. Each level of this hierarchy presides over specific spheres of existence: the planets, the elements, human passions, world events.

Man, in this vision, occupies a privileged position: created in the image of both the Divine and the Earthly, he is the point of contact between the two worlds. The Magical Arts are nothing other than the method—rigorous, disciplined, sacred—with which the worthy man can leverage this mediating position to direct invisible forces toward legitimate ends. Note that the text forcefully insists on this point: the Art must never be used for evil purposes. Those who abuse it invite divine wrath and the vengeance of the very Spirits they attempted to enslave.

This ethical aspect is far from secondary. The *Key* is not a book of black magic in the vulgar sense of the expression. It is, in the intentions of its compilers and copyists, a text of sacred science—a *philosophia occulta* that aspires to the same epistemic status as theology and natural philosophy.

Why Read This Work Today

The 21st-century reader will find himself faced with this *Key* with at least three possible dispositions of mind.

The first is that of the **scholar** : anyone interested in the history of European culture, Renaissance esotericism, the Hermetic tradition, Christian Kabbalah or the history of religions will find in the *Clavicula Solomon* is an essential document. The text interweaves in an extraordinarily rich way the Jewish tradition of the divine Names, Platonic cosmology, Ptolemaic astrology, and medieval Christian liturgy. In this sense, it is a faithful reflection of the intellectual syncretism that characterized European scholarly magic between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

The second is that of the **spiritual reader** : for those who approach esoteric and occult traditions with genuine interest, the *Key* offers a comprehensive and structured system, a gateway to a profoundly symbolic universe. The rigor the work requires of its practitioner—purification, fasting, prayer, humility before the Creator—is not distant, in its psychological structure, from that of many contemplative and ascetic traditions around the world.

The third is that of the **curious reader** : that he read this text as one would read an extraordinary document of the human imagination—a testimony to man's ability to construct coherent symbolic systems to give name and form to the invisible, to rediscover a sense of order and power in an otherwise chaotic and unpredictable world.

Whatever your disposition, the *Key of Solomon* does not disappoint. It is a text that speaks—with its archaic language, its inaccessible Names, its elaborate ceremonies—of something perennially human: the desire to know the secrets of the world, to dialogue with the forces that govern it, and not to be, in the great theater of the universe, mere spectators.

A Note on This Edition

This edition of the *Key of Solomon* aims to make this monument of Western esoteric literature accessible, preserving the solemnity and depth of the original text. The Hebrew terms and names of the Spirits have been retained in their traditional form, as have the prayers and conjurations, which would lose their character if subjected to excessive modernization.

The reader is advised to approach the text with the same disposition that it requires of its practitioner: with attention, respect for the tradition from which it comes, and the awareness that one is handling something ancient and complex - a text that, like Iohé Grevis discovered many centuries ago bent over Solomon's ivory chest, he reveals his secrets only to those willing to listen.

“Listen, my son, and receive my words, and learn the wonders of God.”

— Solomon to Rehoboam, from the Introduction

INTRODUCTION

Treasure, O my son Rehoboam! the wisdom of my words, since I, Solomon, have received it from the Lord.

Then Rehoboam answered and said: How have I deserved to follow the example of my father Solomon in such things, he who was found worthy to receive the knowledge of all living beings through (the teaching of) an Angel of God? And Solomon said: Listen, O my son, and receive my words, and learn the wonders of God. For, on a certain night, having lain down to sleep, I invoked that Most Holy Name of God, IAH, and prayed for Ineffable Wisdom, and when I was beginning to close my eyes, the Angel of the Lord, namely Homadiel, appeared to me, spoke many things kindly to me, and said: Listen, O Solomon! Your prayer before the Most High is not in vain, and because you have not asked for yourself long life, nor much riches, nor the lives of your enemies, but have asked for yourself wisdom to administer justice, thus says the Lord: According to your word I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that before you there has been no one like you, nor ever will arise.

And when I understood the discourse which was spoken to me, I understood that in me was the knowledge of all creatures, both of things which are in heaven and of things which are under heaven; and I saw that all the writings and wisdom of this present age were vain and futile, and that no man was perfect. And I composed a certain work in which I have set forth the secret of secrets, in which I have kept them hidden, and I have also concealed therein every secret of the magical arts of any master; every secret or experiment, that is, of these

sciences which is in any way worthwhile to be accomplished. Moreover, I have written them in this Key, so that, as a key opens a treasure house, so this (Key) alone may open the knowledge and understanding of the magical arts and sciences.

Therefore, O my son! you shall be able to see every experiment of mine or of others, and see that everything is adequately prepared for them, as you shall see to have been duly appointed by me, both in day and hour, together with all things necessary; for without this there will be nothing but falsehood and vanity in this work of mine; in which are hidden all the secrets and mysteries that can be performed; and that which is (established) concerning....

END PREVIEW