THE EXPULSION 1492 CHRONICLES

y by David Raphael

THE EXPULSION 1492 CHRONICLES

An Anthology of Medieval Chronicles Relating To The Expulsion of the Jews From Spain and Portugal

Selected and Edited by David Raphael

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FOREWORD

There has long been a need for an English language anthology of the medieval chronicles relating to the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal, as much for the convenience of scholars as for the satisfaction of the curious public. Such an occasion is now presented to us in this quincentennial commemoration of the expulsion and other historical events of 1492.

These chronicles, many of them eye-witness accounts, were composed originally in Hebrew, Spanish, Portuguese, and Latin. With a few exceptions, this material has never before been translated into English. These fascinating accounts have long been the exclusive preserve of medieval scholars, and it is hoped that this anthology will expose them to the much broader audience that they deserve.

Although this anthology is the most complete collection of such expulsion-related accounts presently available, no claim is made that every existing minor chronicle has been included. Indeed, certain chronicles have been excluded because they were felt to be of peripheral historical interest for the purposes of this anthology. Two such chronicles are (1) the "Genizah Leaves" eschatological chronicle reported by Dr. Isaiah Tishby and (2) the *Zekher Zaddik* of R. Yosef Ben Zaddik of Arévalo (ends with the siege of Málaga in 1487).

Where possible, I have provided a brief biographical description of the chronicler in question. In most cases, these brief biographies are

based upon the *Encyclopedia Judaica* (EJ) and the *Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada* (EUI).

I wish to thank Professor Henry Kamen for his useful criticisms on my historical introduction. I welcome comments from readers with regard to the selection of the chronicles and their translation. I also wish to gratefully acknowledge the editorial assistance and the deep unflagging support of my wife.

TRANSLATOR CREDITS

This has been a collaborative translation effort involving several individuals. I would like to give them due credit for their contributions to this anthology.

The breakdown, by language category, is as follows:

(1) HEBREW CHRONICLES

Eleven of the fifteen Hebrew chronicles were translated by Rabbi Dr. Shmuel Himmelstein of Jerusalem, Israel. A Talmud scholar, he is responsible for the following chronicles: Capsali, Anonymous I, Abravanel, De La Cavalleria, Ibn Verga, HaLevy, Ben Jamil, Saba, Zacuto, Ben Solomon, and Ibn Yahya.

Only four chronicles have been previously translated and published, namely, the accounts of Ibn Faradj and Anonymous II (trans. A. Marx), Hacohen (trans. Harry S. May), and Hayyat (trans. Olga Perlzweig).

(2) SPANISH CHRONICLES

The four Spanish chronicles—Bernáldez, Pulgar, Colmenares, and the Chronicle of Valladolid—plus the Edict of Expulsion and the confiscation lists were translated by Dr. David Raphael.

(3) PORTUGUESE CHRONICLES

The royal Portuguese chronicles—Resende, Pina, Góis, and Osório—were translated by Mr. Luiz H. Mendes, a Portuguese doctoral student, under the supervision of Dr. Eduardo Dias, Professor of Portuguese at the University of California, Los Angeles (U.C.L.A.)

The previously published Usque account was translated by Dr. Martin A. Cohen of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

(4) LATIN CHRONICLE

The single account in Latin, that of the Inquisitor Páramo, was translated by Dr. Bengt Löfstedt, Professor of Medieval Latin at U.C.L.A.

As supervising editor, I have interacted with the translators, where possible, so as to improve the ensuing English translation. Editorial insertions appear in brackets.

D.R.

THE ROAD TO EXPULSION
by David Raphael

The Jews of Spain had long regarded themselves as the elite of the Jewish people. According to Rabbi Moses Arragel, the fifteenth century rabbi who translated the Bible into Spanish, the Jews of Spain exceeded all their brethren in "lineage, wealth, virtues, and wisdom". For eight centuries, they had made their presence felt on the Iberian peninsula. During a 'Golden Age' in 11th-12th century Moslem Spain, the Jews had made great contributions to philosophy, science, Hebrew poetry and grammar. Even in Christian Spain, Jews had achieved prominence in the intellectual, economic, and artistic spheres. Yet despite all their accomplishments, despite all the roots they had planted deep into the Iberian soil, the Jews of Spain would not be able to withstand the tempest of Christian anti-Semitism that would uproot them completely from the land they called Sefarad.

THE MASSACRES OF 1391

The expulsion of the Jews from Spain was preceded by a century of explosive anti-Jewish feeling. In the wake of the Black Death and the political turmoil that plagued late 14th century Spain, anti-Semitism began to rear its head in Castile among the lower artisan classes.

In the year 1391, Ferrant Martinez, the fanatical Dominican archdeacon of Écija, urged the mob to destroy the *judería* or Jewish quarter of Sevilla. Its twenty three synagogues were largely destroyed, with the

exception of two which were converted into churches. It is estimated that four thousand Jews were butchered in the onslaught; many more opted for conversion to Christianity when faced with the choice between being either a dead Jew or a live Christian.

The ruling boy-king Henry III (1390-1406), whose kingdom was being ruled by appointed regents till he came of age, was unable to stop the carnage that spread through all Andalusia. In nearby Écija and Carmona, all the Jews perished. In Toledo, those Jews still faithful to Judaism were slain; some, such as Rabbi Judah, a descendant of the famed R' Asher ben Yehiel, slit the throats of his wife and children and then his own rather than be converted to Christianity. In Cordova, many Jews were slaughtered and the Jewish quarter burned to the ground, with many rescuing themselves by allowing themselves to be baptized. Likewise, in Madrid, Cuenca, and other cities of Castile, the majority of the Jews were either killed or forcibly converted to Christianity.

In the ensuing months, the disturbances spread to Aragon, Catalonia, and the Balearic islands. The once proud community of Barcelona was decimated, with hundreds perishing when their protective fortress was overrun by the mob; this caused a large mass of Jewish souls to convert to Christianity. Likewise, the Jewish quarters of Valencia, Gerona, and Majorca were looted, and the Jews were forced to choose between conversion and death, with only very few managing to escape such a fate.

All told, seventy Jewish communities were wiped out. It is estimated that fifty thousand Jews perished during these brutal massacres, and that a much larger number, most likely over a hundred thousand Jews, was forcibly converted to Christianity.

Faced with an unprecedented level of physical and spiritual destruction, the Jewish community began the painful process of rehabilitation, thanks largely to the efforts of Rabbi Hasdai Crescas of Zaragoza. However, attempts to reestablish the Jewish presence in certain cities such as Barcelona and Valencia met with failure. Morale in the Jewish community was at an all-time low, and it sunk even lower with continued Christian harassment oftentimes committed by hostile apostate Jews.

PAUL OF BURGOS AND VINCENT FERRER

The most prominent of the apostate Jews, Paul of Burgos (the previously named Solomon Halevi), had suspiciously changed religious

allegiances at the time of the 1391 massacres. Convinced of the rightness of Christianity, he set off to Paris to study Christian theology. He returned to Spain with a doctoral degree in hand, rose quickly within the Catholic hierarchy, and ultimately became Bishop of Burgos.

Sensing the vulnerabilities of the faith from which he had sprung, and eager to prove the sincerity of his conversion to Christianity, Paul of Burgos set out to influence the rulers of the kingdom to pass legislation harmful to the Jews. As a result of his activities, and those of Fray Vincent Ferrer described below, the following laws were passed in Castile in 1412: Jews must wear distinctive badges; Jews must be segregated into specific quarters in all cities and villages, and could not eat, drink, bathe, or even converse with Christians. To make them appear dirty and unkempt, Jews were made to wear long coarse mantles and were forbidden from trimming their beards; Jews could not bear arms; Jews could not join the artisan trades (carpenters, tailors, shoemakers); Jewish apothecaries and merchants could not sell food items or medicinal drugs to Christians. Finally, Jews could not employ Christian servants.

Hardly a generation had passed since the bloodbath of 1391 when a new Dominican firebrand, Fray Vincent Ferrer, began a new conversionary campaign during the years 1411-12. He went from one Castilian city to the other, a Torah in one arm and a crucifix in the other, preaching relentlessly unto the Jews in their very synagogues. In this campaign, he was accompanied by a hostile mob, many of whom piously scourged themselves with whips in imitation of the passion of Jesus. Many Jews, fearful of a repetition of the massacres of 1391, converted. In Toledo alone, Ferrer's campaign is said to have effected the conversion of 4000 Jews. The former Ibn Shoshan synagogue was re-Christened by Ferrer as a church and came to be known as the 'Santa Maria La Blanca' synagogue. Subsequently, Ferrer continued his conversionary activities in Aragon. Altogether, it is estimated that 35,000 Jews in Castile and Aragon were pressured to convert to Christianity.

Soon to follow in the years 1413-1414 was a discomfiting religious disputation between Jews and Christians in the city of Tortosa, prompted by a summons from the anti-Pope Benedict XIII. In this one-sided dispute, it was made plain at the outset to the participating Jewish representatives from Aragon and Catalonia that the religious claims of Christianity were beyond dispute, and that they instead would have to counter the religious accusations leveled by the apostate Jew, Joshua HaLorki, to the effect that the Talmud already contained evidence of

the Messiah's arrival. The outcome of this year and a half long disputation, in which the muzzled Jewish leaders carefully held off their Christian theological assailants, was that henceforth Jews would be forbidden to study the Talmud and that they would be required to listen three a times a year to Christian sermons; furthermore, laws against social intermingling between Jews and Christians would be enforced.

The demoralization of the community was virtually complete. Self-doubts as to the need to remain Jewish began to arise in the community. Many wondered whether "...the fearful disaster that had overwhelmed the Spanish community, then the largest segment of the Jewish people, seemed to betoken to all the world that God had withdrawn His favor" (Baer).

THE CONVERSO PROBLEM

The first generation of the Conversos, having been brought to the baptismal font with a knife at their throats, understandably had little love for a Christian faith whose religious tenets were unconvincing in their own right, but which required the application of brutal force to effect apparent belief in them. In Jewish eyes, the mass conversion to Christianity was a sham, a tragic farce that had been driven by the practical necessity of individual survival and, to a lesser degree, by personal aspirations to escape the debilitating limitations of ghetto life.

For the most part, the New Christians in pre-expulsion Spain were Christians in name, but not so in spirit. Longing to return to the religion of their Jewish forefathers, the New Christians waited for the right set of social circumstances that would allow them to revert to their former Jewish ways. Under constant scrutiny from the Old Christians for any evidence of religious backsliding, most New Christians had to meet in clandestine fashion to keep the Sabbath and other Jewish observances. As the chroniclers relate, some Judaizers brazenly practiced their Jewish rituals in public, unintimidated by the watchful Old Christians about them. Availing themselves of the resources in the nearby Jewish community, the Conversos would on occasion seek formal religious instruction and guidance from the unconverted Jews in their midst.

Certainly not all Conversos were faithful Jews. Those Conversos one or two generations removed from the fateful mass conversions had their Jewish sensibilities attenuated by virtue of growing up as practicing Christians. The result was a muddled mishmash, a Judaized form of

Christianity that retained enough Jewish content to warrant the continued animus of the Old Christian populace.

Other converts used the riots as an opportune time to rid themselves of their Jewish social and economic shackles. Once freed, the neophyte Conversos penetrated quickly into the highest strata of Castilian and Aragonese society. Many of the wealthier Conversos married into the noble houses of Spain such that, by the mid-fifteenth century, hardly any aristocratic family in Castile or Aragon could claim that it was free of Jewish admixture. Even the royal blood line of the Enriquez family, from which Ferdinand The Catholic sprung, was reported as having Jewish roots (see Capsali, Ch.57).

Other New Christians secured distinguished positions in the hierarchy of the Spanish Catholic Church, many becoming bishops and cardinals of note. Indeed, two of Isabella's confessors, including the infamous Inquisitor Tómas de Torquemada, were of New Christian descent.

THE SPANISH INQUISITION

During a visit to Sevilla in 1477-78, Ferdinand and Isabella were subjected to a series of sermons by the Dominican prior Alonso de Hojeda. In his preachings, Hojeda alerted the sovereigns to the grave problem of the widespread insincerity and religious laxity among the New Christians. When a clandestine band of Judaizing Conversos was found shortly thereafter in Sevilla, it precipitated a wider church investigation that confirmed the rampant spread of the 'Mosaic heresy' throughout Castile and Andalucia.

Ferdinand and Isabella, upon being presented with such evidence, responded by appealing to Rome for the establishment of an Inquisition in Castile. The formal Papal Bull by Pope Sixtus IV was obtained in 1478; however, it was not until 1480 that the Inquisition became truly operative.

The Inquisition would be charged with the task of uprooting heresy from the land, and would have legal jurisdiction solely over Christians, Conversos included.

When these Inquisitors began their work in Sevilla, a group of wealthy and prominent Conversos, headed by the powerful Diego de Susan, planned to offer armed resistance.

The plot was somehow betrayed by Diego's daughter, possibly as a result of an amorous affair, and the conspirators were arrested, tried, with many of them being ultimately burned at the stake in the first

Auto-de-fe held on February 1481 (see Bernaldez, Ch. XLIV). By 1488, within the archbishopric of Sevilla alone, more than 700 Conversos were burned at the stake, another 5000 reconciled with the church, and many others thrown into Inquisition jails. The Inquisition penitents, made to do public penance by wearing the *san benito* cloak of shame, became social outcasts who were often disbarred along with their descendants from holding public office.

As the Inquisition set up its tribunals in other cities in Castile, many New Christians fled the country, provoking a rapid flight of capital and people. The economic dislocations and impoverishment that resulted in certain areas troubled Isabella little, as it served to cleanse her kingdom of this religious impurity (see Pulgar). The Inquisition, in turn, consoled itself with effigy burnings of the refugees and with the confiscations of their properties left behind. Indeed, many of the properties confiscated from the Conversos were used not only to defray the expenses of the ensuing trials, but also to finance the costly war against the Moors and to generally enlarge the coffers of the royal treasury.

A special council (the *Consejo de la Suprema y General Inquisición)* was formed in 1483 to incorporate the Inquisition activities within the broader affairs of the Castilian kingdom. Its activities were extended beyond Castile in that year to encompass the regions of Aragon, Valencia, and Catalonia. The Inquisition, as well as its appointed inquisitors, would be thus under the direct control of Ferdinand and Isabella, becoming a veritable instrument of state. The unified command of this council, the only council whose authority extended throughout all the kingdoms jointly ruled by Ferdinand and Isabella, was entrusted to Tómas de Torquemada, a Dominican priest and the former prior of the Segovia monastery of Santa Cruz. As the first Inquisitor General, Torquemada would pursue a campaign of unprecedented severity against the Conversos.

After the first *Auto-de-fe* in Zaragoza, the leaders of the Converso community in Aragon, frantically seeking to prevent further activities of the Holy Office, plotted to execute the Inquisitor Pedro de Arbués. The conspirators included many Conversos in the upper echelons of government, including the chief treasurer of Aragon, Sancho de Paternoy. When Arbués was mortally wounded in a Zaragoza cathedral on September 15, 1485, the fury of the Christian populace turned against the scheming Conversos. The conspirators were caught and cruelly punished, some having their hands cut off, others beheaded, before their bodies were cast into the flames. The queen, outraged by the

deed, authorized that even more severe measures be taken against the Conversos wherever they might be, and that their wealth be confiscated.

In the years 1490-1491, the anti-Semitic feeling of the populace was inflamed even further by the trial of *El Niño de la Guardia* ('The Child of La Guardia'). In the vilest tradition of medieval anti-Semites, the Inquisition accused a small group of Conversos and Jews of conspiring to ritually murder a Christian child from La Guardia on the outskirts of Toledo. Supposedly the conspirators had performed magical rites upon a stolen sacramental host and the heart of a kidnapped Christian child, whom the Jews had crucified in the same manner as the Jews had crucified Christ, so as to render the Inquisition powerless. The trial proceedings, under the direction of the Grand Inquisitor Torquemada, were concluded on November 14, 1491, and the guilty Conversos and Jews were burned at the stake. This widely publicized trial convinced the Christian masses of a widespread diabolical conspiracy between Jews and Conversos to overthrow the Catholic Church. When the Edict of Expulsion was declared four months later, the scandalized Christian public needed no further convincing of the need to eject the Jews.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESTRICTIONS

Since 1465, the construction of new synagogues was prohibited. Certain professions—medicine, surgery, and law—were closed to the Jews, and they were furthermore prevented from selling any food or medicine without special permit.

Only two years after Isabella assumed the throne of Castile in 1474, the sumptuary laws, previously observed in the breach, were now passed by the Cortes of Madrigal with a much greater strictness. Jews were forbidden to wear silk nor could they adorn themselves with any gold or silver ornaments. To facilitate the public identifications of Jews on the streets, Jews were forced to wear a red badge on the right shoulder, failure to do so being punishable by loss of one's clothing.

The combined forces of economic pressure and religious zealotry sought to limit social intermingling between Jews and Christians. In 1480, at the behest of the newly established Inquisition, Jews were to be physically separated and confined to an encircled area: the *judería* or Jewish quarter. A Papal Bull in 1484 followed that gave pontifical approval to this sequestering action.

Additional regulations affecting Jewish economic life were passed: Jews could not maintain shops on Christian streets or in the main plaza,

nor could they engage in commercial activities during Christian holidays. In Burgos, the *judería* was to be closed on Sundays as well as Christian holidays.

Although the above laws originated in Castile, parallel laws were enacted in the kingdom of Aragon, particularly those requiring the establishment of separate Jewish quarters.

In certain cities, the economic regulations penetrated into the confines of the *judería* itself. In Vitoria, the sale of goods was forbidden within the Jewish quarter. At the famous annual fair of Medina del Campo, Jews were not allowed to have any booths set up on the fair grounds and, within the *judería* itself, were prohibited from selling any wood, coal, or cooked bread.

Charges of usury were leveled against those Jews actively involved in providing high-interest rate loans to Christians, even though the same rates were charged by Christian money-lenders (usually in the vicinity of a 30 % annual rate). Regulations were passed by the Cortes at Madrigal to restrict such allegedly usurious practices.

THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA

When Spain fell under Moslem rule after the invasion of Tarik in 711, Asturian rebels in the north began a resistance effort that evolved into the Reconquista, the centuries-long Christian campaign to reconquer the Iberian peninsula from the Moors. Christian advances at first were slow; however, by the mid-thirteenth century, the Christians had recovered all of the Iberian peninsula except for the small, but densely populated, Moorish kingdom of Granada. Content with such territorial gains, the Christian cudgels were laid to rest.

In 1481, hostilities began anew after the Moorish seizure of the fortress of Zahara. A full-scale war was declared to finally rid Spain of the infidel Moors. Radical financial measures were necessary to finance such a military enterprise. Large sums were raised from the municipalities, the church, wealthy individuals, the nobility, and the military orders. The Jews of the kingdom, although exempt from military service because it was forbidden for Jews to bear arms, were subjected to a special war levy in addition to their heavy annual taxes. Prominent Jewish financiers, among them Don Abraham Seneor and Don Isaac Abravanel, provided interest-free loans to the crown to aid with the war effort. In addition to assisting with the provision of supplies to the

Christian troops, Abravanel himself is recorded as having lent 1,500,000 maravedis to the king and queen.

After many bloody battles and an occasional setback, the Christian forces successfully wrested away one fortress after another from the Moors—Alhama, Moclín, Loja, and others. The key Gibralfaro fortress at Málaga was taken in 1487 after a prolonged siege, its Moorish defenders starved into surrender, and the 450 Morisco Jews of the city ransomed by Don Abraham Seneor in return for a promised 20,000 Jaenese gold doubloons to be raised by the Jews of the kingdom.

On January 2, 1492, Boabdil, the last Moorish king of Granada, surrendered the city of Granada and the fabled Alhambra palace to its new Christian rulers. When the cross of the campaign and the banner of Santiago (St. James, the patron saint of Spain) were raised atop the towers of the Alhambra, it signaled the triumph of Christianity over Islam and served to vindicate the Christian conquerors of the seeming rightness of their cause. In the mind of the Christian zealot, the external threat of the Moslems had been deposed, but the internal spiritual threat of the Jews remained. Whereas harsh measures against the Moslems might provoke repercussions against Christians held in Moslem lands, there was no such concern about retaliation from the powerless Jews. If not all the infidels could be expelled at this moment when all of Spain was now under a unified Christian rule, it was at least possible to rid it of its unwanted Jewish elements; the unconverted and still rebellious Moors could wait until later (all unconverted Moslems were expelled from Castile in 1512 and from Aragon in 1525).

THE EXPULSION

On March 31, 1492, Ferdinand and Isabella signed the Edict of Expulsion, ordering all Jews either to convert to Christianity or else leave Spain by July 31, upon punishment of death and confiscation of all their belongings. The Edict had a primarily religious objective: to expel the Jews for aiding the New Christians in being unfaithful to Christianity and in attempting, by whatever means possible, to "subvert and to draw away faithful Christians from our Holy Catholic faith". Jews were accused of instructing the New Christians in the ceremonies and observances of the Laws of Moses, "making them to understand that there is no other law or truth besides it." Despite the creation of separate quarters for the Jews in 1480 at the behest of the Inquisition and the partial expulsion of the Jews from Andalusia in 1483, the Edict maintains, such measures were now shown to be insufficient, and that nothing less than full

expulsion of all Jews would suffice to take care of this contagious heresy among the New Christians (see Appendix for entire Edict).

However, it was not until a month later that the terms of the edict were made public in formal declarations throughout the cities and towns of the kingdom. In Santa Fe, a siege city built a short distance away from Granada, the announcement of the expulsion decree was announced with three trumpets (even though, curiously, no Jews resided in Santa Fe).

During the three month time period, most of the Jewish exiles had to sell their households and belongings for a small fraction of their actual value. In the cities of Zamora, Soria, and Burgos, the exiled Jews were stripped of their valuables. The inventory list of confiscated valuables (see Appendix) includes items such as gold and silver coins, gems, silverware, candlesticks, brooches and bracelets, coral and pearl strings, silver and gold finger-rings, and other types of jewelry. Even Torah scrolls adorned in any way with gold or silver were confiscated, as were the velvet and silk mantles used to cover the Torah scrolls.

Christian debts owed to Jews were rendered uncollectible by local judges who delayed payment until the expulsion deadline had passed; however, Jews obligated to Christians were often jailed, beaten, or otherwise pressured to immediately pay up their debts. Even the crown demanded that each Jewish community pay its full share of taxes for the entire year lest the crown suffer.

Upon the departure of the Jews, all unpaid debts owed by Christians to Jews were now made payable instead to the royal treasury. Kayserling estimates that from the three cities alone of Zamora, Soria, and Burgos, approximately six million maravedis were taken in, inclusive of the debts transferred to the crown, an amount equal to four times the cost of Columbus's first expedition. Although no formal tally was made, the total worth of the valuables confiscated from the Jews must easily have run into the tens of millions of maravedis. It was from this amassed sum of confiscated wealth that Columbus's second voyage was financed (see Appendix), and from which Columbus was given the ten thousand maravedis by the Spanish sovereigns as a reward for being the first person to sight land in the New World.

Because it was forbidden to take out gold, silver, minted money, arms, and horses, many Jews arranged to take out some of their wealth in the form of letters of credit arranged through Genoese banking representatives.

Over two hundred Jewish communities were destroyed in the process. The estimate as to the number of exiles varies considerably with the chroniclers, but all speak of large numbers. Abravanel, for example, estimates the number of exiles as high as three hundred thousand individuals. Anonymous chronicler II claims that there were 50,000 families in Spain. Bernáldez reports that Rabbi Meir Melamed had informed Don Abraham Seneor, the chief tax-collector for the crown, that there were 35,000 Jewish households in the kingdom (see pg.73). Assuming 4.5 individuals per household, this leads to an estimate of approximately 160,000 Jews in Spain at the time of the expulsion. Because Melamed and Seneor would have no interest in exaggerating the figure of Jewish households (this would result in greater taxes for the Jews of the kingdom), but rather in minimizing their number, this population estimate must be regarded as a conservative and likely correct figure. Estimates based solely upon surviving tax records are notoriously inaccurate, often resulting in absurdly low figures, and should be viewed with great suspicion.

It should be noted that the above estimate does not include the Jews also expelled from the islands of Sardinia and Sicily then under Aragonese rule. Indeed, at the time of the expulsion, there were more Jews residing on these islands than on the Italian peninsula. From Sicily alone, approximately 37,000 Jews were expelled, while a substantially smaller number was forced to leave Sardinia (less than a thousand).

Don Abraham Seneor, the chief judge (*juez mayor*) of the Jewish communities in Spain, and his son-in-law, Rabbi Meir Melamed, converted to Christianity on June 15, 1492. It should be noted that Seneor was not the *rab de la corte* ('the rabbi of the court') as has been mistakenly claimed by several historians. There was no established official title by which the chief rabbi of the kingdom was called; the title of *rab de la corte* was used only by Rabbi Abraham Benveniste in 1432 and by no other individual. Some chroniclers, who did not know Seneor personally, refer to Seneor as a 'rabbi'. It is unclear whether Seneor was truly an ordained rabbi. Certainly this popular belief could easily have arisen because of two reasons: (a) certain previous chief judges had also served as chief rabbis, and (b) as the result of church propaganda designed to foster the impression that the 'chief rabbi' had converted when, in fact, it was merely the 'chief judge' who had done so. As pointed out by A. Levy, "In no official Spanish document prior to the Expulsion is Senior either given the title of Rabbi, nor is he described as holding the office of Rab as is the case with every other Court Rabbi in

Castile". Whether Seneor received rabbinical ordination or not, it certainly appears that he was at no time regarded, either at the royal court or by his fellow Jews, as the 'chief rabbi' of Spain.

The reins of leadership at the time of the expulsion were in the hands of Don Isaac Abravanel, the distinguished scion of a distinguished Spanish-Portuguese Jewish family. Don Isaac met three times with the Catholic monarchs, attempting unsuccessfully to persuade them to annul the expulsion decree. According to an account by the 16th century Spanish-born Sicilian Inquisitor Luis de Páramo, the sovereigns were on the verge of reconsidering the expulsion order in return for a substantial sum of money. Supposedly Tomás de Torquemada, the Grand Inquisitor, confronted the Catholic Kings and surrendered his crucifix, stating that he wanted no part of this betrayal of Spain for money, just as Judas Iscariot had sold their Lord for thirty pieces of silver. This account has been regarded as legendary because Páramo was writing many years after the event. However, an incident of this type may actually have taken place because as the anonymous chronicler (II) states: "The agreement permitting them to remain in the country was almost completed when it was frustrated by the interference of an official, who referred to the story of the cross" (pg. 130).

A special delegation headed by Rabbi Isaac Aboab, the eminent *gaon* of Castile, and by the wealthy Don Vidal Benveniste de la Caballeria, was sent to Portugal to persuade King João II to allow the Jews to settle temporarily settle in his kingdom. King João consulted with his advisers whether to admit the Jews into Portugal; after a court debate on this issue, the King decided to admit the Jews, but only upon payment of a substantial sum of gold which he hoped to apply towards a future campaign against the Moors in North Africa (see the Pina and Resende chronicles). An agreement was reached with the King whereby Jews could stay temporarily in Portugal for an eight month period upon payment of eight gold cruzados per head. Arrangements meanwhile would be made to transport the Jewish exiles to their ultimate destinations, be it to North Africa or to the lands of the Ottomans. The thousands of Jews caught entering Portugal illegally, or who overstayed the eight month limit, were enslaved by the Portuguese authorities; the children of these enslaved Jews were shipped to the newly discovered island of São Tomé off the west coast of Africa. Finally, only six hundred of the wealthy families were allowed to remain permanently in Portugal, this right secured by payment of one hundred gold cruzados per family.

It is estimated that half of the Spanish exiles emigrated to Portugal. The constellation of new arrivals included members of the De la Caballeria family along with Rabbi Isaac Aboab himself; the famed Abraham Zacuto who became the newly appointed royal court astronomer (see *Sefer Yuhasim*); Rabbi Abraham Saba (see *Tseror Ha-Mor*) and Rabbi Solomon Ibn Verga (see *Shevet Yehuda*); and Rabbi Simon Maimi of Segovia, soon to become the *Arraby Mor*, the chief rabbi of Portugal.

In 1496, when King Manuel ascended the throne, it appeared that matters would improve for the Jews in his kingdom when he ordered that all children of enslaved Jews, previously sent to the island of São Tomé, be returned to Portugal. Seeking a suitable marriage partner, King Manuel had aspirations of winning the hand of Princess Isabel, the daughter of Ferdinand of Isabella. The Spanish monarchs, their religious zeal unabated, would not consider such a marriage proposal unless Manuel agreed to expel all the Spanish Jews who had fled into his Portuguese kingdom.

Manuel agreed to these terms and, one month after signing the marriage contract, ordered the expulsion decree in Portugal (see Appendix). As in Spain, the Portuguese decree of December 1496 ordered all Jews and Moslems either to accept Christianity or else leave the country by October of 1497, on pain of death. As the Jews readied themselves for departure, Manuel decided he could not countenance the loss of so much Jewish talent and wealth. Instead he set upon the strategem of forcibly converting all the Jews to Christianity, Spanish exiles and native Portuguese Jews alike (see the accounts by Usque, Góis, and Osório).

The first major Portuguese assault on the Jews took place on Easter Sunday, in April of 1497, when all Jewish children up to the age of fourteen were taken away by force from their parents and brought to the baptismal font (see Osório and De Góis). As the deadline for departure approached, Manuel had all the Jews summoned to Lisbon where the sea vessels meant to carry them away never materialized. Instead the Jews were corraled into the narrow confines of Os Estãos, and subjected to inhumane torture so as to convert them to Christianity. Declaring them to be his slaves, Manuel denied them bread and water for three days. When this failed to produce any significant results, the harried Jews were dragged to the baptismal fonts by their hair and beards and by ropes around their bodies. Many Jews preferred to commit suicide rather than transgress their religion: some jumped to their

deaths from rooftops, others threw themselves into wells where they drowned. Rabbi Simon Maimi, the chief rabbi, was thrown into the dungeons where, along with other Jewish leaders, he was beaten, tortured, and immured in a pit filled with mud up to his neck; after an agonizing torture, the saintly rabbi finally died at the hands of his Christian captors (see Capsali, A. ben Solomon, and A. Saba).

En route by sea to the lands of dispersion, many exiles were attacked by the very same crews ostensibly taking them away to safety. The Hebrew chroniclers relate the savage attacks and the multiple atrocities that befell the hapless exiles—murder, rape, robbery, forced starvation, enslavement, and abandonment on deserted islands. The same calamities pursued them on land; in Morocco, bands of Arabs defiled and murdered numerous young men and women, oftentimes eviscerating their entrails in their search for gold coins which the Jews had supposedly swallowed.

Many exiles arrived on the northern shores of Africa and settled in cities such as Orán, Tlemçen, Tunis, Tetuán, Salé-Rabat, and Mekhnez. Most, however, sought to make their way to the Kingdom of Fez under the rule of the Marinid king, Muhammad Esh-Sheikh. Among those taking this course was a ten-year old boy, Abraham ben Solomon (see *Sefer Ha-Kabbala*), who joined the thousands of starving Jews kept within a large makeshift camp outside the city walls. A major fire erupted in the camp, killing many and destroying what few possessions the exiles claimed (see Bernaldez, Ch. CXIII and Capsali, Ch. 76-77). After this disaster, the King of Fez mercifully allowed them to enter his city. Nonetheless, difficult times persisted, and many exiles continued to move on to other lands in the Mediterranean, particularly eastward towards the Ottoman Turkish Empire. Others, having suffered many barbarities in the lands of the Moors, returned to Spain in large numbers and accepted conversion to Christianity.

Thousands of exiles, including the renowned Don Isaac Abravanel and his family, settled in the Kingdom of Naples under the rulership of King Ferrante II. This southern kingdom was essentially the only European kingdom that freely allowed all Jews to enter permanently without restriction. Regrettably, the outbreak of a major pestilence, possibly cholera, among the Jewish immigrants spread throughout the city, causing much anti-Jewish feeling among its Christian inhabitants. The stay in Naples was to be short-lived because, in 1494, King Ferrante II died. This precipitated a successful invasion of Naples by the French king, Charles VIII. The Jews, including the Abravanels, were

forced to flee the city and the kingdom as the conquering French sacked the Jewish quarter. Abravanel, much of his library destroyed, followed the king's son, Alfonso, into exile in Corfu while the rest of his family was directed to safer areas. The Pope and a few local rulers, such as the Duke of Ferrara, allowed small numbers of wealthy or highly skilled Jews to enter their respective domains.

Two thousand Jews fled to the tiny nearby kingdom of Navarre. Their respite was to be brief. In 1498, unable to further resist pressure from Ferdinand and Isabella, the Navarrese monarchs ordered the expulsion of the Jews of the kingdom. However, Navarre was encircled by land where it was prohibited for any Jew to trespass upon. Thus the Jews of Navarre had no choice but to convert.

THE OTTOMAN TURKISH WELCOME

The majority of the Spanish Jews were to end up ultimately in the Ottoman Turkish Empire. The Sultan Bayezid II, eager to attract the technical skills and mercantile talents of Jewish artisans and merchants, issued a royal decree ordering that Jews be allowed to settle wherever they so pleased within the Ottoman Turkish Empire. A massive relief effort was conducted by the native Byzantine Jews to resettle the tens of thousands of exiles pouring into the Ottoman kingdom. This relief campaign was headed by Rabbi Moses Capsali, the chief rabbi in the land and brother to the chronicler Elijah Capsali (see pp. 23-24)

The newly arrived refugees joined existing communities in Istanbul, Edirne, Izmir, and in the Macedonian city of Salonica, and established new communities throughout the towns of the empire. Wishing to associate with those of similar background, they formed congregations based upon the regions in Spain from which they had originated: Castile, Lisbon, Provenzal, Catalonia, Aragon. The massive influx of renowned scholars from Spain and Portugal made the Ottoman Turkish Empire a thriving center for Torah study. When the Ottoman Turks defeated the Egyptian Mamelukes in the year 1516, the cities of the Holy Land were made open to Jewish settlement. Jews later migrated to the holy cities of Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberias, and Safad, the latter becoming famous as a center for Jewish mysticism.

Since the majority of the exiles came from the more populous kingdom of Castile, it was the Castilian dialect that ultimately prevailed as the *lingua franca* of the Turkish Sephardim. With additions of Hebrew and Turkish words, it would evolve into a distinctive Judeo-Spanish

written with Hebrew characters, often called Ladino, in which thousands of books would ultimately be written.

THE LITERATURE OF THE EXILES

The disastrous expulsion stimulated the search among the exiles for an underlying explication, usually of a religious nature. Many Hebrew chroniclers viewed the events as a national chastisement for the sins of the Spanish Jews, in particular, for their departure from the ways of the Torah while living in Spain. The witnessed calamities were thus interpreted as being somehow part of God's mysterious plan for the Jewish people. A few bemoaned their fate in lyrical prose, wondering why God had chosen to abandon his flock (Anonymous I). Others regarded these sufferings as divine measures intended to prepare them for the imminent coming of the Messiah (Capsali). Indeed, the illustrious Don Isaac Abravanel composed three works in order to bolster the despirited Jews with the words of his pen, going so far as to specify the year in which the foreordained Messiah would appear. Others, such as Solomon Ibn Verga, attributed the expulsion to natural causes as well. These exiles, and those who interacted with them, have left us these chronicles not as merely as historiographical testimonies to the events themselves, but as a fascinating account of their attempts to fathom and interpret the cataclysmic tragedy of their day.

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I. THE MINOR ORDER OF ELIJAH
(SEDER ELIYAHU ZUTA)
Elijah Capsali (c. 1483-1555)

Elijah Capsali came from a prominent Jewish family in the island of Crete. The entire Capsali family was involved in the massive community relief effort to resettle the thousands of Spanish Jews pouring into the Ottoman Turkish Empire. Prominent in these relief activities were Elijah's father, Elkanah Capsali, the civil head of Cretan Jewry, and his brother, Moses Capsali, who was appointed the chief rabbi in the Ottoman Empire by Mehmet II ('The Conqueror' of Constantinople in 1453).

Beginning in 1508, Elijah moved to Padua where he studied Talmud for seven years in a yeshiva. Upon his return to Crete, he served as the rabbi of Candia from 1518 onwards. Well connected with Turkish and Jewish authorities, he was able to reconstruct the history of the Ottoman Empire, as well as that of Spanish and Portuguese Jewry through the period of the expulsion. The chronicle of Elijah Capsali is the most complete, and perhaps the most fascinating, of all the medieval accounts relating to the expulsion. He writes in a masterful Hebrew style rich in Biblical quotes and Talmudic sayings, and is attentive to the memoirs of the Spanish exiles which he integrates into the narrative with insightful comments of his own.

Chapter 55

[...] At that time [in 1391], he that helped fell down, and he that was helped fell down (see Isa. 31:3), and the king decided in his anger not only to revenge himself of Don Samuel [Halevi], and he was so angry that none could tell him what to do and what not to do. He thereupon decreed that all the Jews in his kingdom were to be converted, and if they refused, they were to be killed. Indeed, countless of them were killed for the sanctification of the name of our God. Many others were converted against their will, while others fled, for at that time Spain was not under a single king, and whoever was able to escape was fortunate. As a result of that decree, there was a tremendous increase in the number of Marranos in Spain, because many were forcibly converted, seeing the sword at their necks. These converted and became Christian families. Since that time, most of the Torah scholars of Spain died and the yeshivot closed down, so that the Torah was almost entirely forgotten. Furthermore, the Jews became involved in Greek [i.e., secular] philosophy, and became concerned with being accepted among the non-Jews. Their children spoke half Greek [presumably Spanish] and half Hebrew, and left the Torah abandoned in a desolate corner. There might be one in a city or two in a family who studied the Torah, but the rest of the people went to glean in alien [non-Jewish] fields.

God then raised up the great Oak, the mighty tower, the great Torah scholar R' Isaac Campanton, who brought the people back to their previous roles, raising up many students and strengthening the Torah. Among the greatest of his students were four whose writings are enjoyed throughout the world. The first was R' Isaac Aboab, who was blind in one eye, and was unique in his generation. The second was R' Isaac de Leon, and the third R' Joseph Hayyun, who was crippled in his legs. And the fourth was R' Simon Maimi.

Once these four were sitting at the threshold of the synagogue, and a wise man passed by and saw them. He said to them: "Upon a single stone are seven eyes," for these are the eyes of Israel and its light, its greatest men, and from them Torah spread throughout Spain, Portugal and the western lands. Wherever they went, blessing accompanied them, and had it not been for them, all would have been destroyed. These sages lived before the expulsion, and three died before the evil events took place; their righteousness went before them, and God gathered them in, so that they did not experience all the evil which took place under the sun. Indeed, the righteous are gathered in before evil

occurs. The only one who remained alive at the expulsion was R' Simon [Maimi], who died sanctifying God's name, as we will yet relate.

Chapter 56

In the days of King Don Juan [John II, 1406-1454), whose lineage was that of the ancient Spanish kings, the Jews dwelled in tranquility, each under his vine and his fig tree, and the Jews ruled over the non-Jews, and did as they wished, and flourished. Even the Marranos had great freedom, and served God in their homes and courtyards. They feared God and served Him, as did the non-Jews who converted them. They had synagogues underneath their homes, and it was there that they would worship God with all their hearts and souls. During Passover, they would bake *matzot*, and so too, during the other festivals, they would observe the commandments of the festival, keeping secretly the laws of Passover on Passover and those of Sukkot on Sukkot. All the people, including the king, were aware of this and said nothing, for the king could do nothing against them, with the majority of Spain, its wealthy people and its ministers, officers and wise men of their ranks, and who could touch them? Not only did they perform the commandments in secret, but even in public, in front of everyone, and they would close their stores and would not work on the Sabbaths and on the Jewish holidays. Nor did they observe Sunday, and they would desecrate it with impunity. They thus kept the Torah of Israel, as commanded by God.

King Don Juan died, and left two children, a son and a daughter. The son's name was Don Henry, and the daughter's Isabella, who deserved to be known as Jezebel because of the way she did evil in the eyes of God to enrage Him, as we will yet write.

After the death of King Don Juan, King Don Henry [1454-1474] ascended the throne. He was a simple and straightforward man, who loved tranquility, a modest man who sought but truth and peace his whole life, and there was none to put him to shame in any thing (see Judges 18:7). King Henry married a woman from Portugal, the sister of King Alfonso [Alfonso V], and made her his queen. The king, though, was barren, and had no children. When the queen saw this, she committed adultery with one of the ministers named Don Beltran [de la Cueva], and gave birth to a daughter who was named Juana.

When the daughter grew up, the king made a great feast to mark the occasion. He believed that she was his daughter, and loved her as such. Some of the ministers and officers of the court, though, knew the secret, and there were those who whispered it about. Now, when King

Henry was on his deathbed, he called together all his high officials and said to them: "I am about to die, and you have my one and only daughter with you. Marry her off as you feel proper, and do me this last favor."

It was then that tremendous hatred visited the land, because a controversy broke out between Isabella, King Don Juan's daughter, and his granddaughter, Juana, the daughter of King Henry. The latter said, "The throne must be mine, for I am the king's daughter," while the former said, "I must reign, because you are illegitimate." Each, of course, tried to enlist supporters, and all of Spain was split in two, for each woman had her own adherents. At length, Isabella emerged victorious, and the officials in Spain ruled that she was to rule, for she was of the royal lineage. Juana, for her part, fled and became a nun, and a church was built for her, where she remained until her death, as we will yet write.

Once it became known that Isabella had assumed the throne, all the kings sought to marry her, and all the princes desired her. All the Jews thought that Isabella was good to the Jews, including Don Abram Seneor, who was the advisor to royalty, and R' Meir Melamed, his [son]-in-law. The latter two chose Ferdinand of Aragon, and even though he was not worthy of the queen, and there were a number of kings who were greater and better than he who had asked for her hand, as the Ferdinand had come from Jewish stock and his [great]-grandmother had been Jewish, they chose him. They said to themselves: "He is our brother and our flesh, and we will take him for her because we feel he is an honest man. Maybe through him God will again take pity on us, and we will be able to flourish in the land."

And now we will write clearly the heritage of King Ferdinand of Aragon, and how he was of Jewish stock.

Chapter 57

During the reign of King (...) of Spain, there was a Jewish woman named Palomba, the name meaning a dove. This woman was extremely beautiful, and of aristocratic stock. Once, her father sent her to her mother's home, together with male and female servants and members of her household. As is the custom among women—for they wish to show off—she was dressed in gold, with a huge gem sparkling within the gold. Everyone who saw her was taken by her beauty, and all exclaimed: "Oh that I had wings like a dove! For then would I fly away, and be at rest" (see Ps. 55:7).

As she was about to enter the city, the Admiral of Castile saw her, and her beauty bewitched him. The Admiral was the highest official in the land, next to the king. He was a mighty warrior, and ruled a number of states and cities of the Alimelekh clan. The Admiral sought to find out who this woman was, and someone told him: "That is Palomba, the wife of so-and-so." The Admiral then sent emissaries who seized her and brought her to him. He thereupon forcibly seduced her. The woman became pregnant and returned to her home, where she told her husband everything that had happened to her, and how she had been defiled. Her husband was terribly taken aback and separated himself from her, having nothing more to do with her. The woman later bore a son, who grew up to be a most handsome boy, as handsome as a prince. When the boy was about six or seven, he went out to play with his friends, and all liked him greatly.

One day, the servants of the Admiral, who knew the secret, saw the boy and told their master about him, rebuking him with the words: "Why do you delay in taking the boy to you, for 'this will serve as a vindication for you before all who are with you, and you will be cleared by everyone'" (Genesis 20:16). The Admiral listened to their advice, and told his guards: "Go and bring him to me." The guards hastened to do their master's bidding, and came to the woman's home. There they told her: "Give us your son, because that is what the king has ordered." She, however, hid him for three days, and even though they searched her house thoroughly, they did not find the child. The Admiral thereupon sent other guards, and this time they searched extremely thoroughly, so that she was no longer able to hide him (see Exodus 2:2-3). She therefore took the child and sent him back with the Admiral's guards, while she sat down and wept (see Genesis 21:16).

The Admiral now took the child and treated him as his own son—which he was—and loved him dearly. "He led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye" (Deuteronomy 32:10). The child grew up in the king's palace, and turned out to be a brilliant man, a counselor and an eloquent orator (Isaiah 3:3). Whenever the king needed advice, he found that he was tenfold better than any of his peers. The Admiral then granted him a large inheritance, while he was still alive, deeding to him much of his wealth and most of his cities. And as a wife, he took for him one of the most aristocratic women in Spain. Then, when the Admiral died, his son took over his position and all his wealth, and became the [new] Admiral of Castile.

This man, the Admiral, namely the son of Palomba, had four daughters, three of whom he married off to kings and other nobles. One he married off in Portugal and two in Spain, and by this he gained the favor of his sons-in-law, for his daughters were remarkable women. The Admiral was then left with a single daughter for whom he had not found a groom, and she lived with her father.

At the time, the king of Aragon [Juan II] lost his wife, Fierenza [Blanca, queen of Navarra], she having been a woman of outstanding lineage. She left a single son whom she had borne to his father, and his name was Carlos. When it became known that the king had become a widower, the Admiral, the son of Palomba, sent messengers to the king to give him his daughter, Juana, in marriage. The king consented, and took her as a wife, where she succeeded his wife as queen. She had a son by him, who was named Ferdinand. May the day that he was born and the night that he was conceived perish. Cursed be the man that told his father "you have a son," because this Ferdinand would rule all of Spain, and would destroy all the Jews, and banish them from Spain, as we will write later.

Now, from the day that the queen bore the above-named Ferdinand, she began to hate Carlos, the king's son, whom the French Fierenza had borne, because she knew that he was the firstborn, and thus eligible for the throne. She therefore said to herself: "Would that Carlos should die, and then my son will inherit the throne." Then one day, when the queen was playing chess with her husband's son, Carlos, the youth burst out laughing. The queen thereupon became enraged and said: "Chess is the disgrace of the twelve French knights." This anger also included the mother of Carlos, for she too was from France, as we have noted. Carlos realized that she was insulting his mother, who was of the twelve knights of France, and he whispered to himself: "Until the time comes." Meanwhile, he answered her, saying: "Chess is the disgrace of the twelve tribes of Israel." In this he hinted at her lineage, for her father's mother was Palomba, as we have noted. The queen realized that he had planned to insult her, and from that day on she hated Carlos, and said to the king: "Banish this mother's son, because he will not inherit together with my son" (Gen. 21:10). The king answered her and said: "Do not say that, O queen, because he is my firstborn, and he will be king, and no one else will sit on my throne." From then on, the queen hated Carlos more and more, and sought a way to kill him, for he had insulted her unfairly. In addition, she wanted to give her son the kingdom.

At that time, [Prince] Carlos became very ill, so the queen called her physician and said: "This is a disease from which he is not to be healed." She thereupon commanded the physician to poison him. The day came when [Prince] Carlos summoned the physician and said: "I want you to cure me of this disease," and the physician answered him, "You can rely on me, my son. All will be well with you." The physician then brought a poisonous potion and gave it to him to drink, as the queen had told him to do. However, as soon as the prince drank it, he realized that they had poisoned him, and he cried out: "There is death in the pot" (see II Kings 2:4, 40-41); "Surely the bitterness has come" (I Sam. 15:32). Then with a loud cry he exclaimed, "Give me a burial place and I will be buried" (see Gen. 23:4). And almost immediately after he had drunk the potion, the prince died. He was mourned by all his friends, who cried copiously at his passing, and by all of Spain. The queen, though, was overjoyed, because now she believed her son would be the next king, and that was the day that she had longed for.

Afterwards, the king of Aragon died, and his Ferdinand sat on his throne, and rejoiced greatly, as he was crowned king. That was a day of wrath, a day of darkness and gloom.

Chapter 58

It was because of all of the above considerations that the Jews decided to bring Ferdinand of Aragon to the throne and to give him Queen Isabella as a wife, for, as they said, "He is of our flesh and blood. We will have him marry her, because we feel he is just." The day then came when all the greatest men of Castile assembled to advise the queen about who, among all the kings, Isabella should marry. One of those who had been summoned was Abram Seneor, a Jew who had been appointed by the king to be in charge of Jewish affairs. All the king's income passed through his hands, and he was very close to the king. Don Abram then gave his view and stated: "Let Ferdinand of Aragon marry Isabella, because he is a wise and mighty king of comely appearance," and so on and on, but unfortunately he was praising a false gift (see Prov. 25:14). His intention, though, was based on the fact that Ferdinand of Aragon was of Jewish stock. A certain elderly baron then remarked: "'Why did I not die from the womb?' (Job 3:11) 'or that my mother might have been my grave, and her womb to be always great with me. Why did I come forth out of the womb to see labor and sorrow' (Jer. 20:17-18). 'I therefore praised the dead who are already dead more than the living who are yet alive. Yea, better is he than both they,

who has not yet been, who has not seen the evil work that is done under the sun' (Jer. 4:2-3), for Ferdinand of Aragon to become king of Spain is a disgrace."

Then the [royal] councils became factionalized, some saying that Ferdinand of Aragon should marry her, while others said that a king greater than he should marry her, and that the king's daughter should not be given to a man who was unknown to them. Now the argument between them raged all that day and the following night, each side offering reasons for its choice. Don Abram Seneor and those who supported him then realized that the other side had the majority. They therefore planned to bring Ferdinand of Aragon into Spain secretly, without anyone knowing of it, and to crown him against the wishes of those who were opposed to him. And that was what they did. Don Abram Seneor and those in his camp then sent a message to Ferdinand, telling him: "Come immediately and in secret, and let no man know of this, lest you and those with you be killed."

As they planned, so they did, and the joy was great. Ferdinand then said: "Now I know that I will be successful in this course of action; this is the day for which I have longed." He then hastened and came to Castile secretly, and took with him only seven men. He disguised himself, wore shabby clothes, and shuffled slowly. He then arrived at the home of a certain Jew named R' Jacob, an extremely brilliant man, one of those who was expelled—I knew him personally. I heard this account directly from his own mouth. The king told him: "I want you to go to Castile, the capital, to the following place, where you will find Don Abram Seneor, and give him this letter. Afterwards, raise up your hand and touch him and his flesh with your finger near his heart if he does not bless you to your face, to let his face shine on you and grant you peace."

Jacob left his home and came to Castile, the capital, and he met Don Abram Seneor riding on a donkey, with a gold necklace around his neck and dressed as one of the nobles, and with him were all the great men of the kingdom riding horses. When Jacob saw this, he exclaimed: "He must be the king here, and I did not know it. Whoever tries to harm this man will be punished." Jacob then returned to his home and told King Ferdinand everything he had seen. Now, the king became very upset at this, and begged him: "Gird your sword on your waist, O mighty man, gird your loins and go. If you meet any person, do not greet him, and if anyone greets you, do not answer him, for you are to move as speedily as possible. Now run and give the enclosed letter to Don Abram, and

after you give him the letter, touch your finger close to his heart. Don Abram will greatly esteem you and thank you, and will say he will be with you. And here is the proof that I sent you: that when you give him this letter, he will rejoice greatly, as if he had just found a treasure, and he will esteem and thank you."

Chapter 59

Jacob thereupon departed. As he felt that he had nothing to fear, he traveled swiftly. He arrived in the city and came to the home of Don Abram Seneor, and bowed down to the ground. He then said: "I have something private to discuss with you, my lord." Don Abram Seneor then brought him into his room where he gave him the letter. Afterwards, he raised his hand and touched his heart with his finger, and said: "I hope you are not angry, my lord, but this is what I was commanded to do." Don Abram then opened the letter and saw the writing, and once he had read two or three paragraphs he became very happy. Abram then hurried off—but to troubles which he could not anticipate. He then wrote a reply and sealed it with his seal, and stated: "Go immediately without delay, and bring this letter to the one who sent this letter to me." Jacob replied: "I will do as you tell me, my lord the king," and he bowed down to the ground." Jacob then came back safely to the city where Ferdinand was waiting, and gave the king the letter. In this letter, Don Abram Seneor had advised Ferdinand what to do and how to act.

Twenty days later, the king came to the capital, arriving stealthily like a thief, according to the advice given him by Don Abram. He arrived in the city in the middle of the night, when it was pitch-black, and asked the local people: "Where is the home of Don Abram Seneor? He was shown the house and arrived there, without seeing anything or being any the wiser. He then called out: "Have every person leave the area," at which time he revealed himself to Don Abram. Abram then bowed down to the king and said: "Come, and on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on you, and on all your father's house?" (I Sam. 9:20) It was because of his great handsomeness that the wicked Isabella wanted him, and she desired him more than all the kings that had asked for her hand. This Ferdinand heard and was pleased.

In the middle of the night, Don Abram brought the king to the queen, and they led him to a fortress where Isabella was staying. He then said to him, "Here is your wife. Take her and go." He took the queen and she became his wife. As the dawn broke, the news swept the city, and all in it divided into factions. Some said, "Will Palombino rule over us?"

(they had nicknamed the king Palombino, as he was a descendant of the Jewish Palomba, and this was a term of contempt). The others said: "Will Beltraneja rule over us?" (they referred to Juana, the daughter of Henry, by this disparaging name, indicating that she was not Henry's daughter but that of Don Beltran, as we have written). In any event, the battle lasted for many days, as each camp fought with the other.

At that time, King Alfonso of Portugal heard that Isabella ruled and that Juana, known as Beltraneja, had been expelled, and he became very upset, because Beltraneja was his niece, as we have noted. The king therefore decided to go to war against Spain. Alfonso thereupon massed a mighty army and attacked King Ferdinand, so as to seize the monarchy from Isabella and to restore it to Beltraneja, his niece. The nobles of Spain also helped him greatly. The Portuguese army entered Spain, and much blood was spilled, with the war lasting a considerable time. In the end, though, the King of Portugal was defeated by Ferdinand, and he fled from him in humiliation into France, not even returning to Portugal.

From that time on, those who supported Beltraneja dwindled steadily in number, whereas the supporters of Isabella increased. As far as the first group was concerned, King Ferdinand killed many of them, with the result that the rest accepted Ferdinand of Aragon as their king, voluntarily or against their will, and the people became united. Meanwhile, Beltraneja fled to Portugal, where she built herself a large home and became a nun, for her soul was embittered over the way she had been humiliated and had not been given the monarchy. And there she remained until her death.

Now the king of Aragon ruled all of Spain, that being the first time ever that a single king ruled the country, for prior thereto there had been many kings in the land—in fact more than seven: of Castile, of Aragon, of Catalonia, of Guipuzcoa, of Navarra, of Granada, and many others. But now one king ruled over all, that being the king of Aragon. He also ruled over his wife's kingdom, namely Castile and all the other territories linked to it, and there was no area in Spain that was not under his reign except Granada. That too he conquered, and God gave him all the land, for the Jews had been too long in the land, and God wanted a general expulsion throughout the land so that no Jew should remain there. That was why God gave him all the land, as we will yet write, God willing.

And in every province and city, word that the king of Aragon was now also the king of Castile was greeted with joy and exhilaration by

the Jews, because they said to one another: "He is our brother and flesh, with Jewish blood in him. You have blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land'" (Job 1:10). Thus Ferdinand ruled over all of Spain in peace and tranquility, and there was none to threaten his reign. And as the monarchy was not his by inheritance from his fathers, whenever a proclamation was issued, it was issued in the name of both the king and queen. So too did the coins which were minted carry portraits of both the king and the queen, with hers higher than his, to show that she was superior to her husband. Thus the king was always subject to the queen, and whatever she decreed was done, whereas if the king had wished to do against the wishes of the queen, such an action would have been annulled, because she was the real ruler.

Chapter 60

The king of Aragon, whose name was Ferdinand, became ruler over Castile in the year 5236 (1476), where formerly he had ruled only over Aragon, a small and young country, an insignificant and minor one. Queen Isabella was thus clearly superior to him, and whatever she wished was done. Isabella was extremely devout and strong in her faith. Once, by chance, she saw that the Jews throughout her kingdom, except in Toledo, paid a fee of thirty *shuldin* each [probably *sueldos*, a type of coin] regardless of whether they were wealthy or poor. When she asked her ministers and officials why there was this tax, she was told that this fine was imposed on the Jews because they had sold Jesus for thirty *shuldin*. As the Jews of Toledo, though, had been there from before the destruction of the Temple, they had not been present in Eretz Israel at the time of Jesus. That was why they were exempt from this tax. The queen did not agree to this tax, because she felt that this was humiliating. She therefore issued a decree abolishing it. From that time on, the tax was abolished in Spain.

In the seventh year of the reign of the king of Aragon, he appointed officials throughout his realm to check scrupulously all the Marranos that kept the Torah, as we mentioned earlier. Rather than the Marranos having the upper hand, as had been the case for many years, and especially at the time of Don Juan, and doing whatever they wished without anyone objecting, there now came a great wind from the north which rocked their homes so that they collapsed and the people died. In an instant, their homes, which had been seats of tranquility, were transformed, because the queen hated them. At her advice, the king did

whatever she wished, even though it was against his wishes. The king thus appointed priests and investigators to investigate the land throughout all the districts in Castile, so as to know who of the Marranos, old or young, was still observing Jewish ritual, and whoever was found to be doing so was sentenced to death at the stake. When the Marranos heard of this, they went into deep mourning, for they knew that the queen was out to harm them and that they had fallen into a trap.

The priests then came and shaved the Hebrew with a hired razor (see Isa. 7:20), namely the fearful and trembling Marranos, and killed many of them, with their earthly possessions forfeit to the king. And "they touched them with iron and the staff of a spear; and they were utterly burned with fire in the same place" (see II Sam. 23:7). Thus their joy ceased and their woe increased, because the priests, in their zealousness and treacherous plotting, had no mercy on them, and passed sentence after sentence, heaping trouble after trouble upon their shoulders as they afflicted them. At that time, the lamenting of the Jews was like that of "the mourning of Hadad Rimmon in the valley of Megiddo" (Zech. 12:11), for not only were the Marranos sentenced to the sword, death and destruction, but the hapless Jews as well. Thus, many of the Jews were taken sent to the prisons and told: "You were the ones who seduced the Marranos to violate their Christian religion, and you thereby killed them." The leaders of the Jews were thus beaten and tortured with all types of torments to force them to confess, "And that which should have been for their welfare, became a trap" (Ps. 69:22). Furthermore, proclamations were issued in all the synagogues that every man or woman who knew anything about the Marranos' conduct was required to inform on them, regardless of whether their offence had been a minor or major one.

At that time, the priests descended upon the shaven Marranos, from the youngest to the oldest, torturing them with lashes and other vile tortures, and they forced all of the Jews to come to testify against them. This, then, was "for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel" (Isa. 8:14). Many people died by God's decree, this terrible order being enforced month after month and year after year, so that "the house of Jacob was a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they kindled in them, and devoured them" (see Obad. 1:18). This terrible matter kept growing bigger and bigger, with "an unceasing fire burning on the altar" (see Lev. 6:6).

Chapter 67

After all of this [the conquest of Moorish Granada], God decided that the time had come for the Jews to leave Spain, and once such a decision was reached, nothing could prevent it, for all is written in the book: who is to go captive and who is to go hungry. Thus it came to pass at the time of King Ferdinand that a terrible blow was inflicted on the Jewish people, one of the sword and of killing and destruction, as we will yet describe below.

As we have mentioned, when Queen Isabella had seen how the city of Granada had refused to surrender, she had made a vow. Now that Granada had indeed fallen to Spain, she decided to keep that vow in full. Actually, Isabella had always hated the Jews, and had been involved in an ongoing argument with her husband, Ferdinand, for ever since her marriage she had been asking him to exile the Jews from Spain. In this, she was spurred on by the priests, who had persuaded her to hate the Jews passionately. When, however, she saw that the king was reluctant to take such a step, she told him: "You no doubt love the Jews, and the reason is that you are of their flesh and blood. In fact, the reason the Jews arranged for you to marry me is so that you would act as their protector." When the king heard this terrible thing, he took his shoe off and threw it at the queen, hitting her. She then fled from the room and the hatred between them continued for a long period of time.

Now, when the king went out to battle, he remembered what Isabella had said to him. He therefore said: "I do not want the queen to gloat that I am of Jewish descent. God will surely listen to me after I return to His fold a large number of people." Thus, both the king and the queen were against the Jews. The relationship between the two resembled that of two men with adjacent fields: one had a huge pile of dirt in his field, while the other had a massive pit in his field. The one with the pile said: "Would that I had a pit to get rid of my pile," while the one with the pit said, "Would that I had a pile of dirt to fill my pit." Eventually, their children married, and the owner of the pit said to the owner of the pile of dirt, "Please sell me your pile of dirt," whereupon the other responded: "You are welcome to have it for free." In this case, too, Ferdinand and Isabella both, for their own motives, opposed the Jews, and it was the fate of the poor Jews to be the scapegoats.

Chapter 68

In the year of 1492, in the Hebrew month of Adar, the golden age that had been Spain came to an end. The king announced that the Jews were

to be banished from his land, and had it not been for God's grace, all would have perished: men, women and children. It was in that month — the secular month of February — that the king sent out a proclamation to all the ministers, nobles and officials, that the Jews were to be banished from Spain, and that all had to leave the realm within three months from the 9th of Iyar, namely by no latter than the 9th of Av of that year.

And this was the text of the proclamation:

"We, who rule by God's grace, Ferdinand and Isabella, rulers of Castile and Aragon, rulers of Leon and Murcia, rulers of Majorca and Sardinia, rulers of Granada and Navarra, etc.: The cries of the Marranos have come up to us, upon some of whom we have decreed burning and upon others to be imprisoned forever, for they have been found wayward in our religion, while some of those who have remained free of these punishments, have done so because they have repented their ways completely. Yet the hands of the inquisitors are still stretched forth to investigate the evil of their deeds, and they cried out to us bitterly that it is the Jews who to this day have been the reason for their rebellion and their forsaking of the Christian religion, by teaching them their ways, their laws and their beliefs, as well as the laws of their feasts and festivals, and as long as Jews are to be found among them in Spain, it will be impossible for them to be complete and true Christians. We have therefore seen fit to totally banish the Jews from all places in our kingdom, even though they deserve a greater punishment than this for what they have done. However, we have had mercy on them, and we are content to limit ourselves to this punishment. We therefore decree and command that every male and female, young and old, who is a Jew and who lives in our kingdom is to be banished and is to leave all those places where they live and to go outside the provinces of our kingdom to another land within the coming three months, starting with 1 May and ending on the last day of July. And whoever disobeys us and does not leave within this time and is to be found in any place in our kingdom will be sentenced to death by hanging or to convert to Christianity. Whoever wishes to convert and become a Christian from this day on for the coming three months may remain in his home with all his possessions, his land and his movables, as before, and in addition will be exempt from any tax or servitude.

So, too, will he be exempt from investigation by the inquisition for a period of ten years.

We also decree that all judges, officers, advisors and leaders of the country or any official of any kind in every province and city is to look after the Jews, and any person of any rank who harms any Jew, either bodily or in his possessions through theft or robbery, whether within the city or outside it, is to be hanged immediately on a tree by the official or judge or leader of the city. In order to ensure this, we hereby decree that every official or judge in each province and each city is to place the royal seal, on the home of each Jew, wherever he lives.

And we decree and order every official and judge in every province and each city to send a crier in the markets and streets to announce this decree of ours, as well as in every Jewish community in every province and each city on the coming first day of May. And every official or judge or any other government employee who disobeys this order will be rebuked and punished as is seen fit."

Chapter 69

The messengers went forth carrying the instructions throughout Spain, telling the Jews that if they converted to the cross, they would eat of the fat of the land, each under his vine and his fig tree, while those who would not convert would be forced to leave the country within three months.

When the Jews heard this, a great and anguished cry arose among them. And wherever the king's pronouncement was heard, the Jews went into mourning. For many Jews, this pronouncement arrived just before the festival of Passover, and they spent the first day of the festival dressed in sackcloth and ashes, and ate and drank nothing the entire day. Even those who did eat, did so with the bitterness of the bitter herbs in their mouths, for God had sent forth His angels against all the houses of Israel. Then the Jews went to the king's palace to cry for deliverance, but there was none to hear their plea.

It was during that time that Don Isaac Abravanel, Don Abram Seneor and the other elders of Israel came to plead to the king and queen to have the decree annulled, but they were ignored. On that day, Don Isaac Abravanel was given permission to speak and to defend his people. There he stood, like a lion in wisdom and strength, and in the most eloquent language he addressed the king and queen. Don Abram Seneor, too, addressed the monarchs, but eventually all agreed not to pursue the matter any more.

Now that they saw that the decree was to be enforced, they all said to one another: "What will we gain by speaking, because the king is not listening? Happy is he who speaks to an ear that listens. Let us at least receive an extension of time, so as to make matters a little easier for us." But even on this the king refused to listen to them. He had evidently decided to destroy all the Jews, and hoped that by giving them so short a time they would not be able to leave the country.

It was then that the two sages whom we have mentioned decided to write their words down and to send them to Queen Isabella, for they thought that maybe by this means the queen might consent to their plea, so that they would live and not die. Thus Don Isaac Abravanel sent a letter to Queen Isabella, in which he chastised her mercilessly and showed no respect for her rank, "because he had poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors" (Isa. 53:12). He then arranged to have the letter delivered to the queen while he fled for his life, knowing that he had incurred the death penalty for his action, for he had written that God would avenge the Jews from her and her household, and so on. He also reminded her that all those who had been bad to the Jews had ultimately perished. Don Abram Seneor also wrote her a marvelous letter, in which he rebuked her for being ungrateful for everything he had done for her and had now banished him and his people from the country. These letters were given to the queen, and when she opened and read them, she became terrified because of what Don Isaac Abravanel had written, and sought to have him captured, but he had managed to flee and escape. All who read these letters agreed that they were masterpieces, and it is said that from the time that the monarchy had been instituted in Castile there had never been letters such as these. Yet these were of no avail, because the king's decree could not be annulled.

But there was worse to come. The enemies of the Jews approached the king and said to him: "Your majesty! How can you permit the Jews to leave the country with all their money and possessions? Your fathers amassed fortunes, and you are squandering them. You must do something about this." The king therefore told his officials, "Let us find a way to foil these people." Then a decree went forth from the king that every Jew who left the country had to leave some of his property to the crown in payment of any taxes that might be owed. Furthermore, the decree stated that the Jews had to leave their best land for just this purpose.

In those terrible days, if a Jew owed a non-Jew money, he would be beaten mercilessly until he paid, while if a non-Jew owed a Jew money and the Jew went to court to collect it, the judge would ignore the case — and even if there was a signed promissory note backing the Jew's claim. Then, once the Jew left the country, the note automatically became worthless.

In those awful days, thousands and even tens of thousands of Jews converted, and this even included some who were leaving or who had left the country, as they saw what a terrible fate awaited them in their travels. Even Don Abram Seneor and his [son]-in-law, Meir Melamed, among the greatest Jews in Spain, were also baptized, willingly or unwillingly, for I have heard it rumored that Queen Isabella had sworn that if Don Abram Seneor did not convert, she would wipe out all the communities, and that Don Abram did what he did in order to save the Jews, but not from his own heart. His [son]-in-law also followed him, because it was important for the queen to have the two convert, by whatever means necessary and that they continue to serve her until the day of her death. And on the day that these two were converted, their children and families followed suit, and they worshipped other gods.

Then King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella appointed the sons of Don Abram Seneor as judges and military officers, and they became prominent throughout Spain, being given lands over which they ruled, and all this for changing their religion.

Chapter 70

Now, the banishing of the Jews from Spain was opposed by many of the high officials in the land, because they loved the Jews, and they too begged the king to reconsider. The king, though, with the evil Isabella at his side, refused to do so.

When the Jewish communities saw that the king refused to listen to anyone, they decided to do everything possible to strengthen their own faith, so that whether they were permitted to live or were forced to die, they would not violate their religion and would remain loyal to it.

They then packed up whatever belongings they were able to, and hurried to leave the country as soon as they could. A mighty torrent of people left: the old and the young, men and women, and all were led by their King, God. Thus they sanctified His name, offering up themselves, their children and all their possessions. They then traveled in search of a safe haven. And these were their destinations:

Those communities that lived near the sea boarded boats from Biscay, Catalonia and Castile, some large and some small, for when news of the decree was announced, these boats came from throughout the country to transport the Jews. In fact, some came from as far away as Genoa and Venice. Some set sail for the Muslim lands, such as Oran, Alcasar and Bougie, which are far from the coast of Cartagena. To the Oran coast came ships carrying tens of thousands of people. When the local inhabitants saw these great numbers of people, they feared greatly, for they were afraid that the Jews would conquer the country and enslave them. They therefore did everything possible to prevent the ships from landing by firing at them. Thus a number of ships were sunk and the Jews in them lost their lives. Finally, when the people of Oran found out about the Spanish decree, their king welcomed the fleeing Jews. This was due to the intercession of a Jew who was highly positioned in the country, whose name was David Yaham. Once the Jews finally landed on dry land, they sought for themselves places to settle, but the city was to small to absorb all of them. The king then built them wooden housing outside the city walls, and they constructed barns for their cattle. Thus they were saved.

Now, one Friday, one of the bakers rose to bake bread, and when he lit the oven the fire went out of control, and it soon spread, whipped along by a strong wind, to the Jewish housing. In that great conflagration, the Jews lost the few possessions that they had managed to bring with them, and their cries went up to God.

As to the Jews who had lived in Aragon, Catalonia, Castile and Valencia, they too took up their wandering staffs and on the first day of the month of Elul arrived in Naples, a large city. But before their ships arrived in port, the Jews sent along a messenger to the king, to ask him to accept them. At the time, the king of Naples was a wise and mighty man, whose name was Ferdinand [King Ferrante II, 1458-1494], a truly saintly man, who was honest and feared God, and even though his name was the same as that of the king of Spain, he was the exact opposite of that wicked king. When the king heard that the Jews had come to settle in his land, he was overjoyed and exclaimed: "Come, O blessed ones of God." The Jews thus came to Naples and settled there, and became a large community.

Many of those who came did not have the money needed to pay for their passage, and the Naples community redeemed them from the ships' captains. However, the community did not have enough money to ransom the great number of people who came, and as a result some of

the captains, after having waited for days without being paid, sailed away with the unransomed Jews and sold them as slaves to non-Jews.

Chapter 71

Now, when these Jews arrived in Naples, hungry and thirsty, most of them sick and weak, they used their valuables to buy food. Yet before they even had time to digest their food, an epidemic swept through their midst, and many of them died. When the righteous king saw what had befallen them, he was very distressed, and commanded the Jews to bury their dead in the darkest night, lest the non-Jews say: "These weak, sick Jews are infected, and will infect us as well, until we all die." The king thus commanded that the burials be carried out secretly, and all those who had died were buried unceremoniously, regardless of who they were. The Jews now began moving about in the city in groups. They were dressed in tatters, and wherever they came they were taunted and even beaten. Meanwhile, they were still starving, and had no money to buy food. As a result, some died of starvation.

Six months after the Jews had arrived in Naples, cholera swept their midst, and many more were killed by this new epidemic. This epidemic alone killed more than 50,000 people. This was in addition to those who had died on the sea voyage or had been killed by others. Then, when the king heard of this, he sought to find a way to cure the disease.

On that day, all the officials and the people came to the king and cried out bitterly: "What have you done to us by taking in these people, who have infected us with disease, and now we too will die because of them." The king became very angry at their words, and took his crown off his head and said: "If you eject the Jews, you may take the crown, and you can be the kings, while I will serve you, for monarchy becomes you." The people then bowed down and said: "Do as you see fit. We are your servants, and we owe everything to you." The king then commanded that a large infirmary be set up outside the city for those who were suffering from disease, and there provisions were made for these unfortunates, including beds, tables and lamps. The king also sent medicines and ordered his doctors to heal these poor souls.

But even with this, God's anger against them had not run its course, and the epidemic raged on. The king then commanded that all the roads to the city be barred, so that no one could enter or leave it, and he placed guards all around the city. The non-Jews, however, hated the Jews, for

they claimed that the Jews had brought the disease which would kill them and their children.

Thus, wherever the Jews fled, the local inhabitants saw that they were carrying the plague, and said: "The Jewish people will not live with us, because their presence will harm our sons, our wives, our infants and our daughters." And the non-Jews cried out: "The Jews have been brought here to kill us and our nation."

(At that time, many of the Jews fled to Turkey, where they were received most cordially, for the king had commanded them as follows: "You are not to harass them or to assign any despicable work to them," as we will yet write.)

The plague also spread to the ships and their crews, and many of them died. Others were drowned or burned to death, and God showed all His terrible decrees from the heavens.

Now, after the plague subsided, famine increased in Naples, and the people cried out in their hunger: "Bread, bread, bread!" Matters got so bad that the people were faced with imminent death. The community in Naples was exceedingly generous, and supplied food to the hungry and the thirsty, but even this was simply not enough to meet the needs. Now, when the king heard of this, he took pity on the people and arranged to feed them at his own expense. May God's grace be with him, because he took pity on the poor and fed them.

Chapter 72

In the year of 1494, in the Hebrew month of Shevat, a terrible evil befell the Jewish people, for King Ferrante of Naples, who had done so much for them, died. He was mourned by the officials separately, by the Jews separately, and by the other folk separately: "Lost is the master and his majesty." The Jews lamented him, for they knew that he was matchless; thus they cried bitterly at his passing.

The doctors embalmed the king's body and left it lying in state in the king's palace for eight days. Meanwhile all the government officials gathered together to mourn the king for seven days. Afterwards, the body was taken and buried with great honor. And the accounts of all the king's deeds are to be found inscribed in the annals of the kings of Naples. King Ferrante was succeeded by his son, Alfonso, a mighty warrior, who was also a God-fearing man, but not like his father, and in his days the kingdom was split asunder, and the king was unable to prevent this.

In that year, 1494, in the month of May, when Charles [VIII] of France heard that King Ferrante, who had been feared by all and sundry, had died, he determined to seize the throne. He therefore raised up an army, so as to invade the country. A messenger came to King Alfonso and told him what was happening. He became terrified, for he saw that evil had befallen him, and that his government officials were all backing King Charles. The reason for this was because he had left this person alive and had not killed him. That, indeed, was why the King of France was now attacking.

Now we will write the lineage of King Ferrante, and why King Charles had decided to declare war, for King Alfonso had not listened to his teachers and instructors. It came to pass that the king of Aragon bore the above-mentioned King Ferrante, and he was mighty and wise and very beloved by his father. Although he had an older brother, who was the heir to the throne of Aragon, the king wanted his younger son also to become a king. The king therefore ensured that his younger son was crowned king of Naples, and the son ruled his kingdom well and wisely.

Some time later, the king of Aragon died and was succeeded by his oldest son. The latter began harassing his brother Ferrante in order to take away his kingdom, which the brother Ferrante was holding illegally in his hands. After all, as the firstborn, he felt he was entitled to be king of Naples as well. During the king of Aragon's life, though, the father had never permitted the older brother to do anything against his brother. When Ferrante saw that his brother planned to attack him, he decided to kill those officials who he knew were not with him.

At the time, King Ferrante made a large banquet for all his officials, and announced: "This is a family feast. Come and dine with me." They all accepted eagerly, but did not know that this would cost them their lives. Then, when all were in his palace and had become drunk, he surrounded the palace with armed guards and gave the guards instructions to kill anyone trying to escape. When all had finished eating and drinking, the king ordered his own men to come in and kill everyone present. Now the king's son, Alfonso, knew of what was to take place, and that the feast was to turn into a bloodbath. It happened that Alfonso had a close friend who was among those dining at the feast, and in order to save his friend, he had motioned to him to hide at the beginning of the meal. Thus, when all sat down to eat, that particular man's seat remained open. The king then asked his son Alfonso: "Why didn't this particular man come to the feast?" Alfonso answered: "Because he was

summoned to a certain place, and was therefore unable to be present." Ferrante then realized that his son had arranged this deliberately, and he became incensed at him for having chosen this friend over his own father. "As long as that man lives," the king shouted, "your throne will never be safe. You have allowed an enemy to escape."

And that was indeed what happened later. It was that official who escaped, and who later threatened the reign of the monarchy in Naples. Meanwhile, the official fled to King Charles of France, and said to him: "Long live your majesty!" The king took him in and made him a military general, and he became very successful in this position.

Now, after the death of Ferrante, he was succeeded by his son Alfonso. All seemed peaceful and quiet in Naples, until this official who had escaped death at the hands of Ferrante, and who hated the royal house of Naples, repaid his savior, Alfonso, by inciting the king of France to go out to war against Naples, and he promised to do everything he could to bring the royal house down.

Chapter 73

The king of France accepted the advice of this official and mustered an army so as to go to war with King Alfonso. Alfonso, on his part, raised up an army as well, and sent it to the border of his realm to guard the country and to fight off any would-be invaders. As head of the force, he appointed Senior Virgilio as Grand Captain, a mighty soldier. He also sent his son, Ferdinand as an officer of the army, and supplied his troops with horses and other equipment—and thus they waited for about three months.

Now, as the king of France drew closer and King Alfonso heard about this, he realized that his officials had turned disloyal. Meanwhile, the official who had escaped from the feast at Alfonso's advice sent spies throughout the different cities, telling them: "When you hear the sounds of warfare, you may know that the mighty king of France has arrived." Then, when the king of France approached, everyone fled and Alfonso found himself deserted. He therefore said to himself: "If I remain in the city, the people of the city will take me captive in order to deliver me into the hands of the king of France. I will therefore flee while I can, and save my life." The king thereupon summoned his son, Ferdinand, and made him king of Naples, for he knew that the people wanted Ferdinand more than him, for he was beloved by all, resembling in this his grandfather, after whom he had been named.

Thus the young man became king during his father's lifetime, for, as his father put it, this way the people might be willing to fight against the French invader. All the officials and all the people rejoiced at this change and shouted: "Long live the king!" Meanwhile, Alfonso fled for his life, and to this day we do not know if he is still alive. All this happened because he refused to listen to his father's advice, as we wrote above. Now, whenever the king of France approached any city, it was immediately opened for him and all paid homage to him.

Finally, when the king was no further than 16 miles from Naples itself, the widow of the old king, Ferrante, wept for she saw that the French were going to conquer her kingdom. In order to flee them, she got dressed in peasant clothing. The Jews, too, feared what would be. The queen, on her part, gathered together whatever valuables she was able to find and sailed to Messina. King Ferdinand, too, fled there, running from his enemies. Thus Charles became the ruler of Naples.

Many of the Jews, too, fled and came to Messina, where they remained for two months. The number of those who ran away was so large that all the ships that sailed from Naples were packed with men, women and children. Many of them lost all of their possessions in their flight, and were faced with famine. The reason they all fled was their fear of the French, who, they were afraid, would kill them all.

Two months later, these ships with Jews on them were given permission to sail to whatever places they wished. Many then set sail for Avlona [in Albania] and from there to Turkey or Corfu, while many others, too many to count, arrived in Candia where many great mercies were done on their behalf. Thus, my father and teacher, R' Elkanah Capsali, collected 250 Venetian florins in a single day for those who had been exiled, and that was on the 9th of Av in the year 1493. When the conditions became absolutely impossible, they were even forced to sell some of the synagogue ornaments in order to ransom the different captives from those who held them, or from the seamen who had carried them, but even that was not enough to meet the need. It was then that Italy and all of the Levant became filled with these unfortunate Jews, some of them slaves and others captives who owed their seamen the cost of their transport. Indeed, whatever Italian city they came to, the Jews of the city did their utmost to ransom them, but this was still insufficient. Meanwhile, God arranged that in Corfu there be Persian merchants, who ransomed many people and brought them to Turkey. In other places, the ransoms demanded were exorbitant, and the Jews were

as sheep to the slaughter, with more dying than remaining alive, sometimes one from a city or two from a family.

Chapter 74

Now Sultan Bayezid [II] of Turkey heard about all the misery that the king of Spain had inflicted on the Jews, and that the Jews were seeking a refuge, and he took pity on them and sent messengers throughout his kingdom, as well as a proclamation in writing, forbidding the governors of his cities from driving out the Jews and requiring them instead to accept the Jews happily. Whoever contravened this regulation would be given the death penalty. He also sent this message to Chios. The people all were mortally afraid of the king, and they accepted the Jews happily, protecting them from any harm and not insulting them in any way. Thus tens of thousands of Jews who had been banished from Spain arrived in Turkey, so that the land was filled with them. At the time, the Jewish communities of Turkey were outstanding in their aid to their brethren, and paid whatever ransoms they could so as to free their brother Jews.

At the time, R' Moshe Capsali, may his memory be for a blessing, was extremely active in going from community to community, and he forced each person to give the amount that he could afford, so that he raised considerable amounts of money for this cause.

Now, the Jews who remained in Naples under the French were plundered, and some of them even converted during the war, but from then on they lived safely under the French, for the king of France sent out an order that whoever harmed Jews would be put to death. However, after four years and a few months of French rule over Naples, the people again decided they wanted their own king. They therefore sent for King Ferdinand and anointed him over them, while driving out the French from their cities. Then the Jews lived in peace as in the days of the king's grandfather, Ferdinand, for the grandson resembled his grandfather in every way. And the Jews live there today.

At the time, the Jews had entrusted their valuables to non-Jews, so that the French troops would not steal them, and when the Jews came back and asked for their valuables to be returned, the non-Jews denied their claims. One of the high officials had gold and silver articles entrusted to him by one of the Jews, as well as clothing, and when the Jew asked for their return the official denied ever having received such items. They then came before King Ferdinand, each giving his side of the story, but there was no proof available either way. The king, though,

realized that the Jew was telling the truth, and he told the official: "Take your ring off your hand." When the official took the ring off and gave it to the king, the king sent it along with a messenger to the official's wife to tell her to hand over to the messenger everything the Jew had entrusted to him. Should the woman not believe him, he was to show her her husband's ring as proof that the request had indeed come from the husband. The messenger ran to the official's home, and gave the wife the message the king had told him to relate. When the woman saw her husband's ring, she believed the messenger and took out all the Jew's possessions to the messenger, who then brought them to the king. When the official saw everything lying there, and realized how he had been disgraced, he hurried back home.

On that day, the king sent an order throughout his kingdom that if any Jew claimed that a non-Jew had been given valuables for safekeeping and the non-Jew denied it, the Jew's word would be believed under oath. This was of inestimable value to the Jews. Thus the Jews lived peacefully under King Ferdinand.

After this, the kings of France and Spain made a treaty and jointly attacked King Ferdinand and seized his realm. Ferdinand meanwhile fled to France, where he was treated with the utmost courtesy by the French king, and he remained in France until his dying day.

God now sent an evil spirit between the French and the Spanish, for each claimed possession of Naples, the French claiming they had by far the larger population and the Spanish claiming that numbers were irrelevant, and indeed Abraham, who was only one man, had nevertheless inherited the land (see Ezek. 33:24). At the time, the French were far more numerous than the Spanish, and the Spanish fled from before them, even though they were led by the Spanish Grand Captain, Gonzalo deCordoba, a valiant soldier of Jewish extraction. Thus, while the Spanish had come and surrounded the city, the French then came on the scene and surrounded the Spanish.

When the Grand Captain saw that the battle was evidently lost and that his enemies had gained the upper hand, he used guile by taking sheep, cattle, camels, donkeys and horses and tying them together, leading them out of the city at night. He then placed candles and torches on them and his troops began blowing bugles, so that the earth trembled. The French then woke up from their sleep and saw the lights in the distance. They said to themselves: "We see that our enemies are attacking us. No doubt the Spanish realized that we were asleep, and they have

come out to assault us. We have to take counter-measures." They therefore set up their batteries and fired at the animals, killing them, for they were convinced that there were soldiers riding the animals. Now, after they had shot all their artillery, the Spanish Grand Captain divided his troops into three sections, and he told them: "Go and hide from the French, and when I blow the bugle, you are to come out of hiding and to attack your enemies. Be brave and we will be successful." They thereupon did as he had said, and attacked the French from their hiding places, screaming, "Italy, Italy!" as they had been ordered to do by the Grand Captain. [The reason for this will be explained below.] He had even warned them that anyone shouting "Spain" would be killed. Thus, with guile they were able to conduct the battle.

Now, the French fell back in confusion before the Spanish, and each fled on his donkey. The common folk also helped them when they heard the cry, "Italy, Italy!" for they believed that these must be troops who were loyal to King Ferdinand. They therefore joined the Spaniards and wiped out the French soldiers, not even leaving a remnant. The Spanish then ruled the land and the local people loved the Grand Captain greatly, as he had saved them. He was very good to the Jews and was compassionate, and all the time he was there they had full freedom.

When the king of Spain saw that the Grand Captain had been there for a long time — more than ten years — and had not returned, the king said to himself: "Surely what he will want next is to be king." He therefore sent a man to the Grand Captain, but this man was like one who refuses to listen, and merely found one fault after another. The king then took along a force and came to Naples. When the Grand Captain saw that he had no alternative, he went to greet the king and told him: "I and all that I have are yours, and whatever you see is yours." The king then blessed him.

Then, in the year 1508, the king of Spain decided to rid all his provinces of Jews, and he therefore banished all the Jews from Naples, Calabria, Sicily, Messina, Apulia, and any other place where Jews had lived during the time of the righteous King Ferrante, both before and after the exile from Spain. The Jews then uprooted themselves again and came to Turkey with their children. There they found refuge for themselves.

These are the travels of the Jews, the congregations of Spain, who moved to Portugal on land. This was a shield of salvation for them (see Ps. 84:4).

Chapter 75

A large number of people set out for and reached Portugal. When Don Juan [João II], the king of Portugal, heard of the exile decreed by Ferdinand on the Jews, allowing them to leave the country with their possessions, he told his officials: "The king of Spain is a fool, and left the Jews with their religion and their possessions. I will convert them and will take all of their belongings." And that was precisely what he did, for he did evil in the eyes of God by forcing the Jews to convert against their wills, and by taking their children, their goods and whatever else they valued.

Before the Jews arrived in Portugal, King Don Juan sent messengers to strip them of their belongings. Thus, these messengers went through all of their goods and took everything of value. So too did the king appoint officials who were not to allow any person to enter the kingdom until a tax of a gold coin had been paid per head for the privilege. So too did he decree that any person who had clothes was to pay a tax on everything he brought in. Thus the Jews were forced to give the amounts specified. Many of the poor who could not afford the amount tried to steal across the border, but the king had special people to track them down. Nothing fazed the king. He thus took those people who were caught as slaves, and this included about 15,000 men and women. Of these, about 10,000 were ransomed by the Jews of Portugal.

Afterwards, the king ordered that 5,000 children from the ages of 10 to 15 be taken to a certain island [Sao Tomé] that his servants had found [off the coast of West Africa]. This island was particularly bad to one's health and dangerous, and was overrun with snakes, scorpions and crocodiles, and lacked adequate water. He therefore commanded that the children be taken there and raised in that inhospitable climate. When the people heard this terrible decree, they all mourned for their children, and many were converted in order to save their children, for they were unable to part from their beloved children. Those who did not convert, left their children and their flocks in distress, and their children were then carried away. Thus many of the children lost their Jewishness and many of them died because of this evil decree. The children who were brought there had to contend with the elements but managed to overcome them, for they had sent with them skilled workers who set fire to the forests against the crocodiles and who shot at them. The crocodiles, though, killed many of them, and they spent their days and nights in fear, so that their faces were always contorted in fear. And

not only were their faces contorted, but even all their hair, their eyebrows and their beards fell out because of the difficult conditions in the area. Thus, in the end those who saw them even wondered if they were even human.

The evil king also commanded that no person was to be allowed to take Jews away from the country on a ship, and that only the king's ships had the right to do so, so that the king and his people would make two florins on every single person. Many, indeed, left and arrived in Fez and in other cities of the Mahgreb, as we will yet write. The despicable king then ordered that within six months each person remaining had to pay a florin. Now there were many that wished to stay, and when the time came when the payment was due, they pleaded to the king to give then an extension of time. The king then ordered that a proclamation be issued as follows:

> "The men and women of those who were banished have come to live in the land of Don Juan, the king of Portugal, even though the king gave him the right to do so for only six months, and these six months have already elapsed. Now whoever wishes to remain may do so, but must pay eight florins per head, and can then live undisturbed. Whoever does not pay this amount will become a slave to the king forever."

Chapter 76

When the Jews heard the king's edict, the rich ones were overjoyed, while the poor ones greeted it with anguish and grief. The rich rejoiced and the poor cried; it was a time to rejoice and a time to cry. Thus all the rich ones paid the tax, whereas the poor bought passage to the Muslim lands. A total of 120 ships were chartered, which carried about 60,000 people.

These ships all departed Portugal in the month of Iyar, in the year 1493, and the ships traveled back and forth, from one place to the next, drifting around by order of the king so as to harass the people even more. In the process, the majority of them died of hunger and thirst. Finally, when three months had passed, the Jews cried out to the captains of these ships: "How long will you not have mercy on us? Take us to any Muslim country. Why should you prevent us from doing do?" They too acted with stealth, and took them to the coast of the sea of Arcila [in North Africa], which was under Portuguese rule, and the person in charge was the Count of Borba, and it was he who destroyed that holy community by forcing the majority to convert.

These ships, then, arrived in Arcila in the month of Av, and two or three Jews went ashore to ask permission to land. The governor, though, refused to permit them to do so, at the king's orders, and he said to them: "I am unable to take you in, for you will use up all my provisions. I am only willing to keep you here in the fields until you move to Fez, and that provided that you pay me three hundred florins each week." Given no alternative, they accepted this condition. They thereupon left the ships and camped in the valley. But indeed the land could not sustain them, and there was a severe famine in the land, until a loaf of bread weighing two *unkiyot* was sold for a marcello [a Venetian coin]. This, too, led to their destruction, and many of them died of starvation.

The Jews thereupon pleaded to the governor to send messengers to the king of Fez to ask him to send mules and camels that would lead them, together with a caravan of Muslims, to Fez. They then gave the governor gold and silver items, as well as expensive clothes, as security for the payment that the king of Fez would demand. The king of Fez then sent a thousand mules, upon which they loaded men, women and children, and the people then set off for Fez.

As they were on the road, a Muslim caravan came along, and it set upon the Jews and beat them, killing the young men with the sword. The Muslims then looted all of their possessions from morning to evening. They were left naked as the day they were born, and that was the way they had to sleep in the freezing weather of the night. Thus all were naked, both men and women, and they sewed together the pages of their holy books to cover their nakedness.

The Jews kept on moving, but as they went, various groups lay in ambush in the fields and on the roads, and attacked them to try to find any gold and silver which the Jews might have in their stomachs, for when the Jews had been attacked they had swallowed various rings and bracelets, so as to conceal them. Then, when the Jews would later excrete these precious items, they would be able to recover them. When the Arabs realized this, they began to search the Jews' bodies, trying to feel if anything was located in them. And where they found something, they would cut the person open to retrieve that object.

At the time, there was an old and holy woman, whose two daughters had been cut open before her eyes, as the Arabs had searched for precious stones, and both daughters had died as a result. The woman thus remained all alone. She chose death over life, and she took in her hands sewing instruments and used them to dig a grave, and there she lay, not

eating or drinking a thing, until she died of starvation. Better death by the sword than a death such as this.

And many were stories of this kind, but the one principle that is consistent is that all manner of terrible things befell the Jews who had been banished, whether by man or beast, until finally they arrived in Fez, with no hope and in severe distress.

Chapter 77

When the Jews finally reached Fez, they were on the brink of death from starvation, for there was no food in the country. After all they had experienced, they wandered into the homes of the Muslims, and even though Jews were not permitted to enter their mosques, because of their great number and their distress, they would sometimes enter the mosques against the law and would dirty them with their excrement. This incensed the Muslims greatly and they told the king of Fez: "We regret the Jews that have been here the whole time, and now you wish to add more of them? These people have profaned the religion of Mohammed by entering his houses and his walls and filthying them, for never has this been done before." The king then ordered that a proclamation go out from the king and his high officials that all the Jews who had just arrived had to leave within two days, and anyone who did not do so would be stabbed to death.

When the Jews heard this, they were terrified and said: "If we decide to stay in the city, it will be bad for us, and if we decide to leave the city, we will be the victims of brigands. What shall we do? This evil is worse than any other that has befallen us from the time we were exiled until now." The Jews then cried out to God. On that day, more than 2,000 Jews were converted between the morning to the evening, but the rest were unable to leave the city as the king had ordered them.

Toward nightfall, the king went to the palace, when he heard the cries of the Jews who were crying and mourning as they were leaving the city in order to fulfill the king's decree, and he asked: "What is this tumult all about?" He then took pity on them, because he saw a vast throng of people crying and walking far away into the distance. The king therefore decided to gather the Jews back to the city. Joy spread through the camp, "the sound of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous" (Ps. 118:15), and whoever of the banished ones was willing to settle in Fez was permitted to do so. The people then believed that God had taken pity on His people, and they bowed down in gratitude.

The king also aided the Jews greatly in many other ways, and each Friday he would give them a hundred florins to support the poor who would otherwise die of hunger in the markets and streets. And as the land could not support them all, he ordered his servants to cut down all the gardens and orchards within the city of Fez where the Jews were camped. Actually, the city of Fez has three cities, one within the other. In the first, non-Jews live, in the second, Jews, and in the third the king lives with his servants and other officials. And as the Jews in Fez had been few and the city was large, they had planted gardens and orchards with all types of fruit trees. Now that the king saw that there was not enough room, he ordered the Jews to cut down these trees, and so they did, and these were worth more than 30,000 florins. All of these were chopped down to make room. Afterwards, the king commanded that his servants take planks and boards, and they built little houses in the valley, where the Jews finally found sanctuary. That valley was referred to as "the Valley of Blessing," because there they blessed God. And the Jews remember the king favorably to this day.

Chapter 78

Now, when the Jews remaining in Arcila heard that their brothers who had come to Fez had found rest, they decided that they, too, would go there, for there was great famine in Arcila. Thus they had cried to the governor: "Give us bread, or we will die before your eyes." The governor had answered: "How am I to help? We simply do not have any stock of food." Thus they said to one another: "Let us go to Fez, because there is (*efes* in Hebrew) bread." Thus a very large number of them entered ships, in preparation for a journey that was to begin the third day thereafter. On that day, though, the evil king sent priests to persuade them to convert, but they ignored them. Afterwards, he decreed that they had to leave within no more than the following two days, and they kept to their plans.

When the king saw that the Jews had ignored him, and were intent on leaving and had remained strong in their faith and had not converted, he said: "Only if you do the following will you save your lives. You may go on your way, but your sons and daughters must remain behind, for 'these daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and these cattle are my cattle, and all that you see is mine' (Gen. 31:43). Now flee on your way, 'escape to the mountain, lest you be consumed' (Gen. 19:17)." "And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night" (Num. 14:1), on account of their

children whom their enemy held as hostages. It was then that many converted, because they were unable to accept this terrible decree, and they took pity on their children. Many of them, though, said: "'We love God with all our heart and all our soul and all our might' (see Deut. 6:5)." And further, they said: "What is there for us and our children? It is good to serve God, it is good for us to love our souls, 'all that a man has will he give for his life' (Job 2:4)."

Now, when Haman [i.e., the Count of Borba] saw that his idea had not worked, he became furious. He therefore commanded that all children under the age of 18 be taken from the Jews. But this was not enough for him, and he ordered that all of their wealth and possessions be taken as well. He then gave them ships to sail away, but he ordered the ships' captains secretly as follows: "Sail very slowly, and only bring them to shore after many days have passed." Furthermore, he told the captains not to take pity on anyone: on the old or the young. He also forced them to eat very sweet food, in order to cause them to have diarrhea, so that they would excrete any valuables that they had swallowed. Then these remarkable people in both quality and quantity embarked on the ships, for they had agreed to die a martyr's death and thereby to sanctify God's name. The ships meanwhile sailed back and forth, and those in the ships wept, many of them dying during the journey of starvation and disease.

Then the Jews begged the sailors to let them off wherever they wished, so that they could at least be buried on dry land rather than thrown into the sea as food for the fishes.

The captains of the ships, however, still sought to kill them, for that was what the king had ordered them to do. Finally, the Jews realized they were approaching dry land — but they had been returned to Arcila! They therefore began lamenting and weeping terribly. The evil king then ordered that they be baptized against their wills, and he killed many of those who refused to allow themselves to be baptized.

In that time, there was a great woman among the Jews, who had five children. Now that the woman saw how the accursed baptismal waters were drawing closer, she fortified herself to be cruel to her children, and prayed to God that she should not give them to another religion. Then, when the day arrived that someone came to take her children to be baptized, the woman barred the way to him. The man said to her: "The king has sent me to you to give him your children, so as to convert them, in accordance with his decree." This saintly woman then answered the king's servant: "Why must you concern yourself with

this? I myself will do what the king has decreed, because that is my wish, and that is only proper." She went on in a similar vein, and persuaded him of her sincerity. Then she said to the king's servant: "I have but one request that I pray you do not refuse me. Leave me alone at home for a few minutes, and I will lock the door because I have some valuables buried under the ground, and I want to take them with me when I go to the king. Therefore, allow me this small boon of leaving me alone so that I can take my gold and silver with me." The king's servant heard this and was overjoyed, and he answered her: "Blessed are you to God for having been so ready to accept the king's decree, and for bringing your children with you so readily." He, though, did not know that she had beguiled him, and she closed the door before him and locked it.

She lifted her eyes to the heavens and prayed silently to God. She then took her children and sat them down beside her, to her right and her left. Then after calming the children down with her words, she took a dagger and killed them all.

She then looked out of the window and called to the king's servant: "Why are you tarrying in taking my children? Why are you delaying in taking my daughters? Come, O bloody man and man of Belial (see II Sam. 16:7), and take whatever you wish." She then took a sword and fell on it, and her soul united with her God.

And many are the stories of this kind of how those who had been banished from Spain acted, as they sanctified God's name diligently, "His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth" (Ps. 25:13).

This is the end of the saga of the exiles from Spain.

Said the author: After I wrote of the terrible misfortunes and the troubles inflicted by the loathsome King Don Juan [João II] of Portugal on the poor Jews who had come to him seeking his protection, I said to myself that I must also relate joyful events, and I will mention a short story from which the reader will see that God, may He be exalted, abided His anger, but in the event wreaked vengeance on the king for all the wickedness that he had perpetrated upon God's people, the Jews.

Chapter 79

After Don Ferdinand became king of all of Castile, he had four daughters of his wicked wife Isabella, and one son. When the time came for his oldest daughter to marry, all the Christian kings sent messengers asking for her hand in marriage, because Ferdinand was a

mighty king. Furthermore, he had but one son, and all said: "If the son should die, Ferdinand's oldest daughter will inherit the throne." They therefore set their eyes on her, and sought her as a wife.

One day, then, the king summoned his daughter and said to her: "'Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline your ear' (Ps. 45:11). Know that all the different kings have sent emissaries asking for your hand in marriage. Now, my daughter, tell me how you feel. Do not conceal anything from me, and tell me who among all these kings you wish to marry, and I will do as you ask, without diverging right or left." The princess thereupon answered: "Father, give me three days' grace, and I will then tell you what I want." The king thereupon responded: "I will do as you have asked." The princess then sent to find out who among the different kings was the most handsome of all, and she was told: "There is none to compare in handsomeness to the son of the king of Portugal." They then sent along an engraving of the son, and the princess said: "I will take him, because that is pleasing to me."

The princess summoned one of the artists who wove cloth and said to him: "Make me a garment, and on the undergarment embroider the crest of the king of Portugal. No one is to know of this." The artisan did as commanded, and brought her the garment, but the princess remained silent. Then, on the third day, the princess wore this garment and came to the royal court, where all the emissaries of the different kings waited. When the king saw her, he called her to his side and said to her: "Tell me, my daughter, who of all of the kings do you wish to marry?" She answered him: "Father, raise up the hem of my dress and there you will see the crest of the man that I wish to marry." The king did as she said and raised the hem, and saw the crest of the king of Portugal embroidered on it. The king then became furious at her choice, because there were far greater and better kings who had asked for her hand, but he was unable to do anything about it, and he reluctantly gave his assent. The emissaries of the Portuguese king then let out a shout, and the entire city resounded to that shout. They then sang: "The queen has been given to us as an inheritance."

When the other emissaries of the various kings saw that the princess had chosen the king of Portugal, they withdrew in mortification. They then returned to their own kings and told them what had transpired. Then a messenger was sent to the king of Portugal post haste, to tell him that the Spanish princess had decided to marry his son. The message soon reached the king, for throughout Portugal, every thirty miles, servants of the king were posted on swift horses to relay information.

Thus, in less than two days, the news reached the king, and wherever word of the match arrived, there was rejoicing and the roasting of cattle and sheep.

Some time later, the king of Portugal sent many of his prominent officials to bring the princess back to Portugal for the wedding. When the princess set out on the trip, she brought with her a magnificent trousseau, eighty mules given to her by her father, and the finest products of Spain. Then, when she drew near to Lisbon, the capital—when she was about twelve miles [*milin*] away—they entered under a large canopy made of a London cloth which was worth two and a half florins a yard and which extended for the entire twelve miles to the city, which had been set up by her future father-in-law, the king of Portugal, and the entire country was lit up in her honor. Then all the highest court officials, men and women, came to greet her and bowed down to her. So too did the Jewish notables, three hundred in number, come to greet her, and they brought her all types of valuable jewelry. Her interest, though, in her husband was purely physical, as she had chosen him because of his handsomeness, and in this she followed her mother, Isabella, who had chosen Ferdinand for the same reason, as we noted above.

When the young woman arrived in the king's court, she was brought to her marriage ceremony there. Wherever the eye looked there was gold, even on the ground. The king distributed the gold as if it was but stones, for he was the richest of all the kings because of all of his ships that came laden with gold every three years from the land of the blacks. The king's son then approached the princess and they said to her: "This is your future husband, and he will be your master. Bow to him." When she saw him, she was overjoyed, because there was none to compare to him in handsomeness. At that time, there was rejoicing throughout Portugal, and people from the furthest parts of the country came to pay their respects to the bride and groom.

Six months later, when the king of Fez heard of the wedding arranged between the king of Portugal and the king of Spain, he was pleased to hear that there was peace between them. He then took six excellent horses and other precious items from Fez and sent these with his servants as a present to the king's son. The prince was indeed extremely happy at this gift, because there were no horses to match these in the entire country.

The time came, though, that the sins of the king of Portugal were so great that they tipped the scales. God then had the prince decide to go riding on one of these horses, and as he galloped at full speed, the horse

swished its tail about and the rider fell off the horse. And where he fell, he died. Thus the king's son died, and he was childless.

That was a time of great mourning throughout Portugal, and all the court and common folk cried out in anguish, for the prince had been the only son of the king. As a result of the mourning, people stopped working for more than a month. Meanwhile, the prince's body was embalmed, and people came from the length and breadth of Portugal to mourn and weep. Indeed, the entire court was dressed in black. The wicked Don Juan [João II], too, in his palace, sat and cried, and prayed for death. Meanwhile, the Spanish princess returned to her father's palace.

Chapter 80

Then, in the year 1497, God smote Don Juan of Portugal, and he died prematurely and in great agony, for his sins in harming the Jews. He died childless, and he was buried like a donkey rather than like a king, for he had died of a loathsome disease. Indeed, for a long time before his death he had suffered greatly, for his sins were great. How he died was as follows: One days his servants had said to him: "Your majesty, you will undoubtedly feel better if you leave the city and go out into the gardens of the country. There you will be able to walk about and feel better." Following their advice, he left the city, but God was angry that he had left it, and an angel of God barred the road to him. The road was dark and slippery, and the angel of God, his sword in his hand, chased and smote him, and he died. There, in the middle of the fields, he lay dead, until they brought horses and took his body, which they buried in one of the Portuguese towns. As they carried the body, though, different organs fell off, and each was buried where it fell, rather than his being buried among the Portuguese kings.

He was succeeded by another wicked man, the epitome of the lowly person who is suddenly thrust into the kingship and given unlimited power, and his successor's name was Don Emanuel. Even though his name means "God is with us," he was the exact opposite. In his days, God left His place, as it were, to make the Jews objects of scorn and a curse, and He gave them into the hands of their enemies, for their sins were too great and cried out to the heavens. And God said: "Because they have forsaken My Torah I will forsake them, and because they forgot My commandments I will forget them. I will stand above them and kill them."

This king decided to exile the Jews from his land, because he envied the king of Spain. He therefore said to himself: "Whatever the king of Spain did to the Jews, I will also do." Would that he had done what the king of Spain had done, but he was ten times worse, the former beginning the task and the latter concluding it, but being far more terrible. And, in fact, Don Juan's successor was the worst of the lot.

Thus, in the month of March the king proclaimed throughout his kingdom that all the Jews had to leave his country within three months, and any Jew who did not do so would be imprisoned in chains until his dying day. When the Jews heard this, they mourned and a wave of fear went through the Jewish community, and especially among the Jews who had already been driven from Spain, for they said: "We have fled the lion and been confronted with the bear" (see Amos 5:19). They then cried to God and dressed in sackcloth and ashes.

The king further commanded that no person had the right to rent space on a ship unless he had received permission from the king and been given the king's seal attesting to this. Thus the Jews were forced to pay fortunes in order to receive permission to leave the country. And after they had bought this permission, the king changed his mind and ordered that no one was permitted to take any Jews by ship unless he had permission to do so from a judge or government official, and whoever violated this law was to be hanged. Thus the Jews found themselves caught—they had to leave the country, but were unable to do so because they did not have permission to leave. They therefore raised up a great cry to heaven, for the decree that the king had issued kept being changed. And this went on time after time, with the king proclaiming a decree and then annulling it, only to make another decree and to change that as well.

Chapter 81

It was at the time that the king kept making and unmaking decrees that he ordered his people as follows: "Every Jewish youth between the ages of 15 and 18 [actually, only children up to the age of 14] is to be taken by his neighbors and to be converted." Thus the children who were meant to carry on the Jewish tradition were taken captive by the enemies of God, by order of King Emanuel. And that was what they did. Everywhere Jewish children were kidnapped and their parents left desolate.

Then, on the night of the 14th of the month of Nissan the Jews searched for leaven, as is customary on the night before Passover, but

the next night, the first night of Passover, the non-Jews came into their homes and stole their possessions and kidnapped their children, and the Jews groaned to the heavens. Thus, instead of the joyful *seder* at night, it became a night of mourning and of lamentation.

As a result of these decrees, innumerable Jews converted, because they were unable to take the royal decree of the seizing of children. Some of them, though, sanctified God's name and refused to forsake their religion even when their children had been taken away, for they were strong as lions in their faith.

When the wicked Belial saw that even the seizure of their children did not always work, he ordered that all the Jews' possessions be seized, to be given to the children who had been seized, with the children inheriting from their parents in the parents' lives. This, too, did not make those steadfast Jews change their minds.

When the evil one saw that the Jews were nevertheless loyal to their faith, he ordered that a proclamation be issued that all the Jews be brought to Lisbon, and from there they would be given ships by the king to take them wherever they wished.

Thus all the Jewish communities from throughout Portugal gathered together in Lisbon, so that the city was filled with them. They then beseeched the king: "Your majesty, take pity on us; send us away from the land." But the king was as deaf, not hearing their plea. Then this Haman [Emanuel] told them: "If you wish to live, you have to do but one thing: change your religion. If not, you will all be killed." When they heard this, the Jews fell at the king's feet and begged him to change his decree, but he ignored them and instead cursed the Jews for their God. The king then commanded that a proclamation be issued: "Every Jew or Jewess who wishes to convert will immediately have his or her children returned, will be exempt from all taxes, and may live freely anywhere in Portugal, and whoever does not want to convert is to be imprisoned until death."

That was the final straw for many of the Jews, and many of them converted, so as to reclaim their children and their possessions, while others accepted their fate of dying in order to sanctify God's name and did not give in, in spite of this decree. These were then placed in chains and thrown into prisons, where they died, often of starvation. Many were unable to take the torture of remaining in the boiling hot pits where uthey had been thrown, and converted. Others, however, withstood the test and refused to convert regardless.

Chapter 82

After this wicked one saw that the remaining Jews had decided to die rather than to give in, he ordered that they be converted against their wills, and that was done. Thus they were dragged into the churches and were baptized against their wills. Now that the Jews saw that they had no alternatives, they determined that they would die to sanctify God's name, and when they were dragged into the churches in order to be forcibly baptized, they would deliberately break statues in the churches, whereupon they would be sentenced to death by burning. Thus they died sanctifying God's name with pure souls.

When the wicked one saw that the Jews had found a way to die, he ordered that every Jew who was brought to be baptized against his will was to be left alone and not harmed even if he cursed the Christian God, and was not to be punished for what he had said, for no person can be punished for what he does in his distress. This decree was the worst of all decrees that the Jews had endured ever since the exile from Spain. The Jews then decided that they would rather commit suicide than submit, and indeed many did so, jumping into pits or caves, where their bodies lay until they rotted away. The king then ordered that Jews had to be guarded against suicide.

Soon there were simply no Jews left, when we consider those who died of starvation and those who were tortured to death and those who converted against their will and those who were killed for cursing the Christian gods and those who killed themselves. Thus only a small handful of Jews remained alive of all those who had been in Portugal, these being the small number who had fled immediately after the decree. These were primarily the rich who had bribed their way out of the country. Of those who remained, the majority were converted voluntarily or involuntarily, while some died for the sanctification of God's name, as we have written. Of all the Jews who had been imprisoned, only seven survived, and these are sure of eternal life, life where there is no death and injury.

After these seven had been tortured, God, whose eyes wander about the earth, saw how these people had been tortured in all types of cruel ways over extended periods of time, and how these nevertheless refused to convert and remained loyal to their faith. The king commanded that the seven be brought forcibly to the church, where they were stood up for baptism. They meanwhile shouted: "We will not accept, because all the gods of the other nations are but idols, while God made the heavens." So too did they insult the Christian religion

and break some of the statues, bringing them crashing to the ground. Among them was the sage Rabbi Simon Maimi, who was not afraid of anything and hurled imprecations at the king and his religion, so that he would be put to death. They nevertheless did not touch him, for the king had ordered that he not be killed, as he was the leader of the Portuguese Jews, as were his fellows. The king thus thought that if he converted them, that would make the others Jews, who had been converted earlier, stronger adherents to their new religion. He therefore did not kill or harm them, but put them in the deepest of pits and tortured them more than before. They nevertheless did not listen to him, and the Belial ordered that baptismal water be thrown over them. This too was unavailing, for they exclaimed: "Whatever you did was a waste of time, and we refuse to believe in the new religion."

The king then commanded that they be brought to his palace, and he came and offered them high positions—higher than anyone else in his court—at the national level, for the country was large. With these appointments, they would be given great respect by everyone. He even pleaded to them, offering them much gold and silver, and told them: "You will receive the best of the land if you but listen to me." Furthermore, the king went on: "I want only you, and I desire no more than you and your families." But they paid no attention to his entreaties, and told the king: "Please kill us, rather than having us continue in our misery and the profanation of our religion and the word of our God." Then, when the king saw that his hopes had been dashed, he commanded that the seven most saintly men be dragged bodily by animals throughout the city until they were brought to the pit. Afterwards, they were buried to their necks in the ground and given putrid bread and water. Of them it can be said, "Upon one stone shall be seven eyes" (Zech. 3:9), because they were the eyes of the land, and their Torah enlightened the eyes. There they were kept for seven days and seven nights, and during that time three of them died sanctifying God's name, included the great Torah sage, Rabbi Simon Maimi.

The king then commanded that the four remaining saints be placed in a small boat without bread or water, and a ship cast the boat into the middle of the sea. They were then told: "Change your religion, for otherwise you will die here in the midst of the sea." This was as a jest to them, and they told the guards: "Fools! Do you think we will give up eternal life for the temporary life of this world? Will we change our clean garments for soiled ones? We much prefer death to life." Then, when the guards saw that they were intent on dying, they stopped

speaking to them and sailed away, assuming that the boat would capsize in the sea and the four would perish.

But God, the Keeper of Israel, neither slumbers nor sleeps, and He arranged for a strong wind to blow that entire day and night, and by the morning the boat had been carried to the coast of Fez. They saw God's miracle in their being saved, and the rest of Israel, too, saw His mighty hand. They were overjoyed that they had arrived on land, and when they came to the city, all the elders of the city came out to greet them. They then said: "We have come to offer a sacrifice to God for having saved us. Praise the Lord for His mercy and His miracles." And the entire community celebrated and praised God. Meanwhile, in Portugal, the king closed all the synagogues in the land and sealed all the Jewish books inside them to this day.

Now, three years ago, I had a Jew who stayed at my home whose name was Rabbi Joseph, who was one of those who had escaped from Portugal. It was he who told me how twelve years earlier the king of Fez had sent a certain high official in the court who was a Jew to Portugal as an emissary, and this emissary had taken twelve prominent Jews from Fez with him as his assistants, as is customary. This R' Yosef was one of these twelve. And he told me that when this emissary arrived before the king of Portugal, the latter asked him various questions, and in the process showed him a hand-written Bible copy, dating back to the days of Ezra the Scribe and written by two orphan girls, which is known as *Mikdashiyah*. It had been a custom among the Jews and their scholars not to use this copy except at very infrequent intervals. Then, when the king seized all the Jewish books, he seized this one as well, and treated it with great respect. In the end, the king consented to show it to the emissary and to the people with him. Joseph then picked up the book and found that wherever the text has the Hebrew word (*tzarah*) and words of that Hebrew root, the three letters *tzaddi*, *reish*, *heh* had all been outlined in gold, because in the year 5290 (*heh*, *reish*, *tzaddi*) [i.e., 1530—translator] the Messiah would come to Israel. That was why they had outlined every reference to this word in gold. After the emissary had looked at the book for a very short time, the king closed it and placed it back in its place. After this, he immediately locked it up again, because the Christians, too, know that the book had been written under divine inspiration, and is most holy, so that they, too, treat it with the utmost of respect and honor. By the same token, the king took all the other books of the Jews and locked them up in the synagogues and study halls, to this day.

Chapter 83

My generation has seen all of this: how the sons of Esau [i.e., the Christians] exiled us and imprisoned us and destroyed us, and told us: "Flee to the hills, lest the pursuers find you." First it was Spain, and then Portugal, and they did everything to consume us alive. Yet they have not vented all their anger, and they still seek to harm us. They have stood on the road to plunder and loot us, leaving us naked to the elements. Had we been sold as slaves, that too would have been terrible, but what they did was far worse, for they tortured us and maimed us, and killed us by fire and water, or by their baptismal waters. Others they killed through starvation and plague, and by stealing infants from their mothers' breasts. And even worse than all of this was the thousands and tens of thousands whom they baptized against their wills.

To sum up: there wasn't a single beastly thing which they did not inflict on Israel, killing them by the sword, by starvation, or by the plague; selling them into captivity and forcing them to convert. Thus, when a man fled from the lion, he was confronted by a bear, and when he came home and rested his hand against the wall, he was bitten by a snake.

Had the Lord of Hosts not left us a surviving remnant, and allowed us to find favor in the eyes of Sultan Bayezid [II], the king of Turkey, who greeted the Jews into his kingdom with open arms, we would have perished as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Jewish people would have disappeared.

Had God not willed it, the king of Spain, of the true royal lineage of Spain, would not have estranged himself from the Jews and would not have done all this evil to them, while forgetting that it was the Jews who had been instrumental in making him the king and in raising his prestige. Rather, he repaid good with evil. That is why evil will never depart from his home and his son, Don Juan, died on his throne without children, and the entire kingdom of Spain went to the son of the emperor of Germany, for he had married his oldest daughter, Joanna. As the kingdom came to him that way, it was no longer named after the Spanish king's line or that of his forefathers, so that the name perished from Spain and God wreaked His vengeance on Spain. Isabella the wicked, too, did not live long after the exile, and following the death of her son, Don Juan, she died of a horrible and painful illness. She, indeed, begged for death in the end. The king of Portugal, too, died suddenly in the fields, and where he died, there he lay.

And just as God saw to bringing punishment on Spain, He saw to bringing a reward upon Sultan Bayezid, for having accepted the Jews graciously and in love and friendship. Thus, God blessed Turkey because of the Jews, for it said to the Jews: "Build yourselves houses for your young and fences for your cattle."

Thus, the God of all mankind, who does not deprive any creature of his just reward, did not deprive them of their reward, and the Turks had great and illustrious kings, as we will yet write about Sultan Suleiman the Great, for the Jews taught the Turks about all the different weapons of war, and through them the Turks became masters of the whole earth.

Indeed, the other nations did not respect the king of Spain for having banished the Jews, and having had them move to Turkey. In fact, when the king died, all the officials said: "The king of Spain was a fool, for having banished so illustrious a nation and having driven it to his enemies." In fact, I myself heard Messer Bernardo Barbarigo Capitano curse out the king of Spain for exiling the Jews, and his name is reviled constantly.

The people of Spain, too, regretted what they had done. Thus, the king of our time, namely the grandson [i.e., son of the daughter] of the king of Spain issued a proclamation offering the Jews a safe return and the right to live in Spain unmolested, but the Jews ignored him, for they had done well in Turkey, where they had found rest.

We had thought that the exile was bad, but God saw it as good, and maybe, indeed it was just for this that we were banished, and that the salvation began in the year 1492, for we were all gathered together to be ready for the ultimate gathering of all the exiles. To this, I can bring a trustworthy witness, author of *Sefer Ha-Kaneh*, that the year 1492 is a harbinger of the coming of the Messiah. Even though the Talmud in *Sanhedrin* is strongly opposed to calculating the end of days, for one can err and miscalculate, now that the Jews have gone through fire and water and have been subjected to such terrible suffering such as had never been seen before and will not come again, "Tell your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation" (Joel 1:3). "Behold you among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvelously: for I will work a work in your days, which you will not believe, though it be told you" (Hab. 1:5), for how could a man to whom all the mysteries are revealed through the *kabbalah* err so greatly as to make dark into light and light into dark, to make the bitter into the sweet and the sweet into the bitter? Listen thus carefully with both ears to the words of *Ha-Kaneh*.

I will thus tell you, my friends, that the exile which appears so terrible to the eye will be the cause of the growth of our salvation. And from that day on God has begun to gather together the scattered ones of His people so that they will be ready for the coming of the Messiah, and the troubles that the Jews suffered at the time are in accordance with the words of the prophet: "There will be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time your people will be delivered, every one that will be found written in the book" (Dan. 12:1). Blessed is he who waits for his arrival. Indeed, this is the time of the end, and the Messiah cannot tarry much longer. In the final analysis, the kings of Turkey feared the Lord, both King Mehmet ["The Conqueror"] and King Bayezid, and they both aided the Jewish people, gathering together those who were scattered in different lands, and offering them refuge. And indeed, the Jews settled there and succeeded in their efforts.

Chapter 97

And it was after Sultan Selim [1512-1520] had settled in his palace... that he took up the practice of [his ancestor] Mehmet of whom we have written, and he disguised himself and went about the city so as to discover what was going on, and no one knew about it.

One day the king along with a few men passed next to a crowd, and a Jewish man from the Sephardim came up to him and recognized he was the king. The man hurried and climbed to the upper level of his room, and he took two jars of rosewater and perfumes, "spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinanamon" (Song of Songs 4:14). The Jew looked through the window and poured them on the Sultan. The Sultan was taken aback, and the carriage carrying him along with his horsemen was overturned. No such thing had ever occurred in the past, and no one who had put out his hand against the king had ever escaped punishment. The king's men hurried to find out whose heart had dared to commit this awful deed, for never had it been done to the Sultans throughout the days of the Turkish Empire to this time. For whoever observes from rooftops or from windows when the Sultan is passing by that way, the law is he must be executed; even if he throws pure water in a vessel, he must be a madman for it shows contempt for the kingdom.

The Sultan's men entered the home of the Jew so as to kill him, his wife, and his children. The Jew saw that he had become odious in the eyes of the king and his servants for the deed was about to consume him, and he went terrified from one room to the other trying to hide

himself. All his household was frightened. The [king's] men came into the Jew's house and began to beat the people within. The king saw this, felt pity for them, and said: "Do not spill any blood! Stand back so that I may listen to whoever it was that did this. Bring him to me and I will decide what to do with him." They brought the Jew and placed him in front of the king. The Jew's heart died within, and he became petrified as a stone.

The king asked him, "Where are you from?" And he answered, "I am a Jewish man of the exiles from Spain." The king asked: "How is it that you did not dare to raise your hand against me?" But there was no sound nor reply nor evidence of attention, because of his fear of the king. The king answered and said: "There is no death sentence against this man, because he is a stranger and also an exile from his usual place, and he does not know the laws of the kingdom. Whatever he did, it was to honor the king, not done as part of a revolt or a conspiracy, but rather his intention was a good one." The king interrupted the words of his men, and he did not allow them to proceed against the Jew and his household, and they put the swords back in their scabbards, and the Jew and his family got their souls back as a gift.

Whoever heard of this deed was astonished at the king's justice and the rulings which he made on behalf of [the people of] Israel. Because the Turkish law is that whoever throws anything, even if done for honor's sake, such as spikenard and saffron, and if it touches the king's horse while the king is riding on it, according to the law he must die. It is not necessary to add [how much more severe it is] when the object touches the king himself, as done by the Jew mentioned above. But the king in his wisdom and breath of his understanding, and in his love and compassion for the Jews, saw that the aforementioned man was a stranger from a faraway land, and did not know the customs. Therefore, he forgave him and cleared him of transgression...

Source: Capsali, Elijah, *Seder Eliyahu Zuta*, Vol. I, The Ben-Zvi Institute of Yad Ben-Zvi and the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1975. Transcribed and annotated by Aryeh Shmuelewitz.

Additional material: *EJ*, "Capsali, Elijah ben Elkanah."

II. AN ANONYMOUS CHRONICLE
Anonymous I

This anonymous composition, written in a magnificent Hebrew prose style, is constructed from multiple Biblical verse quotations. The original manuscript is part of the Hebraica collection of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York.

Draw near, O nations to hear, and peoples hearken and listen. Gather together, O you people, and be amazed. Stand by the wayside and see, and ask about the earlier days which were before you. Was there anything such as this in your days and the days of your fathers? Did a nation hear the voice of God, the voice of the Lord smashing cedars, a voice emanating from the Master of mercy, to destroy and to kill and annihilate all the House of Israel, His close nation? He even came in judgment against the elders of His nation and ministers, as we have seen with our eyes, for in our days the earth was divided and destroyed. God has mixed the language of all the sons of Ever [the "Hebrews"], and has sent forth His arm with anger and fury against them to exile them. The Lord roars from on High, and from His holy abode His voice issues forth to bring scorn upon all in captivity and to extinguish the western light, namely the [Jewish community in] exile [which originally came from] from Jerusalem [and settled] in Spain, making them as dust to be trampled and as water to be poured down from a steep place, a nation scattered and divided. Or has God [before] tried to come and take for

Himself the seed of Abraham His servant, the descendants of Jacob His chosen one, with anger and wrath and great indignation ... to destroy and to smash His nation and His servants, from the youngest to the oldest, as we have also seen in our days? For the flame of God burned us, and it consumed our hearts. The Lord left His place to plunder and to take booty, and to vanquish each mighty man and every man of valor, including our young and our old [...], our wives and our children and our infants, until not a remnant was left of us, for we were destroyed. Over this I will mourn and cry out and will roll about in the dust, and with a broken cry I will say "Woe, woe," over the evil which came down from the Lord, to extinguish our remaining embers and destroy our inheritance, and to annihilate the rest of our refugees. As for those in the Spanish exile — one which was a marvel for the nations — where the beloved and precious Jews said: "We will live in the shadows of the nations" — they became an astonishment, an example and a byword. Their glory was brought down to the grave, along with their brilliance and their multitudes, their wares and their riches. And the people of the Lord, who had been above all the nations of The Earth, the Lord burst out against them in the breach, and gave them into the hands of worthless beings who afflicted and plundered them, as fish caught [in a net], who gave Jacob for spoil and Israel into the hands of robbers. And for every [former] happy and illustrious community, I will raise my voice as a woman in travail at the birth of her first child. Woe that the remnant of Judah is no longer master, and instead of being the crown of beauty and glory, it has removed the veil and the glory of its crown. And now they dwell in Marah [literally "bitter"], with wound after wound and blow after blow, and thus live the lions [i.e., the leaders] in the group, among them those in whom there is the spirit of the holy God and great wisdom. From the ends of the earth people trembled to hear their wisdom and came to see their glory and the honor of their excellent majesty. Together they will yet sing and raise their voices and rejoice in happiness, and say: "Blessed is the Lord who gave respite to His people, the Lord has shown us His glory and His wonders, blessed be He who imparted of His glory to those who fear him."

But now, where has all our good turned aside? Where has our grandeur and our radiance and our glory gone? How did the remnant of Judah remain, orphaned and alone in exile, forced to wander to and fro, with none to guide it and none to take its hand. ***Where are they*** — our heads, our leaders, our kings, our ministers and all the great men of our nation, who would stand in the breach to fight our fight to set aside this

decree? They [i.e., the leaders] were righteous and honorable and had many good qualities, and in their days the Jews knew light and joy, and there was no breach and no complaint. Now, though, our souls are dry, there is nothing, there is no staff to support us and there is none to return our glory to its earlier times. For those who go out and those who come in there is no peace, for there is no redeemer. He that is helped still falls down and all fail together, for the glory of Israel has departed. How was our glory dissipated, leaving the Daughter of Zion plundered and a restless wanderer? The nights of my pleasure have turned to fear. ***Where are they***, the two hundred seventy and seven holy communities, overflowing with good, which once lived in Castile at ease and in contentment, who produced among them great scholars and heads of yeshivot? In the other kingdoms, too, there were glorious communities by the thousands and tens of thousands, and we could not count them. All were settled on their land, in their towns and by their castles, and all of Israel had light in their settlements. How were they all destroyed in an instant, from the smallest to the biggest, if their Rock had not sold them and the Lord delivered them? And the community of Castile became as tinder, a rebellious and evil city, for the Lord removed Israel from before Him, and caused great confusion. The sword without and the terror within destroyed both the young man and the maid. And of all the thousands of Jews who lived there in the good times, there remained almost no man, except for one in a thousand and two in ten thousand, and all these were poor, all afflicted, all wandering about. They could not rest or cease or find ease for their souls, for the Lord did not wish to leave them be. How could they rest when the Lord commanded that they wander about like a wandering bird, from nest to [...]? And yet [God's] hand is yet outstretched, and He has not returned his sword to its scabbard. All who saw them [i.e., the Jews] hated them, because the Lord had rejected them. All the inhabitants of the hand loathed them, and they were to them as pricks and thorns and thistles, because the Lord had moved away from them and did not [pardon them]. For they are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them. Fortunate was the eye which beheld when Israel dwelled in their settlements and the Torah was in its proper place: grace, grace unto it. Woe to us, for in our days there were destroyed and looted her precious stones and her jewels. For these I weep. The great scholars of the generation, who once spread their wings over us, and in earlier days were to us as eyes, must now jump between the oven and the stove and must toil in the mill. Their voice, that of the Almighty, now

suffers with much pain in all their loins, and there is none to answer and none to listen to the sound of their wailing. There is none sicker than they, and none who grieves at their distress, for the Lord of Hosts has brought into contempt all the honorable of the earth, to bring down to the ground our heads, to bring low the radiance of our most precious, and to bring into contempt all the honorable of our people, in order to grieve our heart and to make us abhorred. For this our heart grieves, and for this our eyes have become dim. I therefore said, "Look away from me, I will weep bitterly, and I will rend the casing of my heart. Do not hasten to comfort me because a consoler who can restore my soul is far from me, for God has turned away from me and become my enemy." To whom shall I flee for aid, when the Lord my strength and fortress will not help me? Who will make me arise out of the horrible pit of my troubles, if not the Lord my Shepherd and protector? Let us lie down in our shame and let us cover our disgrace, for the Lord our God has put us to silence, has devoured us, crushed us. And from our station he has driven us, and carried us with a mighty captivity. It is He who devoured us, and who devised against us, that we cannot raise our heads. God has found our sins, He has revealed our shame, for we were brought down from our dwellings and the Lord has cast us off from our land. I cannot answer one who reproaches me, for the Lord has cursed me. This is my grief and I must bear it. All the days that I live on the earth I will dwell in darkness and be clothed in desolation, as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, until the Lord sees our affliction, contains His anger and consoles us. My back is to the smiters and my cheeks to them that plucked off my hair, and instead of a girdle a rent, until the Lord forgives and heals our wounds. When I remember the glory of my multitudes in earlier days, my heart stirs. In the midst of my rejoicing I must mention the torment of my wandering and the labor of my being tossed about. I will speak and feel relieved.

Now let me tell you how my sun set and my night fell, and how God touched me to a remarkable extent. *The word of the Lord was in Taverah*, that being Spain, for the fire of the Lord burned there. A new king arose in the land, a king who issued new decrees, and did that which his fathers and his fathers' fathers had not done. This was Don Ferdinand of Aragon, a mighty king who did not pity the old or favor the young. He was Sennacherib, who mixed up the different nations and scattered Israel about the land; he was Nebuchadnezzar, who blackened the beauty of our light and threw down from the heavens to the earth the pride of our glory. Because of God's hatred of us, He made him king

over all of Spain, of Castile and of Aragon and on Valencia and of Catalonia and of Sicily and of the islands of the sea, both near and far, as well as of the kingdom of Granada. All these, God gave into his hand. And He had him rule over all, that there was none to withstand him. There was none like him among all the kings who preceded him, for dreaded was the council and strong the work which he thought about the Jews.

Source: Hacker, Joseph, "New Chronicles on the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain, Its Causes and Consequences" (Hebrew). *Yitzhak F. Baer Memorial Volume*, *Zion* 44 (1979): 201-228.

III. INTRODUCTION TO THE FORMER PROPHETS

Don Isaac Abravanel (1437-1508)

Born into an aristocratic Portuguese family, Abravanel, throughout most of his life, straddled the disparate worlds of the royal court and the intensely private world of religious study in the *yeshiva*. He successively served the Kings of Portugal, Spain, and Naples in the spheres of commerce and finance. In Spain, he worked as a tax-farmer and personally lent large sums of money to Ferdinand and Isabella to meet their needs in the war effort against the Moors.

Along with Don Abraham Senior, he represented the Jews of the kingdom at court, and vigorously argued against the enactment of the expulsion decree. Unable to prevent the execution of the edict, Abravanel emigrated to Naples where he came under the protective wings of King Ferrante II. A prolific author, he summoned his considerable literary talent to compose a series of works designed to support the flagging morale of his people, among them commentaries on the Prophets as well as a trilogy containing his Messianic speculations.

He is generally regarded as the greatest spokesman and religious thinker of Iberian Jewry at the time of the expulsion.

Statement by Isaac, son of my lord Judah Abrabanel, of the stock of Jesse of Bethlehem, of the seed of David, of a divided nation, in exile from Jerusalem, now living in Spain:

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Melrose Park, PA

The following occurred to me in my writing of my commentary on the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings, this being the exact opposite of what occurred to Hiel of Bethel (I Kings 16:34), when he rebuilt Jericho, who laid the foundations with his oldest son and set up the gates with his youngest son. In earlier days (they were better than these), when I lived in tranquility in Portugal, my birthplace, I raised my voice to God to explain these four books, seeing the scarcity of commentators on them. However, due to the burdens of the king and his ministers about my neck, I was unable to accomplish this task. Finally, God's hand touched me and the Portuguese began to consider me their enemy, in spite of my innocence. They sought to swallow me up and seized all that I owned—a great fortune—and it was only by God's grace that I was able to flee, under threat of the sword, to the king of Castile. After I arrived there seeking to rest as a visitor, I wrote a commentary in gratitude on the first three books: Joshua (*Yehoshua*), because God had saved me (*hoshi'eini*) and rescued me from the sword of Pharaoh; Judges, because God is in the world to judge my case and to protect me from brigands; and Samuel, because "I have asked him from God" (see I Sam. 1:20). All of this took place at the beginning of the year 5244 (1483-4), and as I sought to begin my commentary on Kings, I was summoned to the court of the king of Spain, the supreme king of the country, who ruled over Castile, Aragon, Catalonia, Sicily and various islands. I came to the king's court, and remained there for a long time. God granted that the king favored me, as did the chief ministers of the kingdom, and I served them for eight years. I also acquired both wealth and honor in their courts, and as a result my time for Torah study decreased and the work was halted. In order to work for a non-Jewish king, I abandoned my inheritance, the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, and the account of their stories, and in the year of *Mi-Zara* Yisrael [*Mi-Zara* is 252 in *gematria*, i.e., the year 5252, or 1492—translator], the king of Spain seized the entire kingdom of Granada and the great city of Granada, one with a large populace and an important city. Esau [the Spanish king], then said in his heart: "How can I repay God who has enabled me to emerge victorious in battle? How can I greet my Maker who gave this city into my hands, if not by having enter into His fold the nation which walks in darkness, the scattered lamb of Israel, and have the wayward daughter return to my faith? Failing that, I will send them forth to another land before me, so that they will no longer live in my land and will no longer be before my eyes." He therefore issued a proclamation which stated: "I say to all the families of the

house of Israel, that if you are baptized and pray and worship to the god of the other nations, you will eat of the best of the land as I do today, and you will dwell in the land and trade in it. However, if you refuse and rebel and do not wish to make mention of my god, you are to go out from the midst of my people, from the lands of Spain, Seville, Majorca and Sardinia which are under my rule, and within three months there is not to remain a single Jew in my realm!"

At the time I was in the king's court, I was exhausted from calling unto him until my throat became hoarse. I met with the King three times, begging him: "Save us, O king. Why do you do thus to your servants? Impose a large payment on us, one of gold and silver, and every Jew will give for his land." I called upon all my friends who were close to the king, asking them to intercede before him with all their might, so that the decree to destroy all the Jews might be rescinded. But he remained completely deaf to my entreaties and did not respond to my plea. All this time, it was the queen who stood behind him and hardened his resolve to carry out the decree. We labored, but were not granted that which we sought. I did not rest and did not remain silent and did not let up, but the decree remained. As for the Jews, when they heard the decree they all mourned, and wherever the news of the king's word and order was heard, the Jews despaired, and all feared greatly, a fear unequaled since the exile of Judah from its land to a foreign land. Each said to the other, "Let us strengthen one another in our faith and the Torah of our God, against the enemy who blasphemes and wishes to destroy us. If he lets us live, we shall live, and if he kills us, we shall die, but we will not desecrate our covenant and we will not retreat. We will go in the ways of the Lord our God." In the end there left, without strength, three hundred thousand people on foot, from the youngest to the oldest, all at one time, from all the provinces of the king, to wherever they were able to go. Their King went before them, God at their helm. Each pledged himself to God anew. Some went to Portugal and Navarre, which are close, but all they found were troubles and darkness, looting, starvation and pestilence. Some traveled through the perilous ocean, and here, too, God's hand was against them, and many were seized and sold as slaves, while many others drowned in the sea. Others again, were burned alive, as the ships on which they were traveling were engulfed by flames. In the end, all suffered: some by the sword and some by captivity and some by disease, until but a few remained of the many. In the words of our fathers (Num. 17:28), "Behold we perish, we die, we all perish," may the name of the Lord be blessed. I, too,

chose the way of the sea, and I arrived here in the famed Naples, a city whose kings are merciful. This is the year of (Ex. 22:20), "You were strangers," and I decided to fulfill my vow and to explain the Book of Kings, which I have not done until now, because it is a time to do for the Lord as a memorial to the destruction of our holy Temple and the exiles which our people have experienced, as written in this work, as I will explain with the help of God. Now, "In his days Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho; he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub" (I Kings 16:34). I, too, experienced wandering and exile, that being my own personal exile from the kingdom of Portugal, in which I began the commentary on these four books, and in the midst of these exiles, the chief one being the bitter and hasty exile and forced conversions when we were exiled from Spain, where everyone who hears of it, reacts with horror, I began this commentary and completed it. I have decided to offer two comprehensive introductions to this commentary, which deals with the stories involved.

Source: Isaac Abravanel, *Perush al Nebiim Rishonim*. Torah ve-Da-at, Jerusalem.

Additional material: *EJ*, "Abravanel, Isaac ben Judah." Netanyahu, Ben-Zion, *Don Isaac Abravanel*. Jewish Publication Society. Third Edit. 1972.

IV. CHRONICLE OF THE CATHOLIC KINGS

Fernando Del Pulgar (?1436-1492)

Pulgar was the personal secretary to King Henry IV and subsequently was appointed royal chronicler to Queen Isabella in 1482. His *Letters* and his literary portraits of the grandees of Spain within his *Claros Varones de Castilla* are models of style and composition. The following selections, from his chronicles of the Catholic Kings, only partly suggest the criticisms he raised concerning the Inquisition. Of Converso lineage himself, it is noteworthy how often he employs the euphemism 'of that lineage' (*de ese linaje*) in reference to those of Jewish descent.

CHAPTER XCVI
OF THE HERESY THAT WAS FOUND IN SEVILLA

Some clerics and religious persons, and others of the city of Sevilla, informed the King and the Queen that in that city, many Christians of Jewish lineage were turning to Judaizing, and to secretly performing Jewish rites in their homes; and they did not believe in the Christian faith, nor did they perform the acts that Catholic Christians should. Concerning this, their consciences were charged and duty bound by the [King and Queen], being as they are Catholic sovereigns, that they punish that ugly and detestable error. Because if they allowed it room to grow or left it without punishment, and it was not stopped at once, it would grow in such a manner that our holy Catholic faith would receive great detriment.

When this was known by the King and the Queen, they felt a great sadness [upon knowing of] people being found in their dominions who did not feel well about the Catholic faith, and who were heretics and apostates. Concerning this, the Cardinal of Spain, who was the Archbishop of Sevilla, composed a certain constitution, in conformity with the sacred canons, as to the behavior that the Christian should have, thus in the sacrament of baptism as in all the other sacraments he should receive, and of the practices which he should practice and believe as a faithful Christian during all the days and time of his life, and at the time of his death. And he ordered it to be made known in all the churches of the city, and to post it on bulletin boards in every parish, as a firm constitution.

Moreover, [the Cardinal declared] what the curates and clerics should indoctrinate and demonstrate to their congregants, and what the congregants should observe and show unto their children. Moreover, the King and Queen charged the Cardinal and some friars and clerics and other religious persons that they inform those people about the faith through their public preaching and in specific private conversations, and that they instruct them and return them to the true belief in our Lord Jesus Christ; and that they admonish them and demand of them that they abandon the performance of those Jewish rituals, and that they be shown how they would incur the perpetual damnation of their souls and the perdition of their bodies and worldly goods.

These religious men, to whom this charge was given, who began at first with sweetly admonitions and later with bitter reprimands, labored to bring back to obedience these ones who Judaized, but it availed them little; because their pertinacity was of such a foolish blindness and of such a blind ignorance that, however much they denied and concealed their error, secretly they would return to fall back into it and to perform and observe the Jewish rituals. The King and the Queen, considering the evil and perverse quality of this error, and wanting to remedy it with great study and diligence, had the exalted Pontiff notified. [The Pope] granted his Bull, by which he conceded unto them the power to appoint inquisitors of the faith in their reigns, and to combat and punish those who had the sin of the heretical depravity. He gave the principal charge of this Inquisition to a religious man of virtuous living who had great zeal for the faith, who was called Fray Tomás de Torquemada, confessor to the King and prior of the monastery of Santa Cruz in Segovia, of the Order of St. Dominic.

This prior, who was the chief inquisitor, had inquisitors substituted in his place in all the cities and villages of the kingdoms of Castile, Aragon, Valencia, and Catalonia. These then conducted an inquisition into that matter of the heretical depravity in every land and district where they were placed. They placed in their reproduced letters, with the force of law, that those who had Judaized or did not feel well about the faith, come forth to declare their transgressions within a certain time period and reconcile themselves with the Holy Mother Church. By virtue of these reproduced letters, many people of that lineage, within the designated time period, appeared before the inquisitors. They confessed their transgressions and errors which they had committed in this crime of heresy. To these [transgressors] they would prescribe penance, according to the nature of the crime which each one had incurred. These were more than 15,000 persons, men as well as women.

And if some were blameworthy in that crime and did not come forth to reconcile themselves within the posted time period, with the testimonies of error committed in hand, they were promptly arrested. Proceedings were initiated against them, by virtue of which they were condemned as heretics and apostates and remitted to the secular arm. Up to two thousand men and women of these were burned at the stake, on several occasions in some cities and villages. Others were condemned to perpetual imprisonment. Others were made to do penance all the days of their lives such that they were to be marked with large red crosses placed upon their clothing garments on their chests and on their backs [the *san benito* cloak]. They and their children were disqualified from holding any public office requiring public confidence, and it was ruled that they could neither dress nor wear silk or gold or camlet, upon punishment of death.

Thereby an inquisition was made as to whether those who had died within a certain time had Judaized. Because some while alive were found to have incurred the sin of heresy and apostasy, proceedings were taken against them by juridical means. They were condemned, and their bones were exhumed from the graves and burned publicly. Their children were disqualified from holding any titled positions or benefices. A great number of these [heretics] were found, whose goods and landed properties were taken and applied [to the account of] the national treasury of the King and Queen.

Upon observing this manner of proceeding, many of that lineage, fearing those executions, abandoned their homes and goods, and fled to

the kingdom of Portugal, to the land of Italy, to France, and other kingdoms. The inquisitors proceeded against them *in absentia*, and confiscated their belongings. From these [belongings], and from the financial penalties paid by the reconciled ones, inasmuch as these revenues were drawn from those who had gone against the faith, the King and the Queen ordered that they not be dispersed on any other thing, except on the war against the Moors, or on other things that would be for the exaltation of the Catholic faith. Some of the condemned prisoners' relatives complained, saying that the inquisition and execution were more severe than it should be; and that the proceedings were conducted and the sentences executed in such a manner that the ministers and executors showed hatred toward those peoples. Concerning this, the King and the Queen appointed certain prelates, men of conscience, to look into the matter and to remedy it with justice.

They found in that time, especially in Sevilla and Cordoba, and in the cities and villages of Andalusia, about four thousand households or more, where many of that lineage resided. They [of that lineage] absented themselves, with their women and children, from the land. And even though the absence of this people depopulated a great part of that land and [even though] the Queen was notified that commerce was diminishing, she regarded with little concern the diminution of her revenues. Appreciating greatly the cleanliness of her lands, she said that, all other interests postponed, she wanted to cleanse the land of that sin of heresy because she understood it to be in the service of God and hers. And the supplications that were made in this matter did not dissuade her from this goal.

Because it was found that the communication this people had with the Jews who resided in the cities of Cordoba and Sevilla and their dioceses was a cause of that error, the King and Queen ordered, as a perpetual constitution, that no Jew upon punishment of death reside in that land. These [Jews] were compelled to leave their homes and to reside elsewhere. [The Jews were expelled from Andalusia in 1483.]

CHAPTER CXX
OF THE EXECUTION THAT WAS MADE IN SEVILLA AGAINST THE HERETICS

We have said how the King and Queen were very affected by the heresy present in some Christians of Jewish lineage who were turning to Judaizing and who did not feel well about the faith. Concerning this,

the King entrusted the general Inquisition of all the kingdoms and lands of the King and Queen to a religious man of the Order of St. Dominic, who was the superior of the monastery of Santa Cruz in Segovia. This prior [Torquemada], who was the principal one, transferred his power to two lettered religious men—one a native of the kingdom of Valencia and the other from the city of Burgos—and to a doctor who was named Juan de Medina, who would serve as Inquisitors in the city of Sevilla and its archbishopric.

These Inquisitors initiated legal proceedings and inquisitions via which they found, as we have said earlier, that many of the Christians of Jewish lineage were turning to Judaizing and to performing Judaic rites. Up to three hundred men and women of these [Judaizers] were burned on different occasions. Others fled and left for the kingdom of Portugal, and to the land of the Moors, and to other seignored lands, so as to protect themselves with the favor of the lords. The Inquisitors proceeded against these [Judaizers] *in absentia*. Confiscated were their belongings which were used to pay for the armada assembled against the Turks, and likewise were used to pay for some things necessary for the war against the Moors; [this was] because the King and Queen ordered that those confiscated goods not be distributed except for things concerning the defense of the faith.

Some of the relatives of the imprisoned and those condemned notified the King and the Queen that the inquisition and execution was not being done in a just manner, and that it was very offensive for many reasons. Especially, they said that the Bull granted by the Pope on this matter solely embraced the converted Christians of Jewish lineage, and not anyone else. From which it was concluded that the solicitor who sought [such a Bull] wanted to stain those of that lineage, making them the special [focus] of that Bull and not anyone else.

Likewise, they said the manner of conduct of these legal proceedings, and the taking of testimony and acquisition of information, and the tortures administered, and in the execution of these sentences, as well as in other circumstances, the ecclesiastic inquisitors and the secular executors behaved cruelly. And they showed a great enmity not just towards those they were adjudging and tormenting, but rather towards all, with the intention of staining and disfaming those with that horrible sin. And that it should consider the piety that God and the Holy Mother Church order to be used in this kind of case: sweet reasoning and mild amonestations, and with good teachings and personal example by which to bring these errant ones to the faith. By pursuing these

precepts and rules of the holy canons, they should reduce them [to their former state] and have them receive the penalties prescribed by law, but not with that cruel punishment by fire, especially those who had confessed their error and converted to the faith of Christ, our redeemer. Because they said it was a cruel and inhumane thing to consign someone to the flames who called in the name of Christ, who confessed to being a Christian, and who lived like a Christian.

With these things seen by the King and Queen, they ordered that the council be looked into, and that whatever was the law should be done. For this purpose were gathered the Cardinal of Spain, who was then the Archbishop of Sevilla, and the bishops of Jaén and Palencia, and the doctors, and four masters of the Sacred Theology. These individuals, after discussing that matter, put into writing a certain order that should be given beforehand, based upon the laws and the sacred canons, of how they should be summoned and reduced [to their former state], and of the punishment each one should have, according to how each had erred.

In Sevilla and its archbishopric at that time were found more than three thousand households wherein resided that people, who absented themselves with their sons and daughters. They went by land and sea to other foreign places. And even though the absence of this people depopulated a great part of the city, and the Queen was notified of the diminution in commerce within it, and that her revenues were reduced in great quantity because of this cause, she regarded the reduction in her revenues with little concern. Putting all other interests aside, she said she wanted to clean the kingdom of that sin of heresy, because she understood it to be in the service of God and of hers. And the supplications and amonestations that were made in this case did not make her desist from this objective.

Source: Fernando del Pulgar, *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos*. Versión Inédita. Edición y Estudio por Juan de Mata Carriazo. Espasa-Calpe, S.A. Madrid 1943.

V. HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC KINGS DON FERNANDO AND DOÑA ISABEL

Andrés Bernáldez (?-c. 1513)

Born in the city of Fuentes, Bernáldez was stimulated by the widow of his deceased grandfather, a scribe, to record for posterity his accounts of the major events of the day. In his work, he describes events during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, relates Columbus's voyages from conversations with the Admiral himself, narrates the city-by-city conquest of the kingdom of Granada, and provides a valuable eye-witness account of the expulsion of the Jews.

He served as the curate for Los Palacios, a small village close to Sevilla, from 1488 to 1513. He was the chaplain to the Archbishop of Sevilla, D. Diego de Deza, the notorious Inquisitor-general who succeeded Tomás de Torquemada as head of the Spanish Inquisition. In his writings, like other Dominican priests, he shows great zeal for the Catholic church and a rabid hatred for unbelievers, particularly towards Jews and the heretical Conversos.

CHAPTER XLIII
OF THE BEGINNING OF THE HERESY AND THE INQUISITION, AND WHEN THE MOSAIC DEPRAVITY AROSE, AND PUNISHMENT OF THE JUDAIC RITES

The heretical Mosaic depravity lasted for a great time, hiding and moving about in the corners, not daring to manifest itself. It was tolerated and given space by the disgraceful cowardliness of the prelates,

archbishops, and bishops of Spain that never accused it, nor denounced it to the kings or Popes as they should have and as they were obligated. This Mosaic heresy had its beginning in the year of our redeemer 1390 at the onset of the reign in Castile of the King D. Enrique III of this name, when the Jewish quarters were plundered as a result of the preaching of Friar Vicente, a saintly, learned, and good Catholic man of the Dominican order, who wanted in that time, by preachings and proofs of the Holy Law and Scripture, to convert all the Jews of Spain, and to put an end to the obstinate and stinking synagogue. He preached much to the Jews, he along with other preachers, in the synagogues, churches, and fields. And their rabbis with the Scripture of the Holy Law, prophecies and knowledge of it, were all vanquished and knew not how to respond. However, bridled and enwrapped in that Talmud commentary made by the two rabbis, Ravate and Ravina, 400 years after the birth of our redeemer, which had ten times the amount of scripture than the Bible, they took it everywhere wherever Jews could be found to strengthen them, because they saw the synagogues falling everywhere. And in the said commentary, there were many lies and intricate arguments. And just as Moses did in his own time, those two rabbis wrote that great and excommunicated book of the Talmud; and they placed upon penalty of spiritual death that no Jew, neither sage nor simpleton, dare to oppose these precepts, nor contemplate doing so, nor give another preaching or doctrine. This was the perpetual damnation of this generation. They deny the truth, and are ignorant of it. And because of this, it is said of them: *"contra negantes veritatem nulla est disputatio."* Thus Friar Vicente could convert only very few of them.

And the [Gentiles] people in their wrath put them to the sword in Castile, and killed many, all done in agreement throughout Castile on a Tuesday. Then they themselves came to the churches to be baptized, and thus many of them were baptized and turned into Christians in all Castile. After being baptized, some went to Portugal and other kingdoms so as to become Jews [again]. Others, after some time had passed, returned to being Jews in places where they were not recognized.

Still, many Jews and synagogues remained in Castile, and they were always assisted by the lords and kings who derived benefits from them. Those who remained baptized as Christians were called *Conversos*. From this point on began the use of this name for those [Jews] converted to the Holy Faith, which they observed very poorly. Their descendants, for the most part, were and are secret Jews, being neither Jews nor Christians; indeed, although baptized, they were moreover

heretics, without law, and this heresy had its birth from it as you have heard. And its rise and exuberant growth came from the great wealth and ostentatiousness of many wise and learned men, bishops, canons, friars, parsons, educated men, auditors and secretaries, and agents of the kings and great lords. In the first years of the reign of the very Catholic and very Christian King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, his wife, this heresy had risen to the point that the erudite were ready to preach the law of Moses, and the simple ones could no longer conceal their being Jewish.

When the King and Queen were in Sevilla, the first time in that city for them, along with the Archbishop of Sevilla, D. Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, Cardinal of Spain, there was in the city a saintly and Catholic man, a friar of St. Dominic [Fray Alonso de Hojeda] of the monastery of St. Paul, who always gave sermons and fought against this heresy. This man, along with other religious Catholic men, made the King and Queen aware of the great evil and heresy that was in Sevilla. They submitted their case to the Archbishop to punish them, and to correct the situation, and he made certain ordinances concerning it, and decreed them in the city and Archbishopric. He appointed deputies in the city to carry them out, and with all this, nearly two years passed but it was for nought, as everyone did what he was accustomed to doing; because changing one's customs is as difficult to do as to desist from death.

"O fera pésima formes pecati, nutrimentum facinoris pabulum mortis!" O savage and malicious beast, deformed sin that nourishes faithlessness, discovery of death, perdition of life!

You should know, whenever this may be seen, that this awful savage beast is the heresy and how, in that time, the heretics and ill-fated Jews fled from the ecclesiastic doctrine, similarly fleeing from the customs of the Christians. Those who could excuse themselves from not baptizing their sons would not baptize them; and those who had them baptized would wash them upon bringing them back home; and from this, an infinite amount of culpability was discovered during the reconciliation of an unlimited number of unbaptized old men and women whom the Inquisitors later baptized. You should know that the habits of the common people, as found out by the Inquisition, were no more nor less than that of the stench-ridden Jews, and this was caused by the continual conversation they had with them.

In this manner, they were gluttons and great drinkers, who never lost the Judaic custom of eating victuals, with earthen jars of stewed meats,

onion and garlic dishes, fried in oil. And the meat they would cook in oil, and they would substitute it in place of bacon and tallow so as avoid eating pork. The meat with oil is a thing that causes a very bad odor to one's breathing. Thus their houses and doors stunk very badly with these dishes. They themselves had the odor of the Jews because of the dishes and because of not being baptized. And given that some were baptized, the character of baptism was so mortified by their credulity, and by their Judaizing, that they stunk like Jews.

They would not eat pork unless forced to do so; they ate meat during Lent, vigils, and the Catholic seasonal fast-days. They observed the Passover and Sabbaths as best they could. They sent oil to the synagogues for the lamps. They had Jews who preached secretly unto them in their homes, especially to the women with greatest secrecy. They had Jewish rabbis who would ritually slaughter their cattle and fowl for their affairs. They ate unleavened bread at the appointed Jewish times, and specially prepared meats. They kept all the Jewish ceremonies, as much as they could in secret. In this manner, the men and women would excuse themselves from willingly receiving the sacraments of the Holy Church, except by force of the Church constitutions. They never confessed the truth; and it so happened that a father confessor, who chanced [to hear the confession of a certain] person of this generation, cut off a small piece of his clothing, saying: "Well then, since you have never sinned, I would like your clothing to stay with me as a relic so that I can heal the sick."

In Sevilla, there was a time when it was ordered that meat not be weighed on Saturday, because all the *confesos* [Conversos] ate it on Saturday night, and it was ordered to be weighed on Sunday mornings. Not without cause did our Redeemer call them *generatio prava et adultera* ["a depraved and adulterous generation"]. They did not believe in giving unto God recompense for virginity and chastity. All they did was to grow and multiply. During the time of growth of this heretical depravity, on account of their "Gentile" men, and their dealers, many monasteries were violated. Many nuns professed themselves to be scoffers and adulterers, themselves debased with gifts from the deceit of these whore-mongers, neither believing nor fearing excommunication, doing it moreover so as to harm Jesus Christ and the Church. Commonly, for the most part, they were money-lenders, of many skills and deceits, because they all lived in positions of leisure, and they had no conscience when buying and selling to Christians. Never did they want to take positions of ploughing nor digging, nor walk through the

fields raising cattle. Neither would they instruct their children otherwise except to obtain titled positions in inhabited places, and to make one's money sitting down with little work.

Many of them in the kingdom in little time made great fortunes and estates, because their gains and money-lending profits were made without conscience, saying that they had earned it at the expense of the enemies, justifying themselves with the saying that God had ordered during the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, that they rob the Egyptians, by cunning and deceit demanding that they lend them their gold and silver cups. Thus they had the presumptuousness of arrogance, that in the world there was no better people, nor more prudent, nor keener, nor more honored than those of the lineage of the tribes [of Israel] or within the midst of Israel proper. Inasmuch as they could acquire honor, royal offices, and the favors of kings and lords, some of them intermarried with the sons and daughters of old Christian cavaliers; [they had] a surplus of riches which they had the good fortune to come across as a result of the weddings and marriages which they had thus made, so that they were regarded by the Inquisition as good Christians and beheld with much honor.

The King and Queen were assured of the aforesaid while staying in Sevilla. Upon departing from there, the charge of the punishment and of its execution was left to the vicar-general of Sevilla, the Bishop of Cádiz, D. Pedro Fernandez de Solís, and the Assistant, who then remained in Sevilla, who was Diego de Merlo, in order to deal with this great evil. And Fray Alonso, the second of Fray Vicente, stayed to watch over it, along with other clerics and friars.

And observing that in no manner could this be tolerated, nor could it be mended without making an Inquisition into the matter, they denounced the situation to their Highnesses, informing them of how and who and where the Jewish ceremonies were being kept, and how they ended up [being observed] by powerful persons and in a very large part of the city of Sevilla. Along with this, they were assured that this monstrous affliction could be found throughout Castile. And they requested a Bull from Pope Sixtus IV to proceed with justice against the said heresy by means of fire. The Bull was conceded and the Inquisition was ordered in the year 1480.

CHAPTER XLIV
HOW IN SEVILLE THEY BEGAN TO SEIZE, BURN, AND RECONCILE THE JEWISH HERETICS, AND OF THE GREAT PESTILENCE IN 1481

When the Bull for the Inquisition was conceded by his highness Pope Sixtus, serving at the time as the Assistant of Sevilla was Diego de Merlo, who was an honorable Christian cavalier, very discreet, and zealous for the faith of Jesus Christ and of justice. [And] the first Inquisitors came to Sevilla—two Dominican friars, one a vicar named Friar John and the other a provincial named Friar Michael; and with them was Dr. de Medina, a clergyman of St. Peter. The three of them, working diligently as one, began their Inquisition at the beginning of the year 1481. In very few days by various modes and means, they knew the truth of the heinous and heretical depravity, and they began to seize the more guilty men and women, and to place them in [the monastery of] St. Paul. They seized soon afterward some of the most honored and wealthy, including aldermen of Sevilla and jurists, degreed and lettered individuals, and men of great favor; these the Assistant of Sevilla seized. Upon seeing this, many men and women fled from Sevilla.

The Inquisitors, realizing that it was necessary, demanded the Castle of Triana where they and the prisoners stayed. There they had their audience and they had their prosecuting attorney, constable, and scribes. When it was necessary, they had a proceeding according to each one's guilt, and the ecclesiastic judge oversaw the proceedings and ordered the sentences, so as to have justice served and not otherwise. They began to sentence burnings by fire, and the first time they took out six men and women to be burned on the scaffold. Friar Alonso [de Hojeda] of the monastery of St. Paul, zealous of the faith of Jesus Christ and who had most solicited the Inquisition, preached that day. But he did not see more than this burning because, soon afterwards, he died of the pestilence that was beginning to spread in the city.

Within a few days, they burned three of the principal men of the city, who were among the wealthy, including Diego de Susan, who was said to be worth ten millions, and who was a great rabbi [*gran rabí*], and who from all appearances died as a Christian. The other was Manuel Saulé, and the other Bartholomew de Torralba. And they caught Pedro Fernandez Venedeva, who was the steward of the church, along with the dean and head of the cathedral chapter, who were among their principals and who had arms in their homes to arm one hundred men; and Juan Fernandez Albolasia, who had been for a great time a justice of the

peace, and who was a learned man, and many other prominent and rich ones, who were also burned, and neither were their riches and favors of much use to them.

With this, the *confesos* were terrified and experienced great fright, and they fled the city and the diocese. And it was ordered of them, upon punishment of death, that they should not flee, and guards were placed at the city gates. So many were caught that there was no place to keep them. Many fled to the lands of noblemen, to Portugal, and to the land of the Moors.

This year of 1481 was not kind to humanity in Andalusia, but very contrary and pestilential and quite widespread, that in all the cities and villages of Andalusia, they died in an excessive manner. In Sevilla, more than fifteen thousand persons died. Others died likewise in Córdoba, in Jerez, and in Écija more than eight or nine thousand persons, and thus in all the other villages and places. In August, the plague arose again and with all this lasted for more than eight years, flaring up in one part more or less, now in another part of Andalusia. In 1488, in Córdoba once again, a great number of people died; it is said, an even greater quantity than in the year 1481.

Returning to the point in question, the Inquisition commenced in the year 1481, seeing that the pestilence was kindled and that the Old Christians were fleeing Sevilla, the *confesos* demanded authorization from the Assistant to go outside the city to take refuge from the pestilence, and this was granted, on condition that they take certificates to show the door guards, and that they not take their household goods, except for useful light items. In this manner, many people left the city, especially to the land of the Marquis of Cádiz, who was the enemy [of the Duke] since his wars with the Duke [of Medina-Sidonia]. More than eight thousand souls came to Mairena, Marchena, and Los Palacios, and he ordered that they be given asylum and treated with respect. Similarly, they went to the land of the Duke of Medina [Sidonia] and other lords. From these, many went to the land of the Moors on the other side, others to Portugal and to Rome. Many returned in Sevilla to the Inquisitorial priests, stating and disclosing their sins and heresy and begging for mercy. The priests received them and delivered them and reconciled them, and [these *confesos*] made public penitences on certain Fridays by disciplining themselves in processions held in the Sevilla streets.

In 1481, inasmuch as the Inquisitors observed that the pestilence grew in Sevilla, they moved to Aracena, where they found something to

do in capturing and burning 23 men and women, heretics gone astray, and they caused to have burned the bones of some who had died in the Mosaic heresy, calling themselves Christians but who were in fact Jews, and who had died thus as Jews.

And that year, since the pestilence ceased, the Inquisitors returned to Sevilla and pursued their Inquisition until 1488, burning more than 700 persons, and reconciling more than 5,000, with others placed in perpetual confinement. There were some who were in jail for four or five years or more, and [when released] they were taken out and had crosses placed on them along with red *san benito* cloaks, [worn] from both the front and from behind, and henceforth they were to walk thus for a long time. Afterwards, the cloaks were removed so that the defamation of the land should not increase upon seeing this.

Among those whom I have said were burned in Sevilla during those eight years were three presbyters and three friars of this *confeso* lineage. They burned a Doctor friar of Trinity, who was called Savariego, who was a great preacher, and a great falsifier, a deceitful heretic who happened to come on Good Friday to preach the Passion and satiate himself with meat. They burned an infinite number of bones, of the [monastery] Corrals of the Trinity, St. Augustine, and St. Bernard, from the *confesos* who had been buried there one atop the other according to the Jewish practice; [the Inquisitors] proclaimed it publicly and burned in effigy many who were found to be injured by the escaped Jews. Those first Inquisitors made the first public burning place in Tablada, alongside the plaster of Paris images of the four Prophets, in which they burned them and, as long as heresy existed, they would burn them. It was a very daring thing to reconcile these people, as it became known through their confessions, how all of them were Jews.

It became known in Sevilla of the Jews of Córdoba, Toledo, Burgos, Valencia, and Segovia, and all Spain—how all of them were Jews, and who were under the hope that the people of Israel were in Egypt; that even though they had sustained many afflictions from the Egyptians, they expected God would take them out from their midst as he took them out later—with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. And thus they maintained that the Christians were the Egyptians, or worse, and believed that God miraculously sustained and defended them. And they maintained that, through the hand of God, they would be commanded as troops, visited, and pulled out from among the Christians, and taken to the promised Holy Land. Under these crazy hopes they lived among the Christians, as was made evident under confession, such that all this

lineage became defamed and touched by this illness. A reconciliation took place in Sevilla in which more than five hundred men and women, with their faces uncovered, came out in the streets during the disciplinary procession held on Fridays.

This saintly Inquisition had its beginning in Sevilla, and later in Córdoba, where there was another equally great synagogue of bad Christians as in Sevilla. Afterwards, Inquisitors were placed in all Castile and Aragon. And there is a countless number of those burned, condemned, reconciled, and imprisoned in the archdioceses and bishoprics of Castile and Aragon. Many of the reconciled returned to Judaizing, and were burned for the same reason in Sevilla and in other parts of Castile.

Now, I do not wish to write more concerning this, for it is not possible to write the iniquities of this depraved heresy; except to say that, with the fire ignited, it will burn until there is an end of the firewood, that it will blaze until those who have Judaized will be wasted and dead, until not a single one remain, including even those of twenty years or older who have been afflicted by the same leprous heresy.

This year of 1481, from Christmas onwards, was a year of many waters and floods, of a manner that the Guadalquivir took and destroyed El Copero that had within it 80 residents, and many other sites along the course of the river. The flood waters rose to Almenil de Sevilla and by the Barranca de Coria, this being the highest level it did not reach. The waters did not descend for three days; and the city was in great fear of being taken by the waters.

CHAPTER CX
HOW THE JEWS WERE EJECTED FROM SPAIN

In the name of the most high God, our Lord, the Catholic and most Christian King and King saw the great damage proceeding from the obdurate belief and perpetual blindness of the Jews, and how the heretical Mosaic depravity was nourished from this. While engaged in the siege of Granada, they commanded and ordered that all the Jews of all Spain and its kingdoms be preached the Holy Evangel and the Catholic faith and Christian doctrine. And that those who wanted to convert and be baptized, that they reside permanently in their kingdoms, like their vassals with all that is theirs; and those who did not want to convert, that they leave and depart from their kingdoms within six months time [actually three months time] and that, upon punishment of death, that

they not return anymore unto them, and that they take all that is theirs, and sell it as they wanted, except not to take out gold or silver.

When this Edict came out and was ordered [to be read] in all the synagogues, plazas, and churches, the sages of Spain preached the Holy Evangel and doctrine of our Holy Mother Church, as proved by the same scriptures, how the Messiah that they were awaiting was our redeemer Jesus Christ, who came at the expected time and who their ancestors maliciously ignored. They never wanted to give their ear to the truth, being deceived beforehand by the false book of the Talmud. Having the truth before their eyes and reading it in their law every day, they ignored it, their sages as well as the simple ones stupefied by the edict and teachings of Rabase and Rabina who composed the said Talmud. So that you may know in what manner and in what time this said excommunicated Talmud was made, those of you who have not read it, it seemed good to me to put here the following paragraph, taken from the *Fasciculum Temporum*, which says thus:

> *"Talmud Judeorum, quod sonat apud eos Doctrina, circa haec témpora anno CCCC. á duobus summis Rabbis S. Rabina, et Rabase, liber utique grandis et maior decem Biblis, in quo sunt inexecrabilia mendatia, turpia facta abominabilia contra legem Dei, contra legem naturae, contra legem scriptam. Videntes namque Judei legem suam quotidic deficere, et fidem christianam proficere in toto orbe etiam cum gloria temporalium, hi duo deceptores, instinguarumt quatenus hunc librum componerent, et tam que Moysii scriptus firmari, adhiberent fidem, prohiberent que, sub pena mortis, nequis aliquid negaret de his quae in eo continentur. Factum est ita ad suam infelicem execrationem et suorum perpétuam damnationem. Ne autem simplices habeant ocasionem recedendi a tanta falsitati, innuerunt eis, ut interrogati de dificilibus, responderent: 'Nos haec non intelligimus, sed Rabbi nostri poterunt respondere vobis.' Sic tradditi sunt in reprobum sensum, ut plus his nugis creddant, quam Moyse, aut Christo, verum tamem plures in diversis mundi partibus conversis crebro leguntur, et aliqui pro fide magna fecerunt, et utilissima scripta reliquerunt."*

which means to say in our Castilian language:

"The book of the Jews, called Talmud, is regarded by them as doctrine. It was composed close to those times, in the year 400 after the birth of our Redeemer Jesus Christ, by two great rabbis, one called Rabase and the other Rabina. It was certainly a large book, more than ten Bibles worth, in which there are very dark lies and abominable

things of lunacy against the law of God, against the law of nature, and against the law of scripture. The Jews in that time, seeing themselves diminishing and the Christian law growing throughout the world, and while still [enjoying] the glory of temporal goods, sought out these two deceivers, that is, Rabina and Rabase, so as to compose this book. And, as with the books of Moses, they asserted that, upon punishment of death, that no one deny anything that is written therein. Thus it was composed for their blindness and perpetual punishment, unfortunately for them. And so that the simple ones not have occasion to separate themselves from their blindness, they commanded them that, whenever they were asked concerning difficult matters, that they respond: 'We do not understand this, but our rabbis will answer you.' And in this manner, they fell into a reprehensible understanding, believing more in the lies of this book, and not in Moses or Christ. But many times, one reads that many of them are converted in diverse parts of the world. Moreover, [these converts] made great things for the faith, and at the end of their days, they left behind very worthwhile scriptures."

And stuffed with the said excommunicated doctrine of the Talmud, the Jews who in that time lived in Spain—even though they saw with their own eyes the exile and their own perdition, even though they were advised and warned—always remained stubborn and incredulous. Even when by force they were made to give ear, never did they willingly accept in their heart anything that would avail them. Before they withdrew from hearing the evangelical preaching, their rabbis would preach the contrary unto them, and would encourage them and give them vain hopes, and would tell them that they should know that certainly it [the exile] came on account of God who wanted to take them out of slavery and to transport them to the Promised Land. And that in this exile, they would see how God would perform many miracles for them and would take them out of Spain, rich and honored, or so they expected; for if there were on land some misfortune or sinister happening, they would soon see how upon entering the sea God would be their guide, as He had been to their ancestors in Egypt.

The rich Jews paid the exit price of the poor Jews, and they treated one another in that departure with great charity. So that in no manner did they want to convert, except for some, very few, of those who were in the greatest need. Commonly, the Jews in that time, be they simple or lettered, were of the opinion and all believed, wherever they lived, that just as with a strong hand and an outstretched arm and with much honor and wealth, God through Moses had miraculously taken out the people

of Israel from Egypt, so too in those departures from Spain, they would turn away and sally forth with much honor and riches, without losing anything of their own so as to possess the Holy Promised Land, which they confessed to having lost because of their great and abominable sins which their ancestors had committed against God. As to which in this departure, all the opposite of what they expected took place, as they were deniers and enemies of the truth. Because in the other exodus when they emerged from captivity in Egypt, by the will of our Lord, who was their protector and who liked them well, in payment of the hardships and afflictions that the Egyptians had given unto them and were due them, He ordered that Egypt be robbed surely. They robbed them when they wanted to leave for the desert to where God had commanded them, saying that they would return, demanding loans of gold jewels, silver, silk, clothes, and other things from the Egyptians who lent it to them, according to Chapter XII of Exodus. Then it was fitting, because they were good and humble, and they believed in God the sovereign and the eternal, creator of heaven and earth; the Egyptians were evil and Gentiles and idolaters.

And now, on the contrary, the Jews are evil and unbelievers, and idolaters, and not children of Israel, but children of Canaan and of perdition. And the Christians are good and children of God, keeping the law of blessing and of obedience, and are a people of God, and are children of Israel because from the people of Israel is the beginning of salvation; and they [the Christians] have the law, and they recognized and accepted the true Messiah who redeemed them, who was our redeemer Jesus Christ, God and man, whom God had promised to send and did send. But whom they [the Jews], who were there then, in their malice, did not recognize him nor accept him, nor did they give ear to the great miracles and marvels that he performed, but with malice they persecuted him and killed him. And with the error made, never did they repent, nor did they want to believe the truth nor even the multitude of miracles done by the Apostles and disciples of Jesus Christ who were of his lineage.

Because of this, God protected them for forty years so that they would recognize him, repent, and accept the holy doctrine of the saintly Messiah whom he sent to them, who was our redeemer Jesus Christ. At the end of the forty years, our Lord seeing how this was a rebellious people, incredulous, stiff-necked, and no longer useful, He spewed forth His ire upon them. The emperor of Rome, Vespasian, and

Titus his son destroyed Jerusalem and all its districts, killed one million and hundred thousand Jews, sold 80,000 [of them], captured and seized all their lands, and brought many captives to Rome and its land. Of those 80,000 who were sold and of the other captives and exiles, many came to France and Spain at several times, liberating themselves by diverse modes and manners, and from whom those alive in this age are derived, as much in lineage as in contumacy. Of these, there were to be found in the kingdom of Castile 30,000 vassals and then some, for there were more than 30,000 households. Concerning this Rabi Meir wrote to the Rabi mayor D. Abraham Señor, his father-in-law, that, truth be known, the King and Queen were exiling 35,000 vassals, for there were 35,000 households of Jews. And of the rabbis whom I baptized upon their return from over there, who were ten or eleven [altogether], one of them was very sharp in nature. He was called Zentollo, being from Vitoria, and whom I christened as Tristan Bogado. He assured me that there were in Castile more than 30,000 Jewish couples and in Aragon 6,000 couples. This was understood to include Catalonia and Valencia in which there were more than 160,000 people at the time when the King and the Queen gave the sentence that those who did not want to become Christians be forever exiled from Spain.

In the six months time of the Edict, they sold and misspent whatever they could of their estates. The young and the old prepared themselves for the journey, demonstrating great courage and hope of having a prosperous exit and divine happenings. And in everything, they had miserable misfortunes. Indeed, the Christians took their many estates, rich houses, and landed properties for a small amount of money; and they would go about begging to sell them, but they could not find anyone to buy them. They exchanged a house for an ass, and a vineyard for a small piece of cloth or linen, because they could not take out either gold or silver. But it is true that they secretly took out an infinite amount of gold and silver, especially many cruzados and ducats embossed with the teeth, which they would swallow and recover from their bellies. In those checkpoints where they would be searched, and in the ports both on the land and of the sea, the women in particular would swallow more; indeed, it would occur to a person to swallow thirty ducats at a single time.

CHAPTER CXI
HOW AND WHERE THE JEWS LEFT CASTILE

In the span of six months, the Jews sold and disposed poorly their estates. They married all the young men and women who were twelve years or older, one with the other, so that all the young girls from this age on up would be under the protection and company of a husband.

The first ones began to leave Castile during the first week of the month of July, the year 1492 of our Redeemer Jesus Christ. The following left Castile and entered Portugal with the approval of the King D. Juan [João II]: more than three thousand left Benavente so as to enter Portugal by Berganza [Braganza]. Thirty thousand left Zamora for Miranda and entered Portugal. Leaving Ciudad-Rodrigo for Villar were thirty five thousand souls, and leaving by Miranda de Alcántara for Maruan were fifteen thousand. Ten thousand people left Badajoz for Helves.

Of those who were on the frontier with Navarre, two thousand souls made their way into Navarre. Of those who resided on the frontier with Biscay, they entered by way of Laredo on the seacoast, and those of Medina de Pumar and its land were three hundred households. Entering Cádiz on the seacost were eight thousand households from Andalusia and from the [estates of] the Master of Santiago. Many others went by way of Cartagena and by the ports of Aragon and those districts, and others went to board ship at the ports of Aragon and its boundaries. Those from the kingdoms of Aragon and Catalonia boarded ship at the ports of Catalonia and Aragon and put out to sea, and many of them entered Italy. Others left for the land of the Moors to the Kingdom of Tunis, Tremecen, and other kingdoms, where fortune thrust them. These ones from the kingdoms of Aragon and Catalonia, and those of Castile, who boarded ship at the ports of Cartagena and within the boundaries of the kingdom of Valencia, were the ones who most experienced misfortunes, robberies and death on sea and on land wherever they went, as much from the Christians as from the Moors.

CHAPTER CXII
HOW THE JEWS LIVED IN SPAIN, AND OF THEIR RICHES AND OCCUPATIONS, AND OF THE FORTUNES THEY TOOK WITH THEM

Returning to recount of the other Jews that embarked at Puerto de Santa Maria and in Cádiz, and to the misfortunes and calamities that

happened to some and to others in this dispersion, I say: That these Jews of Castile, in whose time the Edict of the King and Queen took place, were situated in the best cities, villages, and locations, and in the choicest and best lands, and for the most part, they resided in the seignored lands [lands of noblemen]. All of them were merchants and retailers, and collectors of the excise taxes and assessed penalties, and stewards of the lords, cloth-shearers, tailors, cobblers, tanners, leather workers, weavers, spice-dealers, peddlers, silversmiths, goldsmiths, and other like occupations.

None of them worked the land, nor were they common laborers — neither carpenters, nor bricklayers, but rather they sought well-off positions, with the aim of gaining much with little work. They were a very subtle people who commonly lived off the many profits and usuries gained from Christians and, in a little time, many of the poor among them became rich.

Among themselves, they were very charitable with one another. Although they paid the tributes to the lords and kings of the lands in which they resided, they were never on account of it in much need, because their councils called *aljamas* supplied for all their needs.

They were the masters of all that was theirs. Wherever they lived, there were among them many rich men who had great riches and estates, who were worth a million or two million, or three. There were even persons who had ten million, such as Abraham Señor, who collected the taxes for Castile, and others who were merchants who had great sums of money.

And foregoing the glory of all this, and confiding in the vain hopes of their blindness, they took to the difficulties of the road, and left the lands of their births — the small and the large, the old and the young, on foot and riding on donkeys and other beasts of burden, and on carts; and they continued their journeys, each one unto the ports of destination. And they went by the roads and fields with great difficulties and misfortunes, some falling, others rising up, others dying, others being born, others becoming sick, that there was not a Christian who did not feel their pain.

Always, wherever they went, they were invited to be baptized, and some in their misery converted and stayed, but very few did so. And the rabbis were encouraging them, and made the women and young men sing, and made them play timbrels and frame drums in order to make the people happy. And thus they left Castile and arrived at the ports where some boarded ship, and others went on to Portugal. Those who

went to board ship at Puerto de Santa Maria and Cádiz, upon seeing the sea, would give great shouts and screams, men and women, adults and little ones, demanding in their prayers that God show them mercy. They expected to see some miracles from God, and that a road would open for them through the sea. Having waited there many days, and not having seen anything there but trouble, some did not wish to be born.

They were to set sail on twenty five ships and vessels, among which were seven ships with top-sail. It was with Captain Pero Cabron that they took the way to Orán, where the pirate Fragoso with his armada were in port. Seeing this, they sent a rabbi from among themselves to serve as the chief leader of the Jews, whom they called Rabbi Levi. When he arrived at Fragoso's boat, he explained the cause for this delegation, and he promised to pay 10,000 ducats on condition that Fragoso do no harm unto them, and that he allow them to disembark. The pirate assured them of this, and the rabbi returned to the fleet and to Captain Pero Cabron.

As soon as it became dark, and counsel had been taken, they changed direction to Arcila, but experienced difficulties. The seven ships stopped at the port of Cartagena where 150 souls demanded provisions, and it was given unto them, and they returned to Castile upon becoming Christians. And when the fleet returned to Málaga, four hundred people, men and women, demanded baptism, and they were taken out of the ships and baptized, and they returned to Castile. All the others were taken to Arcila where they were discharged onto the land, from which they went on to Fez.

CHAPTER CXIII
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE JEWS WHO ENTERED PORTUGAL

The Jews who entered Portugal gave King D. Juan [João II] a cruzado per head, so that he would allow them to stay six months. After this time, they embarked from the ports of Portugal, and they left in the month of March of 1493 to go to Africa to the kingdom of Fez. Six hundred of the richest families were allowed to stay for a certain period of time, after having given the king 100 cruzados per household. And another one hundred households stayed, upon giving eight cruzados per person within each household. They did this to delay their departure so as to know how it was going with the rest who had already left, because they already knew the bad goings on of those who were the first to

embark. Thus, more than a thousand souls remained captive in the king's power, because they had not paid the cruzados required for entry.

The rest of the ships, carrying the multitude of Jews that boarded in Gibraltar, went to disembark at Arcila. From there, they were taken in guarded groups to Fez by certain captained Moorish units, upon payment of sums of money, by command of the King of Fez. En route, they were robbed in diverse manners, and they took their young girls and women, and the valuables of the estate, and they assaulted the women in plain vision of their parents and husbands, doing a thousand outrages and misfortunes unto them. As a result, those who also were in Fez, inasmuch as there were many Moorish Jews there, they too were maltreated and were desperate. When this was found out by those who were going there, some did not even want to disembark and stayed camped out there in Arcila, as someone at a fair, where a great number of people gathered. This multitude being present, and having thought it over, many went to the village and became baptized. Many returned from Fez, seeing the evil doings there, from whom those in the camp knew how the returnees had been treated.

There [in Arcila], having reached an agreement, they divided into two groups. One went its way to the kingdom of Fez; the other demanded of the Count of Borba, who was the Captain-General in Arcila, for the love of Jesus Christ in whom they believed, that he have them baptized and have them returned to Spain. He received them and dealt charitably with them. The clerics baptized them, sprinkling holy water above [their heads] with hyssop, for there were many of them.

Afterwards, we, the priests and the clerics found out here by which routes they returned, having taken leave of Arcila throughout the entire year of 1493, when they began to return to Castile, until the year 1496 — there was no cessation of people passing from over there to here in Castile in order to become Christians. Here in this place of Los Palacios arrived one hundred souls whom I baptized, among whom were certain rabbis, who had a shield in which they had read an authority of the tenth chapter of Isaiah:

"Aperiam in montibus flumina, et in mediis
Campis fontes disrumpam, et terram sitientem
sine aquas confundam. Ecce puer meus
exaltabitur, et elevabitur et sublimis erit valde.
Haurietis aquas in gaudiis de fontibus
Salvatoris, et dicetis in illa die,
confitemini Domino, et invocate nomen ejus,

cantate Domino quoniam magnifice
Fecit, anunciate hoc in universam terram, etc."

which means:

"I will open up rivers in the mountains, in the middle of the fields shall I open them, the wells will I burst, and I will drench the dry land with water. Here have I my child, glorified and exalted most high will he be, you shall draw up water with gladness from the wells of salvation, and you shall say in that day: confess unto the Lord, invoke His name, let the people know of His handiworks, remember because exalted is His name. Sing unto the Lord, because indeed He has done miraculously. Announce it throughout the land."

This and other many prophecies of the advent, incarnation, birth, passion and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, they came confessing in Hebrew, admitting to the truth of their fulfillment in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. They confessed to truly believing that he was the true Messiah, of whom they said they were ignorant by impediment of their ancestors who had enjoined them, upon penalty of excommunication, that they neither read nor listen to the scriptures of the Christians.

All those Jews who had passed through the Kingdom of Fez, and who returned here, came naked, barefoot and full of fleas, dying of hunger and having undergone evil calamities, that it was a pain to see them. Within a matter of a few days, the king, upon having regathered these people from Fez, who were ruined, and had been robbed and made poor and from whom he could no longer profit, gave them permission to return and settle wherever they wanted. With this, many from Fez, men as well as women, returned to Castile, and they all came, as it is said.

And on the roads by which they came from Fez to Mazalquivir, and from there to Arcila, the Moors came out and stripped them nude to their bare skins. They threw themselves upon the women with force, and murdered the men, and they would open them up in the middle, searching for gold in their abdomen, because they knew that they had swallowed it. And they would pull them aside off the road, make them open their mouths so that they give them the gold, and thrust their hands [in the orifice] below for the same purpose. After having suffered so many evils, seeing themselves free here, they gave grace unto God that He had taken them out from among such beasts, and brought them to a land of people with reason. The women also confessed to very ugly

things that those brutal animals, the Arabs, had committed with them and with the young men, that it is not proper to write of them here.

See what calamities, what dishonors, what vexations, what bruises, what sufferings came upon this generation because of the sin of incredulity, and their contentions and vain affection in denying the Savior and their true Messiah, who is our Lord and redeemer Jesus Christ, who was always ready to receive them with open arms. Never of their own accord did they want to do so, until they were forced to come, by way of the said calamities, and here it appears that the prophecy was fulfilled, in which David states in the Psalm: "*Convertentur, ad vesperam et famem patientur ut canes et circundabunt civitatem*": which says, "Convert they shall in the evening, and they shall go hungry like dogs, and they shall go prowling about the city." Thus were these converted very late by force, and with many pains, as it has been said.

And upon seeing that continuously many came to become Christians, as many as could get in, the King ordered that guards be placed so that no more be allowed to enter than those who had already entered. And of those Jews who had entered the kingdom of Fez—if they had had the permission to return, or money to liberate themselves, of those Jews who entered the kingdom of Fez, not a single one would have stayed there had they had the chance to return and become Christians.

Of the seven hundred households that entered Portugal, some embarked for Italy, and others for the land of the Turk, and many were converted and baptized and returned to Castile to their same lands.

You should know that these Jews, who resided in Spain, were not all from the dispersion that resulted from the destruction in Jerusalem, that took place forty years after the passion of our redeemer. Because prior to these [Jews], there were Jews in Spain, especially in Toledo who, according to the accounts provided by some Jews and *confesos* who were descended from them, had come during the time when Rome ruled from Jerusalem to Spain; others said, [during the time] when Rome populated Toledo and Segovia, and that the books containing these memories were burned during the lootings of the Jewish quarter that took place in the time of Friar Vicente [Ferrer around 1411], at which time there were in Castile 100,000 married ones and even more.

Because it would be prolix and pointless to write more about these Jews, I do not want to add here more about them; except that in New Fez, those who settled there made a great Jewish quarter from houses of straw. One day, no one knows how, the village caught on fire such that

more than 2,000 houses, with all the belongings and valuables that were in them along with many personal libraries in Hebrew, were all burned. And they had to rescue people and with all this they were burned, such that immediately afterwards eighteen people died. Many among the living were burned, having escaped by fleeing, among which afterwards eighty people died. Later, a pestilence in the Jewish quarter broke out that resulted from this, and in very few days more than 4,000 people died of pestilence, and another 2,000 died in their beds.

CHAPTER CXIV
ON THE JEWS OF THE CITY OF FEZ

You might know that in the Kingdom of Fez, and in the adjacent capital city itself, there were many Jews like here in Spain; indeed, there were more than one hundred thousand residents. They, too, were robbed and many were killed at a single time, as in Castile many years ago. There was a Jew who was called Aaron, a subtle sage, who was favored by the King of Fez in such an excessive manner that he ruled and commanded in the kingdom as he so pleased. The Moors as a result of this became very discontented, those who were worth anything, and the common people revolted against the king and against the Jews. The multitude of Fez arose and killed the king and Aaron his favorite; from there, they entered the Jewish quarters, there being in the city more than two thousand households, and they put them all to the sword, killing and robbing, not leaving anyone alive except for those who wanted to become Moors. Thus they did in all those districts, and they made a new king in Fez.

In that time, those turncoat Jews did not practice the law of Mohammed any more than they had beforehand, just as was done here by the evil *Conversos* upon whom the Inquisition fell. There was someone who told the [new] king how those Jews had been made Moslems by force, and that he deal with them to determine if they were Moslems or not. He ordered that those who wanted to be Jews stay [as such]. Those who wanted to willingly remain Moslems, that they remain Moslems and be set free like the other Moslems; and those who remained Jews were to be subject to certain laws and conditions that he imposed--that they not wear shoes, except for sandals made of hemp; that they not mount a saddled horse, but rather that all of them walk; that they not bear arms; that the men not wear turbans nor headdresses, but that they wear all black; that the Jewish women not use pantaloons, nor cover the face, nor

use violet head-covers, nor wear cloaks. Overall, they made many ordinances harmful to the Jews. While in the field, they ordered that the Jews be separated, and that the Moors who were near them move to another part. [But] they feared that they would be killed, should they say they wanted to be Jews. So that only very few remained as Jews. The rest remained Moslem turncoats, and from this the city and the land were full, where there are now an infinite number of them. Afterwards, here, very many of them of that type have liberated themselves and returned to being Jews, giving a gold coin to the king, and he gives them permission to become Jews. This is the custom still being done today.

Source: Andrés Bernáldez, *Historia de los Reyes Católicos Don Fernando y Doña Isabel*. Vol. I, Sevilla. 1870.

VI. HISTORY OF THE NOBLE CITY OF SEGOVIA
Diego de Colmenares (1586–1651)

This Spanish writer-historian, of noble birth, received his schooling in law and theology. As a curate in a Segovia parish, he authored several works, his major work generally regarded to be his history of the city of Segovia (printed in 1637) from which the following selection is taken.

In these courts, the tribunals named *Consejos* [Councils] were established in the form in which they exist today. The one of justice is called the Royal Council of Castile; Council of State; Council of Finance; and Council of Aragon. A tribunal or council was lacking that would be distinguishable, and which would closely pursue the affairs of religion, the strong foundation for peace in the kingdoms. The monarchs desired this, and the enterprise was animated by the great Cardinal of Spain. Thus the formation of a council was effected in these courts, which they named *General Inquisition Suprema* and its counselors were called Inquisitors, because of the charge of their office. The [first] president appointed to this new council, with the title of Inquisitor General, was Fray Tomás de Torquemada, a Dominican and the prior of our convent of Santa Cruz. His appointment was confirmed by Pope Sixtus IV. With this bulwark of the faith established, the Spanish nation having defended itself in such corrupt past centuries against so many heretical assaults, the new Inquisitor General placed in our city the first Inquisi-

tional tribunal of the *Suprema* that there ever was in Spain. The most appropriate building appeared to be that of the Cáceres [family], because of its large capacity and its fortification for the jails...

The wise kings sought presently to purify the religion in their republics, commanding by public edict that whatever Jews lived in the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon leave the kingdoms within four months time. Strangely, the public announcement agitated those for whom it was intended, who with their gains and usuries ruled over the wealth of the kingdoms; [this was] an affair in which statesmen judged the [royal] determination to be a blunder, and which the Jews did not regard as a sure thing. But the kings, venerating God above all, and considering that the mixture of religion in the republics is the origin of atheism, ordered that it be executed in fact. This resolution altered the manner of this miserable people.

We have seen some written deeds of sales which were granted in those days of cultivated lands, and of homes which they had in our city in their quarter called the *judería*. [This *judería*] was on the noon side from the synagogue, today the Church of Corpus Christi, to the rear of what is today the main church, and passed by the gate which was named then *fuerte* ('fort') and which is now called the San Andrés gate, and extended up to the Casa del Sol that today is a slaughter-house.

The magistrate in our city was Diaz Sanchez de Quesada, a cavalier of such valor and reputation that it gave rise, either by misconception or by hearsay, to the popular practice of calling him then Don Dia Sanz de Quesada after Don Dia Sanz, one of the two Segovian conquerors of Madrid, inasmuch as this person vigorously fulfilled the royal mandate. When the deadline as given by the Edict at the beginning of August was reached, this wretched nation left their homes and went into the fields, and sent some of them to request a delay from the kings. The fields of the Osario, named thus for its having many sepulchres, and the valley of Tenerias were full of this miserable people, who threw themselves on the graves of their own deceased ones and in the caves of those rocks [where others were buried].

Some people of our city, religious and secular, zealous for the salvation of those souls, and wanting to avail themselves of such a good opportunity, went forth to preach unto them, and to inform them of their blind incredulity against the light of so much evidence throughout numerous centuries and calamities. Some were converted and were baptized, giving the name unto the place that is still called today *Prado Santo* because of this event. The rest of them left the kingdom.

With the republic cleansed of this discord, the kings aided the reformation of the religious orders, which were lax on account of the inquiet of the times...

Reference: Diego de Colmenares, *Historia de la Insigne Ciudad de Segovia*, 1640. Reprinted by "La Tierra de Segovia", 1921.

Additional material: *EUI*, "Colmenares, Diego de."

VII. CHRONICLE OF VALLADOLID

This anonymous diary-like chronicle provides an account of the conversion of the chief judge, Don Abraham Senior, and his family.

1492 May 31

On the last day of May of said year, Rabbi Abraham, the physician of the Cardinal, who was originally called thus, and observant of the laws of Moses, adopted the faith of Christ and became a Christian. The godparents at his baptism were the Cardinal of Spain D. Pero Gonzalez de Mendoza, Archbishop of Toledo, and the Papal Nuncio. He was baptized...[by] the Archdeacon of Castrol Rio in the church of Cordoba wherein they baptized him. The mother of the godson [was] the lady Doña Juana de Mendoza, the wife of Gomez Manrique, may God [protect him] there.

1492 June 15

On the fifteenth of June, Friday in the afternoon, were baptized in Santa Maria de Guadalupe D. Abraen Senior and his son D...who were thus named while Jews. By

> the grace of the Holy Spirit, they received the waters of the Holy Spirit. The god parents were the King and the Queen, our Lords, and the Cardinal of Spain.

They gave them the lineage of Coroneles [colonels]: the father they named Ferrad Perez Coronel: to the son Juan Perez Coronel. In the same manner [those] converted and baptized at that same hour (with the above King and Queen as godparents and the Cardinal) were the Rabi-mayor and his two sons, who were thus named when Jews. To the Rabi-mayor they named Ferrad Nuñez Coronel, and to his oldest son Pero Nuñez Coronel, and to the second son Francisco Nuñez Coronel.

Source: "*Cronicón de Valladolid*." *Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de España*, Vol. 13, Madrid, 1848.

Editor's note: The *Rabi-mayor* referred to here is Rabbi Meir Melamed, *not* Don Abraham Seneor. The correct matching of names is: Don Abram Seneor (= Ferrad Pérez Coronel) and Meir Melamed (= Ferrad Núñez Coronel). Surprisingly, many historians have incorrectly switched the Christian names adopted by Seneor and Melamed. In the article about Guadalajara Jewry listed below, different individuals are described as being a *rabi mayor*, indicating this was not a title exclusively reserved for the 'chief rabbi' of the kingdom. Possibly it means that the individual was a major Jewish leader or was an ordained rabbi.

In my historical novel, *The Alhambra Decree*, I suggested that Seneor coded a secret message in his name change; that is, the syllables of his new Christian name, *pe-rez co-ron-el*, should be regrouped to read as *perez-co ron-el* (*perezco* means 'I perish' in Spanish, *ron-el* means 'singing unto God' in Hebrew). If this speculation is correct, upon his baptism, Seneor meant to say: "I perish singing unto God".

Additional reading:

1. Cantera Burgos, F. and Carlos Carrete Parrondo, *Las Juderías Medievales en las Provincias de Guadalajara*, SEFARAD, XXXIII-XXXIV (1973-74).

2. Carrete Parrondo, Carlos, "La Hacienda Castellana de Rabbi Meir Melamed (Fernán Núñez Coronel)", SEFARAD, XXXVII (1977): 339-349.

VIII. WRITINGS OF AN ANDALUSIAN RABBI

Abraham Bokrat HaLevy

This elderly Málaga-born rabbi was well known as a poet and elegist in his day. Two excerpts from his writings are presented. The first is a personal statement on the conversion of Rabbi Meir Melamed. The second is taken from the introduction to his elegy on the expulsion.

(i)

When I heard that R'Meir Melamed had tried unsuccessfully to convert his pride, I said: He was named Meir ["he who gives light"], but there is no light [*or*] in him at all. His name is in reality the thickest of darkness. And those who call him by his name and those who named him this, it is as if they meant "an abundance of light" [the euphemism used for a blind man]. Indeed, the constellations [*me'orot*] about him saw the darkness of Egypt and descended to the inner recesses of his mind, realizing that the night, too, is sometimes referred to as light, and, finding white in soot, they gave him his name.

Source: Hacker, Joseph, "New Chronicles on the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain, Its Causes and Consequences" (Hebrew), *Yitzhak F. Baer Memorial Volume. Zion* 44 (1979): 201-228.

(ii)

And all [the Jews] left [Spain], about 200,000 on foot—men, women, and children—dispersed through the mountains and the seas as a shepherdless flock. And our enemies were happy at our misfortune, saying these have no Master. Thus we came to the kingdom of Tlemcen, about 12,000 souls. From the people here at that time, about three thousand people died in great distress. The remainder went about naked, without clothing, in the streets and the marketplaces. The Jews roamed outside, clinging to the trash-heaps. Famine grabbed them in that year, because we were walled off [from sustenance]. Many could not take it any more and returned to the kingdom of Castile and converted their honor. Likewise, this occurred to those who came to the kingdom of Portugal and the kingdom of Fez, and it was the same wherever one went...

Source: Ben-Sassoon, Hillel, "An Elegy on the Expulsion from Spain" (Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 31 (1961): 59-71.

IX. THE DE LA CAVALLERIA CHRONICLE

This chronicle of the illustrious and aristocratic De la Cavalleria family is found within a British Museum manuscript as an appendage to an extensive commentary on Psalms. The author is the son of Don Vidal Benveniste de la Cavalleria, the individual who negotiated the terms with King João II so as to allow the exiled Spanish Jews to temporarily settle in Portugal.

A "Family" Chronicle of the Expulsion from Spain
With the Help of God
A Memorial which Commemorates Sin

This came to pass in the days of King Don Fernando, who ruled in Castile and Aragon, etc. During the king's reign, his forces were stationed in the Granada valley, after he had conquered Málaga and Alhama, and had laid siege with his horses and cavalry to Granada. He then built a city and a wall all about, some distance from it and named it Santa Fe. After he had besieged it [Granada], all its ministers and all its people accepted him as their king. He and all his army entered into it, conquered it and imposed taxes on it. And it was credited to his name.

Afterwards, King Don Fernando was praised among kings because he did what none of his mighty fathers — men of stature, namely all the kings of Castile — had ever done since Granada had been founded [i.e., by conquering Granada]. He now became conceited and arrogant and

said to himself, "I will be like the superior kings, the kings of France and England, and just as they expelled and banished from their lands and kingdoms the Jews, I will do the same, for I am no worse than they. Thus I will fulfill 'they will not dwell in your land lest they corrupt you,'" etc.

He saw that the time was favorable and said to himself, "Let us sacrifice to God." That is why he raised his hand on high against Israel, [God's] people. At his counsel and the counsel of those who hated Israel who were close to him, they increased the burdens on Israel, and as they increased the burdens, so they [the Jews] sinned more and more. Out of respect for them, though, I will not mention their names on my lips. However, I will mention a wise man from Aragon who is a relative of mine, whose name is Messr. Alfonso [de la Cavalleria], son of Messr. Pedro [de la Cavalleria] the apostate, who converted along with his father, Don Fernando, and his entire household, in the days of the priest Fra Vicente [Ferrer], the hater of Israel. These converts, the "sons of the lion," known as de la Cavalleria, destroyed and hurled down their own souls first to the ground, and afterwards those of all their families, so that there only remained two brothers [who were faithful to the Jewish religion], Don Vidal my father and Don Salomon his brother, may their memory be a blessing. They alone cleaved to their King, the Lord. Upon all of Israel there was conversion, and they let pass over their souls the iniquitous waters, the bitter waters offered by these sinners as the price of their souls. Indeed, they had become accustomed to sinning, starting with the days of Fra Vicente, for these seventy years. From the wicked came forth evil, and evil brought forth gall and wormwood. This refers to Messr. Alfonso, who thought evil of God's nation, he and a group of his friends, who were with the king in his work. Together they conspired to destroy the name of Israel from the land. Thus [the king] issued a proclamation throughout all of Castile saying: "No [Jewish] man or woman is to be found in all the land within three months," by the end of July 1492 by their calendar, and by the Creation calendar up to the 9th of *Av* 5252, the day decreed for all generations for weeping. This man and another evil one, Don Abraham Seneor, the Satan of Israel, and Don Meir Melamed his relative, did not remain true to God's plan. Their Evil Impulse impelled them; not by force nor by strength nor by a mighty arm did they convert, to leave the community. As a result, people who did not understand what they should do followed these leaders, leaders who had used their wisdom to do evil, and

they too left the fold. The people thus followed in their counsels, turning aside from the proper path.

After the three months of the decree had ended, those Jews who feared God and took account of His name, deserted their resting place and left for other people whatever they owned, in order to sanctify the Holy One of Israel and their Redeemer. They threw their money into the courtyards, for they did not desire it, and from their homes they were expelled to Portugal and Cartagena and to Naples and to the land of the Ishmaelites. And because our sins were so great and our blame so immense, God's hand was against them. Many died because of the vicissitudes of the way, and many by hunger and thirst, or from poverty or too arduous work, while others converted because of their great distress and oppression. He who knows man's thoughts will pay each person according to his ways, and He, being merciful, will be forgiving. We had prepared our hearts to seek God, but the non-Jews threw us forcibly into a land of drought and of disorder. We, though, must nevertheless rely on the Holy One of Israel, who will not Humiliate one who relies on him, and if he returns to the Lord he will be healed.

And now, O Israel, see and observe, for He will return and take pity on us. The small number of that flock [the Jewish people] will soon become what is was, and there will yet be a young man in Jerusalem, and from the rising of the sun until its setting all nations will bow down to Him, and all the Jews will yet bring an offering to God, and each will come from his place. On that day the Lord will be one and His name one. The Lord of Hosts is His name.

Source: Hacker, Joseph, "New Chronicles on the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain, Its Causes and Consequences" (Hebrew). *Yitzhak F. Baer Memorial Volume*. *Zion* 44 (1979): 201-228.

X. THE STAFF OF JUDAH (*SHEVET YEHUDA*)
Solomon Ibn Verga (c.1450–c.1520)

This work is important in medieval Hebrew literature because it offered a fresh viewpoint on the causes of Jewish persecution. Rather than repeat the traditional religious explanation that Jews were being exclusively punished for their sinfulness, Ibn Verga proposed that natural human causes (lack of education, jealousy, transmitted hatred) were responsible for the expulsion; and being natural in origin, these causes were consequently correctable in principle. The book's structure is that of a compendium of accounts and dialogues that aim to reconstruct the course of Jewish history.

Well known in Spain as a vigorous community leader, Ibn Verga emigrated to Lisbon in response to the expulsion decree. When the Jews of Portugal were forcibly converted in 1497, he pretended to live as a Converso even though he claimed never to have been formally baptized. Later, after the Lisbon massacre of New Christians in 1506, he was able to move to Rome.

The Forty-Fourth Conversion

In Spain, there was a priest who had tremendous hatred for the Jews, and the rule is that whoever afflicts the Jews becomes a leader by doing so. He was the confessor to the queen, and he instigated the queen to force the Jews to convert. If they would not, they were to be put to the sword. The queen pleaded to the king, and begged him to do this. Some

time later the king gave in and decreed, at the advice of his wife, that all the Jews had to convert, and those who did not had to leave his kingdom. This was issued as a royal decree.

When the Jews heard this, they went to one of the king's ministers who loved them greatly. Indeed, the Jews had been beloved by the kings and ministers and all their wise men, who had always respected them highly. The expulsion order only remained in effect because of the intervention of some of the common people, who claimed that ever since the Jews had arrived in the kingdom food had become more expensive, and that Jews had usurped their positions in certain trades. The expulsion was also fostered by the priests, in order to show how saintly they were and to show the people that they wished to honor and advance the Christian religion. The priests therefore preached daily against the Jews. The other classes of Christians, though, respected the Jews highly, as if they dwelled in their own land, and they loved them greatly, as was known to the elders of Spain. Now, this minister said to the Jews: "The queen very much loves gold and silver. I therefore suggest you quickly gather together 5,000 gold pieces, and place them in a house which I will show you, which is close to where the queen lives. I will see to it that the queen passes there, and I will tell her how I suggest she should take care of your matter."

The Jews did as instructed. The minister had the queen pass that house and said to her: "Your majesty the queen! Is it worth cutting down a vine which yields such fruit?"

That day one of our seed who was very learned, named Master Martin de Lucena, passed that way, and said to the Jews: "What the queen sought will not take place. Tomorrow the priest will be hanged, and the custom is that when a person is killed, those decrees which he was instrumental in passing are annulled." That night, the king's servants testified that they had seen the priest speak of lustful matters to the queen. They asked the queen, and she confirmed that this was so. The king therefore ordered that the priest be hanged for his conduct. The king then ordered that the royal chronicles be read, for he knew that the priest had incited the queen to ask for the Jews to be forcibly converted or expelled. The king therefore, against his will, agreed to cancel the expulsion, and the money was returned to the Jews.

There is another, oral version of this, but I did not find it in writing.

The Forty-Fifth Conversion

In the year 5153 (1393), the community of Barcelona was lost as was most of Gerona, and in the end most of Catalonia, and the true reason for the mass conversion is unknown.

The Forty-Sixth Conversion

In the year 5172 (1412) the sky above Israel became dark, because there arose in Rome a pope who did everything in his power to force the Jews to convert, and imposed very harsh decrees on them. The queen of Spain joined with the pope in this, and the Jews were driven from their homes by the sword. They were in terrible straits, to the extent that 16,000 Jews left the fold. Many, though, sanctified God's name and were burned to death, while others were killed by torture. Those who fled fell in the fields, and there was none to bury them. A few saved themselves by giving away all their possessions to wayfarers and to the people of the villages.

The Forty-Seventh Conversion

In the year 5151 (1391), the Christians made false accusations against the Jews of Toro, of Lorit and of Carrión and all the villages near them. The same was true for the community of Burgos, which was an important community in terms of wisdom and wealth, and they left the Jewish religion. In the other places, they stood for the sanctification of God's name and were burned. From that time on most Spanish communities remained under siege and in distress, with each day more cursed than the previous one; and all that the people, or at least most of them, thought about was how to destroy the remaining Jews.

The Forty-Eighth Conversion

A manuscript in the handwriting of the wise and saintly R' Shem Tov b. Shem Tov, No. 37, states:

In the year 5150 (1390), in Spain, during the reign of King Henry, when he was still a youth, many people arose to have the Jews abandon their faith, and they persecuted and beat them greatly, to an extent unknown ever since the Jews had begun living among the nations. Because of their great troubles and suffering, many of the Jews in Spain left the faith of Moses, and especially a large mass in Seville, where most of them abandoned their self-respect. The same was true for the community of Cordoba and that of Ecija, and all of Andalusia, and other large cities, and so too Madrid, Leiscat and Ocaña, and the towns

of Huete, Castile, Manaris, Muñoz, Torrijos and Escalona, and not a soul escaped. The same was true for the other communities, which suffered unspeakable horror which one cannot describe in print, because it terrifies the heart, and from this they went from one evil to a worse one.

The Forty-Ninth Conversion

During the reign of King Don Juan, the son of King Henry, they added more troubles, taking away the Jews' livelihoods and imposing severe penalties against those who had not been converted. Jews were not permitted to trade in public and were forbidden to sell food to non-Jews, because they were accused of poisoning the medicine and food. Further, they decreed that Jews were not permitted to act as bloodletters or as doctors, except for the king's physician, that they could not buy estates, that they should wear a red mark as a sign that they were Jews, and that one found not wearing the mark was to be put to death. And there were numerous other decrees, one after the other, with their hand stretched out [against us] all the time. They might have completely turned us aside from the true religion, had we not been promised (Isa. 59:21), "It shall not depart out of your mouth, nor out of the mouth of your seed, nor out of the mouth of your seed's seed, from henceforth and for ever." This is a clear indication that God preserves us in the main area, and that is the existence of the religion of our teacher Moses, peace be on him.

That is the end of the wise man's words.

Many of the enforced conversions and exiles that Israel endured have not been written down. We are unable to tell about all the kingdoms and all the cities where the Jews lived. So too are there matters which it is not fitting to write, and we have already had fulfilled against us the verse (Lev. 26:38), "You will be destroyed among the nations." Not even one of every thousand Jews who left Jerusalem and the cities of Eretz Israel and came to Spain survived. As to those who went to France and Germany, where they were willing to give their lives for the sanctification of God's name, thousands were killed, and of those who went there, not even one in five thousand survived. The important rabbis of Germany wrote works describing all their troubles, and produced a large volume of the events which transpired in those countries. As these are already in writing, I saw no reason to mention them here, and especially as we have no way of verifying the truth of matters in those distant lands.

God is just, for we have rebelled against Him, and as we have paid our debt, may God make His face shine upon us and bring us back from our captivity, Amen!

The Fiftieth Conversion

Shlomo said:

I too heard and saw many such as these from those who were banished from Castile and Portugal and who suffered under the decrees of Fra Vicente [Ferrer] and other conversions. I had decided to write them here, but I saw that Don Judah Abravanel wrote them all in *Parashat Tokekhehot*. I therefore refrained from doing so, except for a few of the details which he omitted regarding all the troubles which the Jews experienced when they left Castile. Those who left by sea found that there was not enough food, and a great number of brigands attacked them each day. In some cases, the sailors on the ships tricked them and sold them as slaves in far distant islands, claiming they had taken them with their swords (Jer. 49:1): "Has Israel no sons? has he no heir?" etc. A number were thrown into the sea with the excuse that they were sick, so that the sailors could seize their property. As to those who left by land, they found fulfilled the verse (Deut. 28:61), "Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written."

In the great city of Toledo there was a great conversion at the time of Don Samuel Ibn Shushan the Wise, who would give oil to all the yeshivot of Egypt and of Jerusalem—may it be rebuilt and reestablished speedily in our days—each year. The decree, though, was annulled, because there came a great minister named Don Samuel Ha-Nasi, he being of the house of David, as he showed in writing and under seal. I have written about this in my work *Shevet Evrato*, and you will see it there.

The Fifty-First Conversion

Joseph said:

The reason for the banishment from Castile and its description were written by the great, wise Don Isaac Abravanel at the beginning of the introduction to his commentary on the book of Kings, and in his clear and luminous language, and this is his language:

In the year of *Mi-Zara* Israel [*Mi-Zara* is 252 in *gematria*, i.e., the year 5252, or 1492—translator], the king of Spain seized the entire kingdom of Granada and the great city of Granada, one with a large populace and an important city. Esau [the Spanish king], then said in

his heart: "How can I repay God who has enabled me to emerge victorious in battle? How can I greet my Maker who gave this city into my hands, if not by having enter into His fold the nation which walks in darkness, the scattered lamb of Israel, and have the wayward daughter return to my faith? Failing that, I will send them forth to another land before me, so that they will no longer live in my land and will no longer be before my eyes." He therefore issued a proclamation like that of the which stated: "I say to all the families of the house of Israel, that if you are baptized and pray and worship to the god of the other nations, you will eat of the best of the land as I do today, and you will dwell in the land and trade in it. However, if you refuse and rebel and do not wish to make mention of my god, you are to go out from the midst of my people, from the lands of Spain, Seville, Majorca and Sardinia which are under my rule, and within three months there is not to remain a single Jew in my realm!"

As at the time I was in the king's court, meeting with him three times, time and again, begging him: "Save us, O king. Why do you do thus to your servants? Impose a large payment on us, one of gold and silver, and every Jew will give for his land." I called upon all my friends who were close to the king, asking them to intercede before him with all their might, so that the decree to destroy all the Jews might be rescinded. But he remained completely deaf to my entreaties and did not respond to my plea. All this time, it was the queen who stood behind him and hardened his resolve to carry out the decree. We labored, but were not granted that which we sought. I did not rest and did not remain silent and did not let up, but the decree remained. As for the Jews, when they heard the decree, they all mourned, and wherever the news of the king's word and order was heard, the Jews despaired, and all feared greatly, a fear unequaled since the exile of Judah from its land to a foreign land. Each said to the other, "Let us strengthen one another in our faith and the Torah of our God, against the enemy who blasphemes and wishes to destroy us. If he lets us live, we shall live, and if he kills us, we shall die, but we will not desecrate our covenant and we will not retreat. We will go in the ways of the Lord our God." In the end there left, without strength, three hundred thousand people on foot, from the youngest to the oldest, all at one time, from all the provinces of the king, to wherever they were able to go. Their King went before them, God at their helm. Each pledged himself to God anew. Some went to Portugal and Navarre, which are close, but all they found were troubles and darkness, looting, starvation and pestilence. Some traveled

through the perilous ocean, and here, too, God's hand was against them, and many were seized and sold as slaves, while many others drowned in the sea. Others again, were burned alive, as the ships on which they were traveling were engulfed by flames. In the end, all suffered: some by the sword and some by captivity and some by disease, until but a few remained of the many. In the words of our fathers (Num. 17:28), "Behold we perish, we die, we all perish," may the name of the Lord be blessed.

The Fifty-Second Conversion

I heard from various elders who left Spain that a certain ship was struck by an epidemic. The captain thereupon threw the people onto the land, in a place where there was no human settlement, and there most died of starvation. A few managed to find the strength to walk until they found a settlement.

One Jew, along with his wife and two sons, decided to walk, and as the wife was unaccustomed to the exertion, she fainted and died. The man then carried his two sons, until he and his two sons also fainted from hunger. When he awoke from his faint he saw that his two sons were dead. In his despair, he got to his feet and said: "Lord of the Universe! You have done much to have me abandon my religion. I want you to know clearly that, in spite of the forces of Heaven, I am a Jew and I will remain a Jew, and whatever you have brought or will yet bring against me will be to no avail!" He then took some earth and buried his sons, and went on to look for a settlement.

The Jews did not wait for their own deaths, and each was occupied with his own distress, not noticing the distress of his fellow.

The Fifty-Third Conversion

Those who went to Fez endured a great deal from God, may He be blessed, and especially terrible hunger. The local inhabitants refused to allow them to enter the cities lest the price of food increase, and they were therefore forced to live in the fields and in tents. They grazed for grass but found none, because the climate was so dry that there was nothing, except for a few isolated clumps. A large number of them died there, and there was none to bury them. Those who remained alive simply did not have the strength because they, too, were starving. On the Sabbath, they would graze with their mouths, because one is forbidden to uproot anything with one's hands [on the Sabbath].

At that time, an event occurred, the like of which is unheard. An Arab came, and saw a beautiful young Jewish woman, and in front of her parents he violated her. About half an hour later he returned with a spear and stabbed the young woman through her belly. They said to him: "O cruel one! Why did you do this?" He answered: "I was afraid that she might have become pregnant, and her child would be raised as a Jew." Hear and see! Has such a thing happened in the world, or did one hear of such?

There too a woman saw her son faint, and as she had nothing with which to feed him, she lifted a rock and threw it at his head, so that the child died. After that, she beat herself until she died.

The Fifty-Fourth Conversion

When the Jews were in a field near Fez, where the famine was very severe, it got to the stage that a Jew would go to the city and sell his son as a slave for a slice of bread. The king of Fez, though, was a righteous man, and after the famine had ended he decreed that whoever had acquired a Jewish child for bread had to return him to his parents.

The Fifty-Fifth Conversion

In an area close to Fez there was a large ship belonging to non-Jews, and Jewish young men and women would pass close to that area. The captain called them over and gave each a slice of bread. When they saw this, they were overjoyed, and they went and told about it to other youngsters. The next day, about 150 young people arrived at the ship. The captain told them that if they came aboard he would give them enough to sate their hunger. Once they were all on the ship, he raised the anchor and sailed away. When the Jews, and especially the women, heard this, they ran to the shore and shouted, but there was none to help them. The captain then chose the most handsome among them and gave them as gifts to the ministers of the land, and the rest he sold as slaves abroad.

The Fifty-Sixth Conversion

From Spain, ships arrived in Italy. There too there was a severe famine, and there was a serious epidemic on the ship. The poor ones did not know what to do, but in the end they disembarked. The people of the cities, though, did not allow them to enter, and they went to Genoa. There, too, there was a famine, and they were allowed into the city. The young ones were unable to take this deprivation, and they went to the

churches to convert so as to be given a little bread. Many of the Christians would walk about in the city carrying a cross in one hand and a little bread in the other, and would say to the Jewish youngsters: "If you bow down to this, you will receive the bread." By this means, many were converted and assimilated among the non-Jews.

The Fifty-Seventh Conversion

Among the Jews who came to Genoa, there were those who left for Rome because of the famine. The Jews who were in Rome gathered together to try to prevent them from entering the city, because they were afraid that their livelihoods would be affected. They immediately gathered a thousand florins to give the pope as a present so that he would not permit the other Jews to enter his land. When the pope was told this, he said: "This is something new to me, because I had heard that Jews always help one another, and yet here they are acting cruelly!" He therefore decreed that they, too, were to be banished from his land. The Jews of Rome were then forced to collect another two thousand gold pieces to give the pope, and they agreed to having the other Jews settle there as well. Thus, the poor exiles were enabled to eat of the fat of the land.

The Fifty-Eighth Conversion

On a ship carrying those who had fled from Spain, the captain wanted to kill [the Jews] in order to steal their possessions. On the ship was a merchant who was kind-hearted, and he said: "It is a terrible sin to shed the blood of the innocent!" The cursed captain answered: "I am only taking revenge for the blood of Jesus which they shed!" The merchant answered: "He forgave all for his blood, so that mankind might find atonement — and are you then not willing to be forgiving? I suggest that you cast them onto an island, and if they die they die, but you will not be responsible for their deaths!" The cruel captain stripped them and cast them overboard on a promontory near the seashore, in a place where no human lived.

None of the poor people who had been thrown there got up because of embarrassment, because all were naked, and only at night did they walk about. They would find water in various crevices, sweet water which they would drink, and thus they remained for three days. At the end of the third day, they said to one another: "Let us climb the promontory and see from there if there is any settlement or village, so that we may live!" With great effort, they climbed to the top, and found

there a den of lions. The lions attacked them and killed one of them, while the others jumped off the mountain and broke their bones in their fall. The poor Jews who had sought salvation jumped into the sea to escape from the lions, and only when the lions returned to their dens did they return to the land. They remained that way for five days.

At that time, they saw a ship approaching. The people on the ship had sailed closer because they had been amazed to see people in an area where no one had lived. The captain sent a man to enquire, and the Jews told him all that had befallen them. The captain took pity on them and ordered that they be brought on the ship. He then took an old curtain and cut it up, and gave each man enough to cover his private parts and each woman enough for a cloak for modesty, and he gave them food and drink. Then, when he came to a place where Jews lived, he had them disembark. The poor people hurriedly sent a messenger to the Jews, because they thought the captain wished to sell them. The heads of the Jewish community came abroad the ship and the captain said to them: "I did not take these poor unfortunates by means of the sword in order to take ransom. I will be quite content if you pay me my costs." They immediately paid his costs and gave him a gift, and the Jews took their brothers and aided them, as is the Jewish way.

Throughout the lives of those poor people, they prayed that God grant long life to the captain of that ship, and that God reward him.

The Fifty-Ninth Conversion

What shall we say and what shall we speak of the decrees of Lisbon? The worst of all was the taking of their children and casting them onto desolate islands, known in Spanish as *Islas Perdidas*. When the children were seized by the order of the king and taken by ship, one cannot possibly describe to one who did not see it with his own eyes the weeping and anguish of the mothers! But there was none to pity or comfort or to intercede on their behalf.

There was one woman from whom they took seven children. When this poor woman heard that the king had left for his church, she fell at the legs of his horse and begged him that he leave her the youngest. [The king] refused to listen to her, and told his servants: "Throw her away from me!" She, however, kept pleading, and they became angry at her. Finally, the king said: "Leave her alone, for she is like a female dog whose pups are taken from her!"

May God see and judge the oppression of the Children of Israel!

Some said that the reason for this [Lisbon] decree was that those who had been exiled from Spain had promised the king [of Portugal] a certain amount if he allowed them into his kingdom, and in the end many had not paid, so that this bitter fruit was produced.

Many of those youngsters died on the ships because of the different food and climate, while others, after landing on the islands, were devoured by crocodiles which lived in the lakes and at the shore. Over the course of time, brothers married their sisters.

The Sixtieth Conversion

There was a decree that people be put to death. I was outside Lisbon for a time, and when I returned I was told by an old man, "The two kings are not the same, but what they have in common is their evil ways!" What the old man told me, I will set down here.

On the night of Passover, the Christians found *conversos* sitting with *matzot* and bitter herbs before them, conducting the *seder*. They brought them to the king, and he ordered they be imprisoned until their verdict was rendered. At the time, there was a tremendous famine in the land, and the Christians gathered together and said: "Why did God do this to us? It must be because of these Jews!" When word of this came to the preachers, they decided that they must do something to help the Christians. One of them then arose in church and delivered a bitter denunciation against the Jews. They also made a hollow cross, with an opening at the back and the front of glass. Inside it, they placed a lighted candle, and they then said that the cross would produce fire. When this happened, the people fell on their faces and said: "See the great miracle! This is proof that God will judge the Jewish people by fire." One of the *conversos* who came there, and who had not heard what had been said, exclaimed innocently: "I wish it was with water rather than fire, because it is water we need in this drought!" The Christians then announced: "He is mocking us!" They immediately took him out and killed him. When his brother heard of this, he came there and said: "Woe, my brother, who killed you?" One of those present then drew a sword and cut off his head, throwing it onto his brother's body. Afterwards, the priests took all the Christ-bearing crosses out into the city streets and announced: "Whoever kills a Jew will receive a hundred days' penance in the world to come!" Then the people arose, sword in hand, and in three days they killed 3,000 people. They would drag them into the street, where they would burn them. A number of pregnant women were thrown out of the windows of their homes onto waiting

spears. And there were other such bestial acts, but this is not the place to relate them.

Some said that the hatred of the Christians for the Jews was due to their hatred for a Jewish tax collector named Mascarigas, because he would lord it over them and would impose all types of ordinances upon them. The proof that is given is that as soon as they found this tax collector, they stopped their rampage. The judges of Lisbon were in no way to blame, nor were its leaders, because this was done against their will. Indeed, they tried to save the Jews. However, faced with the mob, they were unable to do anything. In fact, the mob even attacked those who tried to aid the Jews, and they had to flee themselves.

The king of Portugal was a righteous man, and was not in the city at the time. When he heard of what had happened, he cried bitterly and immediately came to the city. He investigated and found that this had been a plot by the priests. He ordered that the church from which this had originated be razed to the ground, but his ministers did not permit this. He then wished to kill the murderers, but his advisers showed him that the law stated that any crime involving more than fifty people did not warrant a death penalty, except for the actual perpetrators. The king then ordered that the priests be seized, and that they be burned to death. In ancient days, Lisbon had been known as "the faithful city." The king then ordered that for three years it be proclaimed "the rebellious province."

The Sixty-First Conversion

I heard that in Spain a few people had claimed that a young Christian boy had been found dead in the home of a Jew, and that there had been a cut opposite the heart. They claimed his heart had been removed in order to use it in Jewish ritual. Don Shlomo Ha-Levi, who was a Torah scholar and a kabbalist, came, and placed God's name underneath the boy's tongue. The boy then awoke and related who had killed him and who had cut out his heart, in order to falsely accuse the Jews.

I did not find this in writing, but only heard it.

The Sixty-Second Conversion

In the great city of Seville lived R' Judah Ibn Verga, may his memory be a blessing. When the Inquisition came there, the local residents said that if its members wished to know which of the *conversos* were still practicing Jewish ritual, they should seize R' Judah Ibn Verga,

because everything the Jews did, they did in accordance with his command. Before the Inquisition came to fetch him, he knew about it. He then placed three pairs of doves in the window: one pair killed and plucked, and he wrote on their necks: "These are the *conversos* who left recently." The next pair were plucked but not killed, and these stated: "These are the middle ones." Finally, he left one pair untouched, and on them he wrote: "These are the ones who left first."

Many of the *conversos* were burned alive, in order to fulfill the decree from heaven. R' Judah fled to Lisbon, where he was tortured mercilessly in order to tell them who still practiced Jewish belief. He, however, withstood the test, and died of the torture in the jail. May the merits of all the saintly ones remain with us!

The Sixty-Third Conversion

Shlomo said:

When a person thinks of these terrible blows, he will be amazed and say: "Why this great anger? God did not act this way to any other nation, even though they have far greater sins than the Jews!" All these questions and such as these can be answered by a single verse, which states (Amos 3:2), "You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." In addition, there are seven reasons for what happened to us: First—the sins of our fathers, as our Sages stated, "'On the day that I afflict, I will afflict' (i.e., once the sons are punished for their own sins, the sins of their fathers are also visited upon them—translator), and we read (Lam. 5:7), "Our fathers have sinned, and are not; and we have borne their iniquities." The second reason—when one does not have great merit, exile continues naturally because of the hatred of the Jewish religion and the desire by the ruler to convert everyone else to his religion. Our Sages, of blessed memory, said: "Why was the mountain named Sinai? because from it there descended *sin'ah*—hatred." This is all the more true when our religion forbids us to eat and drink with them, for this brings to the drawing together of people, as our Sages of blessed memory state: "Great is drinking, in that it brings together those who are far," and as they stated: "For that You did." The third—the killing of Jesus, and not in vain did not Moses state (Ex. 8:22), "Shall we sacrifice the abomination of Egypt before their eyes without them stoning us?" The fourth—the three great envies: envy of religion, and the coveting of women, and money, and all three of them applied to Israel with the other nations, because in Spain they had already begun to look at the

non-Jewish women out of habit. Some had even found ways to permit these women to themselves, claiming that the sin is only one for which the punishment is lashes, whereas they did not see that the penalty is that the zealots may kill them, and that the punishment by oral tradition is *karet*. Furthermore there are all the sins involved if the woman has a child who is an idolater. The coveting of money—because the Jews were engaged in the same crafts and trade. Then, when a man was found to steal, the blame was laid on all, as is their way, and that way the name of Heaven was desecrated, for they said we have no religion. As R' Mosheh of Coucy (?) wrote, even if this happened only among our own people, that would have been enough to extend our exile, and it states in the prophets (Zeph. 3:13), "The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies." The fifth—that our people had become accustomed to take false oaths, and Ibn Ezra wrote that that alone is enough to extend our exile. The sixth—the conceit which we felt. Some of our people wanted to be lords over the non-Jews. And it was because of conceit that in the year of the exile, on the night of *Yom Kippur*, there was an argument in the synagogue about seats, and each took a torch from before the *hekhal* in order to beat the other. [The seventh point is missing.] There were many other such sins, and God is righteous.

Source: Ibn Verga, Solomon. *Shevet Yehuda*. Ed. A. Shohat, Jersualem, 1947.

Additional material: *EJ*, "Ibn Verga, Solomon."

XI. THE VALE OF TEARS
(*EMEK HABACHA*)
Joseph Hacohen (1496–1577)

The author was born in Provence to parents with Aragonese roots. When the entire family moved to Italy, Joseph, at an early age, took up the practice of medicine. Versant in many languages, he distinguished himself in the composition of two major chronicles: first the *Chronicles of the Kings of France and the Ottoman Empire* followed by the present *Vale of Tears*. In writing this historical and moralistic account of Jewish persecution through the ages, and particularly in his own day, he sought out original sources to serve as the basis for his accounts.

No stranger to hardship, Joseph HaCohen and his family would experience expulsion twice from Genoa — once in 1516 and later in 1550.

After Granada had been under the rule of the Moors for two hundred years, Ferdinand and Isabella, the rulers of Spain, besieged it and conquered the whole territory of this realm by their power: the city of Granada was delivered unto them in January of 1492, and the Jews living in that province fell victim to plunder and booty.

The number of Marranos had increased in Spain much since the days of Fra Vicenza. They had intermarried with the most aristocratic citizens of the country and were highly respected. The Jews also grew in number until the days of Ferdinand and Isabella. These two appointed Inquisitors over the Marranos to find out whether or not they followed

the precepts of the Christian religion. They made the name Jews into a horror, a by-word and object of satire. Many of them were burned then. God also did not lift His hand to spare their destruction; one stormed against the other, a lad against an old man, the despised against the venerable. And if a woman longed for the silver and gold vessels of her neighbor, or a woman who shared the same building with her and the woman refused to hand them over, she was denounced. During that time the Jews became disgusted with their lives. Now, as these two rulers saw that many adhered to the House of Israel, they expelled the Jews from their country so that the Marranos would not follow in their paths, as many had done to that day. All the Hosts of the Lord, the Exiles of Jerusalem in Spain, emigrated from this cursed land and in the fifth month of 5252 (1492), and from there they dispersed to the four winds of the earth. On Friday, the tenth day of Ab (August 3), sixteen large ships sailed from the harbor-town of Cartagena filled with Hosts of Humanity, without those (of course) who did the same thing in other parts of the kingdom; and they went where the whim of the moment drove them: to Africa, Asia, Greece, Turkey; and they remain there to this day. Stark, grave suffering and all kinds of perils met with them; the mariners of Genoa abused them daily and people languished on the way there. The Moslems killed a part of them in order to rob them of their gold some of which they swallowed in order to hide it. Others were devoured by pest or by starvation. They cast another one overboard into the waters; others were cast off naked by the ships' captains on the islands of the sea, and still others were sold as male and female slaves in proud Genoa and its surrounding territory in this terrible year.

Among those who had come by ship to Italy was a Hazan (cantor) by the name of Joseph Zibhon with a son and several daughters. One of them caught the heart of the ship's captain. When the cantor's wife learned this, she preferred to commit suicide: she cast her daughters into the sea and plunged after them. When the seafarers learned this, they became full of terror and descended into the sea to bring them back on the ship, but only one fell into their hands. The name of one of the sisters was Paloma (the Dove). Her father cried over her with a lament of these words: "And they took Jona (the Dove) and cast her into the sea."

Many remained in Spain who had not the strength to emigrate and whose hearts were not filled with God. Thus, many of them were lured away from their faith. Behold this, Oh Lord, and witness it. To whom

have You done this? Where else has man eaten up the fruit of his own loin?

Among those who were cast off on the islands of the Provence was a Jew with his old father who, smarting from hunger, begged for bread. No one gave him anything in this foreign land. The son went out and sold his own youngest son for bread so as to revive the old man, but when he returned to his father, he found him laying dead. Thereupon he rent his clothes, returned to the baker to retrieve his son; but when that man refused to hand him over, he began to cry out loudly and bitterly, and no one stood by his side. Oh God, all this happened after five thousand years had taken their course and in the month of Ab in that year. The word "Rabim" corresponds to the numerical value of that year as alluded to in Isaiah: "For numerous are the children of the desolate." Yet we have not forgotten You and did not renege on Your Covenant. But now, Oh God, do not stay away from us; hurry back to our aid, for You, Oh Lord, are our help; champion our cause and save us for Thy Name's sake.

The King of Navarre, however, did not exile the Jews from his country, and many who had come from Aragon settled there. After the course of one year, as those men whose hearts were filled with God wished to move away from this iron oven, because they feared for their lives, the King of Aragon permitted them to cross his land. They reached the Provence by ship and remained for a short while in Avignon.

Among the arrivals was my uncle, Don Bonafous, his mother, Preciosa, his wife, Orazetta, and my mother, Dolca, who spent her youth in the house of her mother as did the sons of Don Bonafous. Also Don Abraham Official and his wife Myrrha and many other whose names I have forgotten arrived with them. There they found my father, Rabbi Yehoshua, from the stock of Cohanim (Priests), who had moved away from Fort Huete. They gave him my mother, Dolca, for a wife on the 15th of Ab in the year 5255 (1495). But they did not remain there for long and moved to Turkey where they have lived to this day. After a short time, the King of Navarre expelled those Jews who had remained there, but when, because the road had been barred, they could not migrate, they fell away from the Lord, the god of Israel.

The Jews of the Provence were also to be expelled in those days, but they refused to leave this land of destruction and chose another faith. They have remained there to this day. In the Provence only those who lived in Avignon and in the towns belonging to the Pope remained.

In the meantime, the Lord was zealous for His people and retaliated against the two rulers for their handiwork: their daughter died in Portugal and Ferdinand's oldest son died of a dread disease so that no male heir, who could inherit the crown, was left to them. His wife, the infamous Isabella, was also fed up with her life because a part of her body had been eaten up by a bad and grave disease, called cancer; and she died. Verily, God is just.

Jospeh Hacohen speaks: The exile from France and the above named fatal and terrible banishment have prompted me to compose this book so that later generations of Israel may know how we have been afflicted in these countries and places. For, behold! new days have arrived! About six hundred family fathers migrated, in the Year of Exile, from Castile to Portugal with the consent of King João II, who had made a pact with them in consideration of a headtax of two guilders to be paid to him. He also promised to deliver ships to those who did not wish to remain in his country. With the aid of the ships, these Jews were to be allowed to go to whatever places their hearts desired. However, the plague reigned in that year in Portugal, and it had also begun in Italy, where many died. After a short while, many expressed the desire to emigrate to the land of the Moslems and to Turkey. These demanded ships from the King, but he procrastinated with much double-talk. But when they remained persistent, he gave them ships and they began their voyage without harm and went on their way. En route, however, the mariners rose against them, tied them up with ropes, raped their wives before their eyes, and nobody came to their aid. Thereafter they brought them to Africa, and then ejected them on a barren, empty, and unfertile land which seemed uninhabited. Their children asked for bread, but no one could give them anything, and their mothers lifted up their eyes toward Heaven in this fateful time. Those who dug the graves cried out to the mountains, "Oh cover us!" for many sank feint to the ground like dead; and they wished to forfeit their lives because of the heat of hunger. But as they lifted up their eyes toward Heaven, some Arabs came upon them and stopped and waited to see if those people would face up to them. When they did, the Arabs reproached them and talked to them harshly because the Jews had come into their land without making a covenant with them beforehand. Then they made them into slaves and dragged them along behind. But these poor ones, eaten up by hunger, regarded this as fortunate and they praised God. Then the Jewish inhabitants of the country brought them out of bondage and presented them with clothing, food and drink out of pity. May God

remember them forever. After this became known in Portugal, the remaining Jews there became filled with fear and did not dare to emigrate. And in the second year after the Israelites had moved away from Castile, the King of Portugal inquired if more than the original six hundred family-fathers, with whom he had made his pact, had entered his country. When it was found that, in the haste, more than that number had come in, he had the excess arrested, declared them to be his slaves, and refused to accept ransom. Then was their life truly embittered.

His servants who plowed the sea with his ships discovered an island which they named St. Thomas. Not only can large fish, called lagartos, be found there, but also snakes, toads, and basilisks. The King used to send common criminals there, and those who had been sentenced to death. There he sent the poor Jews, together with the criminals, and no one came to their aid. the mothers rose their voices with weeping when these barbarians tore the children from their laps, and the men tore out their beards because of their souls' grief in this time of terror. Many prostrated themselves before the King, saying, "Please, let us go into exile with them," but, like a deaf viper, he refused to listen and ignored them completely. One woman, who clutched her child to her bosom, plunged into the sea because of her grief, and thus found their death. See and witness, if such a thing has ever occurred before! When they were on St. Thomas, some of them were swallowed up by the lagartos and others died of deprivation of all necessities. Only a handful were able to save themselves, and their parents mourned them for a long time.

The oldest son of King João, Don Alfonso, married the daughter of the Spanish King, Ferdinand, and he loved her much. But when he rode on his fleet-footed horse on that day of his rejoicing, God punished him, and he fell to the ground and died on the following day. His father mourned him. After a short while, King João also passed away, for he had been poisoned. And he left no heir for his kingdom. He was followed by Manoel who had been hostile toward him and had planned his perdition. After the course of five years, from the time the Israelites had emigrated from Castile, Manoel let it be known publicly in Lisbon and all the other cities of his realm that those who bore the name of Israelite, had either to leave the country or to accept a new religion; and any other Jew who was found there later on was to be killed. Through this decree the Jewish Community in Lisbon was destroyed. In their great travail, the Jews decided to emigrate to serve their Lord, the God

of their forefathers. But when the King heard that, he ordered them to come to Lisbon, promising to provide ships for their departure. When they got there, they were cast into prison and were told, "Choose another religion and become like us, and if not, it will be done by force." But they did not listen to the King's voice, and when he saw that he had no effect on them, he ordered all the young Jewish men up to twenty-five years of age to step forward from the circle of their parents. When they were surrounded, a loud and mournful cry went up; and, in the king's name, spurious promises were made to them, and they were asked to leave the Holy One of Israel. But when they paid no attention to him nor lent an ear to his impressive entreaties, they were grabbed by the arm or the hair of their bears or the curls of their heads, and then dragged to the church where they were sprinkled with baptismal water, given different names and handed over the authority of the country's populace. Thus they became converted.

Thereafter, one of the King's servants went to the aged and said to them, "Your youngsters and sons have already accepted a new religion: do as they have done so that ye may live." However, as they refused to listen to him, the King commanded that they be given neither bread nor water, and when, after three days of fasting, they still refused to listen to him, they were dragged to a church, mercilessly beaten - not even the faces of the very aged were spared - and then, forcibly baptized. Many refused even then and preferred to be killed. One man wrapped his son in a prayer-shawl and exhorted them to sanctify the Name of the Holy One of Israel, whereupon one died after the other, and he himself after them. Another man killed his dear wife, and then plunged the sword into his body so that he died. Those who wished to bury the dead, were murdered by the Christians with pikes. Many plunged themselves into graves just to remain faithful, and many jumped through fences and out of windows, and their corpses were thrown into the sea by the Christians in the presence of all the other Israelites. This was done to intimidate their hearts so that they would no longer persist in their obstinacy. Later on they were continuously defamed, ridiculed and daily falsehoods were testified against them in order to destroy them and to usurp their possessions. And they became weary of living. The monks also conceived evil things against them and created a bad name for them in the eyes of the populace, saying, "When pestilence, war and famine come to your land, it will happen solely because of the greed of those who cling in their hearts to Judaism."

Source: Joseph Hacohen & the Anonymous Corrector, *The Vale of Tears (Emek Habacha)*. Translated plus critical commentary by Harry S. May. Martinus Nijhoff, the Netherlands, 1971, 65–71.

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Additional material: Ha-Kohen, Yosef, *Emeq Ha-Bakha de Yosef Ha-Kohen*. Spanish translation by Pilar Leon Tello. Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Instituto Arias Montano, Madrid, 1964.

XII. THE OFFERING OF JUDAH
(*MINHAT YEHUDAH*)
Judah ben Jacob Hayyat (c.1450–c.1510)

Hayyat began his mystical studies in Spain where he was born. This recounting of his personal misfortunes is part of a commentary on the Kabbalistic work, *Ma'arekhet ha-Elohut*. His commentary is generally regarded as one of the finest examples of post-expulsion Kabbalistic literature.

And when I, Judah, the son of my wise, pious, and perfect master, Rabbi Jacob Hayyat, peace be upon him, was in Spain, I tasted a little of the sweet joy of learning, my eyes were filled with light, and I set my heart upon searching and delving into the realm of knowledge. I "went from strength to strength" in gathering all that now exists of the book I have mentioned. I gathered a little here and a little there until most of what now exists was in my hands. And I believe with absolute faith that the merit I thus acquired stood me in good stead throughout all the troubles that befell me in the course of the expulsion from Spain, troubles that will cause the ears of all who hear them to ring. I do not know how to recount all these troubles in full, but I shall relate some of them and shall speak the praises of the Lord.

My family and I, together with two hundred and fifty other souls, sailed in one small boat from the great city of Lisbon in the kingdom of Portugal, in midwinter, at the command of the king, in the year 1493.

And the Lord, blessed be he, smote us with the pestilence to fulfill the words of Scripture: "I shall smite them with the pestilence and destroy them." That was the reason why there was no place where anyone would receive us. "Be off with you, unclean ones," was their cry unto us. And so we sailed the sea, wandering and tossing about, for four months, with but little bread and scant water. At the end of this time a Biscay boat came upon us. We were taken captive, deprived of our wealth, and brought to the great city of Malaga in Spain. There we lay at anchor against our wishes, for we were permitted neither to go ashore nor to sail from there. Each day priests would come aboard our ship at the order of the bishop, to hold sermons before us. They kept repeating to us: "Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon them." And we would answer: "What will ye see in the Shulammite? As it were a dance of two companies."

And when they realized the devotion and the tenacity with which we clung to our God, the bishop placed an interdict upon them that they give us no bread, and no water, and no provisions whatsoever. Perhaps that would cause us to seek conversion. This went on for five days, and throughout those days the rulers and grandees of the city, in the company of learned priests, kept coming aboard our ship and saying to us: "How long will you refuse to hearken unto us?" — referring to the verse: "Who is the man that desireth life?" Thereupon close to one hundred souls apostatized in one day, since they could not withstand this bitter trial, and since those who died by the sword were more fortunate than those who died by starvation. Those of us who remained — a few out of many — were strengthened in our resolve to prefer death, for we said: "It is better that we die at the hand of the Lord."

Then my dear innocent wife, peace be unto her, expired of hunger and thirst; also, maidens and young men, the old and the young, altogether close to fifty souls. As for me too there was but a step between me and death. There was then indeed fulfilled that which the prophet, peace be upon him, had foretold: "And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east...In that day shall the fair virgins and the young men faint for thirst." "Out of our straits we called upon the Lord; he answered us with great enlargement." And out of affliction respite did come, for the bishop revoked the interdict, once he saw how stubbornly we clung to our God. From then on we were brought all kinds of food, and we lay there at anchor another two months, against our wishes, until we were finally permitted to go at

will. From there we set sail for the Barbary coast, in the kingdom of Fez.

In the Moslem country the people are evil and great sinners against the lord. What the pestilence left behind, the locust consumed. There too I found neither peace nor rest. A certain Moslem who had come from Spain lived in the same house with me. He happened to be there because his people too had been subjected to expulsion. He brought charges against me that when I was in Spain, I had ordered the Jews of my community, among whom I served as teacher of the Law, to make an effigy of Mohammed, the prophet of the Moslems, and to drag it again and again through the market places and streets of the city at a time when the holy congregations were holding joyous celebrations over the conquest of the great city of Granada [by the Christians]. His charges were given credence upon the alleged testimony of three witnesses. Thereupon I was beaten and wounded. I was stripped of my clothes, cast into a pit full of snakes and scorpions, and soon hereafter condemned to be stoned to death. They assured me, however, that if I would apostatize, I would be set up as prince and ruler over them, not to mention the reward and gifts I would receive. But the Lord in whom I placed my trust confounded their evil devices, although I stayed there close to forty days in pitch darkness, with sparing bread and scant water, and my stomach sagged to the ground from hunger and thirst, and I was naked and lacking everything. And the Lord stirred the spirit of the Jews of Susa and they came to ransom us. I gave them almost two hundred books that I had, in return for the ransom they paid.

After I left there I proceeded to the great city of Fez. Famine prevailed in this city, until we were reduced to eating the grass in the fields. Every day I ground grain with my two hands at the homes of the Moslems, in return for a small slice of bread, thinner than thin, not fit even for dogs to eat. And during the nights my stomach sagged to the ground and my swollen belly was my bolster. Because of the intense autumn cold, because we had no covering against the cold, and also because we had no houses in which to spend the night, we used to dig holes in the rubbish heaps in the city and burrow into them. Then were fulfilled the words: "They who were brought up in scarlet embrace dunghills." And then I managed to get to the kingdom of Naples, after much wandering and troubles too numerous to count. But even there I found neither peace, nor quiet, nor rest, for trouble came, ushered in by the king of France. I was included in the general roundup of all the Jews

of the kingdom, and again I was beaten, and wounded, and stripped of all my clothes and of all that I had.

After that, I came, clothed in rags, to the great city of Venice, by way of the sea. When the Spanish grandees who were there saw me, their eyes brimmed with tears and they clad me. May the Lord requite their work and may the Lord succor them in the day of evil.

If my strength was the strength of stone, if my flesh was of brass to withstand all these misfortunes, it was no doubt by merit of my efforts and my exertions in pursuit of knowledge, which stood by me and strengthened me measure for measure, just as I took hold of her when there was none to uphold her.

From the city of Venice I made my way to the great city of Mantua. There I found a certain scholar from Spain, Rabbi Joseph Jabez, a survivor of the expulsion, a man righteous in all his ways and gracious in all his works, as fine in his practice as he was in his preachings. He, along with other wise and important personages, requested of me that I prepare a commentary to the Order of God, since they were eager to behold the graciousness of the Lord and to visit early in his temple. I was inclined to fulfill their desire and withheld nothing from them.

Source: From *A Jewish Reader: In Time and Eternity*, pp. 198-201, edited by Nahum N. Glatzer, translated by Olga Marx Perlzweig. Copyright 1946, 1961 and reviewed 1974 by Schocken Books, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Schocken Books, published by Pantheon Books, a division of Random House, Inc.

Additional material: *EJ*, "Hayyat, Judah ben Jacob."

XIII. THE CROWN OF A GOOD NAME (*KETER SHEM TOV*)

Shem Tov ben Jamil

The Jews were expelled from the kingdom of Navarre in 1498, owing to pressures exerted by Ferdinand and Isabella. Because Navarre was completely surrounded by territories belonging to Castile and León (where trespassing as a Jew was punishable by death), most of the Jews of Navarre, seeing the situation as hopeless, opted to convert to Christianity.

Others, such as the elderly author of this account, sought to escape to freedom. This resourceful Jewish exile originated from the city of Tudela in Navarre and ultimately found refuge in the Moroccan kingdom of Fez.

...At that time, they sent to Castelnov ['New Castle'] in order to plunder and pillage my factory where my sons were, but God, who protects the simple, aroused the residents of the town and God did not permit them to harm them. Each then went his own way, this way and that. When they saw that they had not succeeded in that which they had desired to do, they came to our house and seized every object there. Then, after I had been in prison in Valencia for three weeks, the infidels sent for me on the Sabbath and said to me: "Why do you remain here in the prison, where you are but digging your grave? Come and accept our belief, and we will act kindly toward you. Realize, though, that if you

do not do so you will surely die, for that is the king's decree." I replied: "I am very old, and do not know the day of my death. How can I give you an answer when I am so confused? Give me some time and I will send you back my reply." They responded: "We will accept what you say, but you are to return to prison." I then said to them: "Why do you speak thus to me? Is it fitting to accept the baptismal (literally in the Hebrew, "bitter") water when one comes out of prison?" They then said, "What you have said is correct." I thereupon thanked God for having led me in the proper path. Even when my nights had been tortured, I always had God before me.

Thus, when the sun set and the Sabbath ended, I took a Muslim lad and paid him to take me out of that evil place. The lad brought me to a village near the city of Valencia. In the middle of the night I found a certain Muslim and paid him to bring me, in the darkness of the night, close to Castelnov. I searched for my sons and workers and found them, one here and one there. However, we did not know how to proceed because it was a time of distress. Our hearts, though, were all to God. In end, we decided to go to Tortosa to see if we could find a ship, for it was on the coast. However we were unsuccessful and returned after having gone half the way, for wherever people saw us they became angry at us and said: "These are the Jews, the most impure. Let us burn them in fire." We therefore decided to go to Almeria which is in the kingdom of Granada, for we had been told that it was possible to sail from there in a single night to Oran, a city near Tlemcen. We agreed to this, even though the distance was more than a hundred *parsa'ot* [parsa'ot equals approx. 3 miles]. Furthermore, we were forced to pass through Valencia, the place where they were hunting for us. On the day that we passed through it, God was merciful to us in that there was mass confusion in the city, and we passed through unmolested. God saved us, and we walked through in peace and tranquility and security, without any harm. We finally arrived in Almeria and saw the waves of the ocean. It was then that Satan [an enemy of the Jewish people] came out and said: "Where are you from? You are spies." We told him, "No, my lord, we have come to see if we can find a ship which is set to sail to Tlemcen, where we have people who have been close to us for a long time." He replied: "You are lying! You are Jews and I can tell it from your faces." He thereupon had us seized and brought to the mayor of the town. We were then thrown into the local prison in chains of steel and of affliction. In that place there was a distinguished Muslim, whose words were hearkened to by the local officials [possibly the Moroccan

consul in Almeria] When he heard what had happened he became very angry, and he said to them: "Why did you do this? These men are Muslims, and I have known them and their families for many years." The Christians, though, hardened their hearts like a rock, and maintained we were Jews. Indeed, they sought all types of ways to prove their allegation. The honored Muslim, who was named Salima al-Bahu, persisted in asking [the authorities] why we had been detained, and said to them: "Let these men out of prison. If you do not, I swear that I will go to the king and tell him of the righteousess and uprightness of these men, and we will see whose word will prevail—mine or yours." The mayor and those with him then replied: "If you are telling the truth that they are indeed Muslims, let them recite the prayer which you say." The Muslim told them: "Let it be so." They then took us out of prison and each of us recited the Muslim prayer flawlessly. They thus had nothing to say. Then, when God had shown His hand and His might and had taken us out from the darkness to a great light, we agreed to go to Granada to seek refuge, for we had been unable to take a ship from Almeria. We remained there for four months, and after these four months a caravan appeared of a hundred people who were traveling to the kingdom of Fez. We therefore said: "Let us go in the light of the Lord."

I will not go into detail regarding all the terrible travails which we underwent, but in short we were given permission to leave Granada and paid thirty ducats as taxes. Then, when God led me from Granada and we reached Vélez Málaga, a treacherous man revealed that we were Jews. I cannot go into detail here about all the troubles we experienced as a result, but in general terms, we were thrown into prison and kept as prisoners, along with our donkeys and all our possessions, and that made it that much worse. We remained there for two days and a night, and the Muslims who were with us were treated especially cruelly, because it was alleged that they had known all about this scheme.

The third night there was a heavy rain, and in the middle of the night they took us out of prison and we did not know why. They brought us out like prisoners, with our hands tied behind our backs. We remained in the pouring rain all that night and the following day and were almost overcome by it. What had happened was that treacherous man had taken us to Carmona, a distance of forty *parsa'ot* from where we had been taken prisoner. Now Carmona is close to Seville, a distance of about six *parsa'ot*. There in Carmona we remained as prisoners and were subjected to the most terrible conditions. We were in the custody of Don

Juan de Sisfaras, one of the Righteous Gentiles of the world. I cannot go into length about all that befell us, as each day they tried to pressure us into forsaking the Living God. After we had been there for four months, the king ordered that we be returned to the place we had been seized, Vélez Málaga, and there they would decide what to do with us. There we remained in prison for two and a half months. I will not describe in detail everything which occurred. After this time had passed, the king ordered that we be brought back to Granada, where we had been before, and they gave [us] everything that had been taken from us: thirty silk cloth bolts and fourteen rings made of fine gold, and we remained in the prison there for a month. After this month, against my will they took away my two young sons, the most precious things to me, Joshua and Jacob, who were referred to as "Jamil's children," and threatened us with all types of death. When they saw that they had gotten nowhere, they gave us away as a gift to three ministers, to do with as they pleased. In spite of this we did not forget our God and did not pray to a foreign god. The man whom I fell to, old as I am, was named Juan de Salas, one of the Righteous Gentiles of the world, and soon after I came into his possession, he sent me to Safi in Morocco by ship. There I saw the work of God, for three times we went down the sea and had to return for the sea raged, but the fourth time we entered it in peace and left in peace. The righteous Jews there redeemed me and gave me fifty silver *ookiyot* within three days. May God repay them. This occurred in the *parashah* of "Do so and live—I fear God" (Gen. 42:18—*Parashat Miketz*). I gave a Torah discourse there, and the topic I chose was that God should grant us mercy. I remained there for about three months or more, to try to find out about Isaac and Samuel Ibn Jamil, who had remained in their masters' hands. I eventually found out that my firstborn son, who was my strength and an educated scribe, had fallen into the hands of a minister and judge whose name was Pedro de Porres, who was also a Righteous Gentile, whereas my other beloved and intelligent son, known as Samuel Ibn Jamil, had fallen into the hands of a despicable man, but he had sold him to a righteous man named Luis de Cordoba. Now God, who sees all from on High, so arranged that the two brothers would come together, and they remained there for three years, as they engaged in all types of physical labor in the fields. During those three years I knew nothing of their fate. Similarly, they did not know about me, and we remained between the living and the dead until God looked down from the Heavens. A merchant who sailed the seas came to the port of Salé [in Morocco], and the Jews who

lived there gave him a thousand maravedis to take notes from me to Luis de Cordoba, for whom [my sons] worked. He asked, as their ransom, two hundred ducats, not a penny more nor less. He sent these notes [demanding the ransom] to Alcazar [in Morocco], for I had lived there for nine months. When I heard the good news, I decided to come with those notes to the fortunate community of Fez, for God had given the city a blessing. This was in the *parashah* of "the Lord your God walks in your camp to save you" (Deut. 23:15—*Parashat Tetze*). When the scholars and leaders heard the news, they all agreed that I should go to Tlemcen to the leader of the Jewish people there, a good and honest man. The leader there would advise me on how to proceed. God guided me on the proper way, and even though the roads were dangerous and the trip was more than 120 *parsa'ot*, I nevertheless arrived at my destination with God's help. There I gave a Torah discourse, and they gave me twenty doubloons.

...Therefore, the children of the Living God, those of the good name and deed, my masters and companions, my brothers and friends, who study this introduction and work, *Keter Shem Tov*, do not blame me if you find in it errors or superfluous verbiage or the opposite, for I am eighty-two years of age and I do not see so well, and my other senses are no longer with me, and all that remain are the dry bones filled with sorrow and distress, as mentioned in the introduction to this work. To add to this, I do not have a son or a brother, neither a grandchild nor a great-grandchild, nor any other close relation in this land. Nor is there anyone in this land who knows me and will testify about me. I have therefore decided, with my broken heart, to write this work, and I took of the holy words of R' Simeon bar Yohai and his colleagues of those which we understand, and those which I did not understand I left to God. In most *parashiyot* I gave the meanings of the statements but in some cases I used the language of the dry bones, and to myself I refer the verses, "There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty gives them understanding. Great men are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgement." (Job. 32:8-9). (?)

With the help of God, I will begin to write *Keter Shem Tov* which was written by Shem Tov b. R' Samuel b. Jamil, who was expelled and had to wander from the city of Tudela de Navarra.

Source: Toledano, Y.M., "Mi Kitvei Yad," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 4 (1928): 403-409.

Additional material: Gampel, Benjamin, "The Last Jews on Iberian Soil," Univ. of Calif. Press, Berkeley, 130-132.

XIV. THE FAMILY ORIGINS OF ISAAC IBN FARADJ, THE PURE SEPHARDI

Isaac Ibn Faradj

This eye-witness account describes the personal experiences of his family in the wake of the Spanish expulsion, their continued persecution in Portugal, and their eventual settlement in the Ottoman Turkish Empire. The several incorrect historical dates are indicated.

After the expulsion of the Jews from France, an old esteemed scholar and mathematician came to Toledo, a leader of the exiled, R.A. b. J. Ibn Faradj. He married in that city, and had four sons, Isaac, Meir, Jacob, and Joseph. They all married, and every one of them had sons and daughters, and so on. My father Jacob went to Seville in the year 1451, and there married Clara, the daughter of the old scholar R. José ibn Danon. Out of the large community he was one of the few that escaped from the persecution in Seville, which took place in [5]163(1403), when twelve thousand Jews were killed [the massacre of Jews in Sevilla took place in 1391]. Many were then baptized in the time of Fray Vincente, and twenty synagogues were taken and changed into churches. The aforementioned R. José had four daughters, and they all married, and had children. The youngest of them was my mother, and she bore my father five sons and two daughters. These daughters and one of the sons, Abraham the elder, died, and Joseph, Isaac, Meir, and Abraham the younger were left.

In the fourth year of King Ferdinand, of Jewish descent, the Jews, about a thousand families, were expelled from Seville and its surroundings, and they went to Toledo, and to old Castile in [5]241 (1481). My father then went to Medina del Campo, where his brothers Meir and Joseph were among the prominent citizens. There my father and mother are buried. In [5] 241 (1481) my brother Joseph married there, and in [5]249 (1489) I also. About two years later expulsions and bitter persecutions were proclaimed in Castile, Aragon, Navarre, and Catalonia against more than forty thousand Jewish families, and almost all of them perished through violence, baptism, and other kinds of persecutions. We then went to Portugal in [5]251 (1491). In Braganza my brother Meir married. In Portugal children were taken as slaves because they did not leave the country at the end of a year after their arrival [actually, only eight months], and the names of the children were changed, they were separated from their parents, and deported a thousand miles across seas to the island of St. Thomas [São Tomé]. Such a persecution never happened before!

While I was in Lisbon, the capital of Portugal, two of my sons and three of my daughters died, and of my many children only Jacob and Clara were left to me. Clara was born one year before the persecution in [5]257 (1497), and Jacob in [5]361 (1501). An expulsion was proclaimed in Portugal in [5]258 (1498), to take place at the end of a year. [The edict was announced in December 1496, and was to last until October 1497.] During this year King Manuel did not want any Jew to leave his kingdom, and children of thirteen years [or younger] were taken away from their parents and baptized, amid tears, and against their will, and separated from their parents, whose fortunes were taken away from them and given to these same children. In spite of all this they did not allow the parents to leave the country, even without their money, unless they were baptized. When the time had passed, and the Jews did not want to change their faith of their own free will, they were taken by force in all the king's provinces, and were beaten with sticks and straps, and carried to the churches. There they sprinkled water on them, and gave them Christian names, men and women alike. In the second year of the persecution, in [5]260 (1500), my brother Meir left the country secretly, and came hither to the kingdom of Turkey, the Greek country, though capital punishment was decreed from the king for every Jew who should leave the country without his permission. For many years after the persecution none of them, even such as were regarded as Christians, and though they left their wives behind, were

permitted to go out of the kingdom with merchandise unless they spent large sums in bribes.

During this time books, numerous as sand on the sea-shore, were brought there from all parts of the kingdom and burnt by order of the king.

Five years after the baptism, when all the baptized Jews who lived in the kingdom under Christian names and as Christians in every respect, the men, the women, and the children alike, had accustomed themselves to go to the churches with the Christians, eating and drinking with them on their holidays, the prayers having been impressed upon both the young and the old with sticks and straps, it happened on a Christian holiday, on the 21st of April (the 25th of Nisan) [5]265 (1505) [actually on April 19, 1506], while the king and queen were absent from Lisbon, the capital, on account of the plague which raged there at that time, that a priest with a cross stood up, and wicked men with him, murderers and scoundrels, and they killed more than fourteen hundred Jews, and burned their bodies, men and women, pregnant women, and children. They burnt them in the streets of the city three days on end, till the bodies were consumed and became ashes, and I stole from the fire one half of the burned head of a dear friend of mine, and I hid it, and kept it, brought it to Aulona [in Albania where many of the Spanish Jews went from Naples in 1495], and buried it in a Jewish burial-place. When King Manuel heard of the great wrong done to the Jews he came to Lisbon, and the priest was burnt at the stake, and forty murderers hanged. The king allowed all the Jews to go to Christian countries [in 1507], whithersoever they wanted. After that my brother Joseph and myself went in a ship to Aulona, and then we came to Salonica in the aforementioned kingdom on the 14th or Tishri, [5]266 (1505) [most likely in 1507].

Reference: Marx, Alexander. "The Expulsion of the Jews from Spain. Two New Accounts", *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, Old Series, 20 (1908): 240-271.

XV. THE BAG OF MYRRH (*ZEROR HA-MOR*)

Abraham Ben Jacob Saba (d.c. 1508)

Upon his expulsion from Spain, Rabbi Saba settled in the Portuguese city of Oporto. In 1497, in the ensuing assault on the Jews of the kingdom, as a result of the decree by King Manuel, he witnessed the forced conversion of his two sons to Christianity. He fled to Lisbon, only to be arrested and imprisoned there with other scholars, including the Portuguese Chief Rabbi, Simon Maimi. He successfully resisted the tortures and sufferings inflicted upon him in the Portuguese dungeons; subsequently, he was able to make his way to the Kingdom of Fez in Morocco. Having lost his library and manuscripts in Portugal, he dedicated himself in Fez to rewriting his commentary on the Pentateuch (*Zeror Ha-Mor*) along with other works from memory.

The verse states (Lev. 26:40), "They will confess their sins," etc. How then does it continue (v. 41) "And I will walk contrary to them"? Furthermore, how does the latter verse add, "I will bring them into the land of their enemies"? After all, earlier it had already stated (v. 32), "I will bring a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies." So too, how, after saying (v. 42), "I will remember my covenant with Jacob," does it go on to say (v. 43), "The land also will be left of them"?

One can answer that the reason for this [i.e., why the people will

suffer even though they have confessed] is that their confession was only a matter of rote, but they did not really mean what they said. That is why "I will bring them into the land of their enemies," following their insincere confession. Thus, I will keep punishing them until their uncircumcised heart is finally subdued, and their confession will come from a broken heart. It is then that "I will remember my covenant with Jacob."

Alternately, we are told that even if a person confesses his sins, he will not be released from punishment until he has paid for his sins by suffering. This is as I wrote in *Parashat Vayikra* regarding the sin of *me'ila* [i.e., the illegal private use of property belonging to the Temple], that (Lev. 5:25), "It shall come to pass that if he sins and is guilty, he shall return the theft," etc. Similarly, in *Parashat Naso*, I explained why the Torah states (Num. 5:7), "He shall confess" even though immediately afterwards it states "and he shall recompense his trespass with the principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth part thereof, and give it unto him against whom he has trespassed." Now, if he has confessed, why has he not atoned for his sin, and why must he add the fifth part? The reason is that even if one confesses, he must pay an additional fifth to expunge his sin. The same applies here as well. Even though they confess their sins and say, "We have done thus and thus," they have not yet gained atonement, but must suffer in order to expunge their sin. That is what is meant by, "And I will walk contrary to them," namely that I will punish them more, so that they will confess their sin and atone for it in full.

When the Torah states (v. 41), "I will bring them," this seems strange, because earlier (v. 32) we are told that they were already in the land of their enemies. It appears, though, that God brought them to the land of their enemies so that they would be punished there. Then, when He saw that they continued to sin even more, He brought them to the land of even worse enemies, ones who were more cruel than the first ones. This we saw when the Jews were banished from Castile, where they had been like kings, and came to Portugal, where they [i.e., the Portuguese] did what they did to us and our Torah. Afterwards, those who remained traveled to the Muslim lands and others. Yet we find that those who remained in Portugal publicly sanctified God's name and gave their lives for this. They also remained imprisoned for long periods of time. The perfect and holy scholar, Rabbi Simon Maimi and his sons-in-law were all truly righteous, as was his wife and other truly righteous individuals. Even though [the Portuguese] did everything to

have them forcibly converted, they maintained their guard and observed the Torah and the *mitzvot*, in spite of the king and his ministers, until Rabbi Simon finally died. By that time, there was not another Jew in the entire country except for me and those who were in prison with me. It was due to the merits of this righteous man that a father and his son who were *Conversos* worked in that prison, and the two were given permission to take the body outside the city and bury it. They took the body outside the city, and more than forty righteous *Conversos* who had been forced to convert against their will gathered together. They then buried him in the Jewish cemetery, and eulogized him as was proper. Because of his merit, the king allowed us to be brought to Arcila. But the king did not want to send the Jews who had been with the righteous man in prison. They thus remained in prison as slaves. God, though, had them find favor in the eyes of the chief jailer, and they were treated with great respect. Afterwards, the king sent them to Arcila to be subject to hard labor under the governor of that district [the Count of Borba]. He saw, though, that his decree had not been obeyed, for the governor tortured them to force them to profane the Sabbath. As a result, they fled and built themselves caves to dwell in. All of this came about because of our sins, because these individuals were completely righteous and sanctified God's name in public. God, however, inflicted all our sins on them. It was because of this and similar matters that (v. 39) "they that are left of you will pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands," in this case referring to the Jews who remained in the land of their enemies, in Lisbon, because of the sins of their fathers. "They will confess their sins." They indeed confessed many times, but their sins held them back. This is as it states (v. 41), "I will walk contrary to them and I will bring them into the land of their enemies," this referring to the second land they were brought to, namely Arcila, where they were subject to a cruel taskmaster. That was a land of a more cruel enemy, to see if Israel would submit to their abominations. Then, if Israel would not submit, "I will remember my covenant with Jacob," etc.

The reason why Jacob is the first one in the verse mentioned here has been the subject of many interpretations. My view was already hinted at by me earlier, in *Parashat Vayetze*, that the three Temples [literally "houses"] represent Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Now the Third Temple, which we await, will never be destroyed, and it parallels Jacob, who referred to it as "the House," as in "the House of Jacob," etc. That is

why with this, the fourth exile in which we find ourselves, our redemption will come due to the merits of Jacob.

The reason why the word for Jacob, *Yaakov*, is written in full [i.e., with the addition of the letter *vav*, a letter which is generally omitted] is to teach us that the redemption will be in the sixth millennium [i.e., between the year 5001 and the year 6000], for the letter *vav* has a *gematria* value of six. There is even a hint of this in the verse, "All the souls who came with Jacob to Egypt ... sixty-six."

Malachi, the last of the prophets, states, "Remember the Torah of My servant Moses," for it is because of the merits of the Torah and of Moses that the ultimate redemption will come about, as our Sages tell us. Now, our father Jacob was the symbol of the Torah, as it states, "Jacob was a guileless man, who dwelled in tents" [i.e., the "tents of Torah"]. Our Sages thus tell us that Jacob was worthy of having the Torah given to him, but the time had not yet come for this. Thus, it is due to his merit that God will redeem his descendants. And as he is the last redeemer, it is proper to mention him first, and to state, "I will remember my covenant with Jacob," with the added letter *vav* representing the scepter [i.e., the letter *vav*, which is a straight line, is taken to symbolize the scepter] of the monarchy. Our Sages tell us that this letter *vav* was taken as a pledge by Jacob from Elijah, for his name appears in Hebrew as *Eliya* rather than *Eliyahu*, without the *vav* at the end of the name, and that pledge will remain with Jacob until Elijah returns. Thus it states, "Behold I will send to you *Eliya* the prophet." So too does it state, "I will remember My covenant with Jacob as at the beginning." The reason is that Jacob was a man who suffered greatly, from both Dinah and from Joseph, and that was a sign for his descendants. That is why, in this fourth exile, Israel suffered most of all, with much torture and banishment, which the other exiles did not have. And when the troubles have been so great that Jacob will no longer be able to bear them, it will be fitting for God to remember the merits of Jacob and all that he suffered, which the other forefathers did not. That is why it states, "I will remember My covenant with Jacob" first.

Source: Saba, Abraham, *Zeror Ha-Mor*. Edit. 1586. Jerusalem.
Additional reading: *EJ*, "Saba, Abraham ben Jacob."

XVI. AN ANONYMOUS ACCOUNT OF THE EXPULSION

Anonymous II

This account was composed by an anonymous author, possibly an Italian Jew around the year 1495. Because the author does not make any references to any personal experience of exile, it is suspected that the author compiled this account from the exiles themselves.

And in the year 5252 (1492) the Lord visited the remnant of his people a second time, and exiled them in the days of King Ferdinand. After the king had captured the city of Granada from the Ishmaelites, and it had surrendered to him on the 8th of January of the year just mentioned [actually on January 2nd], he ordered the expulsion of all the Jews in all parts of his kingdom — in the kingdoms of Castile, Catalonia, Aragon, Galicia, Majorca, Minorca, the Basque provinces, the islands of Sardinia and Sicily, and the kingdom of Valencia. Even before that the queen had expelled them from the kingdom of Andalusia. The king gave them three months' time to leave in [1492]. It was announced in public in every city on the first of May, which happened to be the 19th day of the Omer, and the term ended on the day before the 9th of Ab. The number of the exiled was not counted, but, after many inquiries, I found that the most generally accepted estimate is 50,000 families, or, as others say, 53,000. They had houses, fields, vineyards, and cattle, and most of them were artisans. At that time there existed many acade-

mies in Spain, and [at the head of] the greatest of them were R. Isaac Aboab in Guadalajara, R. Isaac Bezodo in Leon, R. Jacob Habib in Salamanca. In the last-named city there was a great expert in mathematics, and whenever there was any doubt on mathematical questions in the Christian academy of that city they referred them to him. His name was Abraham Zacuto. [At the head of the other academies were] R. Isaac Alfranji in Valladolid, R. Jacob Canisal in Avila de Campos, R. Isaac Giakon in Toledo, after the death of R. Isaac of Leon, who was mourned in all parts of Spain, and his antagonist, R. Isaac Ziyyat—they disagreed on ritual questions—R. Samuel Franco in Fromista, R. Isaac Uziel in Medina del Campo, R. Simon Sarsa in Segovia, R. Samuel Zarfati in Plasencia.

In the course of the three months' respite granted them they endeavoured to effect an arrangement permitting them to stay on in the country, and they felt confident of success. Their representatives were the Rabbi, Don Abraham Senior, the leader of the Spanish congregations, who was attended by a retinue on thirty mules, and R. Meir, the secretary to the king; and Don Isaac Abravanel, who had fled to Castile from the King of Portugal, and then occupied an equally prominent position at the Spanish royal court, the very one who was expelled, went to Naples, and was highly esteemed by the King of Naples. The aforementioned great Rabbi, R. Isaac of Leon, used to call this Don Abraham Senior *Soné Or* (Hater of Light), because he was a heretic [*epikoros*], and the end proved that he was right, as he was converted to Christianity at the age of eighty, he and all his family, and R. Meir with him. Don Abraham had arranged the nuptials between the king and the queen. The queen was the heiress to the throne, and the king one of the Spanish nobility. On account of this, Don Abraham was appointed leader of the Jews, but not with their consent. The agreement permitting them to remain in the country on the payment of a large sum of money was almost completed when it was frustrated by the interference of an official, who referred to the story of the Cross. The queen gave an answer to the representatives of the Jews, similar to the saying of King Solomon: "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water. He turneth it whithersoever he will." She said furthermore; "Do you believe that this comes upon you from us? The Lord hath put this thing into the heart of the king." Then they saw that there was evil determined against them by the king, and they gave up the hope of remaining. But the time had become short, and they had to hasten their exodus from Spain. They sold their houses, their landed estates, and

their cattle for very small prices, to save themselves. The king did not allow them to carry silver and gold out of his country, so that they were compelled to exchange their silver and gold for merchandise of cloths and skins and other things.

One hundred and twenty thousand of them went to Portugal, according to a compact which a prominent man, Don Vidal bar Benveniste de la Cavalleria, had made with the king of Portugal, and they paid one ducat for every soul, and the fourth part of all the merchandise they had carried thither; and he allowed them to stay in his country six months. This king acted much worse toward them than the king of Spain, and after the six months had elapsed he made slaves of all those that remained in his country, and banished seven hundred children to a remote island to settle it, and all of them died. Some say that there were double as many. Upon them the Scriptural word was fulfilled: "Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people," etc. He also ordered the congregation of Lisbon, his capital, not to raise their voice in their prayers, that the Lord might not hear their complaining about the violence that was done unto them.

Many of the exiled Spaniards went to Mohammedan countries, to Fez, Tlemçen, and the Berber provinces, under the king of Tunis. Most of the Moslems did not allow them into their cities, and many of them died in the fields from hunger, thirst, and lack of everything. The lions and bears, which are numerous in this country, killed some of them while they lay starving outside of the cities. A Jew in the kingdom of Tlemçen, named Abraham, the viceroy who ruled the kingdom, made part of them come to this kingdom, and he spent a large amount of money to help them. The Jews of Northern Africa were very charitable toward them. A part of those who went to Northern Africa, as they found no rest and no place that would receive them, returned to Spain, and became converts, and through them the prophecy of Jeremiah was fulfilled: "He hath spread a net for my feet, he hath turned me back." For, originally, they had all fled for the sake of the unity of God; only a very few had become converts throughout all the boundaries of Spain; they did not spare their fortunes, yea, parents escaped without having regard to their children.

When the edict of expulsion became known in the other countries, vessels came from Genoa to carry away the Jews. The crews of these vessels, too, acted maliciously and meanly toward the Jews, robbed them, and delivered some of them to the famous pirate of that time, who was called the Corsair of Genoa. To those who escaped and

arrived at Genoa the people of the city showed themselves merciless, and oppressed and robbed them, and the cruelty of their wicked hearts went so far that they took the infants from the mothers' breasts.

Many ships with Jews, especially from Sicily, went to the city of Naples on the coast. The king of this country [King Ferrante II] was friendly to the Jews, received them all, and was merciful towards them, and he helped them with money. The Jews that were at Naples supplied them with food as much as they could, and sent around to the other parts of Italy to collect money to sustain them. The Marranos in this city lent them money on pledges without interest; even the Dominican Brotherhood acted mercifully toward them. But all this was not enough to keep them alive. Some of them died by famine, others sold their children to Christians to sustain their life. Finally, a plague broke out among them, spread to Naples, and very many of them died, so that the living wearied of burying the dead.

Part of the exiled Spaniards went over sea to Turkey. Some of them were thrown into the sea and drowned, but those who arrived there the king of Turkey received kindly, as they were artisans. He lent them money to settle many of them on an island, and gave them fields and estates.

A few of the exiles were dispersed in the countries of Italy, in the city of Ferrara, in the counties of Romagna, le Marche, and Patrimonium, and in Rome.

Before the expulsion, the king of Spain had stretched forth his hand against the Marranos, and investigated their secrets, because they observed part of the laws secretly, and he had ordered the Jews in every city to proclaim in the synagogues that whoever knew of any Marrano who gave oil to the lighting of the synagogue, or money for any holy purpose, must reveal his name on penalty of excommunication. Thus the preachers made proclamation in the synagogues in the presence of the royal officials, and they adjured the people with the formula: "If he did not utter it" ...and with the order of the king to inform against them; and they decreed the ban against everybody who would not give information. Oh, how that sword of excommunication wrought havoc among the Spanish Jews, who wherever they turned found hardship and misfortune! By means of this accusation the Spanish king had many thousands of the Marranos burned, and confiscated their fortunes without number, using the money for the war against Granada. It seems that this was from the Lord to destroy these Marranos, who halted between two opinions, as if they had made a new law for themselves. Their end

shows that they did not sanctify the name of the Lord in the hour of their death. When they asked them in which religion they wanted to die they chose Christianity, in order to die an easier death, and they died with a cross in their hands. Only a few of them died as Jews, and of these few most were women.

In the year 5255 [1494], the king of France [Charles VIII] went to Italy with a great army, and his fear fell upon all the countries. All the cities which he approached received him, and opened their doors without a siege. He went through Lombardy with the approval of the Duke of Milan; then he advanced to Florence, the perfection of beauty, and he had power over all its treasures, and though its inhabitants were numerous and strong they did not dare stand up against him, but they let him enter, in fear and terror. Thence he went to Siena, a glorious land, too, but its inhabitants also went to meet him and welcomed him. Thence he went to Viterbo, a city that is situated on an impregnable pass, so that its people might have hindered him from entering. They did not do so, but they let him pass, against the will of the Pope and the king of Naples. From there he went to Rome, and there also the inhabitants let him in, and the Pope fled to the Castle St. Angelo. Then he went to the kingdom of Naples, and conquered all the cities in a few days. The king of Naples [Ferrante's son, Alfonso] fled before him to Brindisi, a city on the border of his kingdom, on the coast. The French king entered Naples, with the consent of the citizens, and besieged the strongholds till he captured all of them. Then he took the greater part of Apulia and Calabria. There were great congregations in Naples, and in the other cities of the neighborhood, and in Apulia and Calabria. They all were destroyed on account of our sins, such as were for the sword by the sword, and such as were for captivity in captivity, and such as were to be converted by conversion. The French pillaged and destroyed among them, and many were converted from fear of the French, and even though it was against the will of the king of France that the Jews suffered, and though he protected them whenever he entered the cities, yet, after the fear of the king of Naples was removed, the communities stood up against the Jews to despoil them of their fortunes and force them to baptism. It was a time of distress for the Jews in all these countries, which before had been refuges for the exiled. Many thousands of them perished, and very old and famous communities in Apulia and Calabria were annihilated.

He who said unto his world, Enough, may he also say Enough unto our sufferings, and may he look down upon our impotence. May he turn

again, and have compassion upon us, and hasten our salvation. Thus may it be thy will!

Source: Marx, Alexander, "The Expulsion of the Jews from Spain. Two New Accounts", *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, Old Series, 20 (1908): 240-271, with additions and corrections from New Series, Vol. II (1911-12): 257-258.

XVII. CONSOLATION FOR THE TRIBULATIONS OF ISRAEL

Samuel Usque (16th Century)

The *Consolaçam* is written in the form of a pastoral dialogue between three shepherds — Ycabo, Numero, and Zicareo — who discuss the history of the Jews. Ycabo, narrating in the first person, becomes the personal embodiment of the Jewish people, symbolically suffering its afflictions and persecutions. The work, written in a florid and cultured Portuguese style, was dedicated to the wealthy patroness of Jewish learning, Doña Gracia Nasi. Its primary intent was to convince the Marrano refugees from Spain and Portugal to return to the Jewish fold.

As to Usque himself, little is known other than he came from a Spanish background and had a strong background in classical languages and literature.

SPAIN. YEAR 5248 [1488]

I saw the following in Granada, where a thousand five hundred Jewish families lived prosperously and comfortably in the city and its environs:

The Christians conceived the idea that the Jews ought to exchange the Law of Moses for their Christian faith or perish. Although the penalty the Christians threatened was awesome, the Jews nevertheless chose to sacrifice their bodies rather than offend their souls. When their enemies saw the Jews' determination, they put all fifteen hundred families to the sword on the ninth day of the month of Tebet. They did not

spare a single person. They had no pity for the children who clutched their pious mothers' arms, or for the cries of tender virgins, old men, young men, or people of all ages who entreated the Lord on high to avenge this brutality. Among the victims was the renowned and distinguished sage, Rabbi Joseph Levi.

On this same day, the ninth of Tebet, a fast had been ordained long before, and the people observed it without knowing the reason why. It seems that this great tribulation had been foreseen by God's spirit. But the force of this prophecy of Jeremiah prevailed: "Though they fast, I will not hear their cry, and though they offer sacrifice, it will not please Me; but I will consume them with the sword" (Jer. 14.12).

THE INQUISITION IN SPAIN. YEAR 5251 [1491]

Those whom Brother Vincent left as *confesos* in Spain thrived so that they joined the ranks of Spain's grandees and noblest lords; they were therefore soon united in marriage with its leading families. They occupied posts of distinction and importance in the court; they held the titles of count, marquis, bishop, and obtained other high dignities which the material world bestows upon those who court it. Those who remained Jews enjoyed their secret favor and also flourished and prospered.

This happiness lasted until the time of King Ferdinand and his wife, Queen Isabel. And like an uprooted flower, which speedily dries and withers, so did this prosperity perish, like all my others. For the enemies of my good fortune found the king, and much more so the queen, Isabel, inclined to persecute me; and they began to encourage them to destroy the *confesos*. Little effort was required to win the sovereigns' minds, for their stock, it seems, has produced the greatest enemies of my people in the history of the world.

They turned their power against the Jews who were already within the Christian fold. As *confesos*, they were no longer recognized as Jews, and their minds were at ease and their hearts secure, since they were Christians. The king and queen sent to Rome for a wild monster, of such strange form and horrible mien that all Europe trembles at the mere mention of its name.

Its body, an amalgam of hard iron and deadly poison, has an adamantine shell made of steel and covered with enormous scales. It rises in the air on a thousand wings with black and poisonous pinions, and it moves on the ground with a thousand pernicious and destructive feet.

Its form is like both the awesome lion's and the frightful serpent's in the deserts of Africa. Its enormous teeth equal those of the most powerful elephants. Its whistle or voice kills even more quickly than the venomous basilisk. Its eyes and mouth spew continual flames and blazes of consuming fire, and the food it eats is the fire in which human bodies burn.

Its flight is swifter than the eagle's, but wherever it passes its shadow spreads a pall of gloom over the brightest sun. Finally, in its wake it leaves a darkness like the darkness visited upon the Egyptians in one of the plagues.

And when it arrives at its destination, the green grass which it treads or the luxuriant tree on which it alights dries, decays and withers, and then is uprooted by the monster's devastating beak. It desolates the entire countryside with its poison until it is like the Syrian deserts and sands, where no plant takes root and no grass grows.

Such an animal was brought against the entire *confeso* community (who were supposedly unrecognizable in Christian garb). The monster burned a great many of these children of mine with the fire from its eyes and strewed the land with countless orphans and widows. With its mouth and powerful teeth it wrecked and swallowed all of their worldly riches and gold. With its massive, poison-laden feet, it trampled their renown and their greatness, and with its awesome and misshapen countenance it disfigured and marred comely faces [which were forced to gaze upon it], and darkened hearts and souls with its flight. And it still continues its vile deeds in Spain, against the limbs which were severed from my body. And though my children are parading their Christianity, it does not save their lives.

I do not want to be remiss in telling you that in addition to the enemies, there were at that time some *confesos* who delivered their own brothers into this cruel monster's power. Poverty was the spur and the reason for most of their evil acts. Many poor *confesos* went to the houses of their richer brothers to ask for a loan of fifty or a hundred crusados for their needs. If any refused them, they accused him of Judaizing with them.

These misfortunes lasted for four years. Then the sovereigns determined to uproot the *confesos* completely from Judaism, and remove them from contact with the Jews. They exiled from their domains all the Jews whom the wrath of Brother Vincent had not reached, and those whose constancy had kept them within the Law of Moses. Both groups wandered in great tribulation and hardship through many lands. Some

passed over to the Kingdom of Portugal, others to the lands of the Moors, while some dispersed to the Kingdom of Naples and other parts of Europe.

How many of Your judgments, O Lord, were fulfilled, which You pronounced against me through the lips of Your prophets. Concerning this wild beast and a similar one in Portugal it was said by Jeremiah: "I shall send among you serpents, basilisks, which cannot be charmed, and they shall bite you with an incurable bite" (Jer. 98.17). For with these I shall bring it about that "what comes into your mind shall not be at all, in that you say: 'Let us be like the nations and like the families of the countries to worship wood and stone.' As I live, says the Lord, surely with a mighty hand and outstretched arm and poured out fury will I be king over you" (Ezek. 20.32-33). "And then the great and notable treasure of yours in which you place all your hope will be converted into two, and the one who acquired it into a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them" (Isa. 1.31). Because "they who depart from Me shall be written in the earth, for they have forsaken the well of living waters, who is the Lord" (Jer. 17.13). "At the time of their afflictions they will say to me, 'Rise up, save us,' and I shall answer them, "Where then are your gods now whom you worshiped? Let them arise and save you in the time of your affliction"' (Jer. 2.27-28).

YEAR 5252

WHEN THE JEWS FROM CASTILE ENTERED PORTUGAL

And of those who were ejected from the Spanish kingdom and who remained faithful to Judaism, the majority went on to Portugal. Six hundred families came to an agreement with King John, the second of that name, to pay two crusados for each one who entered the kingdom. And the king promised to allow them to live in their religion and to provide ships for those who wished to leave.

As soon as these harried Jews entered Portugal, an epidemic broke out, a harbinger of the catastrophe which awaited them ultimately. Many Jews as well as Christians died from this illness.

Shortly after their arrival, a number decided to cross over to Africa and Turkey, for they feared the eventual cruelty to the Christians more than the present vexations of the Moors. They therefore asked the king to keep his promise and provide them with safe passage. The king, however, had conceived an evil plan. He procrastinated and equivocated until he was so importuned by them that he granted their request. My

punishment was as my iniquities deserved, and as had been prophesied to me. The hapless Jews embarked, thinking they were in the custody of trusted friends. But they were deceived. They were taken to the high seas, where their cries and shouts could move no one to pity, and there they were tied hand and foot, and their women were dishonored before their eyes and they were despoiled even to their last garment.

O Lord, since these enemies of mine fled from the shame of the nations to commit such a cruel and treacherous deed, I was at least consoled that You were a witness to it. From You they could not flee or hide, and You are the source to which we look for the remedy to all our misfortunes.

After they had so cruelly greeted the Jews, they atoned by taking them to the shores of Africa — to its most deserted spot. There they cast them, like victims of contagion, upon a barren beach, far from human help. Babies begged for bread and mothers raised their eyes to heaven for help, while others, reduced to despair by hunger and abandonment, dug their own graves.

But when they were at the end of the thread of life, they raised their eyes and saw a horde of Moors approaching to take them captive. They had entered the land without safe conduct or permission, and they were seized and arrested with great harassment. But they regarded the captivity as a divine visitation and a release from their terrible and awesome plight.

After they had entered the land, their brethren there redeemed them and set them free, and helped them in their need and misery.

Though many of my children in Portugal preferred to spend their captivity in the power of the Moors, and not in Christendom, when this sad news reached them they became so terrified that they did not dare ask for passage.

O, wretched me, for these misfortunes with which you, Moses and Jeremiah, threatened me were now fulfilled: "I will heap evils upon them; My arrows will I spend upon them; they shall be burned with hunger and consumed" (Deut. 32.23-24). "Deliver their children to the famine" (Jer. 18.21). "There shall not be prosperity in your ways, but you shall suffer violence and injury" (Deut. 28.29). And then "you shall be carried off, and there shall be none to save you. You will betroth a wife, but another man will sleep with her" (Deut. 28.29-30). "You will beget children, but shall not keep them, because they shall go into captivity" (Deut. 28.41).

PORTUGAL. YEAR 5253 [1493]
WHEN MY CHILDREN WERE SENT TO THE LIZARDS

This dreadful tempest was soon followed by the lash of an even rougher storm. The Portuguese king, eager to find some logical excuse to vex me, called for an investigation to see if the number of my people who had entered his kingdom exceeded the stipulated six hundred families. Since the haste with which my children had left Castile did not allow time for a census, or for anyone to wait and see if there was sufficient number, they found that they had exceeded the number. The king claimed the excess as his captives and slaves; he could thus vex the Jews at will and carry out his evil designs against them. Their willingness to redeem themselves for the price at which the rest had entered, or a higher price, proved of no avail.

To my misfortune, the island of São Thomé had recently been discovered. It was inhabited by lizards, snakes and other venomous reptiles, and was devoid of rational beings. Here the king exiled condemned criminals, and he decided to include among them the innocent children of these Jews. Their parents had seemingly been condemned by God's sentence.

When the luckless hour arrived for this barbarity to be inflicted, mothers scratched their faces in grief as their babies, less than three years old, were taken from their arms. Honored elders tore their beards when the fruit of their bodies was snatched before their eyes. The fated children raised their piercing cries to heaven as they were mercilessly torn from their beloved parents at such a tender age.

Several women threw themselves at the king's feet, begging for permission to accompany their children; but not even this moved the king's pity. One mother, distraught by this horrible unexampled cruelty, lifted her baby in her arms, and paying no heed to its cries, threw herself from the ship into the heaving sea, and drowned embracing her only child.

Thus those innocent souls were removed from their parents' sweet tenderness by such inhumanities and delivered into the power of merciless enemies. O brothers, who could describe to you the hidden and visible anguish which cloaked all my children — the sighs, the tears, the bloody and febrile groans which were heard in all their houses; for there are no words of consolation to relieve a pain so great, though each one had good reason to hope for consolation.

This monstrous cruelty would have induced many people to take their own lives before the time allotted them by God's will, if others

would not have suffered by their absence. But husbands feared their beloved wives would be widowed and alone among enemies, while wives were restrained by the hope of seeing their children again.

Finally, when those innocent children arrived at the wilderness of São Thomé, which was to be their grave, they were thrown ashore and mercilessly left there. Almost all were swallowed up by the huge lizards on the island, and the remainder, who escaped these reptiles, wasted away from hunger and abandonment. Only a few were miraculously spared that dreadful misfortune.

O Lord, whose power encompasses the dominion of the entire universe, how shall I fortify my heart and soul with patience so that the great force and onslaught of such tribulations does not shatter it? Consider that "You have oppressed us and broken us in a land of dragons, and have covered us with a shadow of death," as my son David had once foreseen and lamented (Ps. 44.20). In addition to the misfortunes in England, your threats against me were again executed here: "Your children shall be delivered to other peoples, and when your eyes see this they shall continually shed tears, and you shall have no strength to be able to bear it" (Deut. 28.32). "Because I shall set the teeth of beasts against them and the fury of serpents against the people" (Deut. 32.24). "And at this time I shall not hear when you call Me and are afflicted" (Jer. 11.11). Therefore "gird yourself with sackcloth, O daughter of My people, and wallow in ashes. Make you mourning, as for an only son, and a most bitter lamentation" (Jer. 6.26). Now since I have suffered such harsh punishments from Your anger, help me now, O Lord, and delay not.

PORTUGAL. YEAR 5257 [1497]
WHEN THEY WERE MADE CHRISTIANS BY FORCE

When death had finally carried off King John, who had persecuted me so cruelly in this world, another enemy then took the scepter in his place. Once he obtained the crown he did not wait long to torment me. He soon proclaimed that all Jews in his kingdom must become Christians or leave Portugal within a stipulated period. If they did not leave, and were still found practicing Judaism, they would be put to death and their estates would be confiscated.

This proclamation greatly saddened all my children, for their hearts told them that my enemy wished to perpetrate an evil greater than exile,

gathered the rest of their belongings as best they could in this short time, and prepared to leave. But when the king realized the Jews' resolve, and how little they seemed to mind exile in preference to changing their religion, he revealed his evil intent. He commanded all Jews in the kingdom to assemble in Lisbon, bruiting that he would there provide them with ships. But as soon as he had gathered them, he had them herded into large buildings called Os Estaos. And when he had corralled them, like sheep prepared for the slaughter, he at last exposed his venomous character, and announced that all were to become Christians; and that they should do out of love what they would otherwise have to do by compulsion.

These threats were not sufficient to make my children turn their backs to their God; instead they answered resolutely that they would not comply with his request.

The king, seeing that greater force was required to jog them, consulted his advisers. They decreed that all the Jewish youth up to the age of twenty-five should be separated from their elders. This separation reminded the Jews of the still fresh cruelty when their children were thrown to the lizards, and they became terrified. What sad words can I find to describe to you the grief expressed by young and old alike, and the fathers' and mothers' screams and groans, which could have cleaved rocks and moved tigers to pity?

After the young people were removed from their families, the advisors spoke to them persuasively, covering their venomous thoughts with treacle and promising them many favors if they converted wholeheartedly. But even this was insufficient to budge them from their constancy.

Finding the children as resolute as their parents, the agents of my temptation attacked them furiously. Dragging some by their legs and arms and others by their hair and beards, they carried them forcibly into the churches, where they threw their baptismal water upon them; it touched some of them but barely reached others. Further, they imposed Christian names on them and placed them in the custody of Old Christians, who were to submit them to their new religion and keep them from their own faith.

No sooner had they completed this violence than they turned to the parents, who clung in anguish to the life they abhorred, and dealt them another mortal blow. They told them that their children had now converted to Christianity and urged them to do the same if they wished to live in their company. But this did not move them. Finally the king

commanded that food and drink be withheld from them for three days to try them with the anguish of hunger, but this they likewise courageously endured.

The king realized that even this was insufficient to change them, and that if he starved them any longer they would perish. He therefore determined to use the violence he had employed with their children. Dragging some by their legs and others by their hair and beards, punching and mauling them, his men brought them to the churches, where the waters of baptism were thrown upon them. Many resisted valiantly: one father covered his six sons with their prayer-shawls, exhorted them sagely to die for their faith, and killed them one by one, taking his own life last. One couple hanged themselves, and those who tried to take their bodies away for burial were slain by the enemies' spears. There were many who threw themselves into wells and others hurled themselves out of windows and were dashed to pieces. My children's torturers took the bodies of these Israelites and burned them in the sight of their brethren, that they might be gripped with increased terror and fear of their cruelty. As a result of this violence, contrary to divine and human laws, the bodies of many Jews were made Christian, but no stain ever touched their souls. Instead they kept forever impressed upon them the seal of their ancient Law.

Who can escape from Your anger, O Lord, when it is moved with so much cause as my iniquities provided? For even here it has overtaken me, in these farthest parts of the earth, fulfilling these cruel judgments which You pronounced against me through the lips of Your prophets: "The Lord will scatter you among all peoples from one end of the earth even to the other; there you shall serve other gods, whom you have not known, you nor your fathers, and you will serve your enemy and languish" (Deut. 28.64-65). "He will place an iron yoke and hunger upon your neck" (Deut. 28.48). "And all those who remain of this wicked generation shall choose death rather than life" (Jer. 8.3). "And on the day of their calamity (in a strange land) I shall turn My back to them and not My face" (Jer. 18.17), just as they turned their backs to Me and not their faces and worshiped foreign gods in their own lands." Yet the truth is that "if we forget the name of our God and stretch forth the palms of our hands to a strange god, the Lord does not fail to search this out. (This must needs be so), for He knows the secrets of the heart" (Ps. 44.21-22).

Source: Usque, Samuel, *Consolation for the Tribulations of Israel* (*Consoloçam As Tribulaçoens de Israel*), translated from the Portuguese by Martin A. Cohen. Jewish Publication Society of America, 1965, 197-204. Reprinted with permission of Dr. Martin A. Cohen.

Additional material: *EJ*, "Usque, Samuel."

XVIII. CHRONICLE OF THE VALOROUS AND DISTINGUISHED DEEDS OF KING JOÃO II

Garcia de Resende (1470–?)

Born in Evora, this Portuguese chronicler was a chamber attendant to King João II and to his son, Prince Alfonso. He is best known for this chronicle of João II.

Chapter CLXIII

OF THE ENTRY OF THE JEWS OF CASTILE INTO PORTUGAL

That same year King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Castile, as Catholic princes, expelled all the Jews from all of their kingdoms so that under the penalty of death they left within a certain period of time. [The monarchs of Castile] gave them permission to take as goods their possessions, as long as they were not in gold nor silver, and this they did for the great damage which [the Jews] inflicted upon our Faith as could be seen by the Inquisition which was established. The Jews, helpless, and yet with their stubbornness in not wanting to become Christians, resorted to King [João II] and asked him as a favor that he harbor them at that time in his kingdoms, and give them embarkation in his sea ports and passage for them to go to other parts within a certain period of time, and for which they would provide him with a large sum of money. And the king—because his wishes have always been to pass to Africa [i.e., to make war on the Moors], which he much desired, and could not accomplish for finding himself without money, due to the great expenses incurred in the celebration of the wedding of the Prince, his

son, and also in other things which befell him, and believing that, with the money which he would receive from the said Jews, he could arrange for his passage to Africa and provide to God much service — consented to this, giving them the permission [to enter] with the intention to use the money [to pass to Africa], as it was said, without inflicting hardship upon his people, of whom he was very fond, and they of him; and this along with a declaration that all the Jews who came should enter by certain ports in the most distant places which were soon assigned. And that they should pay so much per head, for which they would be given a certificate for the taxes paid [upon their entry] by the Officials of the king assigned to this, and they paid what they were required. Those who entered without paying, and were found without a certificate, would be in fault and would become prisoners of the king. So that in this manner they could enter and stay in these kingdoms for eight months within which time he would give them embarkations in certain sea ports (for their money) which he soon assigned. And the Jews, satisfied with the said conditions, entered these kingdoms and within the time assigned the king provided embarkations for all of them who went away from his kingdoms; and the king received a large sum of money of which he never spent any portion, keeping it for the said passage which due to his sickness he never could make, and after his death all the money was found together, as he had received it, without any amount missing. And of these unfortunate Jews, many died in Portugal from the plague which they brought with them, and others died on deserted roads and lands without any assistance. And those who passed to Fez suffered a great persecution, being robbed and dishonored by the Moors who forcibly slept with the women, and with the daughters and sons, killing many of them; a piteous thing, and never have the minds of men seen so much persecution inflicted upon any people as with these sad Jews who came from Castile, and after [being] destroyed, dishonored, and lost, some of them returned to Castile to become Christians, and others also came to Portugal and stayed in the kingdom.

Chapter CLXXVIIII
OF HOW THE KING SENT THE JEWISH CHILDREN TO THE ISLAND OF SÃO TOMÉ

In the year of [1]493 in Torres Vedras, the king gave to Álvaro de Caminha, knight of his house, the Captaincy of the Island of São Tomé of right and inheritance at a hundred thousand réis of rent every year paid at the House of Mina. And as for the Castilian Jews who had not

left his kingdoms within the period of time assigned, the king ordered that, according to the condition upon their entry, they be taken into captivity, taking away from them the young sons and daughters, who became then prisoners, and ordered that they be all turned into Christians, and with the said Álvaro de Caminha, he sent them all to the Island of São Tomé so that by being separated from the parents and their doctrines, and from those who could speak with them about the Law of Moses, they should become better Christians, and that also [with them] growing up and getting married, [the king] could populate the said island which as a result of this started ever since to increase [in population].

Source: Resende, Garcia de. *Chronica dos Valorosos E Insignes Feitos Del Rey Dom Ioam II de Gloriosa Memoria*. Coimbra, 1798.
Additional material: *EUI*, "Resende, Garcia de."

XIX. CHRONICLE OF KING JOÃO II
Rui de Pina (1440–1521)

Enjoying a dual career as diplomat and historian, Pina was charged by King João II to write a history of the Portuguese crown. His pension for this task was confirmed by King Manuel who appointed him as Chief Chronicler of Portugal and as the Chief Keeper of the Torre do Tombo, the royal archives. In the wake of Columbus' discovery of the New World, he was one of the Portuguese delegates sent in 1493 to Barcelona to negotiate the respective national jurisdictions over the newly discovered lands.

Chapter LXV

THE ENTRY OF THE JEWS OF CASTILE INTO PORTUGAL

That same year the king of Castile, Don Ferdinand, and Queen Doña Isabella, his wife, as very Catholic princes, and true captains and defenders of Christianity, in order that the Faith would not wane from their kingdoms and seignories where so much peace and justice abounded, expelled all the Jews from their kingdoms for which under the penalty of death he assigned them a definite and convenient time, giving them permission to take from their kingdoms as goods their possessions, as long as they were not in gold nor silver, and none of the articles forbidden [to take] between kingdoms. [The Jews], finding themselves helpless, and not wanting in their cursed stubbornness to convert to the Faith and to receive the Holy Baptism, resorted to king

João so that—with hope in the vast amount of money they promised him—he would immediately harbor them in his kingdoms, and provide them with passage from his sea ports to other kingdoms. [Concerning] this request, the king held a council in Sintra with learned men and lords of the kingdom in which, before anyone could voice their opinion, he for one thing and the other did [so], and alleged such reasons and attitudes in which he clearly revealed his wishes and desire to shelter the Jews for money with the purpose [to use it] to cross to Africa [i.e., to make war on the Moors], inflicting less hardship and cost upon his people. To which the others, already seeing his resolution expressed before the council, setting aside the entire knowledge of the truth, submitted to his wishes only to please him, giving their approval. And yet this error among the wise and the prudent, especially in grave matters, was always reprehensible to kings and princes and was certainly the cause of the fall of kingdoms and domains; because it is less of a mistake and less deserving of reprehension for someone who does things without counsel than [someone] who does things against counsel. However, some whose judgement was clean and not corrupted by any passion, despising [both] the flattery and the fear which guided others, contradicted him substantially saying: "Your Majesty, there have always been two excellent and highly praiseworthy things in the kingdoms of Portugal whose kings and citizens have been honored and respected throughout the world: the first one was the steadfast loyalty of the Portuguese to their king, and the second the complete faith and true love of God and of His Holy Faith—which the kings [of Portugal] as well as many Catholics—have always had and kept. The first one was corrupted either by others' faults or by your own sins already in your days, and at the time of your reign it was firstly corrupted by disloyalties, from which God by his mercy and your innocence freed you with such firm justice and vengeance. Yet it would have been better if that had not happened at all. For not enjoying the tranquility and security which your predecessors always possessed, the more you should refer back to your misfortunes than to your blessings. And thus the loss of this first thing [i.e., loyalty to the king] in your time started to take away the deserved reputation in the eyes of your vassals. The second which is the Christian Faith, and which is the only thing remaining, you should not want—either for money, as it seems [to be the case], or out of vituperated greed—that [the faith] be extinguished and corrupted first in you. For in the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon, your neighbors, not having such old privilege of this cleanliness, these

excellent kings as Catholic Christians, setting aside the natural upbringing which these infidels and heretics had in their kingdoms, and ignoring such rich services, duties and servitude which they [the Jews] owed them and always rendered, exile and expel them from their lands — as it is done to enemies — for a good example and great purity of Faith. Neither reason, nor honesty, nor your conscience consent that you assist and shelter them where it contradicts everything else. And we do not know with which excuse and fair title you may call yourself a Defender of Faith, turning your kingdoms into a haven and secure port for its [i.e., Faith's] enemies. To which our counsel would be — if your resolution permitted it — that you excuse yourself of such shameful profit and false piety: at least, with your excuse and refusal, it could be that these Jews, persecuted from their birthplaces and already desperate to save their bodies, will be able to receive it [i.e., Christian Faith] and require it for their souls. And baptismal water will not soften the hard callus of their former and erroneous perfidy in the old people, but without a doubt in the youth and their children whose flesh and inclination is soft, baptismal water will benefit all. And the conversion of the infinite Jews of France and England, where the Holy Faith and the Perfect Religion now flourish, will be for this a clear example. Because in the case where these are old trees and of a bad fruit, although being cut by death, they will not stop producing new branches in which other good fruit, which will be their children and grandchildren, is grafted, as it was done in the kingdoms we mentioned. And to offer up to God this mistake, with hope to serve Him in the war of Africa, you already know that this is a sure disservice on your part and very questionable, as the other service in the conquest of the Moors, especially involving an offer so vile." But the king, setting aside these contradictions, decreed with all due place that all the foreign Jews, with the imposition of a certain tax per head, could come to these kingdoms and remain for eight months within which time he would furnish enough of his ships for embarkation to whatever parts of the world they wished to go. And he immediately assigned the ports in the counties of the kingdom for their entries, and placed Officials and Collectors to receive from them the taxes and tributes, according to the said imposition. From which the king gained a large sum of gold and silver, but not without the astonishment from [his] people against him, because of the great injury, losses, and danger which the whole kingdom received from their coming. Because with them, besides other evils, there entered a harsh pestilence from which cause many citizens died in many parts. Not even they [i.e.,

the Jews] did not [escape] piteous harm; because an infinite number of them died and were buried on the roads, mountains, and deserted places in these kingdoms. Also those who passed by sea from here to the land of the Moors could not escape other more cruel, more damaging, and more wicked persecutions; because besides the Berbers, the Moors, to whose lands they passed, robbed them of their clothes and possessions, and—an even bigger torment and injury—took their women and children and, bringing them to all without difference between males or females, gave them to a public and abominable orgy, shortening with iron the lives of those who resisted. And certainly there has never been seen such distress and misfortune of any people, who suffered such manners of persecution and for such a long time in such different lands, as these Jews, of whom many not being able to endure such evils, with the force of necessity more than of Faith, were converted to it [i.e., the Faith], and, poor and dishonored, they returned to Castile, because God made Himself known only to those who were richly deserving of salvation. [...]

Chapter LXVIII
THE DEPARTURE OF THE JEWISH CHILDREN TO THE ISLAND OF SÃO TOMÉ

In this year of 1493, in Torres Vedras, the king gave to Álvaro de Caminha the Captaincy of the Island of São Tomé of right and inheritance; and as for the Castilian Jews who had not left his kingdom within the assigned date, he ordered that, according to the condition upon their entry, all the boys, and young men and girls of the Jews be taken into captivity. After having them all turned into Christians, he sent them to the said island with Álvaro de Caminha, so that by being secluded, they would have reasons for being better Christians, and [the king] would have in this reason for the island to be better populated, which, as a result, culminated in great growth.

Source: Pina, Rui de. *Chronica D'El Rei Dom João II*. Collecção de Livros Inéditos de História Portugueza (first published in Lisbon, 1792).

Additional material: *EUI*, "Pina, Rui de."

XX. CHONICLE OF THE MOST HAPPY KING MANUEL
Damião de Góis (1501-1573)

Born into a noble Asturian family, Góis entered the royal household as a child and continued his court activities until the death of King Manuel. He was sent on numerous diplomatic missions throughout Europe. Returning to Lisbon in his later years, he was imprisoned by the Inquisition for expressing his unwelcome philosophical and humanistic ideas. Of his multiple historical works, the one on King Manuel is regarded as his major contribution.

Chapter XVIII
OF HOW THE KING EXPELLED THE MOORS AND THE JEWS FROM HIS KINGDOMS AND SEIGNORIAL DOMAINS

After the kings of Castile expelled the Jews from their kingdoms and seignorial domains, as was formerly said, King Manuel, requested in letters by those very same kings, decided to do the same. But since the business was of such a nature not to be resolved without proper counsel, there were several opinions about this, for some people questioned that — since the Pope consented that these people live in all the lands of the Church, permitting them to live in its law, and the same was done in all the principalities and republics of Italy and Hungary, Bohemia and Poland, one could assume [that this practice was] not done without cause, being imitated in all Germany and other Christian kingdoms and provinces which allowed them also to live [there] — what cause

would there be for expelling them from the kingdom which would not contradict the reason which these other nations had for consenting them to stay; and, moreover, sending them out of the land would not give them the opportunity to become Christians, but instead, if they went to the land of the Moors, all hope for their conversion would be lost. Whereas all of them living among us, moved by our religion, and by our good use of it, it could be expected that they would convert [to Christianity]. There were in this other inconveniences, because besides the services and taxes which the king would lose, he was obliged to satisfy the people to whom he and past kings had shown mercy. Not only would [the Jews] take with them from the land many possessions and riches, but also what is of more value: they would take with them their own subtle and delicate spirits [i.e., minds] with which they would teach [the Moors] their mechanical crafts, at which they were very dexterous, principally in the making of arms, from which much damage, stress, and losses to the people as well as to the goods of all Christendom would result. Such was the judgement and opinion of some in the council.

Others were opposed, claiming that it was quite true what they said, but that the kings of France, England, Scotland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, along with many other neighboring provinces, and all the state of Flanders and Burgundy have not expelled the Jews from their lands — even though for many years they had good reasons for expelling them [instead of receiving them] — and the same should be considered by the kings of Castile, which should prevent the expulsion of this nation [the Jews] from the kingdom. Let alone what did not seem [to be] good counsel — [that if] these kingdoms [i.e., Portugal] surrounded by the kingdom of Castile, and Castile by France — were to take in the Jews who were being expelled from the land of such powerful neighbors, [they] could take amiss that we had a better counsel in allowing these people to live among us than they [i.e., Castile and France] had in expelling them, the dislike of which they will perchance have hidden, so that when they saw an appropriate time they would open the wings to tyranny and, underneath the color of Catholics and very Christians, would inflict upon us whatever harm and injury they could manage; and that, above all, the good advice would be to forgo the yearnings for all the profits and tributes which would be gained from these people and [rather] to place one's intentions in God only and in His Holy Faith, because He would double with His graces what would be lost in this. This matter was decided by the council to do His wishes; [its] resolute

conclusion was to immediately expel from the kingdom those who did not want to receive the baptismal water and did not believe in that which the Christian Catholic Church believed. With which opinion and counsel the king agreed, without considering what he would lose in this, nor with the explanations which he was obliged to give, as he completely did later.

And soon the right time for the execution of this business was signed, which was declared and published, the king being still in Muge in the month of December of 1496, delivering a sermon about this. Not only did the council assent that the Jews leave the kingdom with their wives and children, and possessions, but also the Moors in the same manner, for which the king at once assigned to all of them a certain date and the ports of his kingdoms for their embarkation.

Chapter XX
OF HOW THE KING ORDERED THAT THE CHILDREN OF THE JEWS WHO WERE LEAVING THE KINGDOMS BE TAKEN AWAY, AND FOR WHAT REASON HE DID NOT DO THE SAME TO THE MOORS

Many of the native Jews of the kingdom and [many] of those who entered from Castile took the baptismal water, and those who did not want to be converted immediately began to negotiate the things which befitted them for their departure and embarkation, at which time the king, for reasons which compelled him to do this, ordered that in a certain day the sons and daughters [of the Jews] under the age of fourteen be taken away from them and be distributed among the villages and places of the kingdom where, at his own expense, they would be raised and indoctrinated in the Faith of our Savior Jesus Christ. This the king along with his council decided [to do], being in Estremoz, and from there he came to Evora at the beginning of Lent in the year of 1497, when he declared that the assigned date should be Easter day. Among those in the council, there was no secret which was not known by them; there was no one who did not know what had been ordered [to be done] regarding this matter and the day in which it would take place; because of this [lack of secrecy], it was necessary for the king to order that this execution should be immediately carried out throughout the whole kingdom—before the Jews, by ways and means to which they could resort, secretly sent their children out of the kingdom—which not only caused great terror mixed with many tears, pain, and sadness to the Jews, but also great astonishment and surprise to the Christians,

because no creature can endure, nor tolerate, to be separated by force from their children. Others by natural connection felt almost the same, especially rational beings, because with them Nature communicated the effects of its law more liberally than it did with the brute creatures; which law made many of the old Christians — moved by such compassion and mercy toward the screams, cries, and laments of the fathers and mothers whose children were being taken away by force — themselves to hide [the children] in their houses so that they would not be taken away from the hands [of the parents], and thus they were saving [the children] knowing that they were doing so against the law and decrees of their king and lord.

The same natural law led the Jews themselves to resort to cruelty. Many of them killed their children by throwing and drowning them in wells and rivers, and by other means, rather wishing to see them end this way than to be separated from them without hope of ever seeing them again, and by the same reason many of them killed themselves. While these executions were taking place, the king did not fail to take care of that which pertained to the health of the souls of these people, by which, compelled by mercy, he deceived them, without furnishing them with embarkation. Of the three ports of his kingdom which had been assigned for [their departure], he closed two, ordering all to embark in Lisbon where he provided them with lodgings for shelter [Os Estãos] and where more than twenty thousand souls were gathered. Due to these delays, the time which the king had assigned for their departure had passed, with all of them becoming prisoners then. [Many of the Jews], finding themselves in such a miserable state, entrusted themselves to the king [i.e., to be converted] so that the king returned their children, and promised them that for twenty years they would not be under official investigation [about their beliefs], and so they would become Christians with which the king agreed, giving them many other privileges. And to those who refused to become Christians, the king immediately ordered that they be given embarkation, ending the captivity imposed on them, and all of them crossed to the land of the Moors. Thus it is the case which one could regard as negligence if we did not say that there was reason for the king to order the children of the Jews — and not of the Moors — to be taken away, because one as well as the others were leaving the kingdom for refusing to receive the baptismal water and to believe in that which the Christian Catholic Church believes. The reason was that by taking away the children from the Jews, no damage would be inflicted upon the Christians who were

spread around the world, where the Jews by their sins have neither kingdoms, nor domains, nor cities, nor villages, but they are—in all parts where they live—pilgrims and subjects [tributaries], without having power, nor authority to execute their desires against the injuries and evils done to them. But to the Moors by our sins and punishment, God allows them to occupy a great part of Asia and Africa, and a good part of Europe, where they have empires, kingdoms, and great domains with many Christians living under their tributaries, besides many whom they hold as prisoners. For all of these [Christians], it would be very harmful to take away the children of the Moors; because those who would suffer this offense, it is clear that they would not forget to take vengeance on the Christians who lived in the lands of the other Moors, after they [i.e., the Christians] are found there, and above all on the Portuguese, of whom [the Moors] could, particularly in this part, complain. And this is the reason why they [i.e., the Moors] were allowed to leave the kingdom with their children, but not the Jews, whom may God by His mercy allow to know the way toward the truth, so that they may be saved through it.

Chapter XXI
OF THE FRUITS REAPED BY TURNING THE JEWS INTO CHRISTIANS

It is agreed upon that this deed to compel the Jews to become Chistians was praiseworthy, since the inconveniences which were mentioned in the king's council could result [from this], and many others which came afterwards and which we did not accept well, because no loss could happen to the kingdom with the conversion of these people that could be regarded as loss in comparison to what was gained in their knowing the truth of what they must believe in; but, not even by obtaining such gain is it possible to deny the loss which results from the disturbance of and to the detriment of the public and private welfare. What did occur in these kingdoms [was on account of] the occasion of their presence and the shrewdness of their business; after they [the Jews] had the name of Christians, they could deal in many things which by the canonical right were utterly forbidden to them, such as the one not to rent [the land-based] tithes of the Church, nor any of the crops. The prices of foodstuffs, which had not often been high in times past, as it was later, began to rise after they started dealing in this. [They] made the price of the crops from the land rise, as if what was raised on the land was being brought from outside the kingdom. Due to the shortage

of [foodstuffs], the Old Christians became accustomed [to this], and they do this in part less from fear of God than out of fear of the justice [meted out by] the New Christians. [It is from these New Christians], with the boldness in [their] names as 'lovely Christians' and as the 'most favored [ones]', and who being more related by blood [with their own kind] in the land than those others [i.e., Old Christians], that the disorder came thereafter—of not only raising the prices of the foodstuffs beyond reason, but with it [the prices] of all kinds of merchandise. [...]

Source: Góis, Damião de. *Crónica do Felicíssimo Rei D. Manuel*. New Edition according to the one of 1566. University of Coimbra, 1949.

Additional material: *EUI*, "Góis, Damião de."

XXI. OF THE LIFE AND DEEDS OF KING MANUEL

Jerónimo Osório (1506–1580)

Born in Lisbon, Osório studied law and philosophy at the Universities of Salamanca, Paris, and Bologna. He later became bishop of Silves and a professor at the University of Coimbra. Known as the 'Portuguese Cicero' for his eloquence, he was the author of several historical works composed in Latin. The following selection is from the Portuguese translation of his history of King Manuel, *De rebus emanuelis*.

OF THE LIFE AND DEEDS OF KING MANUEL

King Manuel at once took into his hands the deliberation of a point which was then coursing through all matters, and which even among those of his council itself was highly controversial. This was the deliberation: whether the Jews, already expelled by the kings of Castile and now inhabitants of Portugal, had to be immediately ousted (as it had been decreed during the reign of His Majesty João II), or if the king by his benevolence would allow them to stay in the places in this kingdom to which they were assigned. In his letters, the king of Castile requested Dom Manuel not to consent that such evil people, despised by God and by men, should live in his kingdom. This was a matter which the king had seriously to ponder.

[The king] found in his council many who felt that we should not discard a people who even the Pope would not disdain to harbor in many cities of the Roman Church—an example which many cities of

Castile, and many Catholic princes not only of Italy, but also Germany and Hungary as well as other regions of Europe, have embraced, giving the Jews permission to live there and to exercise their trade. That by expelling them from the land neither would they be divested of their innate treachery, for wherever they set their feet, footprints of evil would be left; nor would any wise man disturb himself more about the evil done before in this place than one done in another place. With the Jews gone to Africa (which no one doubted, as soon as we expelled them from the kingdom), all the hopes for their conversion would be severed. While among Catholics, with the interaction and example of the Christians, and exposed to their good teachings, many [Jews] approached Christianity: whereas once among men contaminated by the errors of Mohammed, they would be beyond any hope [of conversion]. Moreover, it would be a great loss to the Republic for the Jews to transfer money to the Moors, (many of them being opulent), along with the arts they would take from us and in which they would train our enemies, so that later with them they would inflict upon us great injury.

Others contrarily reasoned: that it was not without cause that the Jews had been expelled from France and from various parts of Germany, from the kingdoms of Aragon and Castile; but in fact because those princes, less fond of the large taxes than the purity of faith, realized that the Jews used to destabilize the religion of the simple folk, defaming the sacrosanct name of Jesus Christ with the most despicable contempt, spoiling the understandings of those with whom they communicated with pestiferous opinions, which contagion was already cultivated among the peasants. That no one of sound mind would ever trust the enemies of the Christian law, who have no scruples about passing to our adversaries as many secrets as they can find out, nor would one [of sound mind] betray our salvation for bribes. If they [the Jews] have been advantaged by our benefits, nothing more useful would there be than to have this riffraff born for fraudulence far from us before they handle the entrails [guts] of our revenue. Rather that they take their possessions which they now own than that they be allowed to take for themselves the attested treasures of the public fortune. Rather that they take away with them what they themselves had brought than that (the longer they stayed in the kingdom) they ruin many families financially by deceit and fraud in which they are veritable masters. This counsel pleased Dom Manuel who at once decreed that all Jews and Moors who were not baptized leave the kingdom and that those who stayed after the assigned date would lose their liberty.

In the following year of 1497, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, who were bitterly at war with King Charles of France, sent ambassadors to Portugal to ratify the alliance previously made with King João and to request aid against King Charles. Dom Manuel and all those present in the council gladly ratified the alliance, but as for the request for aid, the king replied: that his being at peace with Charles, and not having suffered any offense from France, it would be quite dishonorable for him to violate old alliances, especially when the war was occurring in a remote country and no weapons were molesting Spain. That, in case the French came to attack Spain, then—by the kinship which existed between them [Portugal and Spain]—he would throw himself heartily into repressing the French aggression—a reply which the monarchs of Castile seemed to have accepted quite well.

Meanwhile, the day was approaching when the Jews who opposed the baptism had to go into exile. Already all of them in their obstinacy were on the verge of setting out on the voyage when Dom Manuel, who was troubled in his soul that so many millions of men would suffer eternal punishment, devised a plan which would at least save their children. The plan was unjust; it was unfair, even though it was born out of laudable purposes. He ordered that every child of a Jew who was not beyond the age of fourteen years be taken away from the parents so that, removed from their sight, they be indoctrinated in the Christian religion. But the king did not accomplish this without great spiritual affliction. It was such a piteous thing to see the children being wrested from the breasts of their mothers, and the parents being dragged, struck, and whipped as they clutched their little children in their arms. A cry was raised and the air trembled with the laments and the weeping of the women. There were some among them who, turbid with indignation, drowned their children in the wells; some of them fell into such madness that they killed themselves. The calamity of such miserable people worsened. Anxious for immediate passage to Africa, overwhelmed by such injury, [the Jews] were denied all means. For the king was inflamed with such a desire to reduce these sheep to the flock of the Church, that he set premiums to attract them, and insults to compel them [to convert]. Even the license for the embarkation which they had been given was delayed from one day to the other in order to provide them with time to change their status. Of the three ports which had been assigned for the embarkation, two were closed, so that they could only leave through Lisbon, and the concourse of Jews that discharged into the city was innumerable. The decreed day had passed, and already

it was becoming a struggle to rob the Jews who could not leave of their liberty. Overcome by such misfortune, many wanted to profess willingly the Christian religion, or rather to feign it than to continue to live under such cruelty. As soon as they were instructed in the doctrine of Christ, they were purified in the sacred fountains, were given back their children, and the king enticed them with large prizes, and they lived a comfortable enough life in Portugal.

But such a procedure was neither legitimate nor was it a Christian act. How so? You force them, rebellious souls not sworn by any tie of [true] religion, to believe in what they persistently scorn and reject? You take upon yourself to put an obstacle in the way of the liberty of free will and to throw off the shackle of [those who have] foul-mouthed understandings? This is neither permitted nor is consented to by the Most Holy Name of Jesus Christ who only requires voluntary sacrifice from man, and not by force, who never ordered the violation of souls, but for wills to be drawn by affection and to be invited into the true Christian treatment. And who is there in these parts who presumes to [alter] consciences [of men] — what only the Holy Spirit can do in those who do not persist in resisting it until the final breath of life? For He is the only one who illuminates, who confronts, who invites and finally who brings to the communion and confession of Jesus Christ those who do not reject such gifts with ungrateful obstinacy of spirit. In conclusion: don't you see what an indignity it is to entrust such mysteries, such sacrosanct things and symbols so divine, to men who are suspect in their Christianity? To thoughtlessly encourage evil in those who mock and scorn the Christian discipline and to outrageously stain the essence of religion with a mask that mimics it?

However, many praised His Highness, alleging in their reasons that he had religion for a motive so that those Hebraic people should walk in the path toward salvation, taking as a warranty the opinion of persons very accredited in wisdom and Christianity and the example of many Catholic princes — upon [whose opinion and example] he relied — so that he could therefore accomplish it. There is never a lack, nor will there ever be a lack of those who adjust their speech and with it praise [the deeds of] the princes.

And although the king's action was not too just, each day we see as a result of it the accumulated fruits, for the children of these Jews — who were very persevering and suspected of simulating their faith — devoutly cultivate today — due to our treatment, familiarity and discipline, and perhaps due to the forgetfulness of paternal perversity — the

religion of Jesus Christ and mold their lives by the precepts which He left. Thus it happened that some of the Jews crossed to Africa, and those who remained ceased to remain [as Jews]. But the Moors who did not want to abandon the pestiferous superstition of Mohammed were taken to Berberia, without having inflicted upon them the slightest harm, as was done to the Jews, so that the Christians who were in the power of the Saracens in Africa or Asia would not suffer any aggravation.

Source: Osório, D. Jerónimo. *Da Vida E Feitos De El-Rei D. Manuel*. Biblioteca Histórica—Série Régia—Livraria Civilização—Editora.

Additional material: *EUI*, "Osório, Jerónimo."

XXII. THE BOOK OF GENEALOGIES (*SEFER YUHASIN*)

Abraham Zacuto (1452–c.1515)

A renowned astronomer and mathematician in his day, Zacuto composed his greatest astronomical work, *Ha Hibbur Ha-Gadol*, at the request of the Bishop of Salamanca. He invented the copper astrolabe which allowed the more precise determination of the sun's position. His corrected nautical tables facilitated the calculation of latitude without resorting to the use of the sun's meridian, and allowed the more accurate calculation of lunar and solar eclipses. Many Spanish and Portuguese navigators, including Columbus and Vasco da Gama, made use of his famed nautical tables.

After the expulsion from Spain in 1492, Zacuto settled in Portugal where King João II appointed him as the royal court astronomer. In 1497, during King Manuel's forcible conversion of the Jews in his kingdom, Zacuto fled with his son to North Africa, ending up in Tunis where he completed the *Sefer Yuhasin*.

In the year 5141 (1381) the Christians changed their method of identifying years, and they began to number them from the birth of the Nazarene. In the year 5151 (1391), when the king died, there was a massive conversion drive in Toledo and R' Judah, the son of *Rosh*, R' Isaac Ibn Shoshan and others were killed. The same occurred in Seville, in Lerida and Barcelona and Majorca, where they arose against

the Jews and killed them by the sword, and they took their sons and wives to sell at sea. More than 4,000 Jews converted [Earlier MS. editions read 200,000 Jews]. We are told that they took non-Jewish women into their homes until they became pregnant, and their children were non-Jews, and that the children themselves killed their fathers. Even though their children were righteous, we are responsible for one another, and all the more so in questions of sexual morality, for if one draws close to and marries a non-Jew, God Himself seeks His revenge. He is righteous, and there is none to tell Him what to do.

Then they came to Algiers and to Oran and to Bougie and to Tunis to flee from the conversion, and R' Maimun b. Sa'adiah Najjar came to Constantine, as did R' Isaac Perfet bar Sheshet and R' Simon bar Zemah Duran in the year 5151 (1391), where they taught Torah among Israel and wrote responsa and many other works. This was especially true of R' Simon Duran, who wrote *Magen Avot* in the year 5185 (1425), where he showed his knowledge of the other sciences and of all of the Talmud, and wrote a commentary on Job which he called *Ohev Mishpat*, and a commentary on the *Azharot*, all in all fourteen works, and the *Tashbetz*, which is three volumes, the name being an acronym of *Teshuvot Simon b. Zemah*, and rulings on the Talmud and sermons, as well as a commentary on the entire Torah and the poetical hymns. His son, R' Solomon, wrote *Tikkun Soferim*, an important work [and also *Milhemet Mitzvah*].

At that time, in the year 5160 (1400) the greatest in the kingdom of Castile was a great Torah scholar and the king's physician and a great astronomer, Don Meir Alguadez, who translated *Sefer Ha-Middot* [Aristotle's *Ethics*] into Hebrew, a holy and saintly man, who was a student of R' Judah b. Asher the saintly.

At that time, there was in Burgos a great Torah scholar who resembles his fathers, who knew the entire Talmud, R' Judah b. Asher, great-grandson of *Rosh*. He was killed in Toledo in the year 5151 (1391). He was the author of *Hukkot Ha-Shamayim* ["Laws of the Universe"].

In the year 5172 (1412) there was a greater forced conversion than ever before in Aragon and Castile, by the priest Fra Vicente [Ferrer], who preached to the Christians, and by the king, Don Ferdinand of Aragon, the grandfather of King Ferdinand in whose time the Jews were exiled from Spain by the Harlot Catalina, the queen of Castile, who was a widow, where more than 200,000 Jews converted and those who remained Jews lived in tents in the open fields, while others fled to

Portugal. This king had the same name as his grandfather, King Ferdinand, who took Granada from the Muslims and ordered the exile in the year 5250 (1490).

In the year 5172 (1412) there was a great storm and many ships at sea were wrecked. There was also a great epidemic, but not as that of the years 5105—5107 (1345-7) where more than two-thirds of all the people died. By a mere glance they would die, until they killed all the lepers because they were afraid they were poisoning the air. So too would kingdoms arise against the Jews and kill them, claiming that what was happening had never happened before.

Then they burned alive the Jews in Germany, for they claimed they had poisoned the wells, but the sages of that time said that the reason was from Heaven, based on astrological signs.

In the year 5125 (1365), the king of Portugal took the territory of Septa [Ceutá] in Africa, at the narrowest place of the sea where the sea is but three miles wide, and from there it enters the middle of the land. Then he declared that he had conquered it because he had accepted the *Conversos* and the Jews who had arrived from Castile. He reigned for eighty years. Septa [Ceutá] is a large city, and was built by Shem, son of Noah, and Joab b. Zeruyyah was there.

In the year 5188 (1438), R' Menahem, the *Arukh*, died.

R' Shem Tov b. Shem Tov was a rosh yeshivah and a kabbalist, and died in the year 5190 (1430). His son, R' Joseph b. Shem Tov, wrote a commentary on *Sefer Ha-Middot* ("Book of Ethics") and a commentary on the *Iggeret* by R' Perfet on the matter of faith. Then glory returned to its abode and Don Abraham Benveniste, the saintly and perfect, was appointed rabbi in the year 5192 (1432). He strengthened the Torah and its study, and disposed of many conversions with his money. His son was R' Joseph Benveniste and his grandsons are very wealthy and spent their money freely to strengthen the yeshivot of the heads of yeshivot listed:

The first was the great Torah scholar R' Isaac De Leon, who is absolutely brilliant in defending the Torah against its opponents. He died at a very ripe old age without leaving any issue, but he left over after him students who were great Torah scholars, and these are like his children.

The second was my Master R' Isaac Aboab, who was very sharp. He died in Portugal in the year 5253 (1493), seven months after the exile (from Spain), and I was there and eulogized him, using the verse, "Behold I send an angel," in *Parashat Mishpatim*.

The third was R' Samuel Valensi, a relative of mine on my mother's side, an extremely learned sage, whose family had been immersed in Torah from time immemorial. He died about five years before the exile from his land [Portugal], in the year 5252 (1492). He was aged 52 at the time, and lived to the same age as the prophet after whom he was named, the prophet Shmuel (Samuel). R' Isaac De Leon, on the other hand, lived over 70 years and R' Isaac Aboab about 60 years. At the time, the Torah was maintained by Don Vidal Benveniste and R' Abraham his brother. On the day of the circumcision ceremony of the latter, R' Joseph Albo gave a sermon about him, using the text, "This is of the children of the Hebrews." This took place in the fortress of the city of Soria. R' Joseph Albo lived in Soria and wrote *Sefer Ha-Ikkarim* ("The Book of Principles") in the year 5185 (1425). At the time R' Shmuel Sarsa wrote *Mikhlal Yofi*. [I once heard that R' Isaac Canpanton was the cause of this man's being burned, for once all the rabbis gathered to read a certain *ketubah* [marriage contract] and they stated, "this-and-this year of the creation of the world," as is the custom of *ketubot*. This Sarsa, though, placed his hand on his beard and hinted at the eternity of the world [he questioned the Divine creation of the world]. The rabbi then arose and said: "Why is the bush not consumed? Let the bush be consumed." They then took him to the civil courts and he was sentenced to be burned to death by these courts for questioning the creation of the world.

The great rabbi of all of Israel, the pious and modest, holy in all his ways, was R' Isaac Canpanton, son of the wise R' Jacob Canpanton (who wrote works in mathematics, in astronomy and in Torah). The son, R' Isaac, was known as "the Gaon of Castile." I myself saw him, and to see him was as if to see the Divine Presence (the *Shekhinah*). At the time, I was about six or seven. He died in Peñafiel in the year 5223 (1463). Maestro Abraham Bibago lived in Zaragoza at this time, and wrote *Derekh Emunah* ("The Path of Faith").

Constantinople, the chief city of Greece fell to the king of Turkey in the year 613 (should read 213—namely 5213 -translator), on Tuesday, the 29th of May, that being the year 1453. Four days later, by order of the king, the minister in charge of the army, who had been second only to the king, was killed in Castile... That year, they burned the cross in Constantinople which the Christians claim was the one upon which their messiah was crucified, and that was a prime article of their faith.

They no longer had an emperor, and they elected as emperor the king of Germany. Nigra Ponti, the fortified city, was captured by the king of Turkey on Thursday, 11 July 5231 (1471).

On *Shabbat*, 26 *Sivan* in the year 5231 (1471), eight Jews of Sepulveda sanctified God's name, even though they were completely innocent and had been convicted based on false testimony. Two were strangled, two burned to death, and four hanged. May God revenge them soon, Amen.

In the year 5241 (1481) the good king of Portugal died. In the year 5238 (1478), on Wednesday, 29 of the month of *Av*, at midday, there was an eclipse in Spain as had never been seen before, which made it as dark as midnight. The following year, 5239 (1479), all the Christian scholars of Italy, France and Spain gathered together in Alcalá [de Henares], about one and a half days' distance from Toledo, regarding a certain work written by Maestro Diesme in Salamanca, and they burned that book, which spoke against their religion. In the year 5242 (1482), Alhama was captured by the Marquis of Cádiz. As the city's name was a Muslim one, this was as a thorn in the side to the Muslims. To the misfortune of the Jews, as soon as they took Alhama, the war against the Muslims began, and within ten years they captured the kingdom of Granada.

That year they began to investigate the religious practices of the *Conversos*, and those found guilty of practicing Jewish ritual were sentenced to be burned at the stake, with their money forfeit to the king. That year, they divided the Jews and non-Jews into different living areas. In the year 5245 (1485), Ronda was captured, as well as Marbella and Cartama and the Casarabonela.

In the year 5246 (1486), on the 18th day of *Marheshvan*, it began raining in our land, and for sixty days it did not cease. In the year 5247 (1487), there were about six months where there was no bread, from *Adar* and on, and wheat did not rise in price. Then in the winter [the King] took Vélez Málaga and Xaraba. In the summer of 4247 (1487), the beautiful Málaga, which is by the sea west of Granada, was besieged by the king of Castile for a hundred days. At that time, a certain man named El Moro Santo [the Moorish saint] came forth from the Muslim camp and tried to kill the king and queen in the Christian camp, wounding a minister and an important woman who were in the king's tent, who he thought were the royal couple. The man was killed.

During the time that the city was under siege the war was fierce and some of the Christians outside the city—about 14,000 people—also died, as well as many in the city. It was finally taken because of the starvation brought about by the siege of ships at sea and the army on land. The city fell on *Shabbat*, the 29th of *Av*, that being the 18th of August, and all those Muslims who had been in the city, about 12,000 people, were taken captive, as well as about 400 Jews, and the community of Castile redeemed them.

In the year 5252 (1492), on the Christian New Year's Day, Granada was conquered, and that was when the decree of expulsion was decreed on the Jews. Four months later the decree was issued, at the end of April in every province, to the sound of trumpets, that the Jews had to leave the country within three months, the final date being the 7th day of *Av*. This included Castile, Aragon, Granada, Biscay, Sardinia, Sicily, Majorca, Minorca, namely, from all the lands of the kingdom. Some left for Turkey and others for Africa—for Fez and Oran. They were followed by starvation and epidemics, and almost all perished. Most of those in Castile entered Portugal because they were unable to take passage by sea, and had to leave by the assigned date. This required them to pay a tithe of all they owned. Furthermore, each person had to pay a ducat per person and a third of a ducat for permission to pass through the country. Then they had to pay a quarter of all they brought with them, and some of them almost a third. Even one who had no money whatsoever had to pay ten ducats, and if not he was imprisoned. Yet the number that entered Portugal could no longer be counted, because they exceeded 120,000 souls. However, very few of them remained. Some were killed by epidemic, while others were imprisoned and their children were seized and shipped to the islands in the sea. Others converted because of all their troubles. Indeed, the next king who ruled harrassed the Jews, and on 24 December, Sunday, 29 *Kislev* on *Hanukkah*, it was decreed that all Jews had to leave Portugal within eleven months. That year, there was a forced mass conversion such as had never been before, and just before *Shabbat Ha-Gadol* [the Sabbath before Passover], it was decreed that all young boys and girls were to be seized from Evora and from the entire kingdom of Portugal. There was a great cry in Evora to the king, one as had never been before. On Passover, they came and took all the children. The decree went further, that even the old were to be seized against their will. Many died sanctifying God's name, as they killed themselves. That year there was also an expulsion from the entire kingdom of Navarre so that throughout all of Spain not a Jew remained,

except for fifty who had fled to Seville and were imprisoned there for two years until the year 5259 (1499) in the month of *Av*. Then they were taken out to be sold and were brought to Algiers, in the land of Africa, between Oran and to Bougie, that being by the sea. R' Simon Duran and his family are there to this day, and there they were redeemed for 700 ducats, even though it is a small community in quantity, it is large in quality. God, may He be blessed, will repay them in this world and in the World to Come. The community of Bougie also helped in this, so that not a single Jew remained in Spain. May God gather in our exiles and build our Temple, Amen.

Source: Abraham Zacuto, *Sefer Yuhasim Ha-Shalem*. Ed. by H. Filipowski. London, 1857.

Additional reading: *EJ*, "Zacuto, Abraham ben Samuel."

XXIII. THE BOOK OF TRADITION
(*SEFER HA-KABBALAH*)
Abraham ben Solomon

The author, who was ten years old at the time of the Spanish expulsion, settled with his elderly father in the Kingdom of Fez. Apart from other happenings, he was an eye-witness at age eleven to the major fire that raged through the exiles' temporary encampment outside the city of Fez.

Like his predecessor Abraham Zacuto, the author composed this work in the "Chain of Tradition" genre, intending it to serve as a continuation of *Sefer Ha-Kabbalah* by Abraham Ibn David.

Said Abraham, son of the perfect wise and pious R' Solomon of Ardutiel: As Rabbi Abraham b. R' David compiled *Sefer Ha-Kabbalah* in the year 4921 (1161), and listed the generations of sages from the Men of the Great Assembly until his generation, that being the generation of R' Joseph Ha-Levi Ibn Migash, the student of Rav Alfas (*Rif*) and teacher of Maimonides, I saw fit to complete it from the year that the rabbi died, which was the year 4940 (1180) until the present year, which is the year 5270 (1510), so that the generations which come after us will know that the tradition has continued from teacher to student from the year of the giving of the Torah at Sinai until the present, and the same will continue until the Just Teacher will arise. And I have seen fit to divide it into three sections:

The First Section, in which I will bring the sages who lived before

the [above-mentioned] rabbi, but whom he omitted from his work.

The Second Section, in which I will mention the sages who lived after the death of the rabbi until the death of R' Isaac Canpanton, of whose waters all of Israel drinks to this day.

The Third Section, in which I will mention the kings who ruled in Spain until the rule of King Ferdinand, the wars which he fought against the kingdom of Granada, our exile from Spain, all the troubles which we endured, the destruction in the kingdom of King Ferdinand and that in Portugal in the days of King Manuel caused by the sinners of Israel. Thereafter, (I will bring) the good which God did with the remnant who are alive today in the kingdom of Fez, and the sages who received the tradition from R' Isaac Canpanton. I will also mention a little about the kings of Fez until the reign of the righteous king Mulay Muhammad, son of the great king Sheikh Mulay, who was among the righteous of the gentiles, who welcomed the Jews who had been banished from Spain and did good with Israel until his death. Indeed, God had sent him to the kingdom of Fez to serve as sustenance. And I will mention there what R' Abraham Zacuto, who lived there from 5270 (1510) until 5285 (1525), wrote. And I will write of the deliverance and comfort that will take place when the Messiah comes soon, Amen.

* * *

King John [I], son of King Henry [II], ruled for 22 years [actually 11 years (1379-1390)], and ordered the abolition of the method of counting years in force and instead ordered that the counting be from the time of Jesus. [Upon his death in 1390], the enemies of the Jews arose and did as they pleased, killing and looting. They took the sons and wives [of the Jews] to be sold as slaves, and they forced their daughters to convert. Two hundred thousand Jews were affected by this conduct of the [new boy-] king [Henry III], who was still a youth. This took place in the year 5121 (1361) [actually in 1391]. That year there were forced conversions in Seville, Valencia, Lerida, Barcelona and Majorca. That year, the king rode on a horse, but fell from it and was trampled underneath and died. King Pedro, son of King John, reigned for 14 years and died in the year 5165 (1405). R' Meir Alguadez lived in his time. The priest Fra Vicente [Ferrer] served the queen, Doña Catalina, and Ferdinand I, the king of Aragon, and forced more than 200,000 Jews to convert in the year 5172 (1412). That year there was a very great pestilence, and God sent a strong wind which sank all the ships in the sea and smashed the trees in the fields. God brought these two plagues on them

because of their iniquity against Israel. King John of Portugal accepted all the *Conversos*, even though the Christians slandered him. This king traveled to the province of Septa [Ceutá], the great province which lies on the western sea, and he found a great rock there upon which was written: "Septa [Ceutá] was built by Shem, the son of Noah." King John [II, 1406-1454], the son of King Henry [III], the king of Castile, ascended to the throne in the year 5164 (1404) and reigned for 49 years. In his days, the great Constantinople was captured by the king of Turkey on Wednesday, 21 May [1453]. R' Menahem, the *Arukh*, died in Zamora in the year 5171 (1411). He had been a great Torah scholar. R' Shem Tov ibn Shem Tov died in Valladolid. In the year 5192 (1432) Don Alvaro de Luna, the Master of Santiago, was killed in Valladolid by King John [II] in the year 5213 (1453). King John II died in the year 5214 (1454). King Henry [IV, 1454-1474], son of King John [II], ruled for 28 years. In his reign, King Don Alfonso, son of King Don Duarte, the king of Portugal raised a large army and the Muslims killed more than 2,000 of his best soldiers, including seven ministers. This was in the year 5223 (1463). That year, the light of Israel, R' Isaac Canpanton, died. In the year 5238 (1478) the king of Portugal took a large army to Arcila and Tangiers, on Saturday 24 August. On Friday, 26 *Sivan* in the year 5231 (1471), eight Jews sanctified God's name in Sepulveda, and they were killed by order of the king's judge, even though they were totally innocent. Two of them were dragged and two were burned and four were hanged on a tree.

In the year 5235 (1475) Don Alfonso, the king of Portugal, determined to take Castile, and he and his ministers and about 40,000 soldiers set out, with unlimited gold and silver, and he fought King Don Ferdinand between the towns of Zamora and Toro. The ministers who were in Castile helped him, but if God does not build a house, in vain do the builders toil, and he was forced to return home ignominiously, he and all those who were left with him, for more than 5,000 of his men had been killed. This was on Friday, toward evening, the 3rd of *Adar* in the year 5236 (1476).

The king, with the evil of the king of Sodom, braced by his cursed wife [Isabel], was more successful than all the kings who had preceded him. In the 11th year of his reign, in the year 5242 (1482), after Alhama had been captured by Don Rodrigo, the Marquis of Cadiz, the king's judges launched an investigation into the the religious observance of *Conversos*, and found those who still believed in the religion of the God of Israel. All of these were sentenced to be burned to death, with their

money confiscated by the king, in fulfillment of the verse (Zech. 13:9), "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried." Many died sanctifying God's name. That year, the king ordered that the Jews live separately from the non-Jews. In the year 5248 (1488), on the 18th of *Heshvan*, there was rain on the earth for sixty days.

In the year 5247 (1487) almost no rain fell. That year, the king captured Málaga, on Saturday, 9 *Av*, after besieging it for four months, and he took captive all the people of the city, including four hundred Jews, and the community of Castile redeemed them. After this he took Granada, which had been under Muslim rule for close to 800 years. In the year 5252 (1492), God's anger was roused against the Jews, and He brought evil upon us. God is just, and did not do to us in accordance with our sins, because our sins were so grievous. He inflicted us less than we deserved. Had it not been for His mercy and the covenant with our fathers which He remembered, we would have been almost like Sodom, because of our evil ways and sins, and the conceit that prevailed throughout all of Spain. This was, indeed, the sin of Sodom. Furthermore, Torah had almost been forgotten by the Jews, to be replaced by secular knowledge, and only the poor kept the laws of the Oral Torah. God's anger was therefore kindled against His nation, and He banished them from Castile, by means of the king, Don Ferdinand, and the advice of his cursed wife, the evil Isabel and the advice of her advisors, in the month of *Nissan*, which was changed from joy to sadness. It was then that the proclamation went forth throughout all of Spain that all the Jews were to leave within three months, and any who did not do so were to be put to death. Wherever the news of the king's decree reached, the Jews went into mourning, with fasting and praying on that first day of Passover. In place of the *haggadah*, there was weeping that whole night. Between Passover and Shavuot, all the armies of God [i.e., the Jews] left Spain, forsaking their property and land, fleeing by land and sea wherever they could go. Some went to the land of Israel, others to Greece and Turkey, and the majority entered the kingdom of Portugal, where King John [João II], son of Don Alfonso, reigned, and there they left all their gold and silver, their sons and daughters.

King John acted with unparalleled cruelty, and took close to 800 children who had been raised by their Jewish parents and sent them to the island of São Tomé. There, most of them died, and the others married among themselves, brother and sister, in order to populate the area, and

they are there to this day. Who has ever heard such as this? Who ever saw such as this? Is it about this that God refrained from acting? Let us pray for the light to remove the darkness. It was about this that the prophet Isaiah prophesied, that God will pay back His enemies for their wrongs to us and a redeemer will come to Zion. In truth, there is no greater trouble than this. As to all the consolations of which the prophets spoke, all refer to this terrible exile and all the conversions and banishments that we endured, as I will yet write.

Most of the Jews and their great leaders and judges stayed in their homes and converted to Christianity, forsaking the source of living water and the King of the Universe to serve other gods, gods whom they had not known and whom He had not given them, [gods of] wood and stone, who will not hurt nor destroy nor aid. And at their head was the heretic Don Abraham Seneor, the rabbi of the Spanish Jews and his sons and all who belonged to him, and thousands and tens of thousands such as they, who will be wiped off from the Book of Life because they sinned and caused others to sin. The masses looked toward them, and because of them the masses sinned. Of the rabbis of Spain and their leaders, very few were willing to sanctify God's name by dying for Him, or were willing to endure any other punishment.

The greatest of all Jews was the great tamarisk, R' Don Isaac Abravanel, who sanctified God's name in public before the king and his ministers. This was true for him, along with Don Solomon Seneor the Elder, the brother of the above-mentioned rabbi and the sages of Spain, all, from the oldest to the youngest, and their students and all that belonged to them. They gained merit for the multitude, and the merits of all depend on them. Time will lapse, but they will never be forgotten.

I will only write a little of the troubles which the ones who had been exiled suffered, some of them having traveled to Fez, to King Mulay Muhammad, who received the Jews throughout his kingdom and was their benefactor. There were some who entered Salé [Rabat], which is near the western sea, and there they suffered greatly under the uncircumcised Thomas and the uncircumcised Julian, who seized Jewish women and performed terrible abominations on them and were guilty of many unrivaled atrocities, until they arrived in Fez. There were those who entered Arcila and suffered greatly under a very cruel regime, that of the wicked king of Portugal. The viceroy who ruled Arcila on behalf of the Portuguese king was known as Conde de Borba [the Count of Borba] who did much evil to the Jews. Indeed, when the Jews

landed, the Arabs came out, humiliated them and stripped them of all they had, leaving them naked — men, women and children, a large mass of people.

There were those who entered the kingdom of Badis under Mulay Mansour. He was very helpful to the Jews, so that they arrived in Fez with their money and all their possessions. Others arrived in El-Araish, and on their return to Alcazar they were attacked by Arabs who robbed them and left them to die of thirst. Some were eaten by lions, and of them Isaiah prophesied (Isa. 21:13-14), "The burden upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia shall you lodge, O you travelling companies of Dedanim. The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him that fled."

The survivors reached Fez, and all were gathered together there, old and young, the wise and the simple. Among them was my father, who was about seventy years old and who had taught Torah among Israel. He died on the first day of Passover in the year after the Jews left Spain. At that time there died in Portugal R' Isaac Aboab and the great philosopher Shem Tov b. Shem Tov. Two great Torah scholars who taught Torah in Castile died in one year, about two years before the exile, these being R' Isaac de Leon and R' Samuel Valensi.

After Passover had ended, a number of calamities befell Israel, including all the curses which are written in the Torah, and more. After they had been living in Fez for about eight months, a fire erupted in the Jewish section in the month of *Tammuz* and a number of people were burned to death, as if fire had descended from heaven. I was about eleven at the time, and was saved from the fire. This was a catastrophe such as had never been before. This was in accordance with what the prophet stated (Amos 8:9), "I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day." Who would have believed what occurred? This is what Ezekiel prophesied when he stated (Ezek. 5:2), "You shall burn with fire a third part in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are fulfilled; and you shall take a third part, and smite about it with a sword, and a third part you shall scatter in the wind; and I will draw out a sword after them."

Immediately after the great fire which I mentioned, there was a great drought, and more than 20,000 Jews in Fez and in the surrounding area died. And when they saw this terrible thing, there were those who returned to the land of Edom [i.e., of the Christians], for they said: "We will all die here." Others fled to the tents of the Ishmaelites. Some died of hunger in the markets and streets, and the daughters of Israel were

unclothed. It was at this that Isaiah hinted when he stated (Isa. 32:9), "Rise up, you women that are at ease, hear my voice." After this, in the year 5257 (1497) God's anger was again kindled against His nation, that there was no healing, for Israel's iniquity had not yet been paid for.

Now, King John [João II] of Portugal died a violent death, and did not leave a son worthy of ascending the throne, leaving only a son by his mistress. The king who followed him, Manuel, consulted with his advisors on how to destroy all of Israel, and in the end he ordered that all Jews leave his kingdom within twelve months [actually eight months]. Afterwards, he made it impossible to leave, so that they were all effectively trapped. It was then that the Jewish leaders and Jewish heretics, led by the cursed Levi ben "Shem Ra" [i.e., "Bad Name", but whose real name was "Shem Tov", "Good Name"]) sinned, and caused Israel to sin even more than did Jeroboam. It was Levi who counselled the king to seize all the synagogues and study halls, and there was no place where Jews could come to pray. This did not stop R' Shem Tov Lerma, who immediately proclaimed: "Whoever wishes to pray the *minhah* service may come to my home to do so." This became known to the king, and they seized him and tortured him with the cruelest of tortures. All were convinced that he would ultimately be killed, but God saved him. Afterwards, he had no hesitation in continuing to pray with a quorum. Again he was seized and placed in prison.

After Levi ben "Shem Ra" advised that the synagogues be seized, he advised that all the Jewish children under the age of thirteen be taken and forcibly converted to Christianity. The king acceded to this, and issued a proclamation to that effect throughout his entire kingdom. They then seized the children from their fathers and mothers. The cry of the children was very great, as was that of their parents. This was hinted at by Jeremiah when he stated, "Rachel weeps for her children." This was still not enough for the king, and he took all the Jewish sages and tortured them with all types of tortures and chained them in iron chains. Many of the Jews converted because they were unable to stand the test, while others hanged themselves and others gave their lives to sanctify God's name. This group was led by the saintly and pious R' Simon Maimi, one who was as pure as the prophet Elisha, and who, together with all the members of his family, gave his life for God, after suffering tremendous torture in prison. R' Shem Tov Lerma, who had also been tortured greatly, as mentioned, managed to escape with the help of God, and reached Fez, as did R' Jacob Lual and R' Abraham Saba. May God end our captivity and bring the Messiah, may He have us

rejoice as in previous days, and may You show Your servants Your works and Your glory to their children.

Source: Ben Solomon (of Ardutiel), Abraham, "*Sefer Ha-Kabbalah*" within *Medieval Jewish Chronicles and Chronological Notes*, edited by A. Neubauer. Oxford, 2nd Ed. 1887. Vol. 1.

Additional material: *EJ*, "Abraham ben Solomon of Torrutiel."

XXIV. THE CHAIN OF TRADITION (*SHALSHELET HA-KABBALAH*)

Gedaliah Ibn Yahya (1515–1587)

This historiographical work is valuable for its extensive list of scholars in the time of the expulsion. In addition to its brief history of the Ibn Yahya family, *Shalshelet Ha-Kabbalah* contains numerous sermons, a history of the Jewish people, and other ethical writings.

The Ibn Yahyas were one of the great Portuguese Jewish families. Gedaliah's grandfather, David Ibn Yahya, an advisor to the Portuguese kings, fled to Italy before the forced conversions in 1497. Gedaliah was born in Imola, Italy and spent most of his life as an itinerant rabbi. He composed more than twenty books, only a few of which have survived to the present day.

Because of translation difficulties, the names of places and individuals not yet identified are indicated with a question mark.

It is worthwhile for you to know, my dear son, that, regarding the later sages whom I will note and mention below, I have no proof whatsoever as to the accuracy regarding the generations in which they lived, for, because of our afflictions, the later authors no longer signed their names under their works, as did the earlier ones. Even if some did, this was not the prevalent practice everywhere. Thus you will have to do as I and trust to the traditions handed from the great sages of the generation. Therefore, do not be astonished if you perhaps find a teacher listed after his student, or the less worthy one before his superior.

The great rabbi, R' Isaac Canpanton, son of the great rabbi, R' Jacob,

known as the Gaon of Castile, of Spain, and R' Israel Ashkenazi received the traditions from their fathers and our rabbis of previous generations in about 5120 (1360). R' Isaac Canpanton spread Torah widely and had many students. He lived a long life, dying in the year 5223 (1463). He had a regal appearance. R' Isaac De Leon, one of his students, was knowledgable in miracles, and died at the age of seventy. R' Isaac Aboab, a great sage and one of his students, died in Portugal in the year 5253 (1493), about seven months after the exile from Spain. He was sixty years old at his death, and was one of the students of the above-named R' Isaac Canpanton, and author of *Menorat Ha-Ma'or*.

R' Israel Ashkenazi of Austria wrote *Terumat Ha-Deshen* and responsa and other works. R' Jacob of Wohlin and R' Aaron were his teachers, as can be seen in his works. R' Jacob Landau, an Ashkenazi, wrote *Ha-Agur* in the city of Pavia. R' Joseph Colon, of France, who is known as *Mahararik*, was the head of the Lombardy community, and his students who came after him gathered together some of his responsa and compiled them into a volume. This great sage died in Pavia in the year 5245 (1485), and his father, R' Solomon, was also a great Torah scholar, as can be seen from his responsa. R' Judah, who was known as Messer Leon, was in Mantua, and wrote *Nofet Zufim*. He was the disputant of *Maharik*, and the community divided up between the two, until the duke of Mantua banished both from the city. R' Israel of Narbonne and Regensburg was an Ashkenazi, and he contested with *Moharik*. R' Joseph Hayyun, R' Abraham Hayyun, R' Joseph Frances, R' Joseph De Castro, R' Isaac ibn Zeita, (?) R' Jacob ibn Habib the elder, R' Abraham Benveniste and his son, R' Joseph. He had two sons, Don Vidal and Don Abraham—all these were great Torah scholars in Portugal in this generation. R' David Ha-Rofeh (the doctor) b. R' Solomon, known as Messer Vidal, wrote *Mikhtam Le-David* and *Keter Torah*. R' Moses Driati, (?) who wrote the chain of tradition in the form of a poem but without any order, from which I took a small number of items.

R' Isaiah lived in Toledo in the year 5227 (1467), and he was the author of *Halikhot Olam*, which is an excellent collection of the Talmudic method.

R' Shem Tov of Spain wrote a book of sermons on the Torah in the year 5249 (1489). R' Shem Tov ibn Shem Tov lived in Spain, and died in the year 5190 (1430). R' Joseph, his son, wrote *Sefer Ha-Middot* on Aristotle and a commentary on Maimonides' *Moreh Nevukhim* (Guide for the Perplexed). R' Abraham Shalom lived in Catalonia, and wrote

Naveh Shalom. He died in the year 5252 (1492). R' Abraham Bibago lived in Aragon and wrote *Derekh Emunah*. R' Samuel Sarsa wrote *Mikhlal Yofi* on the Torah, and *Sefer Ha-Yuhasin* states that he was burned to death sanctifying God's name. [See Zacuto's differing account.]

R' Pinhas in Prague. R' Katriel in Krakow. R' Natan of Igar (?). R' Tevlen (?) the Elder. R' Judah Idnbruck. R' Samuel Safda (?). All these were great Torah scholars in the Ashkenazic lands.

R' Raphael Yedidyah of Strasbourg from France, and R' Judah in Piazza Armerina in Italy, in the year 5245 (1485). R' Samuel Zavda of France in Padua in the year 5261 (1501). R' Tashbatz of Bauberg. R' Menahem of Misburg. (?) R' Joseph of Starburg. R' Yehiel b. R' Joseph Troyes. R' Yohanan Troyes. R' Jacob b. R' Mordecai. R' Samuel b. R' Joseph, known as the the Wise Mystic. R' Jacob Ha-Levi. All these were French Torah scholars in this generation.

R' Mordecai Comotino of Greece. R' Moses Capsali of Greece. R' Eliyahu Alfag (?). R' Avraham Yerushalmi. R' Eliya Mizrahi who wrote a commentary on *Rashi* which is known as *Mizrahi* and a volume of responsa. All these were sages in Constantinople.

In this generation there arose individuals of the Soncino family, who for many years printed numerous books in Hebrew, which were of great value to the Jewish people. I also saw the introduction to the *Mikhlol* which they printed in Constantinople, where it states, "I, Gershon, of the house of Soncino, son of the great sage R' Israel Natan son of Samuel son of R' Moses, he being five generations removed from R' Moses of Speyer, who is mentioned in Tosafot." R' David b. Don Gedaliah Ibn Yahya was in Castile in 5085 (1325), where he was the community leader after the death of his father, and that was three generations of our family. In his old age he was exiled to the city of Lisbon, because he fled from the decree in Spain. And in the year 5150 (1390) they managed, by means of the queen of Lisbon, to assure the holdings of their elders. This sage wrote a number of works, especially one on the law and an article on the laws of unclean food. R' Caro mentions him at the beginning of *Yoreh De'ah*. He died at the age of 75, and was totally alert until the time of his death. He left behind four sons. His son, Don Judah, the oldest, was very wise, and would sign his responsa: By the hand of Judah Ibn Yahya. He composed a dirge for *Tisha B'Av*, and had many sons and daughters. R' Don Solomon was the fourth son of R' Don David, and he is the seventh generation of whom we know. He went with his father and mother to Portugal, and had two sons, Don David

being the older, he being the eighth generation to Ibn Yahya, and was wise and wealthy. He did not want his children to buy houses or land, so that they would not forfeit these as had their fathers in the time of the expulsion decrees. He died at a ripe old age in the year 5295 (1535) in Lisbon,leaving four sons, these being R' Don Gedaliah, who was extremely wise in Torah and in medicine, and who, at the end of his days moved to Constantinople, where he taught Torah and authored books. The only work which has come down to us is a small one entitled *Shiv'ah Einayim*. The Karaites asked him to intercede and return them to the fold, and he attempted valiantly to do so, but was unsuccessful, for the sages of Israel did not agree to this. At the end of his life he sought to move Eretz Israel but did not manage to do so, because he died on the way during the Fast of Gedaliah, and was buried in Safed.

Don Joseph was the second, and he was the ninth generation from Ibn Yahya. He was our patriarch, and was in Lisbon at the time. The king loved him greatly, and made him his advisor. Some time later, Don Alfonso, the king, died, and was succeeded by Don João, who also loved him, and left him in his place as his advisor. One day, the king summoned him and said to him: "Because of my great love of you, I wish to help you and all of Israel with you, by saving your souls from the torture of Hell. I therefore want you and all your family to convert, and I know that all the Jews in my kingdom will follow in your lead, because I see that you are their leader." Don Joseph answered him: "I cannot do so," as written at length in *Divrei Ha-Yamim Mi-Toledot Bnei Yahya*. In the end, Don Joseph saw that the king was determined on this course, and he realized that the other Jews in Portugal were not following his advice until the exile from Castile, as will be seen later. With his family of exiles from Spain, he chose to emigrate to Italy. He therefore called his three sons who are: The *Gaon*, Don David, who will be mentioned later along with his descendants; Don Solomon, who died in Rhodes in the year 5297 (1537) on 14 *Sivan* and left a son in Salonica whose name is the Haham Don Joseph Yahya.

The third was the wise Don Meir, very proficient in poetry and grammar, who went to Avlona and died there without children in the year 5290 (1530). Don Joseph the Elder then took a considerable amount of money, about 100,000 cruzados, and he and his sons embarked on a ship stealthily at night. After many days and great expenses and tribulations, they arrived at Pisa in Tuscany, Italy. This account is to be found in *Divrei Ha-Yamim Mi-Toledot Bnei Yahya*. They then went

to Florence, where my father was born. Afterwards, he came to Ferrara, where the Duke of Ferrara greeted him most cordially, because he had heard of his greatness in Portugal. He died there at the age of seventy, in the year 5298 (1538), and his sons sent his bones to Safed, as he had commanded them. He is buried near the grave of Hosea b. Be'eri. The rest of these matters are written in the above-mentioned work.

R' Joseph Gikatilla, of those who left Spain, and R' Jacob ibn Habib, also of those who left Spain, received the traditions from their teachers and the great sages who were before them, in the year 5207 (1447). The above-mentioned R' Joseph Gikatilla, known as *Rig*, was a tremendous scholar in Talmud and kabbalah. He wrote *Sha'arei Orah*, *Sha'ar Ha-Shamayim*, and the commentary entitled *Merkavat Yehezkel*, and you should know that this is not the work with the same name written by the earlier-mentioned R' Isaac Lataf. R' Jacob Ibn Habib wrote *Ein Yaakov* and *Bet Yaakov*, and his son, R' Levi, completed it. R' Isaac Arama, also one of those exiled from Spain, was a brilliant scholar in the Torah and all sciences. He wrote a commentary on the Torah and the five *Megillot*, as well as *Hazut Kashah* and other works.

R' Joseph Shraga, known as the Kabbalist of Aragitni (?) was also of those who fled from Spain, and was astounding in his knowledge of kabbalah and in his deeds. I heard many stories from him about saintliness, but I have left these out in order to be brief. R' Jacob Berab, the *Resh Galuta* in Eretz Israel; he left Spain for Fez, and from there to Egypt and from there to Safed.

R' Joseph Taitazak was also among those who fled Spain, and became the community leader of Salonica in the year 5283 (1523). I have heard that there is a book of his responsa.

R' Meir Ibn Verga was also among those who left Spain and lived in Turkey for a long time, and afterwards came to Italy, where he was killed by brigands. R' Joseph Ibn R' Avraham, author of *Sha'arei Zedek*, lived in this generation. Rabbenu Judah Hayyat was among those who left Spain and was a tremendous scholar in kabbalah. He wrote a commentary on *Ha-Ma'arekhet Ha-Elokut* and called it *Minhat Judah*. In his introduction, he states that the *Zohar* was certainly not revealed in the days of Rav Hai and all the geonim, and R' Eliezer of Worms and *Ra'avad* and *Rashba* never saw it. R' Abraham Ibn R' Samuel Zacuto was among those who left Spain and was a great astrologer. He learned this science in a non-Jewish school in Zaragoza, and people from all over the world came to him. His advice, based on the stars, was as that of Ahitofel. He wrote *Sefer Ha-Yuhasin*, from which I copied

many things in this work. R' Abraham de Balmes wrote *Mikneh Avram* on Hebrew grammar. He was a great philosopher and lectured in the university in Padua publicly before Christians. When he died, all his Christian students took part in his funeral.

R' Shem Tov wrote *Sefer Ha-Emunot* and *Mi'dvar To'eh* against Ibn Ezra, Maimonides and *Ralbag*, on the principles of the faith. But R' Moses Alashkar argued against him and attempted to disprove his allegations. This scholar was very wise, and wrote responsa on the law.

R' Abraham Saba wrote a commentary on the Torah known as *Tzeror Ha-Mor*. R' Joseph Ibn Lev lived in Salonica and Constantinople, and taught Torah to many. He was the author of three volumes of responsa. R' Yohanan Alman wrote a commentary on the Torah and called it *Einei Ha-Edah* and a commentary on the Song of Songs which he called *Heshek Solomon*. He taught Don Pico Della Mirandola. R' Ovadiah of Bartenura began to write his commentary on the Mishnah in his birthplace in Italy, and at the end of his life he moved to the land of Israel, where he completed it. He died in 5290 (1530). R' Eliya Hayyim of Gennanzano wrote *Iggeret Hamudot*. R' Joseph Zarka wrote *Rav Pe'alim* on Italian grammar. R' Mordechai Finzi wrote about the astronomy involved in determining *moledot* and *tekufot*. R' Jacob Weil, an Ashkenazi, wrote a book of responsa. R' Eliya Ashkenazi was a great scholar in grammar and wrote books on this subject. R' David of Corfu wrote responsa. R' Judah b. Halana (?). R' Judah Dasian (?) Ibn Zikhri. R' Judah b. Shoshan. R' David Ibn Shoshan. R' Samuel ben Sira. R' Moses De Castro. R' Moses Alvida (?). R' Samuel Franco — all of these were Torah scholars and heads of yeshivot throughout the world. R' Joseph Uzziel. R' Nahman. R' Jacob. R' Shem Tov — all these were students of R' Isaac Aboab. R' Isaac b. R' Samuel Hayyim and R' Yehiel were among those who left Spain and were exceptional in their knowledge of kabbalah. R' Eleazar ben Zur was a Sephardi and led the community in Lamarca (?). R' Yehiel Tarbuto was also there. R' Ezriel Daina was in Lombardy in the year 5296 (1536). R' Joshua She'altiel. R' Baruch b. R' Joseph. R' Isaac Corcosa (?). R. Asher Zion. R' Naftali Troyes. R' David Pazigitin (?). R' Mordechai of Modena. R' Judah Levo (?) of Ferrara. (?) R' Benjamin of Montelizino (?). R' Judah, known as R' Leon of Muriel, who was killed by brigands. R' Judah head of a yeshivah in Padua. R' Bindifo (?) Axilder (?) head of a yeshivah in Venice, and so too R' Moses Bashan. R' Anshil Ha-Levi of the Zion family, head of a yeshivah in Padua. R' Israel in Rome. R' Moses Yaffe in Bologna. R' Leib Ashkenazi. All of these were from different

places and great Torah scholars throughout Italy, and were also of this generation. R' Joseph Saguy (?). R' Isaac Cohen. R' Isaac of Molina (?). R' Samuel Attias. R' Isaac Donron (?) and R' David Ibn Zimra. R' Moses Ha-Kohen. R' Jacob b. Yakar. R' Joshua and R' Joseph Corcos. R' Abraham Corcos. R' Nissim. R' Hiyya his brother. R' Samuel Hakim. R' Aaron of Trani, a student of the rabbi of Pisa. R' Judah Ibn Zechariah. R' Judah Uzziel his student. R' Isaac Hayyun. R' Nahman Sombal (?). R' Jacob Amigo. R' Abraham Biton. R' Abraham Almosnino. R' Avraham Sagiz (?) known as Panieri. R' Isaac Barcelona. R' Nahman. R' Joseph Fasi. R' Jacob Berab and R' Levi Ibn Habib b. R' Jacob disputed their entire lives about many laws, and especially in the year of 5298 (1538), where the sages of Safed ordained an individual in accordance with the ruling of Maimonides, and the rabbis of Jerusalem and its sages showed them that they had not understood Maimonides, and the ordination was not valid. And there are responsa by Habib. Berab ordained a total of ten elders there. R' Moses Arokis (?). R' Israel Kurial (?). R' Hiyya Barocas. R' Samuel Haham. R' Joshua Soncino. R' Joseph Caro the Elder. R' Samuel Almosnino—all these were great sages in the land of Israel and in Egypt and in Fez, and as we have not heard whether they composed any works, they were placed together. R' Samuel Ziralio (?), son-in-law of R' Aboab. There is a true tradition that when Sultan Suleiman seized Egypt in the year 1523 after the destruction, he appointed one of his officers to be his viceroy. The viceroy rebelled against the king and ordered all the Jews in that area to bring him a very large amount of money within eight days, an amount which they could not possibly raise, this under penalty of the sword. The Jews, for their part, began to fast and pray, and this great sage arose and brought with him about 300 boys of about 12 years of age. All closed themselves up to fast and pray aloud in the Great Synagogue in Egypt. He continued with his prayer until the time of the *minhah* prayer. God listened to his voice, and before he left the synagogue he was told that the viceroy had been killed. This occurred on 27 *Adar*. There are those who say that he went so far in his prayers and in his complaints that he left the synagogue blind. *Shevet Judah* states that a *megillah* was written of this event.

R' Joseph Hamon the Elder was the physician of Sultan Selim and his son, R' Moses Hamon was the physician of Sultan Suleiman, his son. In his old age, the Muslim physicians of the king resented him and persuaded the king to remove him from his position.

Source: Ibn Yahya, Gedaliah, *Shalshelet Ha-Kabbalah*. Hadorot Harishonim, Jerusalem, 1962.

Additional material: *EJ*, "Ibn Yahya, Gedaliah ben Joseph."

XXV. ON THE ORIGINS AND ADVANCES OF THE HOLY OFFICE OF THE INQUISITION

Luis de Páramo (1545 - ?)

A Spanish-born Doctor of Theology, Páramo served as an Inquisitor of the Holy Office in Spain as well as on the island of Sicily. The following account by Páramo has often been regarded as legendary because Páramo was writing many years after the expulsion; however, as Anonymous Chronicler II indicates (pg. 130), such an incident may have taken place. Contrary to popular versions of this account, no specific sum is involved nor are any specific Jewish courtiers named.

... In the meantime, the Devil, the common enemy of the salvation of man, was anxious of such a great expulsion from a Christian country, as he expected [would occur] from the restored office of the holy Inquisition, and he tried to prevent such a good thing. For some servants of his envy suggested to the Catholic Kings, and particularly to Isabella, how harmful the expulsion of these people would be for the commerce and trade (on which nations are living), how much the taxes and revenues of the king would diminish, in short, what great and extraordinary harm all of Spain would suffer by the absence of so many citizens. But Isabella was not at all moved by these and other arguments; she is rather said to have responded that she preferred to purge Spain of such an obvious pestilence of heretics and such horrendous crimes and to uproot them completely, rather than to look out for her private gain at the expense of a general loss for the Catholic faith.

After they [the servants of the Devil's envy] had been turned back, Satan tried new weapons. For several of those who had been found guilty or had been accused of the crime of heresy noticed that the Kings were suffering from a great lack of money. Since they knew that judges can be corrupted by their greed more than by anything else, they offered a great sum of money to the Kings, asking them to dismiss the accusations.

But God never abandons his Church. This is characteristic of God's goodness, this is the most sure device of Divine Providence, that He brings assistance with utmost piety where it is most strongly attacked. For the most righteous Kings were burning with such zeal for the Divine cult, they had such an old and joyful faith, they persisted so steadily and energetically with the plan they had accepted, that they were not diverted from it by any prayers or by any requests or by any amount of money, although they suffered greatly from lack of it at that time.

But then Brother Thomas of Torquemada, First Inquisitor (as we have said) and confessor to the Kings, feared greatly for the constancy of the Kings in such turmoil, lest they might be moved by the promised money. He loved greatly the glory of God and what was good for the Catholic Church, and therefore he gave a clear sign of his love. He went up to the palace, hiding a crucifix under his cloak, and he addressed the Kings with great and holy frankness: "I know about the king's business. See here the crucifix of our Savior, whom the wretched Judas sold for thirty pieces of silver to his enemies and betrayed to his persecutors. If you applaud this action, sell him for a higher price. I, for my part, resign from all power. I will not take any blame; you will be responsible to God for this business deal." Having said this, he put down the crucifix in front of them and left. By this deed, the Kings were not only strengthened in their minds, but they soon afterwards assigned districts and provinces to the Inquisitors.

Source: Páramo, Luis de, *De Origine et Progressu Officii Sanctae Inquisitionis*, Madrid: Ex Typographia Regia apud Johannem Flandrum, 1598. Vol. II, Tit. 2, Cap. 3, Sextamundi actas: 133-144.

APPENDIX

XXVI. THE EDICT OF EXPULSION (SPAIN)

Don Ferdinand and Doña Isabel, by the grace of God King and Queen of Castile, Leon, Aragon, Sicily, Granada, Toledo, Valencia, Galicia, Mallorca, Sevilla, Sardinia, Cordova, Corçega, Murcia, Jaén, the Algarve, Algeciras, Gibraltar, and the Canary Islands; [to the] Count and Countess of Barcelona and the lords of Biscay and Molina, Dukes of Athens and Neopatria, Counts of Rosellon and of Sardinia, Marquees of Oristan and of Gociano; to the Prince Don Juan, our dear and beloved son, and to the Infantes, prelates, dukes, marquees, counts, masters [of military orders], priors, wealthy men, knight-commanders, governors of the castles and strongholds of our kingdoms and seignories, and to the councils, magistrates, mayors, constables, royal judges, cavaliers, official shieldbearers and good men of the very loyal city of Burgos and of the other cities and villages and places of its bishopric, and of the other archdioceses and bishoprics and dioceses of our reigns and seignories, and to the *aljamas* [communities] of the Jews of the said city of Burgos, and to all the cities and villages and places of our said reigns and seignories, and to all the Jews and their singular persons, thus men and women of whatever age and to all the other persons of whatever legal status, dignity, or preeminence or condition to which that contained below in our letters appertains or may appertain in any manner, health and grace [unto you].

You well know or should know that, because we were informed that in these our kingdoms there were some bad Christians who Judaized and apostatized from our holy Catholic faith, this being chiefly caused by the communication of the Jews with the Christians, in the Cortes that we held in the city of Toledo in the year 1480, we ordered that the said Jews be separated in all the cities, villages, and places of our kingdoms and seignories, and that they be given *juderías* [Jewish quarters] and separate places where they could live, hoping that this separation would remedy [the problem]. Moreover, we had sought and given the order that an inquisition be conducted in the said kingdoms and seignories which, as you know, has been done and is continuing, and on account of it, many guilty individuals have been found, which is notorious. According to which, we are informed by the Inquisitors and by many other religious persons, ecclesiastical and secular, it is evident and apparent that the great damage to the Christians has resulted from and does result from the participation, conversation, and communication that they have had with the Jews, who try to always achieve by whatever ways and means possible to subvert and to draw away faithful Christians from our holy Catholic faith and to separate them from it, and to attract and pervert them to their injurious belief and opinion, instructing them in their ceremonies and observances of the Law, holding gatherings where they read unto them and teach them what they ought to believe and observe according to their Law, trying to circumcise them and their children, giving them books from which to read their prayers, and declaring the fasts that they ought to fast, and joining with them to read and teach them the histories of their Law; notifying them of Passover before it comes, advising them what they should observe and do for it, giving them and taking unto them the unleavened bread and the [ritually] slaughtered meats with their ceremonies, instructing them on the things they should stay away from, thus in the foods as in the other matters, for observance of their Law, and persuading them as much as they can there is no other law nor truth besides it. This is evident from the many declarations and confessions, [obtained] as much from the Jews themselves as from those perverted and deceived by them, which has redounded to the great injury, detriment, and opprobrium of our holy Catholic faith.

Notwithstanding that we were informed of most of this beforehand, and realizing that the true remedy for these injuries and inconveniences

was in breaking off all communication of the said Jews with the Christians and to eject them from our kingdoms, we sought to content ourselves in ordering them out of all the cities and villages of Andalusia where it appeared they had done great damage, believing that this would be sufficient, so that the other cities and villages and places of our kingdoms and seignories would cease to do and commit the aforesaid.

And because we are informed that neither that, nor the punishments meted out to some of those said Jews found culpable in the said crimes and transgressions against our holy Catholic faith, will suffice as a complete remedy to obviate and to terminate such great opprobrium and offense to the Christian religion; because every day it is found and made apparent that the said Jews increase their evil and injurious activities where they live and converse, and so as not to grant them more space within which to further offend our holy faith, as much in those whom God has protected as in those who have fallen, but have amended and returned to the Holy Mother Church, which, according to the weakness of our humanity and the diabolical suggestion that continually wars against us, which easily could come to pass, unless the principal cause of it be removed, which is to eject the said Jews from our kingdoms. Because whenever some grave and detestable crime is committed by some persons of a group or community, it is right that such a college or community be dissolved and annihilated, and that the minors be punished for the elders, one for the other; and that those who pervert the good and honest living of the cities and villages, and that by contagion could injure others, be expelled from among the peoples, and even for other lighter causes that are harmful to the states, and how much more so for the greatest of the crimes, dangerous and contagious as is this one.

Therefore, we, with the counsel and advice of some prelates, grandees, and cavaliers of our kingdoms and other persons of knowledge and conscience of our Council, having had much deliberation upon it, resolve to order all the said Jews and Jewesses out of our kingdoms and that they never return nor come back to any of them. Concerning this, we command this letter [Edict] to be given, whereby we command all Jews and Jewesses of whatever age they may be, who live and reside and are in the said kingdoms and seignories, natives and non-natives alike, who by whatever manner or whatever reason may have come or are to be found in them, that by the end of July of the present year, that they leave the said kingdoms and seignories with their sons and daughters,

male and female servants and Jewish domestics, both great and small, of whatever age they may be, and that they dare not return unto them, nor be in them, nor be in any part of them, neither as dwellers, nor as travelers, nor in any other manner whatsover, upon punishment that if they do not thus perform and comply with this, and are to be found in our said kingdoms and seignories and have come here in any manner, they incur the penalty of death and confiscation of all their belongings for our treasury, and such penalties they shall incur by the very deed itself without trial, sentence, or declaration. And we command and maintain that no one in our said kingdoms of whatever status, condition, or dignity they may be, dare to receive, harbor, defend, either publicly or secretly any Jew or Jewess after the said deadline at the end of July has passed, henceforth and forevermore, neither in their lands nor in their homes nor in in any other part of our said kingdoms and seignories, under pain of losing all their belongings, vassals, fortresses, and other landed properties and, moreover, to lose whatever sums they may have from us for our treasury.

And so that the said Jews and Jewesses, during the said time until the end of the month of July, may better dispose of themselves, their belongings, and their estates, we hereby take and receive them under our security, protection, and royal guardship; and we assure them and their belongings that, during the said time period until the said day, the end of the said month of July, they may go about in safety, and they may enter, sell, barter, and transfer all their movable and immoveable goods, and dispose of them freely at will; and that during the said time period, no evil, injury, or offense be done to their persons nor unto their goods contrary to justice, upon punishment of that which befalls and is incurred by those who transgress our royal security. In like manner, we give permission and authority to the said Jews and Jewesses that they may take out their goods and estate from our said kingdoms and seignories, by sea or by land, provided they do not take out gold, silver, minted money, or other items prohibited by the laws of our kingdoms, except for non-prohibited merchandise or exchange bills.

And, moreover, we command all the councils, justices, governors, cavaliers, shieldbearers, officials, and good men of the said city of Burgos and of the other cities and villages of our kingdoms and seignories and to all our vassals, subjects, and natives that they observe and comply and cause this, our letter and all that is contained in it, to be observed and complied with; and that they give, and cause to have given, all necessary support and help, upon [threat of] punishment

by our grace and the confiscation of all your goods and benefits for our treasury. And so that this may come to the notice of all, and no one may pretend ignorance, we command that this letter be proclaimed in the plazas and customary places of that said city and of the principal cities and villages and places of its bishopric by a public crier and before a public scribe. Neither one nor another should do the contrary by whatever manner, upon punishment by our grace and the loss of your offices, and the confiscation of the belongings of whoever does the contrary. And we further command the person who shows them this letter, that they are summoned to appear before us in our court, wherever we may be, within the fifteen days following the day of our summons, upon [threat of] the said punishment, and concerning which we command whichever public scribe was called upon to do this, that he show you signed testimony with his signet in order that we may know how our command is complied with.

Given in our city of Granada at XXXI days of the month of March, the year 1492 of our Lord Jesus Christ. I the King, I the Queen. I, Juan de Coloma, secretary of the King and Queen, our Lords, which I have written upon their command.

Source: Fernández, Luis Suarez, "*Documentos Acerca de la Expulsión de Los Judíos*", Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas, Patronato Menendez Pelayo, Valladolid, 1964. (The Edict also appears, with slight variations, in the work by Amador de los Ríos).

XXVII. THREE LISTS OF CONFISCATED VALUABLES

The following three documents provide a partial listing of valuables confiscated from Jews who originated from the cities of Soria, Burgos, and Zamora.

With regard to coinage, the basic Castilian monetary unit was the maravedi. During the time of Ferdinand and Isabella, the approximate exchange rate was 1 ducat = 374 maravedis, 1 doubloon = 1 castellano = 490 maravedis, and 1 florin = 265 maravedis. The silver real was worth 34 maravedis. The Portuguese gold justo was worth 600 reis, and the espadin was worth half a justo.

A MEMORANDUM-BOOK LISTING VALUABLES, TAKEN FROM EXILED JEWS, TO BE USED FOR COLUMBUS'S SECOND VOYAGE (MAY 1493)

The King and the Queen. My kinsman the Count. So that you may discharge your duty in our service in certain matters, it is necessary that all the money, gold, silver, jewels, and other things that Calderon, your purser, and Sala é Collantes, your servants, took from Juan de Ocampo, the Mayor of Urueña, from the persons of Jews going to Portugal, that it be brought before us. We order you and charge you that you do it immediately, and that you submit it and turn it over without delay,

as indicated by the memorandum-book of the said Collantes, signed with his name, and of the said Calderon and of Juan Ortiz, your mayor of Ulúa, and Diego Cano, the royal officer of your house; and that you accept the letter of payment which, with this permit, we allow you to be at liberty and free from obligation after you have thus given and paid; and in this manner, you shall not pay for one thing more. [If this is done], you shall do us great pleasure and service; and should you do the contrary, you shall incur our anger.

From Barcelona on the 13th of May, 1493

Four cups, the three basins and an [ornamented] cup
A tablecloth
One more basin
five pieces of silver
two silver spoons
a small green suit with silver adornments
one silver buckle
five hundred reales
four and a half justos
fourteen castellanos
twenty five doubloons
twelve ducats
one espadin
two silver Moorish wrist bands
twenty one beads of silver
two earrings and a coral of pearls
a ribbon adorned with silver
two silver Moorish wrist bands
an adorned sceptre
three hundred ore fragments
two silver finger-rings
a silver necklace
four pearl strings
two silver wrist bracelets
a coral string with silver beads
sixteen silver spoons
a Moorish wrist band and a broken bracelet
another piece of a silver bracelet
a vessel
a ribbon adorned with silver
four cups
one hundred and thirty three ducats
three doubloons
fifty doubloons
one justo
a chain with a cross of three brocades
six gold finger-rings
seven small linen pieces trimmed with silver
a block of silver
a sceptre
a glass of silver
another sceptre
a small silver kettle
two silver soup-plates, one with ears
a white ciborium
four cups
six silver spoons
five hundred reales
seventy six and a half reales

one thousand, three hundred, and ninety reales
five pearl strings
thirty three cruzados
thirty nine castellanos
one hundred florins, two justos
one and a half ducats
one hundred and thirty and a half doubloons
one justo
twelve silver bracelets
a small silver chain
one silver poniard
three silver earrings
nine and a half ducats
two florins
four hundred and sixty four reales
seven ducats
three justos
three doubloons
two florins
thirty three and a half maravedis
twenty six and a half doubloons
eight florins
a string of pearls
twenty eight and a half florins
one hundred and twenty eight ducats
nineteen justos
one hundred and fifteen castellanos
seventy one doubloons
three skirts, one green, another black, and another blue
six jars of silver
a plate of *munjur*
two candlesticks with their silver holders
four dishes
an earthen pan of camlet
a *carmillona*
three silver finger-rings
thirty four reales
six doubloons
nine and one half castellanos
ten ducats
four justos
two florins
fifty six castellanos
fifty two doubloons
six justos
one more justo
forty nine and one half ducats
eight and a half florins
thirty six maravedis
thirty two doubloons
thirty three ducats
six and a half florins
nine and a half justos
three silver Moorish wrist bands
a thin silver plate
four silver cubes
some silver bridle head-stalls
two earrings adorned with silver
three silver poniards
one silver sceptre
eleven silver spoons
fifteen silver buttons
some *caltres* and little pieces of silver
one gold ring
a little of a pearl string
two silver wrist bracelets
a silver-adorned ribbon
some coral strings

a covering of the Torah, made
of white damask
some purple skirts
a hammer of old *trontay*
an old red skirt
seventy rods made of linen
plus sixteen more rods of linen
a sheet

Calderon, Juan Ortiz, Collantes and the said Diego Cano took with himself a memorandum-book of what should be done, the tenor of which is the following:

What you, Diego Cano, the royal officer in the household of their Highnesses, ought to do in this matter: [you should] travel to the Lord County Don Alonso, whom you will find in the Garrobillas. You will take and receive the money and gold, the silver and jewels that the lord Count will give to you; and you will go with it to Sevilla and turn over all of it, as in the memorandum-book, to Francisco Pinelo to defray the costs of the fleet that their Highnesses have ordered to be sent to the islands and continents that have been discovered or will be discovered in the ocean sea. You will take from Francisco Pinelo an acknowledgement of all that you have turned over, and you will bring it here to their Highnesses so as to be disburdened of it. You should hurry yourself on the road and place great diligence upon it. Because any of the aforesaid things that you should charge the said lord Count are jewels and items of gold and silver, as you can see from the memorandum-book, you should receive it all, and you should sell it with people who know about such matters and sell it in front of a public scribe. All the money together, or the most you can get for it in exchange with certain people you find there, is to be given to Francisco Pinelo in Sevilla at the end of June or, at the very latest, by the tenth of July. Take these permits and deliver them by proper correspondence to the said Francisco Pinelo. Should you not be able to provide it in this manner, go and provide it in the form stated above, and in all of this, exercise great caution and diligence.

THE CONFISCATED VALUABLES REPORTED BY DIEGO DE MEDINA

The King and the Queen. Diego de Medina, silversmith, resident of Zamora. We order you that whatever maravedis, gold, silver, jewels, and other things are in your possession, and which were deposited [with you] by Juan de Soria upon our command, and which was taken from that left behind by some Jews at the time they left our kingdoms upon our command, and which was previously listed in a memorandum-book with your name, that you submit it and turn it over without fail to Bernaldino de Lerma, which is our will and that he receive it so as to perform what our will and pleasure are.

These are the maravedis, jewels, and things that I, Diego de Medina, resident of this city of Zamora, have received from the hand of the most noble Juan de Soria, the secretary of the prince our Lord, the inquirer and executor of the King and the Queen, concerning the things relating to the Jews.

Firstly, I received, in payment of the two hundred ducats given by the woman Diego Guiral, the following money and jewels:

First, one hundred and twenty six ducats which total: XIVIIMCCL*

Item: twenty four castellanos that total: XIMDCXI

Item: in received ducats and castellanos XIIM

Item: eight justos at DIXXX each, totaling IIIIMDCXI

Item: three doubloons, one a Navarrese, totaling: IMXCV

Item: a new crown worth CCCXIC: MCCCXIC

Item: thirteen finger-rings that weighed sixteen ducats minus fifteen grains, one with a false sapphire, and six from florin gold, and the others of gold from twenty carats

Item: we received a purple girdle of narrow cloth, a buckle of burnt silver with twelve lace trimmings

Item: three silver bracelets and some little finger-rings that all weighed in at twenty two and a half reales, and a stone of ten *pistal* set in silver, and a *cos*

On January 8, 1493, I received from Alonso Rodriguez, leatherworker, certain things which were in his possession

I received from Anton Gomez of Sevilla three doubloons which total: IMXCV

Item: I received from the aforesaid Anton Gomez three eights and a small fourth of small pearls, and a small Navarrese coin

On December 4, 1492, I received a cup that weighed two marks minus one ounce, and two silk *trupiñas* that are worthless, and a few small coral strings, worth at present rates about: IIIMDCCI

I received from a laborer:

a doubloon and a castellano
a certain wooden frame
a cameo adorned with silver
eleven small corals in the shape of a tree branch
copper money that is worth: C
an *almizar*
a large silk cushion
two silver laces
two gold mourning pipes

I received from Juan of Bilhorado:

ten ducats worth IIIMDCCI
which he had brought from the Jews of Portugal to Castile

I received from Anton Herrador of the estate that was found in the house of Aimero de Toro, Benito de Chaver, who was found to have stayed with a few Jews under his authority:

twenty five doubloons, one Navarrese, assessed a florin: IXMXXV
sixteen castellanos, one less that is worth 300
six old *curriqués* worth thirteen reales of little silver worth: IIMDCCCL
thirteen reales of mixed silver worth: CCCX

Torah scrolls:

that I received from Alvaro de Ledesma: eight Torahs, two of Damascene workmanship, the other red, and the other blue, brought here.

Item: the four other [Torahs] in other colors in which one of them is made with fine linen, and another such one given by Alonso de la Cuba Aleo.

Five Torahs, one of blue silk and two green ones

I received from Alonso de Manzars:

seven Torahs of old *zerzusa*, and eleven small pieces of silk from one of the old Torahs

I received:

four silver cups
three girdles with their covers
seventy spoons
a gold finger-ring with signet

seven earrings with a silver finger-ring
a coral necklace
coarse clothing with a flat brocade
new carmine
two Torah mantles, one old brocaded one and the other of well-made *zarza*
the silver taken by Iñigo de Ribas Altas, as he was originally called-
...which belonged to his mother-in-law, a Jew, who stayed in Portugal

I received:

three worn rich camlet skirts black, and another of Cotyny, and another worn green [skirt] from London

I received from Garcia de Janelas:

three Torah mantles, one of crimson, lined with blue silk, unsewn; the other of blue velvet, uncovered with red cloth; the other of striped silk of fine workmanship, lined with torn black linen
also a white silk sheet
a Torah as almarizal of linen, the edges red and the silk cubes with their tassels
also a linen sheath with silk workmanship
also two horned towels *destameña* green, with its silk tassels and its workmanship, and the cubes unraveled
also a torn cushion sheath, in which everything was wrapped.

THE VALUABLES LEFT BEHIND BY RABBI EPHRAIM OF BURGOS (MAY 1493)

The King and the Queen. Luis Nuñez Coronel, resident of Zamora. We command you that the money, gold, silver, and other jewels and things which Rabbi Ephraim, a Jew, resident of Burgos, left behind in the possession of Doña Isabel Osorio, your wife, according to what she told Juan de Soria, and the more than 4,850 ducats that you still owe to a Jew from whom you bought some houses, that you surrender it and turn it over without fail to the said Bernaldino de Lerma...

From Barcelona on May 23, 1493. I, the King. I, the Queen.

a small jewel of gilded silver
twenty four small grains of gold
three grains of Moorish gold

two pearl strings
one gold toothpick
a jar of silver
three banded silver settings with twelve plated heads
a covering of high *holera* made of gold
one loose sheet, weighing a mark of gold
one small heart made of gold
a box of *tahali*
a box of shoulder-belts
twenty five ducats
three and a half fruits
a veil of striped cloth
two bundles of clothes and three gold shirt collars and other trifles

Source: M. Kayserling, "Christopher Columbus and the Participatioin of the Jews in the Spanish and Portuguese Discoveries", Carmi House Press, N. Hollywood, CA (reprint of 1893 edition), pg. 160-163. This document is taken from Arch.l de Indias P^{to}I-I-I 2/9; Documentos Inéditos de Indias, XXI, 418sq.

*The Roman numerals in the margin represent maravedis. XIVIIMCCL = 16,250.

XXVIII. LETTERS PATENT THAT THE JEWS OF PORTUGAL LEAVE THESE KINGDOMS AND THAT THEY NEITHER RESIDE NOR BE IN THEM

(Archive of the City Council of Lisbon: Manuelino Code)
1496

Because every faithful Christian is above all obligated to do those things which are a service to our Lord: the increase of his Holy Catholic Faith, after which they should not only place their profits and losses, but also their own lives; this the Kings must do and are obligated to do even more so, because they exist and rule for our Lord Jesus Christ, and from him they receive in this world more graces than any other person. Wherefore, we were quite certain that the Jews—obstinate in the hatred toward our Holy Catholic Faith of our Lord Christ, who delivered us through his death—have committed and continally commit great evil and blasphemies against him in our Kingdoms, which is a cause for greater condemnation of not only [the Jews], who are children of curse as long as they maintain the hardness of their hearts, but even more of the many Christians whom they [i.e., Jews] cause to depart from the true course, which is the Holy Catholic Faith. [It is] for these and many other great and necessary reasons that we were moved to this, and which are well-known and manifest to all Christians. After mature deliberation with learned men and the members of our council, it was determined and ordered that—upon the publication of this law and resolution until the whole month of October of the year of the birth of our Lord of 1497—all Jews, male and female, however old they may be and who are in our kingdoms, should leave under the penalty of natural death and the loss of their possessions to those who accuse them. And

anyone who has hidden any Jew after the aforementioned time, by the same manner we want [that individual] to lose all his possessions and goods to whoever accuses him. And we pray, and we commend, and we order that the kings, our successors, by our blessing and under the penalty of malediction, shall never allow any Jew in any time to live or stay in our kingdoms and domains for whichever reason or thing there may be. And the Jews, we shall let them go freely with all their possessions, and we shall order that any money which is owed to them in our kingdoms be paid; and thus for their departure, we shall provide help and assistance as necessary. And as for all the rental income [which were made] from the *judarias* which were given by us, we commend such people as have these [i.e., rental income] in the *judaria* from us that they come to us to inquire about it, because it pleases us to give them another one which yields as much [income] as the said *judarias*. And so that it may always be known how this was determined through a general law by us, which was executed and obeyed by all, and so that hereafter it may be kept, we order that it be incorporated in the second book.

(Given in Muge on the 5th day of December of 1496).

Source: De Los Ríos, Amador, *Historia Social, Política, y Religiosa de los Judíos de España y Portugal*. Aguilar, S.A. de Ediciones, Madrid (1960): 1009-1010.

ABOUT THE EDITOR

David Raphael is a physician-scientist with an M.D. degree and a Ph.D. in Biomathematics from the University of Washington in Seattle. He wrote and directed the feature-length documentary film, "Song of the Sephardi", about the songs and traditions of Ladino-speaking Sephardim. He has written two historical novels—*The Alhambra Decree* and *The Cavalier of Malaga*—which deal, respectively, with the 1492 expulsion and with crypto-Jewish life in 15th century Inquisitional Spain.

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