

THE CONDITION OF THE JEWS OF FRANCE AND ARAGON
DURING THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY AS REFLECTED ~~IN~~
IN THE DISPUTATIONS OF NICHOLAS DONIN AND
PABLO CHRISTIANI

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the title of rabbi.

Recd. 8/78

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Most historians consider the thirteenth century the " height " of the Middle Ages. This century witnessed the fullest development of medieval Christian society. Specifically this means that the Papacy achieved a larger measure of influence in the life of the several Christian nations, than it had achieved formerly or since that time, during the period under consideration. The status of the kings, the nobility, and the masses took on their most typically medieval complexions. And what is most important for us, the relations of the four groups mentioned to the Jews were most typical of what we now call " medievalism. " Another important influence upon the life of the Jews of the thirteenth century was the rising free cities.

We will therefore consider in a general way the relations of the Jews to the kings and nobility, the free cities, and the church in the order mentioned.

In every instance the kings and nobilities considered the Jews their special charges, and themselves the defenders of the Jews. In return for this questionably valuable service, rulers reserved the right to restrict the commercial activities of the Jews. Barred from agriculture by church council, removed from the trades and ordinary commercial enterprises by the guilds, the Jew lived in any manner possible: which meant petty banking. It goes without saying that in his role of money-lender, the Jew fulfilled a need in the community. He satisfied the need of all classes for ready cash.

In England and France Jews " enjoyed " monopolies in the various ramifications of "money-business. " They were heavily taxed for

these commercial privileges, and thus the Jew aided the ruling houses of these two nations in securing ready cash for their several purposes. They were invited to become the fiscal agents of the crown, and had to pay very abundantly for these opportunities.

In France and Spain, the ruling houses exercised another control over the Jews in addition to their control of the Jew's choice of vocation: the control of their movement and place of settlement. Recognizing the financial advantage of having Jews within their borders, kings and nobles attempted to entice Jews from the domains of the other into their own. They made laws to the effect that having settled in one domain, Jews might not move into another, or leave their home communities without individual and costly permission from their immediate over-lords.

In France, for example, the royal house left no stone unturned in its effort to get Jews to settle in the royal domains, and after getting into the royal domains, restricted their movement very carefully. In Spain during the period of the "Reconquista," however, the Jew enjoyed greater freedom of movement. The general policy with regard to the Jews there seems to have been to afford them every advantage that would enrich them, and thus they would become a lucrative source of cash for the state through taxation.

The special protection of the Jews and their resulting "prosperity" were dearly bought. This extraordinary consideration for the Jew's safety and prosperity aroused universal resentment and hatred of the Jew. This universal resentment allegedly brought about the expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290, and from France in 1306.

In view of the fact that the growing free city did not effect the life of the Jew of France and Aragon during the period we are considering, we will indicate only briefly the relations of free city and Jew. The free city was struggling to throw off the control of feudal rulers of all kinds. Because of the "protection" which the kings and nobles provided their Jews, the burgers naturally identified the presence of Jews in their midst with royal interference in their affairs. And so the town councils taxed their imaginations to discover every possible manner of discouraging Jews from coming to them, and of inducing Jews already in their midst to move on. The town councils barred the Jews from all of their guilds, and from every position of influence in their communities. In a word the town councils barred the Jew from every type of livelihood over which they had any semblance of control. Their apprehension that Jews in their midst assured them of royal intervention in their affairs seemed confirmed when the Jews appealed to king and emperor because their economic existence became so insecure in those cities.

The rulings of the Fourth Lateran Council, 1215, established the church's official attitude toward the Jews during this period. These statements of policy were not completely adopted in all nations, but nevertheless, made themselves felt everywhere. The Church did not set itself the task of wiping out the Jew, but rather set about to assign him to a degraded and humiliating position in the community. It set "the mark of Cain" upon the Jew, and insisted that this mark was to have both religious and social significance. It hoped to accomplish this aim among other means by the introduction of the "badge" in all places, so that above all else there could never be any mistake

as to the identity of the Jew. Through bloodlibels, desecration of the host charges, and religious disputations, the church hoped to prove the Jews to be incorrigible and forsaken of God.

In attempting to account for the church's attitude toward the Jews, The church historian David S. Schaff has the following to say. He seems to give one to understand that Christendom was hopelessly puzzled by the Jews' failure to be moved by its attractions. "The active efforts that were made for their conversion seem to betray fully as much of the spirit of churchly arrogance as of the spirit of Christian charity. Peter the Venerable in the prologue to his tract addressed to the Jews, said, 'Out of the whole ancient world, you alone were not ignorant of Christ; yea all peoples have listened, and you alone do not hear. Every language has confessed him, and you alone deny. Others see him, hear him, apprehend him, and you alone remain blind, and deaf, and stony of hear.'" (1) What inexplicable obstinacy. He gives the following reasons for their persecution:

1. Ancestral crucifixion of Jesus, "and the race, pre-destined to bear the guilt and the punishment of the deed, was receiving its merited portion."
2. Atrocities upon Christian children, and desecration of cross and host.
3. Burdensome usury. (2)

The last two of these reasons are not worthy of consideration. The attitude expressed by the first one gives one to understand that the church looked upon itself as God's representative on earth, both with regard to the pleasant and the unpleasant duties which this relationship imposed. How completely medieval it was for an important communal agency to consider itself God's executioner and magistrate.

This then gives us a general idea of the relations between the kings of Christian Europe, the church, the free cities and Jewry. Let us now sketch in a general way the outstanding characteristics of the Jewries of France and Aragon during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Many Jews were becoming interested in the general culture of the period; they also made an impression upon certain Gentile thinkers. Dubnow is of the opinion that the Albigensian heresy was vitally effected by the Jewish enlightenment movement in Spanish and Provence. (3)

Within Judaism itself, there raged during the thirteenth century a struggle between tradition and enlightenment just as in Christianity tradition was grimly at war with the forces that questioned its infallibility. The early days of the thirteenth century beheld the bitterest portion of the struggle between Orthodoxy and Rationalism as represented by the Maimonidean philosophy. Though in 1233, the orthodox group delivered the " Guide " to the Dominican Inquisition, and it was burned, Orthodoxy did not actually win out until the fourteenth century. Both the Spanish and Provencal Jewries were involved in this cultural battle, the task of denouncing the " Guide " fell to the Orthodoxy of Provence.

The influential Jewish laity directed its energies to the establishment of the " Gemeindeautonomie." (4) In Spain this movement culminated in the establishment of the Aljama, and in France and Germany in the establishment of the " Kongresse der Gemeinden. " We shall have occasion to speak at greater length about the Aljama in connection with the relations

earlier times. In the Middle Ages, the Jews were in a position of complete isolation from the general life of the nation.

of Jaime I of Aragon to his Jews.

Religiously, Judaism presented an aspect similar to that of Catholicism. Both had dealt harshly with heresy, and having done so, both attempted with increasing zeal to protect their doctrines. The church instituted the Dominican Inquisition to seek out and appropriately deal with heresy. Judaism gave itself with renewed devotion to the doctrine of "S'yag Latorah." (5) This attitude tended to stifle individual thought which did not contribute to the firmer establishment of its own foundation. To this extent Rabbinism could be said to have contributed to the growth of Kabbalah. In retrospect, it may be said that with Rabbinism's "Fence" and Kabbalah's mysticism, Judaism shielded itself against the exigencies of the Middle Ages.

By way of summary of our picture of the Middle Ages we present the approach of Dr. Lewin, which he presents at the beginning of his study of the Paris disputation. (6) The end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth centuries marked the boundary between barbarism and civilization. The folk wanderings with their concomitant lack of polish ended with the Crusades. Contact with the Orient, sea travel, newly appearing philosophy, and the poetry of the troubadors effected a particular atmosphere.

As a result of the failure of the Crusades and the many heresies of the period, the Church was uneasy, suspecting great problems in the tiniest incidents. At this time, at the beginning of the conflict between rationalism and orthodoxy, and while the former was still a child's voice, a disputation ^{with} French rabbis took place in the court of a king, whose adventurous Crusades seemed anachronistic even the

from medieval and early 13th

world scene of his day. The disputation testifies to the gradual dissipation of the olympian calm of the church and to a gradual growth of anxiety, nervousness, and irritability.

This disputation was not inspired by any desire for proselytization, as was the one a century later at Tortosa, but was an attack on the Talmud. This attack aimed at damaging the life nerve of Judaism, and at thrusting the Jews out of their particular milieu and into the life of the Christian masses.

The Jews presented an inexplicable example of a people devoted to study, in a world whose culture was created only for the benefit of the Christian clergy. From the rebuke of Bishop William of Auvergne against the Talmud one can best recognize how uncomfortable the "people of the book" could make the church. The church recognized how dangerous this people of Talmudic thinkers could be to its sovereignty through its continued existence. Therefore the Jews had to be deprived of the ability to influence the masses. (7) Nevertheless maintains Lewin (8) the Jews exerted enough influence to strengthen the Albigensian heresy.

Thus far I have indicated in a general way the various non-Jewish agencies that effected Jewish life in France and Aragon during the thirteenth century: the king and nobility, the church, and the free cities. I have attempted to describe the means through which they influenced Jewish life. The next task before me is to fill in the details of this outline in terms of specific personalities both with regard to general history and the disputations.

Chapter II

Jewish Life in France and Aragon during the thirteenth
century

For the first of these personalities I choose the French and Aragonian Jewries of the period. How did Jews make a living? Grayzel presents the facts of the case as far as the church's conception of the answer to the question is concerned. He says, "If the documents here presented were to be taken at their word, and if no others were at hand to be consulted, the conclusion would be inevitable that the Jews of this period dealt in nothing but the lending of money, and that the church sought to restrain Jewish greed for the purpose of saving the individual Christians from total ruin at the hands of the Jews. Frequently the clergy demanded that the secular powers take steps to free the Christians from the oppression of the Jewish money lender, and Pope Honorius III in granting a privilege to a Jew asserts that he was doing so because this particular Jew had not been guilty of the crime of usury." (9)

These same documents reveal that Jews were also farm laborers and landowners. They traded in commodities such as meat and wine as in Spain. So great was their commercial importance here that the various kings suspended the "badge" laws and the laws of restriction of movement so that Jews could more effectively carry on their business.

In Germany and Italy Jews were accomplished artisans. Grayzel mentions that the Jews of Germany were still engaged in the trades and manual labor. The Golden Bull of Frederick II to the Jews in 1236 makes mention of their agricultural activity, and of their travel for commercial purposes. To the Jews of Sicily he granted a monopoly of the dyeing and silk industries. (10) One may gather from the church's objection to their appointment to positions as tax farmers and royal estate managers, that they occupied these positions frequently and well. (11)

It became increasingly characteristic of the Jew that he engaged in

money lending because of the need of loan-banking since the church forbade it to Christians, and because it became increasingly difficult for the Jew to engage in anything else. The situation in this respect became so acute - that is the Jews of France flocked to this business in such large numbers - that Louis IX tried to legislate them out of usury and into the manual arts. (12)

We will have occasion to add further details to this sketch of the commercial activities of the Jews of Aragon when we consider King Jaime I. Especially noteworthy of the Jews in Aragon at that time was their Aljama communal organization, developed with the help of Jaime.

In Aragon the Jews occupied separate quarters, within the cities which could be isolated from the rest of the city. In these districts, the Jews were separate political entities. They had their own communal representatives, judicial, and administrative officers. Technically the king controlled only Jewish affairs and not the Jews themselves. It is recognizable from state archives that for a limited period the king, who had a sharp eye for Jewish autonomy, did not interfere with Jewish internal affairs. Before they were inducted into office the Jewish civil authorities were carefully quizzed by the king. The rabbinical magistrate also derived his authority from the king. The more important decisions of the communal officials required royal confirmation as did new legislation which the king too called "Tecana." (14)

The king frequently concurred with communal officials in imposing the Cherem (Alatma derived from anathema) upon lawbreakers and those delinquent in their tax payments. Experience indicated however that this procedure did not prevent the king from shielding his favorites from (15)

the decisions of the Jewish court.

The greatest autonomy came to the Jews in judicial matters. Differences between Jews were settled by the Jewish court, according to Jewish law. Difficulties between Jews and Christians could be tried by a Jewish court with the consent of all concerned. Cases were usually tried by the rabbi and three dayyanim, and if occasion required the trying body could be increased to ten. Serious criminal cases had to be heard by ten in the presence of the Bajulus, the royal magistrate of the district.

(16)

The kings frequently interfered with this autonomy and when necessary appointed judges who favored the wishes of the royal house. Jewish religious sensitivities were respected, and Jews were therefore not summoned to secular courts on Holy Days. Despite royal interference, Jews were able to achieve a well-knit communal organization. The king's concern for this organization was based less on consideration for Jewish group interests than on his own financial interests. The stronger the power of the Jewish communal officer the easier it was for the king to extort taxes from the Jews. The Jews had to pay for the maintenance of their organizations, for the rights they acquired, and the maintenance of their official representative at court. (17)

So much for the communal organization of the Aragonian Jews. To what extent were the French Jews able to achieve an organization of their several communities ? Dubnow (18) mentions a gathering of representatives of Provencal Jewry in 1215 that met to choose a committee to wait upon the forthcoming Fourth Lateran Council, since Jewish leaders suspected the decrees of the Council.

did this committee ever get to Rome - was it a temporary or a permanently functioning organization ?

The last detail of thirteenth century Jewish life that we can speak about at any length is the place of learning in that life, and the place of Talmud in that study. Rather than discoursing upon individual Talmudic productions, I should prefer to indicate the place of study in the life of the community as such.

From our brief discussion of the relations of the Jews to the various medieval social forces, it is rather clear that the Jew did not live in a world of friends. There were few places in which he could feel at home; both as a Jew and as a human being who lived in the Middle Ages, he had few opportunities to relax, to engage in social convivialities, without being made to feel very keenly his Jewishness. In these surroundings of great and petty annoyances, and cultural mediocrity, the Jew found a refuge in the study of the Talmud. In the Jewish world, excellence of scholarship was the greatest good. The Talmudic life had as its task making one's peace with one's conscience, fulfilling one's religious obligations, and always conducting oneself without consideration of divine reward.

Soon after a child learned to talk, he was taken to synagogue. On Shabuos morning, with covered face, so that he could behold no evil, he heard the alphabet recited forward and backward. A honey-cake and an egg on which Biblical verses were written was his reward for having followed the ceremonies attentively. The day on which the child first started his studies was a feast day for his family and his community. (19)

The child remained in school until marriage, and until his death, the

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gaining of a livelihood was considered secondary to his Talmudic scholarship. This preoccupation with the Talmud was one-sided to be sure, but it was an ideal one-sidedness. Into the sanctuary of Jewish learning no unfriendly hand had ever penetrated until an apostate Jew, who stirred up laity and clergy against his former co-religionists, betrayed it to unfriendly non-Jews. A certain Talmudist of La Rochelle cast doubts upon the validity of the Talmud and of the oral tradition. He was therefore excommunicated by the French rabbinate. Of his apostacy and his apparent attempt to undermine Judaism, we will treat later. Suffice it to say at this point that the Donin incident led enemies into the garden of Jewish scholarship so that they might trample down the rare flowers which resulted from centuries of diligent cultivation and solicitous care. A misled Jew betrayed his people's scholarship into the hands of fanatics so that for centuries to come the enemy might twist and abuse it for their own purposes.

It would be interesting to learn from a reliable source - which is not yet available - something of the relations of the Jews and the Christian masses. There are a few scattered details to be mentioned in connection with Louis IX and the Jews, but these are only isolated details. I was not able to learn anything about the Jews and the Aragonian masses. It would be helpful to know something of the relations of the Jews and the monastic orders. The Dominicans, for example, we know of only as executors of papal policy. There has not yet been produced one first rate history of any of the monastic orders. Of Franciscan history there is not even a biased account.

personalities
From this point on, we will present a series of personalities in such a manner as to portray ~~in the most way~~ the relations of the Jews and

the Church, the Jews and the royal houses of France and Aragon, and the events leading up to the disputations. It is my hope to give as intimate a picture of the participants of the disputations as possible.

Innocent III
The most influential figure of thirteenth century Europe was Pope Innocent III. It was he who formulated church policy with regard to the relations of the church and the lay rulers, and actualized the long cherished dreams of clerical domination of Europe. With this most important part of his activity we are not concerned in this study, but rather with his part in formulating the church's policy toward the Jew. The attitude toward the Jews which the Fourth Lateran Council fixed, established for many generations the place of the Jew in Christian society, and this very attitude provided the legal justification for religious disputations.

Innocent came to the throne determined to put the church in the most influential position in Christian society, and at the same time made it the most effective social force in the Christian community. He hoped to achieve these aims by attacking two sets of problems: first, the relation of the Church to the lay rulers, and finally the church's attitude toward the heretical movements of the day. I include the Jewish problem in the second group because the church used the same tools in dealing with the Jews as it did in dealing with Christian heretics, with the temporary exception of corporal punishment. Through the use of the ban of excommunication and the rulings of the Fourth Lateran council, Innocent brought recalcitrant rulers to their knees, and drove the Albigensian heresy to destruction.

Almost from the beginning of his tenure of office, 1198, Innocent hinted at and partially legislated what later became permanent church

policy with regard to the Jew. Innocent was intent upon depriving the Jew of influence in Christian life. He was determined to so regulate the social relations of the Jews, that they would become a pariah group within Christendom.

From Innocent's resolve with regard to the position of the Jew the thirteenth century papacy deduced an attitude quite different from that of earlier illustrious church-men. Innocent maintained that the guilt of the crucifixion made the Jews perpetual servants, wanderers, et al.

The relation of church and synagogue was that of beloved bride and rejected wife. He urged the kings to so exercise their powers, " that the Jews will not dare to raise their neck, bowed under the yoke of perpetual slavery, against the reverence of the Christian faith. " (20)

A modern church historian leaps into the breach to enlarge upon this attitude in more modernly acceptable sociological terms. Says Schaff,

" Some explanation is offered by the conduct of the Jews themselves.

Their successful and often unscrupulous money dealings, the flaunting of their wealth, their exclusive social tendencies, their racial haughtiness and their secretiveness strained the forbearance of the Christian public to the utmost. " (21)

Certainly no more inaccurate statements could be made regarding the relation of Jew and Gentile than this, if the facts of the case are to be any criterion. And yet such attitudes no doubt were responsible for a large part of the " rationalized " mistreatment of the Jew.

Innocent supplies us with a written statement summarizing his earliest sentiments toward Jews. In 1199 he addressed a letter to one Count of Nevers, said to be unfriendly to Jews. Dubnow quotes a portion of this letter.

History notes /

this again is early doctrine

Die Juden sind gleich dem Brudermörder Kain dazu verdammt, als Flüchtlinge und Landstreicher auf der Erde umherzuirren und voll Scham ihr Antlitz zu verhüllen. Die christlichen Herrscher dürfen sie nie und nimmer begünstigen, sondern müssen sie vielmehr der Sklaverei preisgeben. Nicht recht handeln daher jene christlichen Herrscher, die den Juden in ihre Städte und Dörfer Einlass gewähren und ihnen Wucherdienste für die Herauspressung von Geld aus der christlichen Bevölkerung in Anspruch nehmen. - - und was das schlimmste ist, es dulden, dass die Kirche auf diese Weise (durch den Übergang der Ländereien in jüdischen Besitz) ihres Zehnten verlustig gehe. " (22)

It would be most interesting to know how many of these sentiments were personal passion, and how many pious mouthing of time-worn phrases. Be these words whatever they may, their desired effect was carried out in the daily social relations of Jews and Christians.

Leaving out of consideration the benefit to the church of such an attitude, let us point out in passing a very keen observation that Dr. Graetz made with regard to it, " Aber dem niedern Volke, das froh war, eine Menschenklasse noch tief unter sich zu sehen, an der es seinen plumpen Witz und seine ungeschlachten Fäuste üben konnte, ihm genügte die Entwürdigung der Juden keinesweges. " (23)

And yet for all the personal animus that Innocent may have borne the Jews, he immediately confirmed the bulls of his predecessors protecting the Jews from bodily harm. He rationalized this action by repeating the church principle that the continued existence of the Jews testifies to the victory of Christianity. Dubnow quotes, " Wiewohl die verkehrte Glaubenslehre der Juden durchaus zu verdammen ist, so dürfen die Gläubigen diese dennoch nicht allzusehr bedrängen, denn durch sie wird die Wahrheit unseres eigenen Glaubens bestätigt. " (24) This attitude is at variance with earlier authoritative pronouncements. Pope Gregory I stated, " Just as it should not be permitted the Jews to presume to do in their synagogues anything more than what is permitted

Gregory's view is almost the same, except

them by law, so with regard to those things which have been conceded them, they ought to suffer no injury. " ⁽²⁵⁾ Thomas Aquinas propounded the same view to the princes of his time, " They are not to be forced to render any service other than that which they have been accustomed to render hitherto. " ⁽²⁶⁾

It is very apparent that the attitude of the church toward the Jews at the beginning of Innocent's reign was not an integrated one. Humanitarian considerations clashed with those of practicality, at a time when the church's power was being questioned. Desires for manifestation of personal power, as in Innocent, clashed with regard for nobility of traditional policies. But Innocent was determined to " rectify " this situation, as we shall see.

Until he was in a position to do something definite about the Jewish question, Innocent satisfied himself with occasional efforts to degrade the Jew. In 1205 he censured Philip Augustus of France for having permitted the Jews to return to France for his material benefit. He complained that the synagogue in Sens was taller than the church. He said that the lack of decorum in the synagogue disturbed the services in the church, and that the Jews made fun of Christian worshippers during Holy Week.

In his war on the Albigensians at the beginning of the century, the Jews suffered also, because Innocent discovered a connection between the heresies and proselytizing by the Jews. Innocent ^{made} ~~made~~ this deduction for the following reasons. (27) The heresy was hottest near influential Jewish communities: Albi, Beziers, Carcassonne, and Toulouse.

The Passagii and Circumcisi elements in the heresy preached return to

essential Jewish law

the Old Testament and certain Jewish practices. But what was most damning was that Raymond VII, Count of Toulouse, seemed to favor Jews and heretics in public office as against the faithful. Despite the protest of the local clergy, Raymond continued in his error.

The war on the heretics and Jews in Provence began in earnest in 1209 and lasted for twenty years. The war brought into the country all manner of fanatics and adventurers. It started in Beziers in July. The attack left in its wake 20,000 dead heretics and 200 dead Jews. ⁽²⁸⁾ This source goes on to relate that the wife of Simon de Montfort, in 1217, ordered the seizure of all Jews, and the offer to them of baptism or death. Jewish children were delivered to priests and baptized, and their parents were prepared for death. Simon himself intervened in time to order the release of all unbaptised Jews and their property.

During the two decades of the Crusade, the local clergy gained unprecedented control, and were able to resurrect the laws against "the enemies of Christ" enacted by the Merovingian rulers. The church councils of Avignon, 1209, and of Pamiers, 1212, ruled,

- 1- Jews may hold no public office.
- 2- Jews may have no Christian servants.
- 3- Jews may not work or conduct their businesses on Christian holy days.
- 4- Jews may not eat meat on Christian holy days.

This activity reached its culmination in the decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council, held at Rome in 1215. ⁽²⁹⁾ Its work was dedicated to the uprooting of the Albigensian heresy and its alleged patron Count Raymond of Toulouse. The Jewish problem was considered important enough so that five of seventy decrees were concerned with it. Zeal was particularly directed against Jewish usurers who made it their business

to profit by the decree of the Third Lateran Council, 1179, which forbade usury to faithful Christians. The council decided that as long as Jewish usurers cruelly oppress Christians, Jews were not to be permitted to have business relations with any Christians. When Jews received as forfeits, Christian property of any kind, they must continue to pay the tithes to the church which these properties formerly brought. This edict universalized the payment of tithes to the church by Jews; formerly these tithe payments by Jews had been made only in individual communities.

Innocent was anxious to introduce on a large scale in Europe a practice of the Mohammodans, whereby non-believers were always recognizable. The text of the decree follows: "Während sich die Juden und Sarazenen in manchen Gegenden von den Christen durch eine besondere Tracht unterscheiden, nimmt die Vermischung in anderen Gegenden so sehr überhand, dass sie (die ^{Anders} ~~gläubigen~~) in keiner Weise mehr erkenntlich sind. Die Folge ist, dass die Christen irrtümlicherweise mit jüdischen und sarazenischen Frauen in Verkehr treten, die Juden und Sarazenen aber mit Christinen. Damit nun fernerhin im Falle eines so frevelhaften Verkehrs kein Irrtum (als Entschuldigungsgrund) vorgeschützt werden können, verordnen wir, dass sich solche Personen (fremden Glaubens) ob Mann oder Weib in allen christlichen Ländern an öffentlichen Orten stets durch eine besondere Art der Kleidung von der übrigen Bevölkerung unterscheiden, um so mehr als dies ihnen von dem Gesetz Moses vorgeschrieben ist." (30) He hoped in this manner to ultimately bring about a social cleavage between Jews and Christians. It goes without saying that the Jew-badge, which was to serve as the agent of this cleavage, did not deter illicit sexual relations, its alleged *raison d'être*.

Why
in
Germany
when
Jews
were
in
the
12th
century
etc.

The council also established as universals already existing local anti-Jewish Laws:

1- Jews may not show themselves in the streets during holy week because they insist upon appearing in festive garments at this time (Pesach and Easter came together frequently).

2- Jews may not occupy public office. If a Christian gives a Jew such a post, he must answer for it to the ecclesiastical court. The Jew is to be removed from office, and may have no business relations with Christians until he pays to the local bishop for poor relief all profits that he derived from his office.

3- Baptized Jews had been inclined to be partially loyal to their former religion. Local clergy ^{was} admonished to watch them closely and ordered to use " healing " force whenever necessary. This was to apply especially to those who had been forcibly baptized during the Albigenian Crusade.

Before adjournment, the Council planned another Crusade to the Orient. Crusaders were to be absolved of interest and principle debts to Jews. All Jews who would not consent to these arrangements would be forbidden business intercourse with Christians.

As already mentioned the Provencal Jews planned a synod for 1215, which was to convene before the meeting of the Lateran Council. SHEVET YEHU-DAH relates that the meeting took place at St. Gilles, but that no committee started out for Rome. (31) It goes on to tell that in Kislev, 4976, the " badge " was enacted by the Council. It says also that every Jewish householder had to pay six Peschutim to the local clergy each year before the Christian holy days. It says that the " wicked pope " died the same year, but he actually did not until the following year. Be that as it may, his doctrinaire seeds found fertile soil. The local French church councils readily ratified these decrees. The Council of Narbonne, 1227, specified that the Jew was to wear on his breast a round piece of cloth (signum rotae). At Easter time every

Revised in 1940 = 4976 A.M.

Jewish family was to pay the parish priest a tax of six dinars.

The "badge" was locally ratified as follows: Council of Rouen, 1231; Noyon, 1233; Arles, 1234 & 36; Beziers, 1246. The last council added to the already mountainous pile of restrictions that Christians might not be treated by Jewish physicians. (32)

In connection with reports of further attempts to check the ecclesiastical mischief, we are able to get a more accurate picture of the badge itself. (33) SHEVET YEHUDAH reports that an apostate of Montpellier succeeded in getting Rome to decree that the material of the badge should be yellow or red. Thereupon a committee of Jews from Avignon and Tarascon went to the king who set aside the papal ruling. But the Inquisition, which had been instituted in this same year, brought pressure to bear, and so even influential Jews had to wear badges. The Chronicle describes the badge as a piece of cloth four finger wide of yellow material, with a moon sickle within the material - this was of course sewed on the outer garment. Most of these reports come from the period of the reign of "St." Louis, during which time, apostates continually harassed the Jewish group.

Dominican
Two results of the Lateran Council's decrees were the establishment of the Dominican order of friars and the court of the Inquisition. The former of these was founded by a Spanish monk, Dominic, for the purpose of preaching to the heretics and members of the other religions. A monastic order with such aims quickly won the support of the papacy. Almost in conjunction with them the Franciscan order of friars was established. Their common aim, to win back the here-

tics helped them gain control of the universities and other educational facilities of the times. Both orders spread almost miraculously in France and Spain. The Dominicans soon were able to make Paris the capitol of their French province and their most strategic base of operations, because while captivating Paris, they took over the administration of its university. This school had for some time been the leading theological school in Europe.

The Dominicans considered themselves the " Watchdog of the Church; " they were constantly on the lookout for heresy and judaizing. They considered the religious disputation an essential part of their technique, and not infrequently they engaged Jews in disputations. In their role of " Watchdog of the Church " they were able also to take over the administration of the court of the Inquisition. This control they shared with the Franciscans. At this time and in France, these groups established the methods of procedure of the Court, including the delivery of condemned persons to the civil authority for execution.

Denifle (34) summarizes well the activity of the Dominican order at this time. They assumed responsibility for the salvation of all souls, but attempted to see to it that all Christian souls were saved first. Feeling that they had accomplished this feat, they undertook to learn the languages of the non-Christian peoples of Europe, and made evangelistic excursions among them. The conversion of Pablo Christiani was the result of one such excursion. Raymundus Martini's PUGIO FIDEI was an integral part of their propaganda and a "fitting" rationalization of their activity.

It might be fruitful at this point to mention some of these minor disputations between Dominicans and Jews; Dubnow has much to say about them. (35) He points out that during the second half of the twelfth century, the period of heresy's greatest success, religious "disputations" and polemical literature were daily phenomena. Such literature, on the Christian side, was frequently written in the form of dialogues between Jews and Christians. He cites the following instances as cases in point:

- 1- Brother Ruppert, Annulus seu Dialogus Christiani et Judaei de fidel sacramentis.
- 2- Peter de Blois, Liber contra perfidiam judaeorum
- 3- Anonymous, De la disputation de la sinagogue et de la sainte eglise.

During this period Joseph and David Kimchi wrote their anti-Christian work Sefer Hab'ris. In his forward to the book, Joseph states that he wrote the book as a handbook for those of his disciple who became involved in disputations with Christians and apostates. He says that apostates had been resorting to allegory in order to wring Christian interpretations out of biblical verses.

David Kimchi frequently took part in disputations as is evident from his commentary on Psalms, and in his Responsa. He points out that the prophetic foundations of Christianity are without basis, because Jesus does not fulfill any of the ^{prophetic} requirements for messiahship. Only on his mother's side is Jesus a son of David, if one is to take stock in New Testament genealogies. Did Jesus gather the dispersed of Israel, or did he make an end of war?

Both written and oral polemics became sharper during the thirteenth century, when the Dominicans insisted upon disputations with Jews.

These sometimes took place in private and sometimes in synagogues, into which the zealous Dominicans frequently forced their way. Many learned Jews became famous for their ability in this field. Two such men were R. Nathan Official and son Joseph, the latter of whom is also known as Joseph Zelateur. These men were active during the reign of Louis IX.

Before leaving Dubnow's presentation of the matter, it might be interesting to mention an incident, which very concisely describes Louis' attitude toward the Jews. Dubnow mentions that these "discussions" frequently ended in physical chastisement for the Jewish participants. Louis heartily approved of this chastisement as his biographer Joinville relates, and the incident of the Jews' insult at the monastery of Cluny is the only mention made of Jews in this standard biography of Louis.

We are chiefly indebted to Joseph Zelateur for our knowledge of these disputations, and to the studies on this man by Zadok Kahn and Zevi Malter. Kahn repeats several incidents which give us some conception of the nature of these disputations. (36) An apostate asked R. Nathan why it doesn't say "ki tov" after the second day of creation. His answer was that on this day water was created, and God foresaw what harm would come because of water (baptism). An apostate interpreted the three angels that came to Abraham as the trinity. (37) A priest interpreted the bread and wine which Melchizedek brought to Abraham as the first mention of the "sacrifice of the Eucharist". (39)

In his article on the same subject in R.E.J., he quotes one Rabbi

Joseph of Chartres as having answered the question of why the Lord appeared in a bush rather than in a tree by saying that a bush could not have supplied wood for a crucifix. (40)

Malter in his article in MIMIZRACH UMIMA'AROV ,among other things describes the range of subjects in these disputations. (41) He states that there was little variety in subject matter. Many of these so-called disputations were not disputations at all, for, says Malter, it was the practice of medieval rabbis to grandiloquently record every exchange of opinion that they had with priests as disputations in order to magnify their triumphs. The manuscripts record discussions on all phases of Jesus' life, the trinity, the immaculate conception, etcetera. (42)

Christians constantly maintained that the Torah was originally given as temporary legislation, and that the Mitzvos mentioned in the Torah were not to be interpreted literally. They insisted on triumph in these encounters because they brought "proofs" for Jesus from the Old Testament. In each case the rabbis ~~refuted~~ ^{refuted} these arguments in the ~~usual~~ ^{same} way--insisting that the verses referred backward in time rather than forward. These arguments were notoriously bad because each side was more anxious to vanquish the other than to be self-analytical. The impression which this collection and the testimony of such historians as Graetz give is that all of Jewish life in this period consisted of disputations, persecution, and difficulties over usury; and that the Jew lived only within the four ells of the Halacha. (43)

We have observed in a general way the groundwork which Innocent III laid for the Jews' position in society. We have observed his social

seen properly

legislation aiming at the isolation and degradation of the Jew, and his policy of making insecure Jewish economic life. We have seen the Papacy's efforts to minimize the religious influence of the Jews through the activities of the Dominican and Franciscan orders of Friars and the Court of the Inquisition. In other connections we are going to learn how eventually the Jews were delivered into the hands of the Papacy in a more effectual manner than any of those thus far mentioned. We have seen how consequential a position the polemical activities of the rabbi ^{had} ~~played~~ in the literature of his people.

Let us now see how Innocent's successors, Honorius III and Gregory IX, carried his policies into practice. For in this way we will begin to see more clearly the events leading up to the disputations that form the foundation of this study. If there be any place for interpretation on my part, my reaction to the question of the place of the religious disputation in history would be something to the following effect. The disputation was a natural and logical outgrowth of the Papacy's policy of degrading the Jew, and its effort to render the Jew an ineffectual quantity in the cultural and religious patterns of the day. For from the Christian point of view, these disputations were attempts to point out the unsocial nature of Jewish life. The papacy hoped that through these disputations there would be demonstrated the folly of Judaism, and the necessity for following the Christian way of life.

Now for Innocent's successors - let us remember that Innocent died within a year of the adjournment of the Lateran Council. In dealing

or indication of these disputations in the part of Papacy as well.

with the relations of Honorius III and his successors, we are fortunate in having at our disposal the papal letters concerning the Jews. Some of these letters afford the reader a most intimate glimpse of the pope under consideration. Honorius' letters make clear that he was determined to enforce the Lateran Council's newest laws. It apparently grieved him that the various Spanish rulers were not inclined to take seriously the badge legislation. He stoutly insisted upon their enforcement, but in this effort he failed. (44)

Honorius was also concerned that Jewish money-lenders, having taken possession of Spanish estates through foreclosure, did not continue the payment to the Church of the tithes that had formerly come to the Church from these properties. Early in his career as pope, he devoted a whole letter to this problem (45). He implied in this document that the church had been feeling the disheartening effects of a materially reduced income. One would probably infer from this letter that a considerable number of estates had come to the Jews through foreclosure. In any case, this neglect on the part of Jews was not to be countenanced because it was contrary to the great council's ruling.

Honorius was obliged to relent with regard to the badge regulation. In 1219 he permitted Ferdinand of Castile to relax the enforcement of the badge legislation. One gathers from this letter that Ferdinand had complained about Jews' moving into Moorish domains in order to escape the badge, and that his finances had suffered accordingly. (46)

It would hardly be just to neglect mentioning two occasions on which Honorius came to the aid of Jews. In 1220 he directed a letter to

Isaac Avenveniste of Barcelona assuring him that the church was pledged to a policy of protection of Jews in their persons and property as long as they did not blaspheme Jesus. This was confirmed in a letter to Jaime and to the archbishop of Tarragona. Honorius suggested in this letter that the badge laws might be temporarily suspended. (47)

His concern for the physical safety of the Jews is further illustrated in the matter of the complaint to the pope by the Countess of Champagne. (48) Countess Blanche complained that certain French archbishops had been oppressing her Jews. They had been forcing the Jews to give back to Crusaders both principal and interest payments already made. Honorius wisely commended the archbishops for their zeal in upholding the Great Council's rulings, but cautioned them against overstepping their rights. He maintained that it was not the intention of the Council to harass law-abiding Jews.

It is quite apparent that Honorius' Jewish attitude lacked the fanaticism of his predecessor. He devotedly upheld the honor and prestige of his institution, but he was capable of listening to reason as we saw in the cases of Ferdinand, Isaac, and the Countess of Champagne.

Gregory IX continued to bring pressure to bear for the enforcement of the badge laws. In a letter to the king of Castile in 1231, he called attention to the fact that these and the laws concerned with the payment of tithes for property which Jews had acquired from Christians had been very indifferently enforced. He pointed out that certain Spanish parishes were in dire financial straits because of the cessation of these tithe payments. (49)

He took special pains to describe the appearance of the badge so that

there could never be any question as to the identity of the wearer. (50)
He dedicated a whole letter to this matter in the year 1234.

The directions as the construction of the badge were as follows,
"one round patch of yellow cloth or linen ,to be worn on the uppermost garment, stitched over the heart and another behind it ,
in order that they may thus be recognized. The full size of this sign shall be four digits in circumference."

Gregory was anxious to relieve Crusaders of the burden of usury and in a letter of October 21,1228 he urged the return to Crusaders of usury obtained by force ,by force if necessary.

Gregory had occasion to show that he was essentially a human being. In 1233 and 1236 he intervened in France to protect the Jews from the envy and cruelty of the feudal lords. On April 6,1233 Gregory addressed a letter to the highest clergy of France protesting against the arbitrary imprisonment of Jews and the confiscation of their property((52) . The specific "device" to which he has reference deserves separate mention.

"Indeed we have heard that recently in certain parts of the same kingdom it was enacted by means of a certain device, that after postponing for a period of four years the payment of the debts which Christians owed them, they agreed to pay them in annual installments, not being bound to pay anything above the principal, though this was contrary to the contracts into which they had publicly entered. At the end of the four years, however, the Jews were seized and were kept for so long under custody in prison, until having pooled all the debts which were due them from the Christians, they gave the

lord of the place whatever security he thought proper that within a stated period of time they would not demand any payments of their debts whether these were being paid or not. Whence some of the Jews, unable to pay what security was considered sufficient in their case, perished miserably, it is said, through hunger, thirst, and privation of prisons, and to this moment some are held in chains."

Gregory proceeds to describe tortures that the nobility inflicted on the Jews, and their concerted efforts to effect and economic isolation of the Jews. It appears that wholesale invalidation of financial contracts with Jews was to be the means of accomplishing this end. This extraordinary situation called forth unusual expressions of humanity from Gregory; at the beginning of his letter he says, "Although the perfidy of the Jews is to be condemned, nevertheless their relation with Christians is useful, and, in a way, necessary; for they bear the image of our savior, and were created by the Creator of all mankind. They are therefore not to be destroyed, God forbid, by His own creatures, especially by believers in Christ, for no matter how perverse their midway position may be, their fathers were made friends of God, and also their remnant shall not be destroyed." (53) And Gregory ends his note with an even more exalted thought, "Such kindness must be shown to Jews by Christians, as we hope might be shown to Christians who live in pagan lands." (54)

When in 1236, Jews were massacred in Anjou, Poitou, Bordeaux, Angoulême, Sens, and other communities by massed Crusaders, Gregory again came to the defense of the Jews. This Crusade had been preached by Gregory. The soldiers had offered the Jews baptism or death. In his

letter of September 5, 1236, he reports that 2500 Jews had perished in the attack. He bitterly attacks the Crusaders for forced baptisms; but he felt that the alternatives of baptism or death were not sincere. He says, " And in order that they may be able to hide such an inhuman crime under the cover of virtue, and in some way to justify their unholy cause, they represent themselves as having done the above, and they threaten to do worse, on the ground that they (the Jews) refuse to be baptised. " (55) And with regard to forced baptism of a sincere kind, he has this to say, " But those to whom God wants to be merciful are not to be compelled to the grace of baptism unless they want it voluntarily. " (55)

Gregory had an influential part in the disputation at Paris in 1240. We will describe it in our presentation of Donin's activity which precipitated the event.

Probably the most interesting personality among those surrounding the disputations is Louis IX, king of France, popularly known as St. Louis. He is considered by many the most humane ruler of the Middle Ages, and in his relations to his Christian subjects, he was undoubtedly a devout, kindly, and enlightened king. In his relations with his Jewish subjects, however, he was the epitome of intolerance and cruelty.

Let us first consider his relation to his Christian subjects which will enable us to understand how he came to be regarded as a " saint. "

The CAMBRIDGE MEDIEVAL HISTORY sketches him as follows, " Louis IX, 1226-1270, a saint, whose actions, public and private, were governed by moral and religious principles, and whose aim was the salvation of souls. " (56) He was educated as one who planned to enter upon a monastic

life. He was rather feeble physically and his ascetic life and self-imposed mortifications scarcely ^ubilt him up.

He was constantly subject to illness and despite a nervous and irritable temperament, he achieved remarkable control over himself. He was energetic and strong of mind. Louis was generally revered for his temperance, chastity, and piety. (57)

His religious devotion was enlightened, and based on a thorough acquaintance with the Bible. He derived great pleasure from sermons, Bible-study, theological and moral discussions. He showed his subjects the devotion of a father and was willingly to risk his life for them. He respected rights and privileges that were not opposed to his moral sense. Toward neighboring nations he was scrupulously just and always the peace-maker. Inevitably, Louis, being ^acompletely pious Catholic, had no tolerance toward either heresy among his subjects or the Moslems - how then was it possible for him to have any humane consideration for Jews ?

His attitude toward the Jews might be summed up as follows, " Personally Louis IX would certainly not have ordered the burning of repentant heretics, for one of his great desires was for conversions. Just as at his abbey of Royamount he educated Saracen children whom he had brought from the East, so by his generous gifts he persuaded a certain number of Jews to be baptised. But all tolerance was foreign to his mind, and it was only with great difficulty that he was persuaded to allow the presence of Jews in his kingdom for financial reasons which his counsellors urged upon him. Joinville tells us that he allowed that ' very good clerks ' capable by

their attainments of converting infidels, might argue with the Jews, but that the only possible attitude for a layman if he heard them decrying the Christian law, was ' to plunge his sword into their bellies, as far as it would go. ' " (58)

For any knowledge of Louis' relations with his Jewish subjects we must refer to Jewish writings. As the influence of the Provencal Count, Raymond, waned because of ecclesiastical interference in France, the influence of the crown grew. Philip Augustus and Louis VIII took part in the Albigensian crusade, and consequently benefited from the work of Simon de Montford. Though Philip received Innocent III's blessing for his punishment of heretics, Philip was not ready to cooperate with the church in its anti-Jewish program. Since he had recalled the Jews to France in 1198, he had been anxious to treat them as befits a healthy source of regular income. (59) He had his own interests in mind when he enacted pro-Jewish financial laws. In 1204 he opposed the laws of the church council dealing with the financial relations of Jews and Christians and he likewise opposed the anti-Jewish laws of the Fourth Lateran Council. Jews were allowed to charge 43% annual interest. All financial documents were stamped by a fiscal agent for a stipulated fee. His income from this source amounted 1220 livres in 1202, and in 1217, to 7550 livres.

The feudal nobility endeavored to imitate Philip in this regard. Strife soon arose between the crown and the nobles over the matter of Jews moving from one domain to another. The agreement was finally made that if a Jew moved from one domain to another he must be

returned to his original overlord. As a result, Philip had to return to the Duchess of Champagne, the Jew Cresselin^s, who had settled in the royal domain 1203. This scheme was legislatively enacted in 1210. From this time on, the title "Judaus regus" is frequently seen as a distinction from a Jew living in feudal domains.

The pious Louis VIII, 1223-6, undertook to undermine Philip's scheme. He declared interest and principal debts to Jews outlawed after five years. The Jews had three years in which to collect principal debts, and they had to deduct from these fees to be paid to king and nobility. However, he did confirm Jewish settlement laws enacted by Phillip.

Louis IX represented everything desirable in kings from the papacy's point of view. Whereas his grandfather Philip had conducted all of his affairs with Jews with an eye toward material gain, Louis had his eye directed toward the glory of Christianity. The dream of his life with regard to the Jews was to convert all of them to Christianity, and he therefore, encouraged conversion whenever and wherever possible. He feared the effect that Judaism might have upon his subjects, and he therefore forbade all religious discussion by Jews with Christian laymen.

A council of vassals at Melun, 1230, decreed that for the sake of the king's salvation and for the sake of his predecessors' good name, the usurious practices of the Jews were to be properly regulated. The settlement laws were re-worded to say that a Jew who moved from one domain to another was to be seized as a slave by his new overlord. Inasmuch as it was no longer practical for a Jew to accept a note for money loaned, Christians seeking cash had to leave securities or pledges

for both principal and interest payments. There followed in 1234 a royal decree that all Christian debtors would be forgiven one-third of the amount advanced to them. This led to great confusion in financial circles and encouraged Christians to engage secretly in money-lending.

The matter of the king's salvation being apparently jeopardized by his having to accept revenues from the usurious Jews, called forth a most unusual letter from the Pope. His conscience being greatly disturbed by this problem, Louis appealed to the Pope for advice. The benign Gregory sums up the problem thus, "On your behalf we have been told that since you have received no small sum of money from the Jews of your kingdom and from their Christian debtors and in latter's name, and since this money, acquired by the Jews, bears the stigma of usury, you desire to bring satisfaction for the said money for fear lest the sin of it be imputed to you and you be punished for it." (60) The problem was solved with the suggestion that the money be sent to the relief fund for the emperor of Constantinople.

Before Louis set out on the Crusade of 1247 he hoped to accomplish a great and holy work. He wanted to expel all of his Jews and to seize all their possessions. His plan miscarried and only a few Jews were victimized. After six unsuccessful years in the orient, he returned to France hoping to purge his conscience of Jewish usury. Therefore in 1257-8, he ordered that all interest collected from Christians be repaid, and he appointed commissions to carry out his orders.

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It is relevant at this point to discuss the matter of Christianity's reaction to and understanding of Jewish scholarship. There seems to be no way of ascertaining the extent of this understanding in a connected way. We can surmise only disconnected parts of this picture when considering individual reactions to problems, as for example the reaction of priest and lay ruler during a disputation. The closest approximation of our desideratum is a study by J. Guttman on William of Auverne, bishop of Paris during the Donin incident. (62)

The gist of the study is as follows. William is known to the modern world for his activities as scholastic philosopher. Though the Donin affair took place during his tenure as bishop of Paris, and though William had a part in it, he was a friend of Judaism. The Judaism that he condemned in speech and writing was an uninterpreted Midrashic Judaism. As all other Christians he failed to understand that the Midrash was not to be interpreted literally in Jehiel's manner. He was not acquainted with the position of contemporary thinking Jew with regard to the Midrash, as for example the Maimonists.

Guttman insists that William was acquainted with the MOREH and used it. On the basis of this assumption, which conflicts with his former statement that William was not acquainted with the position of the Maimonists on the Midrash, Guttman maintains that the first Latin translation of the MOREH was already known at the beginning of the thirteenth century. This contention conflicts with another view that the MOREH was not translated into Latin until later in this century. Guttman bases his claim of William's friendship for Judaism upon William's pleasure in Gabirol's M'KOR CHAYYIM. William

of course knew Gabirol as Avicembron. Guttman completes his study with the remark that William was uncertain as to whether Avicembron was a Moor or Christian. He admits that William never mentioned Maimonides by name.

Let us now turn our attention to the life of the Jews of Aragon. The externals we can describe adequately in depicting the relations of the Jews and King Jaime I, who reigned throughout the period in which we are interested. Aragonian Jewish life was somewhat more productive culturally than that of France, but in order to remain within reasonable limits, we will confine our attention to Nachmanides. As we have observed, the Jews of Aragon were subject to ecclesiastical regulation and pressure similar to that of the Jews of France. Through our general discussion of Jewish self-government we have become acquainted with the Aljama organization. There remains for consideration a description of their economic life which is portrayed in our sketch of Jaime. Their cultural and religious activities are reflected in the careers of Nachmanides and Pablo Christiani.

The history of the Jews of Aragon from 1213 to 1276, Jaime's reign, is closely connected with Jaime's political and economic program. (62)
The history of Aragon itself itself was similar to that of France since it too was decidedly under papal influence. The Aragonian kings had fiefs in France namely Montpellier and Roussillon.

Jaime's reign approximates the period of the Reconquista. He was able to get as his share Valencia and the Balearic islands. In good French tradition he regarded the Jews as his personal chattel. (63)

He too prohibited Jews from leaving his personal domains. He would have imitated Louis IX further in his treatment of the Jews were it not for his dependence upon their financial help in his wars with the Moors. He taxed the Jews very heavily and made loans from them for state and personal purposes, in exchange for which money he extended certain reasonable commercial privileges to them. (64)

However he did not forget his obligations as a Christian ruler. Being particularly partial to the Dominicans he encouraged them in their anti-Jewish activities and tried at all times to enforce canonical law.

The plentiful archives of this period throw light upon Jewish life in Aragon. The Jews settled in Saragossa, Barcelona, Daroca, Barbastro, Valencia, Tortosa, Gerona and other towns. Jaime was especially eager to settle Jews in those places which he had conquered from the Moors. After his conquest of Valencia in 1238, he divided Moorish buildings, farms, orchards, and vineyards among his soldiery and the Jews. In 1247 he offered full citizenship to those Jews who would settle in Malorca, Catalonia, and Valencia; he even summoned Jews from Fez and other parts of Morocco. (65)

In an effort to win the financial help of the Jews living on the bishop's estate in Montpellier, he offered them freedom from taxes if they moved onto his domains. Once in his domains however they were not allowed to change their abode without royal permission. In a charter of 1258 to the Jews of Montpellier Jaime boasted that although Jews suffer slavery in most Christian lands such a condition would not obtain in his domains. (66)

Through the pressure brought to bear by the court physician Isaac Avenvenista upon pope Honorius III, Jaime was compelled to suspend the badge laws in his domains. By 1228, however, Jaime reinstated the badge laws because of the pressure of the Aragonian clergy. All royal fiscal agents however were permanently excused from wearing the badge. It is indeed to his credit that Jaime endeavored to protect the Jews during holy week and especially on Good Friday.

When in his later years Jaime came more completely under clerical influence, he forced the Jews to listen to the conversionist sermons of the Dominicans and to conduct disputations with the friars. He seems to have had no compunction about abusing Jewish books.

In spite of the Lateran Council's ruling Jaime permitted Jews to occupy the office of Bajulus, royal tax magistrate. Among these were Judah de Caballeria of Saragossa, Vidal Solomon, Benvenista de Porta of Barcelona, and Astruc Jacob in Tortosa. (67) Jews also served as Alfaquimen or court translator and as court physician.

Because of the special consideration given Jewish financiers, many Jews left their farms, food and cloth establishments, and maritime enterprises to become financiers. Jaime was obliged to regulate this activity by limiting annual interest rates to 20%. (68) At the paying off of such debts, the notary was to make sure that none of the interest charges be included in the principle - as Christian usurers were in the habit of doing. In some communities Christian usurers were restricted to a 12% interest charge, while Jews obtained 20%.

The king reserved the right to interfere in Jewish finance. He could double the amount of the debt (for which he received a com-

mission) or could order immediate repayment of the full amount of the debt. He paid well the Jewish financiers who favored him and permitted them to overstep the interest laws. As security for his loans, the king offered either the revenues of a province or the tax revenues of a Jewish community. Thus it frequently happened that Jewish communities were both debtors and creditors of the king, and many financial transactions cancelled. Thus the exchequers of newly established Jewish communities frequently became the coffers out of which the affairs of the king and ~~infanta~~ ^{infanta} were financed. As compensation for such services these communities gained unusual rights and privileges.

As the following list shows the tax burden upon the Jews was enormous. They were poll, collective (i.e. tax from entire Jewish communities), bridge toll, travel toll, business tax. In addition the Jews paid the traveling expenses of the king and ~~infanta~~ ^{infanta}. Members of the royal entourage made a practice of helping themselves in Jewish homes and business establishments. When the communities of Barcelona, Villafranca, Gerona, and others complained, the king gave the Jews the right to refuse admission into their homes to any royal personage, including the ~~infanta~~ ^{infanta}.

Jaime was evidently much more adept at raising revenue than any of his royal contemporaries. He was more persistent than ^any tax-collector. But the Jewish group took advantage of its important financial connections to extend its autonomy. And thus the Aragonian Jews enjoyed a larger measure of autonomy than Jews of any other part of the world. But this autonomy was short-lived, for about the throne of the shrewd energetic king the Dominican Inquisition

Leading Figures of Bible Disputations

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lurked forebodingly.

We are now ready to turn our attention to the immediate participants in the disputations: Donin, Jechiel, Pablo and Nachmanides.

Though only a small number of Karaites maintained themselves in western Europe, there were nevertheless those who rejected the oral tradition and insisted upon a religion based on the word of the Bible. Such an opponent of the oral tradition was Nicholas Donin a Talmudist of La Rochelle. Because of his adherence to these views he was excommunicated in 1225 by R. Jechiel who in the previous year had succeeded Judah Sir Leon as director of the Paris Yeshivah.

Donin was evidently not one to desire revenge. It was not until 1235 that he was sought out by the friars and was persuaded to become a Christian. They saw in him a most useful tool.

During the same year, a crusade was preached in France, and as a result in 1236 some three thousand Jews died at the hands of the crusaders. About five hundred were forcibly baptized; and any Jewish books that the crusaders found were burned. These troubles were visited upon the Jews of Brittany, Anjou, and Poitou. In his opening speech at the disputation, Jechiel blamed Donin for this carnage. Jechiel stated, "From that time (i.e. the time of his conversion) until now, he has conceived evil against us to uproot all -". Lewin maintains that Donin was responsible for this massacre; Donin did not perpetrate this massacre through his own scheming but in his role of "tool" of the French clergy. Lewin cites as proof for his contention the statement of Hillel of Verona in his "Ta'am Z'kenim", ed. Ashkenazi, p. 71, to the effect that the hatred of the clergy for the Jews was responsible for this incident. Apparently, however, the massacre

did not achieve its aim. Therefore, Donin suggested the Talmud for ecclesiastical scrutiny. Donin contended that the Talmud and the study of it kept the Jews faithful to their religion. By attacking the Talmud, Donin hoped to destroy Judaism. Thus the opinion of Hillel !

2. Hillel does not mention Donin
In 1238 with the help of the Franciscans, a member of whose ranks he was, Donin went to Pope Gregory IX to present to him a bill of complaint against the Talmud. After the disputation Donin disappeared. Some say he was seen at the council of Avignon in 1254. A later Jewish writer insisted that Donin had died an unnatural death before this date. (72)

In the presentation of his case, Kisch holds that Donin pointed out the stimulating effect that the study of the Talmud exerted upon Jewish life. (73) The Inquisition's reaction to the Talmud - and in this reaction Gregory IX concurred - was that the Talmud is a work full of foolish ordinances, childish stories, and silly fables. But Gregory insisted upon knowing "Wo diese gleich dem anderen Götzendienste auch den Dienst des Christenthums verdamme." (74)

With but few exceptions, Jewish historians have given Donin little consideration as a personality. Most secondary accounts of the disputation mention Donin as a misled miscreant who plotted his peoples' destruction. I. Broyde states simply that Donin's bill of complaint was a mere act of retaliation against his excommunicator. (75)

In the letter of R. Jacob of Venice a bit of folklore attached itself to Donin. It says that "Doni" the apostate changed his religion but did not believe in the "Roman" religion. The holy rabbi Jechiel excom-

... that Donin was not a Jew but a Christian who had converted to Judaism and did not believe in the Roman religion.

communicated him. Doni went to the "king over all kings," and accused the Jews of killing babies on the eve of Passover. God punished him - the "king" would not listen to him, and a bear came and killed him. (76)

Kisch seems to present the most likely picture of Donin. He calls our subject Donin of Rupella, and considers him a Maimonist. The headings BLASPHEMIAE IN DEUM and STULTITIAE in his bill, are ~~are~~ exaggerated complaints. They are understandable however in the light of the short-sighted dogmatism of the orthodox. Kisch is particularly certain of his estimate of Donin the Maimonist because of the mocking spirit in which he mentions the Jewish reverence for Rashi during the disputation. (77) These attitudes of Donin's toward the fundamentals of Jewish scholarship probably developed as early as 1224, but it appears that he was not driven to revenge until after the public burning of the MOREH.

Kisch maintains that Donin submitted to baptism in 1236, so that from Christian quarters, he might punish the Jewry that had repulsed him. Kisch's analysis seems most attractive because he explains Donin's defection in terms of a struggle in Judaism which went on during Donin's lifetime. He pictures our subject as a man who had spent his life looking for a satisfying religion, but who failed in this effort. He adds that Donin was executed in 1287 (78) for subversive writings. Alas not even his Franciscan affiliations brought Donin the intellectual or religious satisfaction for which he hungered.

Donin's opponent in the disputation, and his former teacher and

persecutor was Rabbeinu Jechiel b. Joseph of Paris and Meaux. Jechiel was an outstanding Tosafist. He was born at Meaux toward the end of the twelfth century. His French name was Sir Vives and in rabbinic literature he is known as Jechiel of Paris, the holy, the pious, and the elder. He was one of the distinguished disciples of Judah Sir Leon whom he succeeded as director of Paris Yeshivah in 1224. Among his disciples were Isaac of Corbeil (his son-in-law), Perez b. Elijah of Corbeil, Yakar of Chinom, and Meir of Rothenberg. He was held in high esteem by non-Jews, and was said to have been called to the court of Louis IX on occasion.

Because of his position, he was forced into many controversies with Christians. He once had to argue with the chancellor of the University of Paris on the use of Christian blood in the Jewish ritual. On another occasion, he argued with a friar that the Jewish law did not command Jews to bring false witness in courts of justice.

After the controversy, the condition of the Jews grew worse daily. Jechiel lived to see his son imprisoned on a baseless charge. With his son, he later left for Palestine where he remained until his death in 1286.

1268

Jechiel was the author of Tosafos to Berachos, Shabbos, Pesachim, Moed Katan, Beza, Yevamos, Kesubos, Baba Kama, Chulin, and Zevachim, but these are not extant. By the later Tosafists he is known as a biblical commentator. He had occasion to write a number of responsa, some of which are cited by ~~Modcai~~ ^{en} b. Hillel and Meir of Rothberg. (79)

Nothing can be added to this inadequate account of Jechiel's life.

Somewhat more is known about Pablo Christiani. Nothing seems to be

known of his life before his conversion except that he had married and had begotten children. Though Pablo had his children baptized with him, his wife remained faithful to Judaism. (80) Nachmanides, Graetz, Dubnow, Broyde, and Loeb have nothing further to say about Pablo's early life. Mann mentions that Pablo came of a pious family. (81) Mann quotes Jacob b. Elie concerning young Jews of Pablo's generation who hated their fellow Jews and thus became sources of dissension. Could this conflict refer to the Maimonidean struggle?

During the reign of Jaime, Aragon became one of the most influential provinces of the Dominican order. Its provincial general, Raymond da Pennaforte, became Jaime's confessor. The clergy became very concerned over the improvement of the Jewish position under Jaime. They were especially perturbed about Jews' occupying the office of bajalus and other important fiscal offices. Pennaforte and others tried to make Jaime another "saint" Louis. Their efforts began to bear fruit toward the end of Jaime's life when he permitted the Dominicans to undertake a campaign of conversion among the Jews. (82)

In the Dominican schools, Pennaforte instituted instruction in Hebrew and Arabic so that the friars could use these languages in their missionary work. (83) Argumentation was permitted in these classes, particularly in Jewish matters. Especially welcome were Jewish renegades, particularly those who were in a position to uncover the "errors" of the Talmud and other rabbinic writings.

During the year 1260, Pablo toured Provence and Catalonia offering to dispute with rabbis on the subjects that the Bible and Talmud establish the truth of Christianity. His efforts, however, were fruitless;

no rabbi would argue with him and no one would be baptized at his hands.

Since Pablo's travels proved so unsuccessful, Pennaforte decided to arrange a disputation between Pablo and the leading Jewish scholar of the day, Moses b. Nachman of Gerona. Raymond was certain that Pablo could overcome the master, and in so doing Pablo would bring the entire Jewish people to Christianity (84). Pennaforte convinced, at least, Jaime of the wisdom of this plan, and this seemed to be sufficient, for Jaime, personally, invited Ramban to represent Judaism in the projected disputation.

When the forthcoming disputation became widely publicized Jacob Ben Elie addressed a letter to "Saul turned Paul" trying to persuade him to reconsider. He asks Pablo to deny that he plans to harm the Talmud. Jacob admits that the Talmud contains many incongruous Aggados, but points out that Christian church literature contains parallels. He reminds Pablo that Midrashim are written to inspire faith. (85)

He then proceeds to cite a number of similar Christian aggados. He accuses Pablo of putting Israel in disrepute for money, and pleads with him to "silence the bears and lions before irreparable harm has been done." (86) Jacob warns Pablo that he has attacked Israel's medium prayer, which is the ~~medium~~ through which Israel expresses its faith in God. He reproves Pablo for compelling young Jews to listen to his sermons. (87)

The climax of Jacob's presentation is his description of the fate of those who have plotted against Israel as he Pablo has done. (88)

He cites the case of the king of Majorca who met his fate at the hands of the king of Aragon (Jaime and Moslem king of Majorca ?); he mentions Theodore the Greek who was punished by the king of ^{JUN}; 862 the Greek, was afflicted with a terrible disease. One king of Babylon despoiled the Jews and as a result was plundered by the Tartars, who also restored to office Rabana Samuel the exilarch. (89) We have already referred to his account of Doni, the apostate. Finally he mentions the redemption of Israel that came through Esther. He pleads with Pablo to repent and to change his heart of stone to one of flesh. Pablo apparently did not answer. The rest of Pablo's career we will observe with the events immediately following the disputation.

Before the disputations themselves, there remains for consideration the greatest disputant of these conflicts. He conducted himself most nobly and seems in my opinion to have presented his case more effectively than did Donin, Jechiel, or Pablo. I shall undertake to give only a brief sketch of Ramban's life and work. Whatever light the disputations may throw upon his personality, I will treat of in the discussion of the disputation itself. (90)

Moses b. Nachman, Bonastruc de Portas was born in Gerona in 1195. He is related to R. Jonah Gerundi; his teachers were R. Judah b. Yakar and R. Meir b. Nathan of Trinquintaines, the former having introduced him to Caballa. Ramban was a promising student who at the age of fifteen undertook to write supplements to Alfasi's code. Shortly thereafter he began his work MILCHAMOS ADONAI, in which he defends Alfasi against the attacks of R. Zechariah Halevi Gerundi.

Little is known of Ramban's private life. He married and begot children. His son Solomon married the daughter of R. Jonah. He permitted his first grandson to be named for R. Jonah instead of for himself, as was customary, as a token of his esteem for R. Jonah. He had illustrious descendants. His son Nachman, to whom he wrote his letters from Palestine, wrote novellae to the Talmud. Other of his descendants were Levi b. Gershom, Simeon Duran, and Jacob Sasportas. Ramban was rabbi first in Gerona and then in Barcelona. He was a physician by profession.

During the dispute over the MOREH, Ramban found himself in a most difficult position. On the one hand, he entertained the highest regard for the French rabbinate, and considered himself a disciple of this group. And yet his own view of the universe made him a disciple of the Maimonidean group. Speaking of the Moreh and the French rabbinate, Ramban stated that this work was not intended for those "who were barricaded by their faith and happy in their belief, wanting no protection against the works of Aristotle and Galen, by whose philosophy others might be led astray." (91) He described what he considered Maimonides' service to Judaism to the French rabbinate, but in spite of his great authority, Ramban was unable to moderate either party.

In speaking of religious disputations in general, Prof. Schechter can find little with which to commend them. Their only possible advantage was to force the Jews occasionally to redefine their position with regard to their literature, and to distinguish between religion and folk-lore. (92)

By way of criticism, Schechter points out that both sides were guilty of the same disregard for history, and resorted to the same kind of casuistry. Uneasiness and humility were always on the side of the Jews. Their opponents were always arrogant, and backed up their arguments with the swords of the Knights of the Holy Cross. Was there enough common ground between Christianity and Judaism during the thirteenth century to justify the hope of mutual understanding? (93)
Prof. Schechter asks this question, and answers it as follows.

" The Old Testament was almost forgotten in the church. The First Person in the trinity was leading a sort of shadowy existence in art, which could only be the more repulsive to a Jew on that account. The largest part of the church worship was monopolized by worship ~~to~~ the Virgin Mother, prayers to the saints, and kneeling before their relics. And a Jew may well be pardoned if he did not entertain higher views of this form of worship than Luther and Knox did at a later time. "

Ramban was a philosopher of repute, but his philosophical ideas and writings lie rather outside the province of this study.

In Schechter's opinion, Ramban's biblical scholarship, of all his work, left the deepest impression upon posterity - and his commentary to the Pentateuch was the outstanding work of his biblical studies. Its purpose was " to appease the mind of the students (laboring under persecution and troubles) when they read the portion on Sabbaths and Festivals, and to attract their heart by simple explanations and sweet words. " (94)
The most prominent feature of this work, the " sweet words, " undoubtedly filled a need in his time.

Ramban goes on to say, " - the Torah is the expression of God's simple and absolute will, which man has to follow without consideration of reward. Still all of these have their reasons, ^{and} are not arbitrary though we cannot fathom these purposes. - - They are all meant for the good of man, either to keep aloof from something harmful, or to educate us in goodness, or to remove from us an evil belief, and to make us know His name. " ⁽⁹⁵⁾ For Ramban the narratives of the Torah became " a history of mankind written in advance. " ⁽⁹⁶⁾ We shall have occasion to treat this theme at greater length in another connection.

In all of his work, Ramban was chiefly concerned with the ordinary man and scholar, and not the great minds of his day or the past. He wanted to help the ordinary mortal, especially with the matter of becoming contented with ~~their~~ ^{his} portion in life. Schechter feels that this desire to be helpful to the ordinary man, may account somewhat for inconsistency in Ramban's thinking, e.g. his wavering attitude toward Maimonism. If we would follow this figure, we would say that Ramban did not feel ready to join the Maimonists because he did not feel that the majority of Jews could make the step with him.

The portion of Ramban's life which follows the disputation we will mention in connection with the events following the affair. A more suitable representative than Ramban could hardly have been chosen for the Jewish group. He was the leading Jewish scholar of Aragon, if not of all Jewry. He was an accomplished biblical and Talmudic scholar, a philosopher of note, a Cabbalist of a sort. In short our subject was a master of Jewish learning, and an orator, if we can be literal in our interpretation of the Hebrew account of the disputation.

Chapter III

The Paris Disputation

At this point then we turn to a detailed consideration of the two disputations, studying them in chronological order.

In 1238, with the help of fellow Franciscans, Nicholas Donin went to Rome to present a bill of complaint against the Talmud to pope Gregory IX. In view of the passage of many months between the time of his alleged arrival in Rome, and the date of Gregory's first letter on Donin's behalf, June 9, 1239, we assume that Donin did not convince the pope of the justice of his complaints as readily as he had the French prelates. The other possible interpretation of these facts is that Donin found it more difficult to gain an audience with the pope than it had been with his immediate superiors. We have already mentioned the first skeptical reaction of the French Inquisition and Gregory in another connection. Evidently Donin finally gained his point because in the papal letter of June 9, 1239, Gregory ordered the bishop of Paris, " By the authority of these presents we order your Fraternity devoutly to receive our letters given to you by our dear son Nicholas - -. " ⁽⁹⁷⁾ The letter goes on to state that as soon as practical after he had read the letter, the bishop of Paris was to send copies of it to the kings of France, England, Aragon, Navarre, Castile, Leon, and Portugal.

It seems that the matter was not to be taken up in the Papal States, Germany, or Naples. It is not readily understandable why Gregory should not have considered the matter in his own domains if he had any faith in Donin's charges. Quetif and Eccard report that in Aragon an inquisitory committee was set up upon the receipt of the letter, ⁽⁹⁸⁾ but apparently nothing was ever done. The report came from

Portugal that the letter had been delivered, but because of the difference between the king and Gregory, nothing was ever done about it. Why in Castile and Leon, where the " saintly " Ferdinand III ruled, why in Navarre and England nothing was ever done is not explained by our sources.

A second letter was written by the pope on the same day; it was addressed to the archbishops of France. The section of the letter concerning the Talmud has become classical. It follows, " If what is said about the Jews of France and of the other lands is true, no punishment would be sufficiently great or sufficiently worthy of their crime. For they, so we have heard, are not content with the old Law which God gave to Moses in writing: they even ignore it completely, and affirm that God gave another Law which is called ' Talmud, ' that is ' teaching, ' handed down to Moses orally. Falsely they allege that it was implanted within their minds and,unwritten, was there preserved until certain men came, whom they call 'sages' and 'scribes', who fearing that this Law may be lost from the minds of men through forgetfulness, reduced it to writing, and the volume of this by far exceeds the text of the Bible. In this is contained matter so abusive and so unspeakable that it arouses shame in those who mention it and horror in those who hear it. - - Wherefore, since this (i.e. the Talmud) is said to be the chief cause that holds the Jews obstinate in their perfidy - "

(99)

The letter goes on to command the French clergy to seize all Jewish books, while they are in synagogue on the first Saturday of the coming Lent, March 3, 1240. The seized books were to be turned over

(100)

to the Dominican and Franciscan friars. They were permitted if necessary to seek the aid of secular authority, and all Christians with Jewish books were to be excommunicated if they did not surrender them according to papal order.

A similar letter dated June 20, 1239 was sent to the king of Portugal. In a footnote to p. 243, Grayzel says, " In the same manner were addressed the kings of the countries already mentioned. " In another letter of the same date addressed to the " Bishop and the Prior of the Dominicans and the minister of the Franciscan Friars in Paris, " (101) Gregory orders the secular powers to seize all Jewish books. It says, " Those books in which you will find errors of this sort you shall cause to be burned at the stake. By apostolic power and through use of ecclesiastical censure you will silence all opponents. You will also report to us faithfully what you have done in the matter. But should all of you be unable to be present at the fulfillment of these instructions, some one of you, nonetheless, shall carry out its execution. " (101)

This is the last letter which Gregory wrote in conjunction with the Donin incident. Donin brought all of these letters to Bishop William of Auverne in September, 1239. (102)

In France the letters arrived opportunely. Donin had prepared the background for them with the zeal of the true proselyte. His grimness was not needed in France since the French Inquisition was at its peak at this time. The Inquisition had previously drunk its fill of Albigensian blood, and now longed for new victims. And Odo de Chateauroux, Chancellor of the Paris cathedral, violently hated

Jews. Finally, there was "saint" Louis, bitter enemy of the Jews and dutiful son of the church.

Next, we consider the specific charges brought against the Talmud by Donin. They number 35, listed under five headings: the first nine are "errors"; the next four are "Blasphemiae in homines"; the next 11 are called "Blasphemiae in deum"; next five are "Blasphemiae in Jesum atque eius matrem"; the last six are called "Stultitiae" (103) Kisch says scholars have sought the text of the "blasphemies" for the light they may have thrown on Jesus' death, but they have been censored out of all extant editions. A digest of the bill of complaints follows.

1. Jews say that the law called TALMUD was ordained by God. Shammai says there are two laws, written and oral. Sab. 31a
2. Jews say that the Talmudic law was approved by God. Ber. 5a, Meg. 19b
3. The Jews say that the Bible may be both read and written down. The Talmud must be taught but only from memory. Git. 60b, B.M. 33a
4. The Jews say that the Talmud was preserved without being written until the sages and scribes came. Fearing that the Talmud would disappear because men are forgetful, the sages edited and recorded it. Git. 60a
5. The Talmud contains many absurdities of which one is that the sages are superior to the prophets. B. B. 12a
6. The sages may reverse or rearrange the words of Law. Yeb. 89b-90b, R. H. 25a, Mac. 22b
7. One has to believe that "left is right and right is left" when the scribes say so. Sab. 23a
8. Those who do not follow the sages will die. Eruv. 21b
9. The doctors maintain that children need not study the Bible, but should study the Talmud because this contains the Law AND the Bible. Ber. 28b
10. The scholars say that the best of Christians should be killed. J. Kid. 66c.

11. A Christian who observed the Jewish sabbath or Law is not fit to live. Sanh. 58b

After

12. A Christian may be deceived in any way. B.K. 38a

13. Any Jew who does not want to keep a vow needs only at the beginning of the year, that all of his previous Ned. 23b.

14. Any three Jews may release a fellow Jew from a vow. Hag. 10a

15. The Talmud tells the foolish story of the diminution of the moon. Chul. 60b

16. The Talmud says that God repented what He had done in wrath. Hag. 10a

17. The Talmud says that God was grieved at having made a vow, and begged to be released from it. B.B. 74 a

18. The Talmud relates that each night God regrets^{ts} having abandoned the Temple and having submitted Israel to servitude. Ber. 3 a

19. The doctors say that God lied to Abraham. B.M. 87a

20. They also say that God commanded Samuel to lie. Yeb. 65 b (I Sam. 16:2,3)

21. The doctors say that after God had left the Temple, He reserved a large place for Himself where He studies the Talmud. Ber. 8a

22. Every day God studies the Talmud and teaches children who died before they had a chance to study Talmud. Av. Za. 3b (Ps. 104:26)

23. The doctors say that God prays to Himself to have pity on the Jews, Ber. 7a (Is. 36:7)

24. The doctors say that God admits defeat by the Jews in a Talmudic discussion. B.M. 59b

25. God weeps three times a day. Hag. 5b (Is. 22:42)

26. They say about Jesus that his mother conceived him in adultery with one Pandera. Sanh. 67a Chesronos Hashas

27. They say that Jesus was condemned to hell because he mocked the words of the sages. Git. 56b.

28. The doctors prohibit the use of indecent language except that directed against the church. Sanh. 63 b

29. The Talmud has special expressions with which to insult the Pope and Christianity. Av. Za. 20a

30. Three times a day, in the prayer that they consider most important, they curse the ministers of the church, kings, and Jews who have accepted Christianity. V'lamalshinim, Ber. 28b, 29a.

31. The Talmud says that no Jews suffer the tortures of hell after twelve months. Eruv. 19a, R.H.17a

32. Whoever studies the Talmud is assured of life in the world to come. Meg. 28b cf. Nid. 73a

33- The Jews consider sinners all those who renounce the pleasures of the flesh. Taan. 11a.

34- Adam, according to the Talmud cohabitted with animals. Yeb. 63 a.

35- This has to do with the injury which Ham was supposed to have perpetrated upon Noah. Sanh. 70a. (104)

As already mentioned Donin was back in Paris by September, 1239.

There is no further record of the matter until March 3, 1240, when as per schedule the Jewish books were seized. After this Odo and Ganfried de Blavello, rector of the University, were appointed to investigate Donin's charges. (105) Lewin adds to this roster of the committee Archbishop Gautier de Sens, Bishop William de Auvergne, and the bishop of Senlis; Lewin cites a letter of Cardinal-legate Odo of 1244 as his authority. (106) Quoting further from Odo's letter, Lewin relates that learned Jews were summoned by the committee and asked to testify as to the location of the passages in the Talmud. Odo seems to have considered the disputation itself a second hearing.

These statements imply that the clergymen were completely unable to read the Talmud text. The Jews testified that the passages that Donin had cited had different meanings from those assigned to them by Donin. The judges were unable to reach a decision, and a sub-committee composed of the bishop of Senlis and Odo was ordered to investigate and learn the meanings of the passages cited by Donin. (107) With this end in view the commission arranged a disputation between

Donin and representatives of the French rabbinate to be held on Monday, June 25, 1240. It is not known whether the commission or the Jewish community appointed the Jewish representatives.

In connection with the investigation of Donin's charges Kisch refers to two manuscripts, Latin and Hebrew in the National Library in Paris. (108) The Hebrew manuscript is by an unknown Jewish writer and its date is not established. Kisch explains that these manuscripts are the result of the clergy's efforts to become acquainted with the Talmud, and a Jewish effort to become acquainted with church literature - - both as a result of Donin's accusations. Evidently Donin collated all of the attacked Talmudic passages, and translated them into Latin. The Latin manuscript is called, "Extractiones de Talmud;" it dates from the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth century. (108) Evidently the editor of the Latin manuscript had little or no knowledge of Hebrew, judging from several Hebrew words badly copied from Donin's alleged statement. The historical sections are probably based on official sources, and Odo seems to have had a part in their composition. The Latin manuscript also reproduces Jechiel's answers as reported in earlier Christian accounts.

The Jewish manuscript is called Vicuach D'Rabbi Jechiel. Copies are to be found in Paris, Hamburg, Strassburg, and Oxford. It was not written by Jechiel, but by a contemporary or disciple. The internal evidence as to the date of the manuscript is most confusing because on the one hand, the manuscript speaks of the two participants as living, and on the other hand a poem at the end of the manuscript, says they are dead. The date may therefore be placed between 1248 and 1268,

Donin's collection

for the author complains that there are no available copies of the Talmud. At the end of the manuscript there are verses from the Gospels in Latin, written with Hebrew characters and a Hebrew translation. Apparently, this was to serve as a lesson in Latin and New Testament
(109)
for Jews.

At this point, Kisch asks a number of relevant questions. Why weren't the Jewish books burned without further ado ? Was this delay a "good inclination" ? Was Louis anxious for a disputation ? After the preliminary hearing before the commission , Louis appointed June 25, 1240 as the day for the disputation. The king did not care to be actively connected with the event.

Four rabbis, all of them Tosafists, were summoned before a large gathering of clergymen and nobles. The meeting was presided over by Blanche the queen-mother. The Jewish representative were Judah b. David of Melun, Samuel b. Solomon (Morel) of Chateau Thierry (the author of a SEFER HAMITVOS and the usual Tosafos to Avoda Zara), Moses of Coucy (author of SEFER HAMITZVOS GADOL), and finally
(110)
Jechiel.

Was Jechiel the sole Jewish speaker ? Was he chosen for this position, and if so by whom ? According to Lewin it is possible that the above-mentioned men in conferences before the disputation assisted Jechiel in framing his answers. Lewin's source is in the
(111)
work of Moses of Coucy, where a statement similar to ~~that~~ ^{one} of Jechiel's is found.
(112)

In what language was the disputation conducted ? Kisch says in
(113)
Latin, with one statement in French by Donin. Lewin, however, is

of another opinion. He suggests that the language was French since the audience understood Jechiel enough to mock his attitude toward Mary. He also suggests that it was possibly conducted in Latin with occasional French passages by Donin. (114)

At this point we undertake the disputation itself. My version was edited by R. Marguelis. The date is not discernable. It is based on Joseph Zelateur's version of the disputation. (115)

Our account opens with a picture of unrest. The king and his counsellors are angry. The uneasiness has penetrated to the beasts of the field. A source of destruction from the north has come upon the land. It is a human being of sharp and malicious tongue, one who would "expose" his people, one without regard for established custom. He is Nicholas the apostate, whose name was Donin. He brings an evil report of his fellow Jews to the Church, and has procured the service of the clergy against the Jews. On the second day of the week of BALAK, the enemies of the Jews are gathered in the king's garden to take counsel, and there Nicholas decides to take action against the 'ARBAAH TURIM.

Four rabbis (whom we have already mentioned) were summoned to represent the Jews, of whom Jechiel was called on first. In an almost fairy-tale like manner the entire disputation is reported. Donin is pictured variously as a fool or a villain, Jechiel as brave, righteous and brilliant. God is constantly with His servant Jechiel, and whenever his adversary asks a question, which Jechiel cannot readily answer, God places the answer in his mouth. And when God comes to the aid of His representative, it is really on behalf of the Torah.

The disputation begins when Jechiel asks why the meeting has been called. Donin does not answer the question, but says that Jechiel will have to admit that the Talmud is four hundred years old. The rabbi impatiently replies that the Talmud is more than 1500 years old. He asks the queen to stop the disputation because the Talmud is after all an ancient book. Jerome had studied the entire Jewish Law, and found no fault in it - if he had found anything unseemly in it, he would not have permitted it to endure. If in all the 1500 years that the Talmud has existed, and during which priests have studied it no fault was found in it, why now? It is all because of this sinner who has been heterodox these fifteen years. The accusation is brought against Donin that he believed only in uninterpreted Scripture and had been excommunicated for this reason. Because of his ex^{co}munication, Donin had plotted against the Jews. Jechiel points out that Jews will defend the Torah with their lives. The queen and courtiers assure him that the Jews are not in danger. He refuses to go on and demand^d that the matter be brought before the pope. Thereupon the clergy threaten him personally, and so he is willing to continue.

Jechiel could not have done otherwise than refuse to speak. Before him he saw the grim upper-clergy, "the brave" nobles, who were ever ready with their swords. Louis he knew favored this type of "logic," and since he had participated in previous disputations, Jechiel recognized their futility. He had no way of anticipating his opponent's procedure, but he suspected no good. Donin, as we shall see, endeavored to prove the Jews and their beliefs foolish, inhuman, and deserving of destruction.

Why should Jechiel want to take the matter to the pope ? He was quite aware of the papacy's desire to degrade the Jew at every opportunity. Could he have had in mind Gregory's efforts to humanize church policy ? Certainly Jewish leaders were familiar with the pope's efforts to protect them during the riots of 1236. Jechiel surely recognized the pope as his ally and defender.

Donin resumes the discussion by asking Jechiel if he believes in the Talmud. In answering this question Jechiel of course expresses the point of view of the ultra-orthodox Jew. He says he believes in and accepts " literally " all the laws and customs of the Talmud. It is called " Talmud " (i.e. teaching) because of the verse, " V'li-madtem osom es b'naychem. " (Deut. 11:19) In addition to law and custom, the Talmud contains Aggadah to provide entertainment and edification. It relates miracles to stimulate the faith of the " denier, " the epicurean, and the renegade. At this point Jechiel shows shrewd insight into the motives of his opponent, when he (Jechiel) says, this whole explanation is unnecessary since Donin did not come to be convinced of the sanctity and necessity of the Talmud. In any case the Talmud contains only truth.

Jechiel then presents the Talmud as a commentary on the Bible. The Talmud mentions many of the Biblical miracles; e.g. the speaking ass, the transformation of Lot's wife, the stars in the war against Sisera, Jonah's gourd, and the reviving grave of Elisha. Jechiel could see no advantage in pointing out the " weaknesses " of the Bible, but thought, rather, that it should be defended. He is quite aware that there are conflicting verses, and even cites examples: Is. 25:8 conflicts with Is. 65:20; Ex. 19:20 and Ex. 20:22; Ex. 20:5

Deut. 23:4. Would that the Talmud were able to reconcile these.

But both oral and written traditions were given to Moses at Mt. Sinai, and on the basis of these two, each generation must arrive at its own guiding principles. One generation might declare a thing clean, which the next finds unclean, and likewise the permitted and forbidden.

only with this understanding
The Torah, he goes on to say, is constructed to facilitate learning. For example the laws of the Sabbath are mentioned five times. If the student forgets them after learning them in one place, he meets them again and again, and thus familiarizes himself with them. The Law is written as a general rule, that is the laws of the Torah, and thus remains inapplicable without the good offices of the Talmudic method. Finally the Talmud builds a "fence" around the Torah, so that the basic law may never be transgressed.

With the consent of the clergy, Donin now introduces an ugly and totally irrelevant note. He demands that Jechiel swear to tell the truth. My version of the disputation did not explain why Donin should have made this demand.

Jechiel was crushed by this request. He bemoans the fact that he is seeing the day on which his integrity is questioned. After he has recovered, he informs the judges that there is only one kind of oath in Jewish law, and that is the one used in monetary litigations. (Certainly this incident would uphold Kisch's opinion that this was not so much a disputation ^{no} a judicial investigation of Donin's charges, with Jechiel the chief spokesman for the defendant, the Talmud). The queen readily excused him from taking the oath.

Donin resumes the proceedings. He asks does the Jewish Law say that whoever sacrifices all his children to Molech is guiltless, whereas the man who sacrifices some of his children to Molech is subject to punishment ? (Sanh. 64b based on Lev. 18:21) This matter is not mentioned in his bill of complaints. It seems strange that in Donin's first question to Jechiel, he should not use one of his specific complaints. This question amused the clergy and astounded the queen.

Jechiel, recognizing the intent of the question, states that it was asked only to confuse him. He directs his answer to the queen. He asks her whose sin is greater - he who kills one or he who kills two ? The queen says the second. Jechiel then explains a principle of Jewish jurisprudence. He indicates that the traditional Jewish types of capital punishment are stoning, burning, strangulation, and decapitation. A judge may condemn a criminal to one of these, when he is guilty of one capital crime. Through one of these punishments the criminal makes atonement. But when guilty of more than one of these crimes, the criminal can be granted atonement by God alone, and not by a human agency.

Donin at this point makes his most telling accusation. He says that the people has not endured that has dared to speak blasphemously of Jesus, and yet the Jewish people is permitted to live on. The Talmud relates that Jesus was condemned ^{to spend} eternity in boiling dung. This is point 27 in his bill of complaint, and is based on the following story from Gitin 56b. Onkelos b. Kalonikos, the nephew of Titus, sought to be converted. By means of necromancy, he speaks to his dead uncle who advises him to accept Judaism. The story then has Onkelos speak to Balaam, who also advises him to accept Judaism. He asks Balaam what punishment was inflicted on

" that man . " Balaam answers that it is eternal immersion in boiling semen. When asked to whom the words, " Dinay d'hahu Gavro b'mai " refer, Jechiel says that they refer to Balaam. Balaam was receiving the punishment for illicit sexual relations, for because of him the Israelites fornicated with the women of Moab, Numbers 25:1.

Donin then proceeds to quote further, V'acharay chayn askai L'yeshu, which is found in the Chesronos Hashas to this section in Gitin. Jechiel is obliged to admit that Jesus is the person referred to, and that Jesus also is to spend eternity in boiling semen. Donin speaks in French in this particular case, so as to put the Jews in bad-odor with the queen.

From the point of view of courage, Jechiel was equal to the occasion. Before answering Donin's argument, Jechiel scolds him, " From the day you were separated from us (these fifteen years) until now, you have sought an opportunity for our hurt, to expose some evil in us. You have not succeeded thus far, and you have been ensnared by your words. " Jechiel then maintains that the Jesus referred to is not the Christian Jesus - he was an individual who refused to accept the oral tradition, and was therefore treated as a heretic.

This answer arouses Donin's scorn and he mocks it for the special edification of the clergy. Donin then cites the story in Sanh. 43a to the effect that when Jesus was about to be stoned , a herald came and announced for forty day" Jesus the Nazarene is about to be stoned because he has practiced sorcery, has tempted and seduced the people.

Whoever knows any merit about him let him come and make it known."

The account of this story mentioned in CHESRONOS HASHAS adds that

the herald asked this question on erev Pesach and that Jesus was stoned on the same day. This matter is not specifically mentioned in Donin's bill of complaint but is written in the spirit of item 27.

Jechiel begs the question. First he says that one generation should not be held responsible for the doings of another. Then Jechiel says that the Jews stoned Jesus to make an end ~~to~~^{of} Jesus' messianic claims. They did not mention the matter again because ^{by} Ruach Hakodesh they learned that Donin was going to appear and investigate the matter further.

Donin counters with the question, what crucified person was called the son of an adulterous woman? This is item 26 in his bill of complaints. Sanh. 67a is cited as the source of this statement but it is not found either in the Talmudic text or in CHESRONOS HASHAS. to this reference. The priests are chagrined by this statement and they ask Jechiel what harm Mary has ever done to the Jews that they should thus refer to her.

Jechiel answers with what many consider the weakest argument in his presentation. He maintains that this is not the Christian Mary--she is nowhere mentioned in rabbinic literature. The Christians Jesus and Mary lived in Jerusalem, and the person mentioned in the Talmud lived in Lud. The events referred to in the Talmud took place 400 years after the time of Jesus for the "Talmudic Mary" died in the days of R. Papa and Abaye (Hag. 4b).

Jechiel then relates the story of "Chelek" found in Sanh. 107b which allegedly took place during the days of the Temple. Joshua

b. Perachya fled to Egypt with his disciple Jesus because of the persecution of "Yannai Hamelech." After some time Simeon b. Shetach despatched a letter to him asking him to come back to Palestine. On his way back, Joshua stopped at an inn, where he met Jesus (the story begins with the impression that Joshua and Jesus had been traveling together). Jesus said to Joshua, "Master, your eyes have thin brows," meaning thereby, probably, that Joshua was angry with him. He scolded Jesus for taking part in certain idolatrous practices. Nevertheless Joshua was prepared to receive Jesus back into the Faith. Misunderstanding a sign that he had been forgiven, Jesus was of the impression that his plea for forgiveness had been rejected, and so he went back to idolatry. Joshua again urged Jesus to repent, but Jesus replied that whoever has made the people to sin is not given the opportunity to repent, and so the matter ended.

Jechiel then tries to prove by "genealogy and chronology" that this Jesus was also not the Christian Jesus. The following is Jechiel's analysis. The Jesus just mentioned lived in the days of Jannai, Joshua b. Perachya, and Simeon b. Shetach. Simeon was the teacher of Judah b. Tabbai, and Shemayah and Avtalyon, the latter two of whom were the teachers of Hillel. Sab. 15a declares that Hillel, Simeon, Gamaliel, and Simeon were the heads of the Academy for a period of 100 years before the destruction of the Temple, 68 C.E. Simeon b. Shetach lived two generations before Hillel, and therefore almost two hundred years before the destruction. 172 years after the destruction the fourth millenium was completed. Thus it follows that 1472 years have passed since the "Talmudic Jesus" lived. The Christian Jesus lived 1240 years ago; therefore more than

two hundred years separate the two Jesus! The Christian Jesus is nowhere mentioned in the Talmud.

The priests were unimpressed by this speech. They asked Jechiel how two men with the same name could be punished for the same crime on the same day. Jechiel replied, not every Louis in France is King. The queen rebuked the clergy for insisting upon putting blasphemous words into Jechiel's mouth. Jechiel was not trying to deceive with this argument. He was merely giving expression to certain medieval Jewish ideas about Jesus. We will have occasion to deal with this problem at greater length in another connection. Though the priests were unconvinced, Donin makes no reference to Jechiel's words about Jesus.

Donin then launches out on an entirely new problem at this point. He asks Jechiel, "What is a Bas Kol?" Jechiel answers that it is the sound of a voice, but not an actual one. With the dispersion, prophecy came to an end, and the Bas Kol replaced prophecy as the revelation of God's will.

Donin thereupon begins his presentation to prove that the Talmud is full of nonsense. From the language of the text it is not evident to what item of his bill of complaint Jechiel here has reference, but from his example, we recognize item 17, which comes under the category BLASPHEMIAE IN DEUM. He repeats the story that Ravah b. b. Chanah was walking, and heard a Bas Kol regretting that it had taken an oath - it was seeking someone to release it from the vow. Ravah heard it, but did not release it from the vow. The Bas Kol told its story to the rabbis, and they said, "The whole Abba is

an ass, and the whole of b.b. Hanah is nonsense- he should have told you that you are released from your vow."

Donin appears horrified that one would say God regretted any vow He had made. To Donin, this is merely a part of Jewish foolishness which releases anyone from a vow. He says that every Yom Kippur, Jews annul vows and promises forced upon them by Christians; it is never the intention of the Jews to keep vows made to Christians. He quotes Nedarim 23b as the basis for the Kol Nidre ceremony and for his own claims. This is item 13 in the bill of complaints. Donin's interpretation of the Nedarim passage is fallacious - the passage does not imply or state that anyone is to be victimized by these annulments of oaths. Yet the passage can readily be misinterpreted in the manner in which Donin did.

This misinterpretation is obvious, and Jechiel calls it to the attention of the audience. Jechiel then cites a number of biblical passages which speak of God's regretting something He had done. In I Sam. 15:11, He regrets having made Saul king. He then cites Is. 54:9 apparently for the purpose of showing God's regret for the Flood, though this is not apparent from the Bible text. In Gen. 9:16, God establishes the rainbow as a sign that no more floods will destroy mankind. In Gen. 9:14, God assures Noah that the rainbow will constantly remind Him that no more floods are to be brought upon man. Jechiel then makes an unintelligible statement to the effect that He does not regret the destruction of the Temple. Since there is no Temple and no Gentiles praying in it, there is no one who can be held responsible for the world's present condition.

He then turns to the b.b. Hanah matter. Jechiel assures the gathering that the vow to which the Bas Kol had reference is mentioned in Jer. 32:37, where God states that He has made a vow in anger. God made this vow so that someone in later times would be enabled to release Him from it. (This last point is not deducable from the Biblical text in its present form.) Therefore b.b. Hanah erred in not having released the Bas Kol, and deserved the censure that he received.

Jechiel assures his audience that the Kol Nidre nullifies only unintentional vows. Three persons may nullify the vow of a fourth only when the one who has taken it is effected by the vow. Even vows made unwittingly which involve other persons must be carried through. If a person has knowingly made a vow even to harm himself, he must observe it.

At this point, Donin definitely touches upon the STULTITIAE section of his bill of complaint. He mentions the story in Chul. 60b regarding the diminution of the moon. This is item 15 in the bill. In the course of the story, the moon reproves God for His attitude, and God, recognizing His error, asks that a sacrifice of atonement be brought for Him. Donin speaks contemptuously of the people that would admit its God had sinned and had needed a sacrifice of atonement.

In his rebuttal, Jechiel shows genuine appreciation of Biblical poetry. He can see nothing unusual in the assertion that the moon speaks. He cites a number of Biblical verses in which speech is ascribed to inanimate objects. In Ps. 96:12 the trees of the forest sing. In Ps. 19:2 the heavens declare God's glory. In Ps. 148:3, the sun moon and stars

are commanded to serve God. Jechiel points out that the story of the diminution of the moon grew out of the conflict between the two parts of Gen.1:16. A reason had to be found for reducing the size of one of the heavenly bodies. The reason was "Malshinus" literally "tale-bearing", but actually "malice". Because the moon wanted her companion diminished, she suffered the punishment of the "Malshin"--there was done to her what she planned against her intended victim. After the punishment had been inflicted, God tried to appease the moon. This act was to encourage repentance and return to God on the part of erring humans. Jechiel quotes Ezek.18:32 and Is.55:7 to prove that God is ever ready to receive the repentent. The meaning of "Kapparah" in this midrash is appeasement.

At this point, it become evident that Donin's presentation is not well organized. His most telling attacks, the "blas^Pphemies" he introduces first, and, then, does not carry them through to their logical conclusion. At this juncture, he brings up a totally unrelated matter, for which he has no authority.

Donin tells Jechiel that Jews are very foolish for permitting the indiscriminate murder of Christians. This is item 10 of the bill. Loeb cites J. Kid. 66c as the authority for this statement. But, according to the disputation, itself, Donin did NOT KNOW ANY RABBINIC AUTHORITY for this statement.

Donin then tried to prove the Jews to be misanthropes whose anti-social practices are encouraged by their religion. He accuses Jews of forbidding Christians and shepherds the use of wells, and scolds them for refusing to aid either of these groups when their lives are

in danger. There is no mention of this in the " bill " and Donin cites no rabbinical authority for this statement.

His next example of Jewish misanthropy is the statement about the nine Gentiles and one Jew, and the degrees of their respective responsibility if they harm each other. He cites Kesubos 15a as his authority. Donin contends that if there are in a court-yard nine Gentiles and one Jew, and the Jew throws a stone and kills one of their number, he is considered guiltless, because they outnumber him. The Kesubos passage specifies " Mitzri " and not " Goy " for the non-Jewish persons. No mention of this matter is made in the "bill."

Donin then claims that a Jew is never held responsible for the murder of a Gentile. This is based on Sanh. 57a. No mention of it is made in the "bill." Donin then cites Sanh. 58b to establish that a Gentile who observed the Sabbath or who studied the Jewish Law is deserving of death. This is item 11 of the "bill." Donin next holds that Jewish practice permits the execution of an innocent Gentile for the wrong of another. No reference is made to this in the bill, and no rabbinical authority is cited.

He next mentions a group of wrongs which Jews allegedly perpetrate on Christians with impunity. They come in the category of item 12 of the "bill" - this is based on B.K. 38a. Those items contained in this Talmudic passage are: a Jew's bull may gore that of a Gentile with impunity, but the Gentile's bull's damages must be paid for in full. Because the Gentiles did not accept the Noahitic laws, *הַגֵּוֹלִים לֹא קִבְּלוּ עַל הַשְּׁמִיטָה*. The Talmud reads, " Whenever the Gentiles do not obey the Noahitic laws, their possessions are

' free ' to Israel. " Donin includes also the contention that a Gentiles property may be misappropriated in any way. This statement is not part of the "bill" and is not found in the Baba Kama passage.

Donin then piles up examples illustrating the loathing of Gentiles by Jews. The most significant of these is the contention that Jews forbid all mocking language except that directed against idolatry (i.e. by twisting the names of the heathen gods). This is item 28 in the "bill" and is based on Sanh. 63b. Donin cites Is. 46:1,2 and Hos. 10:5 as the Biblical bases for this statement.

Donin then quotes from Mishna Av. Za. 2:1, " (Jews) are not permitted to allow cattle to stand near Gentile inns, for Gentiles may be suspected of buggery. A Jewish woman may not be alone with Gentiles, since they may be suspected of sexual irregularities; nor a Jewish man, because they may be suspected of murder. A gentile woman may not be assisted at childbirth by a Jewish woman, nor may the Jewish woman suckle the Gentile child, for she would thus be raising a child for idolatry. " He continues in this vein to show that Jews may not be generous to Gentiles, nor may they return lost articles to Gentiles. He ends the longest of his speeches by assuring Jechiel that the shame of Israel was being uncovered. What the Jew has been planning to do to the Gentile will be done to him, and he taunts Jechiel, " - and who is it that will intervene on Israel's behalf? "

God is called upon to come to the aid of the Jewish champion after this devastating speech. Jechiel recognizes the spirit in which

only pharisee

Donin's remarks were made. He assures Donin that he has perverted the words of the Torah, and though he multiply words he will not escape punishment. Jechiel first deals with the interpretation of *למה פ'לגל 216*. In answer to a question Donin has to admit that he has never found this statement in any Jewish book. Donin finally says that this statement was made by Rashi, whom the Jews revere more than they do Moses.

Jechiel first takes Donin to task for not knowing in what sense "Goy" is here used. He distinguishes between a favorable and unfavorable interpretation of the term. Ps. 117:1 represents Gentiles as being among those who praise God. Ps. 9:18 equates Gentiles with those who forget God. The expression upon which Donin based his attack is found in SOFERIM ch. 16 (actually 15:10), and it there states,

למה פ'לגל 216 זכחחז. This advice is given on the basis of *זכחחז פ'לגל 216 זכחחז*. In its present form this verse is not found in the Bible; it might be either Ex. 14:7 or :9. Jechiel explained the Soferim and Exodus^s references as follows. Whence did the horses mentioned in the Bible passage come ? Did not all the horses of Egypt die during the plague of the hail ? The answer is, the cattle of those Egyptians who feared God were saved; for when the plague was threatened, they took their cattle to shelter. Yet when the opportunity to do so presented itself, these Egyptians gave their horses to Pharaoh to fight Israel. Therefore R. Simeon said, " Kill the best of the Gentiles in time of war. " There is no man who is trustworthy at such a time. Has the Gentile in this situation not come to kill you ? If this be the case, you kill him first. This law refers to a marauding Israelite also, Ex. 22:21.

But if the Jew comes to make war with Gentiles, he is commanded to first greet the enemy peaceably, Deut. 20:10. In this intelligent manner ^{Jechiel} establishes that promiscuous killing is completely foreign to the Jewish spirit. The Deuteronomy passage refers ~~xxxx~~ to the making of war even with the much hated " seven nations. " The attitude of friendliness characterizes the Jewish attitude toward the Gentile even more so in times of peace. And when Jews live among Gentiles who protect them, the Gentiles are considered the equals of Jews in all things.

Jechiel then gives utterance to a very important principle in Jewish apologetics. In answering the challenge with reference to the nine Gentiles and the one Jew, Jechiel states that this refers only to the meeting of Jew and members of the " seven nations. " This rule applies also in all of the Jewish-Gentile relationships which Donin mentions. Every Goy mentioned in the Talmud is a member of the " seven nations. "

Jechiel insists that all Jewish laws of beneficence refer in application both to Jews and Gentiles. Jechiel reminds his audience of the devotion of the Jew to the Torah, and his readiness to venture anything for its sake. And yet the Jew has been ever ready to violate its laws in his dealings with non-Jews, even when the breach involved transaction of business on a Jewish Holy Day. Jews have willingly taught Gentiles the Torah, and Jechiel points to the many priests who have become acquainted with Jewish lore through Jews.

As for the alleged scorn which the Jews feel toward Gentiles, Jechiel

points out that although Gentiles have no prohibitions against bug-gery, as is the case with Jews, and yet the Jews have never accused them of this failing. Jews are permitted to make fun only of the cults of Peor and Mercury. With this exception all frivolous speech is forbidden. He cites Sab. 33a., *הכל יודע'ק כל ה'אמה' כן'סה' א'א'סה' .*
א'א'סה' כל ה'אמה' כן'סה' א'א'סה' .

At this point Donin's attitude becomes quite ugly. He mentions that many Jews had died during the Crusades in Bretagne, Anjou, and Poi-tou. He challenges Jechiel to produce his wonder-working God, who would save His people.

Jechiel replies that these troubles have come upon Israel because of its sins, but assures Donin that at the end of time wonders will be done for the Jews. He quotes Micah 7:15, " As in the days of thy coming forth out of the land of Egypt, will I show unto him marvel-ous things. "

Donin asks Jechiel whether transgression is removable. He asks whet-her the moral impurity which the serpent imposed upon Eve could pos-sibly have been removed at Mt. Sinai.

Jechiel answered that Eve's sin has clung only to those nations who were not present at Mt. Sinai, e.g. the Canaanites and the Egyptians, who are steeped in vice. The nations of Europe are free of this sin, because through their god, who accepted the Torah, they accep-ted the Torah.

Donin then accuses the Jews of daily cursing converts to Christian-ity, the priests, and Gentiles in their 'al Hamalshinim prayer. This

is item 30 in the "bill", and in addition to this prayer he quotes Ber. 28b f. " Al t'hi refers to converts to Christianity, V'chol Haminim k'rega yo'vedu refers to the priests, and he quotes Rashi, reference undetectable, that these are cursed because they are disciples of Jesus. Umalchus Zadon m'hairo T'akair refers to the king and the people. "

Donin then accuses the Jews of believing that sinful Gentiles are condemned permanently to Gehinom, whereas the sinful of Israel are kept there for only one year. This is item 31 in the bill, and is based according to Loeb on Eruv. 19a and R.H. 17a. The latter passage more nearly represents Donin's attitude. Jechiel later points out that Donin perverted the meaning of the R.H. passage. Here Gentiles are not mentioned among those permanently damned - those damned are apostates, informers, epicureans, who deny the Torah and bodily resurrection, and separate themselves from the community. (116)

Donin insists that this refers specifically to converts and priests because these are disciples of Jesus. Has there ever been a people, Donin demands, that has dared to curse Christians and their priests ?

God again comes to Jechiel's aid. Jechiel explains, al t'hi sikvoh means that apostates should not be permitted to prosper in their new religion, so that they will return to their former one. Minim does not refer to Christians, but to Jewish sectarians who refuse to accept the oral tradition. Donin insists that in the second chap-

ter of R. H., Rashi applies this to Christians, and Rashi is the greatest Jewish sage. *An examination failed to substantiate Donin's statement, either in Talmud text or in the opinion of Rashi.*

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Jechiel counters by questioning Rashi's infallibility. He points out that even certain of his contemporaries had differences of opinion with him, eg Rabbeinu Tam and one "R.Y." It is not clear from the text to whom Jechiel has reference. R.Y. might refer to R. Joseph Tov Elem or perhaps R. Isaac b. Meir or a host of others. And then Jechiel resorts to satire, holding that according to Rashi, Jesus is not to be called a "Min." For a "Min" can only be a Jew who rejects the oral law. The fate in Gehinom refers to his disciples who rejected the oral law and then abandoned Judaism, Deut. 29:13. Since they have not returned there will be no atonement for them. Jesus was no "Min", he was a god, as Donin stated. Those who never accepted the covenant of Moses will not go to Gehinom. Donin since he had been a Jew, and had completely renounced his faith would be damned forever.

Evidently this speech was properly received, for the bishops interrupted to ask how they could be saved, if they continued to observe their religion. Jechiel explained that if they would observe the seven Noahitic commandments, ^{they would be saved} ^{1.} They pointed out that they observe "Ten Commandments," and Jechiel considered that very commendable, But since Donin had rejected the 613 commandments incumbent upon him as a Jew, and had then become an apostate, he would be damned forever.

Jechiel then delivered a brilliant speech. He called Donin's perversion of "Malchus Zadon" misrepresenting the Jew's conception of France, unfounded slander. He who recognizes God and then turns against Him is "presumptuous." As examples of presumptuousness he names Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, and the king of Assyria. These

about 1000 years ago
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men killed and made war on Jews, burned their homes and sanctuary, and decreed evil decrees against them. Yet the Jews have prayed for all of these enemies. Though the Jews have no "portion" in France, the king and the pope have attempted to defend them, and to aid them to gain prosperity. Who would presume to say that Jews return evil for good? Concerning such a kingdom as France, Avos 3:12 declared, "Do thou pray for the peace of the kingdom." Jechiel maintains that MAKCHUS ZADON refers to such associations as those of the Parthians and the Babylonians, who though they recognized the true God, revolted against Him.

Donin again brings up a matter totally unrelated to his previous speeches. He holds up to scorn Ber. 3a, which supposedly contains three STULTITIAE: 1- That God is restricted by the four ells of the Halacha. 2- During each of the three watches of the night, God roars like a lion. 3- Each day He bewails Israel's destruction and the destruction of the sanctuary. The second of these corresponds to item 18 of his "bill." Investigation of Ber 3a reveals that this passage supports only the last two of his allegations.

Donin then states that the sages presumed to say that they can uproot anything from the Torah. This is item 6 of the "bill." Loeb cites as the Talmudic basis for this contention Yeb. 89b-90a, R.H. 25a, and Mac. 22b. The Yeb. passage does not reveal any support for this attitude. Yeb. 91b points out that the rabbis maintained that in consideration for the "needs of the hour" laws might be changed. Somewhat in answer to Jechiel's contention that the Jews are deathlessly devoted to the Torah, Donin says that the Jews never observe it in its literal form, but ever change and reinterpret it.

Donin now admittedly turns to the STULTITIAE section of his " bill. " From Ber. 54b he tells two stories. The first of these relates that Og picked up a mountain three miles long to throw upon the Israelites. The ants of the mountain pierced his head so that it sank into the mountain. His teeth became so enlarged that he could not remove his head from the mountain. The second story is a statement that the Jews killed Moses.

Donin then scoffingly mentions a story in B'choros 57b which mentions a bird called the Bar Yochani, whose egg is sixty K'rachim in size, and which in falling broke 300 cedars. He then mentions the story of Abba Saul (Nid. 24b) who in pursuing an antelope entered a marrow bone three miles in length - the antelope escaped. He then mentions the account, B.M. 59b, which states that God admits being vanquished by the Jews in a Talmudic argument. This is item 24 of the bill. This account tells of the break of Eliezer b. Hyrcanus with the rest of the Yabneh academy.

Donin makes sport of the old Jewish belief that in the future the righteous will dine upon the Leviathan, which has been salted away since the sixth day of creation (salt was used on it as a preservative), B.B. 74b. So does he regard the tale in Sanh. 99a that the righteous will drink wine stored in its grapes since the sixth day of creation. And so the story in Kesubos 77b which tells that Joshua b. Levi had deceived the angel of death, and is still living in the Garden of Eden. Adam, they say, had association with all of animal and fowl life, and through them fathered the spirits, demons, and night demons. This is item 34 of the "bill." Adam, they say, was so large that he reached from one end of the world to the other, and that he has two faces; one in the front and one in the back of

his head, Eruv. 18a. The Jews say that the angels that came to Abraham ate tongues in "mustard," B.M. 86b. They say that if M'tatron ties tephilin to a place, they rise up of themselves. Margulies mentions Hag. 13b as the authority for this statement; no mention of M'tatron is made in this passage - it is mentioned in another connection on 15a. He mentions the statement in Sanh. 98a that the Messiah will not come until the wall of Rome falls, is rebuilt, and falls again. This account is given in the CHESRONOS HASHAS. He will not come until the world is divided by sectarianism.

Donin's attitude then becomes: *what?* How can an intelligent person respect a book that contains statements like the aforementioned. The book should be burned, and what is more there is historic precedent for such procedure. Vespasian burned the Talmud, Taan. 26b; Sanh. 14a relates that in the days of Judah b. Baba, whoever observed the Torah was to be killed. Av. Za. 17b relates that R. Chaninah b. T'radyon was burned upon the Torah. The clergy was amused by this exposition, and rose to applaud when Donin finished his speech.

God again comes to Jechiel's assistance. He rebukes Donin for making sport of the idea that God is confined by the four ells of the Halacha. This should not seem strange for the Bible relates that during Temple days, the Shechina hovered between the two cherubim of the Ark, Ex. 25:22. On this account God's name became great among the nations, as is suggested by Solomon's prayer, I Ki. 8:41-43. Now that Zion is destroyed and desolate, God wants to go back to it, Ps. 87:2, Hos. 2:9. Meanwhile the section of the world that God loves best is that within the four ells of the Halacha, because

within these confines, men busy themselves with the Torah. The four ells represent man's stature.

With regard to God's roaring and weeping, Jechiel says that more unusual things are said about the Christian god. In any case, the rabbis say only such things about Him, as are mentioned in Scriptures. Jer. 25:30 mentions three forms of the verb " shoag. " Therefore God must roar three times a day.

In answer to Donin's accusation that rabbis made alterations in the Torah, Jechiel says changes were necessary to meet the changing demands of the years. He cites the example of Elijah's sacrifice on Mt. Carmel which is in opposition to Deut. 12:13,14, forbidding sacrifice anywhere but in the central sanctuary. Though a breach of the Law, this act was nevertheless a sanctification of God's name. The same obtains between the pope and the secular rulers, where the former permits the latter to violate canonical law to meet a transient need. Jechiel says that a figure of speech was employed in the Og story, and he points out Deut. 1:28 as another example. In explaining the enlargement of Og's teeth, Jechiel indicates the figure of the shortening of the hand of the wicked. (117) Through Moses, God performed even greater miracles - the plagues of the Egyptians, manna and quail in the desert.

The Bar Yochani statement Jechiel also classifies as a figure of speech, and cites a parallel in Job 39:26. Similarly does he speak of the Abba Saul story.

Jechiel now turns to the one truly important matter in the discussion, God's vanquishment by the Jews. He starts by mentioning a cardinal

principle in Jewish jurisprudence, the majority rules. This is based on Ex. 23:2 *אבות פ' 27 ע"ב*, and in early times was so fundamental that even God had to abide by the will of the majority as evidenced in the Baba Mezia passage. Jechiel proceeds to explain that the will of the majority is the will of God. Though the decisions of the generations may conflict, God is always in agreement with the majority of the "present" generation. The subjection of God to the will of the Jewish majority is not, however, to be perpetual.

Of the Leviathan, Gen. 1:21 relates that two such creatures were made. On the basis of Is. 27:1, Ps. 104:26, Job 40:25, 30 he establishes that one Leviathan has been destroyed, and that the other will be feasted upon by the righteous at the end of time.

Of Joshua b. Levi's longevity, Jechiel sees nothing outstanding. He mentions Elijah, II Ki. 2:11, and Elisha, who in his death revived other dead, II Ki. 13:21.

Jechiel refuses to blame Adam for his buggery, Gen. 2:20, since the man had not been warned against it. Adam must necessarily have fathered the demons and spirits for they are not otherwise mentioned in the Creation story. Jechiel maintains that there are "lutin" and "feefale" and creatures having souls but no bodies. The demons are bodies with incomplete souls. Then Jechiel suggests that Adam's association with Lilith produced these creatures. Only thus can Gen. 5:3 be explained.

Jechiel considers ^{Adam's} alleged size a figure of speech, suggesting his resemblance to God. To prove Adam's having two faces, he cites Ps.

139:5.

Jechiel feels that more remarkable than the " tongues in mustard " is the association of the angels with women, Gen. 6:2.

Of the burning of the Torah in Vespasian's days, Jechiel says that this fire consumed both Torah and Talmud, the latter including all the works in the field of biblical commentary. The case of Judah b. Baba is irrelevant since it had to do with ordination. R. Chananiah b. T'radyon's experience had nothing specific to do with the burning of the Torah. He was one of the ten who dies for the " glory of the kingdom. " Legend has it that during the six days of creation it had been decreed Eleazar b. P'rata would be seized for " five things but would be delivered. " At the same time it was decreed that Chananiah would be seized for one cause, but would not be delivered. Jechiel finishes his speech by praising the wonders of the Torah, and God's providential care of Israel, especially as this care was manifested in the Torah.

Jechiel's speech presents conflicting attitudes toward Aggadah. When Donin first asked Jechiel whether he believed in the Talmud, he answered that he accepted both its Halacha and its Aggadah. In discussing such legends as the ants and Og and Abba Saul; Jechiel explains them as figures of speech. Certainly a conflict is reflected in accepting Aggadah as established truth and then explaining individual Aggados as figures of speech. This conflict within Jechiel's presentation reflects a larger conflict in the Jewish world of his day. This struggle made itself felt in both Donin's and Jechiel's life. Donin solved the problem of adhering to a dis-

tasteful Orthodoxy or supporting Maimonism by accepting Christianity after ten years of excommunication. Jechiel on the other hand tried in his own way to reconcile tradition with the needs of his day.

With this last speech of Jechiel's, the text of the original manuscript of the disputation comes to an end. The later manuscript which Marguelis reproduces showers a few more imprecations upon Donin. The chronicler's summary of the disputation states that the affair took place before the king and queen, in Paris, in the royal palace. The leading clergy of Sens, "Shalitz," and Paris were present; it took place in the year ה'תק"ט (619), beginning on the fifth day of Tammuz - on the second and third days of the week BALAK. We are reminded that God was always with Jechiel so that he was able to give a good account of himself.

On the fourth day of the same week, R. Judah b. R. David was called upon to testify, and he answered כל ה'ר. With this the answers " of the unbeliever and the believer come to an end.

Was this then a disputation? Strictly speaking, no. This gathering was called by a "judicial" body to hear the complaints of Donin against the Talmud because a previous hearing had miscarried, since the witnesses called failed to substantiate Donin's claims. Therefore a second hearing was called to corroborate if possible the complaintant's claims. Although it was temporarily set aside, a sentence of burning at the stake was pronounced upon the Talmud. The "hearing theory" of this gathering is thus confirmed. But this theory falls down. The first "hearing" allowed a reading of

the bill of complaints and questioning of the witnesses about the allegations. Are the accused passages actually in the Talmud? Do they have the meaning ascribed to them? If the disputation was to be merely another hearing, why were the complaints not reread; why were only 13 of the 35 items mentioned, and these not systematically?

To a certain extent, it was a disputation - a discussion around a central theme, is the Talmud a blasphemous, stupid document? As we have seen, the disputation was intended to persuade Jews to reject their religion and adopt Christianity. The discussion/aimed to prove that the Talmud should be burned; the intention of persuading the Jews to adopt Christianity was not apparent. But the Donin incident was a model for later Christian disputants.

(118)
What was the outcome of the disputation? Graetz says that its outcome is not known. After the disputation, the commission was no longer anxious to burn the Talmud. Meir of Rothenburg relates that the Jews from June 25, 1240 to June 6, 1242 (the date of the first burning of the Talmud) endeavored to hide copies of the Talmud so that its study might be continued.
(119)

The Jews made all possible efforts to prevent the burning of the Talmud. A Dominican source reports (120) that the Jews bribed a high prelate to intercedewith Louis, who finally rescinded the order. About a year later the Prelate, who^m Kisch names Archbishop Walter of Sens, fell dead in the king's presence. Louis interpreted this to mean that he, Louis, had erred in listening to Walter. Louis therefore ordered the immediate execution of the original court order. From this report we see that, whether or not the facts

were confirmed, the Jews did bring some pressure against the sentence resulting in its postponement for two years.

(121)
Kisch describes a different outcome of the disputation. He holds that a third investigation was undertaken, which was long and drawn-out. The outcome was the same in any case.

On the fateful June 6, 24 cart-loads of Talmuds were burned in a public place in Paris. (122) The burning aroused the deepest sorrow throughout Jewry. Because of it Meir of Rothenburg wrote the elegy *Shol*

והל. In Rome the anniversary of this event became an annual fast. In a letter of May 9, 1244, the new pope, Innocent IV., praises Louis for executing the order of burning. (123) In the same letter Innocent says, " Nevertheless, because the blasphemous abuse of these Jews has not yet ceased, nor their troubles as yet given them understanding, we ask your Royal Highness - - to strike down with merited severity all the detestable and heinous excesses of this sort which they have committed in insult of the Creator and to the injury of the Christian name, and which you have with laudable piety begun to prosecute. Also the above-mentioned abusive books, condemned by these doctors, as well as all the commentaries which have been examined and condemned by them should, at your order, be burned in fire wherever they can be found throughout your kingdom. " (124)

Odo, who now occupied the office of cardinal-legate to France, continued the Talmud-hunt also. Pressure was brought on Innocent and in a letter of August 12, 1247, he ordered the return of " Talmut " (125) copies which had been seized by Odo, Innocent explains his act by saying that since by depriving the Jews of these books, they are

Chapter IV

The Barcelona Disputation

unable to understand the Bible and are deprived of their law, he agreed to return the books. He allowed however the return of only such books as do not injure Christianity.

Odo was not to be discouraged, and continued his attacks against the Talmud, maintaining that it perverted the meaning of the Biblical Text. And so in May, 1248, another court of inquiry was summoned. Odo as president helped the court decide, " dass das Werk von furchtbaren Verirrungen und Blasphemien strotze, und dass es in einem christlichen Staate nicht geduldet werden könne. " (128) Since that date France ceased to be a Talmudic center. Donin had accomplished his aim - he had damaged Judaism through the destruction of the Talmud.

We now turn to the disputation at Barcelona. It was intended to convince the Jews that rabbinic literature contains proof of the messiahship of Jesus and that accordingly Jews should follow the example of Pablo in coming over to the dominant faith. Pablo was out to convince the outstanding Jewish scholar, Ramban, of the justice of this point of view. And thus, having won over the greatest Jewish scholar of the day, Pablo's appeal to the Jewish masses would be certain. His plan of attack conformed with the Fourth Lateran Council's attitude toward the Jews.

344
No discussion of the Barcelona disputation would be complete without the views of Father H. Denifle. His statements to which we have already referred, ^{were} ~~was~~ sufficiently provocative ^{to} result in Loeb's study of the disputation. F. Baer

F. Baer in his study has regard for the views of Father Denifle.

Denifle remarks much has been written about the disputation, and until the time of Graetz many lies. He accuses Graetz of being un-
(127)
acquainted with primary sources. According to the reverend father the affair lasted four days. Pablo received unwarranted insults from the Jews. He further claims that the Jews maintain a victory over Pablo, and that Ramban was rewarded with a gift of 300 maravedis from Jaime.

According to the Latin version of the disputation, it was Pablo who held control in the proceedings; and Ramban fled from Spain at his first opportunity. As proof, Denifle offers a decree of August 26, 1263, ordering Jews and Moors to cordially receive the sermons of
(128)
the Dominicans. Denifle insists that Ramban's account of the proceedings is " ein Lügenwerk. " He scoffs particularly at Ramban's
(129)
discussion of the trinity.

More impartial and considerably less venomous is the discussion of
(130)
F. Baer. He too mentions both the Latin and Hebrew accounts. The Hebrew account is the work of Ramban himself, and the Latin was prepared by the Dominicans for Jaime, and bears his seal of approval. Baer mentions a second Latin account which was prepared for pope Clement ^{IV}~~VI~~, and dating either from 1266 or 7, when the Dominicans
(131)
appealed Jaime's sentence upon Ramban to the pope. Baer points out that the Latin version corroborates Ramban's version. *Free*

The Latin version lists the following subjects for debate: 1-

- 1- The Messiah has come.
- 2- The Messiah is a divinity.
- 3- The Messiah suffered punishment and death for the salvation of mankind. (132)
- 4- The ceremonial law would be abrogated in Messianic times.

literally.

Baer is of the opinion that the differences between the Latin and Hebrew texts show that the Christian editor did not understand the disputation, and recorded the proceedings in a manner, therefore, which he felt would benefit his cause. He apparently also abbreviated most of the discussions. (134)

Raymundus Martini in his book, PUGIO FIDEI which appeared sixteen years later, attempts to justify his Christianity from the Midrash. In speaking of the disputation, Raymundus quotes Ramban as having said that if the opposition proved to him that the Messiah had already come, he would have to admit that Jesus is the messiah. Baer brands Raymundus' statement a lie. (134)

According to the Latin text, Pablo announced the subjects to be debated so as to avoid a discussion of the fundamentals of the Christian religion. Pablo wanted to prove from Jewish sources that the Jews also believed that Jesus is the messiah. The Hebrew text has Ramban announce the subjects because he wanted only to discuss *לפי* *פ' 222 ו' 13*. (135)

Actually Ramban was not anxious for the disputation as is evidenced by a remark that he makes on the second day of the disputation that the foundations of the Jewish religion do not rest upon a belief in a messiah. (136) And this was the attitude of all subsequent Jewish disputants who were obliged to argue the matter of the messiah in the Midrash.

According to the Hebrew text, the fourth subject was, Have the

(137)
Jews or the Christians been observing the true law? The last subject was, "resolved" that the mitzvos are void after the coming of the Messiah. Since Jesus is the messiah, they have been void since his day. The aforementioned resolution was the last subject according to the Latin version. The PUGIO confirms the Latin text's enumeration of the subjects to be discussed.

Baer is convinced that Ramban was serious when he asked, 'Who has the right religion.' The basis for such a discussion would have been the philosophical tendencies of the times rather than the controversial nature of the interpretation of the Aggados of the Talmud. Ramban and all the Jewish disputants who followed him tried to steer the opponent to the field of philosophical thought, and away from the interpretation of Aggados. Ramban was checked in this effort by Jaime and the clergy-men. They would not permit the discussion of the elements of their faith. For the Christian these were not matters about which there could be any legitimate doubt. And what is more, many Christians were convinced that the Midrash contained basic justifications of their religion. (138)

Baer feels that Ramban brought an entirely different attitude of mind to the disputation than did his opponent. Not victory but truth was his supreme concern in the situation. Therefore, for example, Ramban published his own account of the proceedings. The disputation was stopped because of fear of the mob.

The Hebrew account gives the impression that Ramban answered all of the accusations of the Christians - this is subject to question. Baer is convinced that neither of the versions is reliable, but is

inclined to believe that the Hebrew account is more inclined to be
(138)
truthful than is the Latin.

Before turning to a consideration of the disputation let us consider the attitudes, with which all four of the disputants whom we are considering, came to the combat. None can be accused of cowardice or temerity. Jechiel might easily have been timid, coming as he did before a Court that was obviously anti-Jewish. Ramban could easily have lost a large portion of his poise when the gallery became as ugly as it did. Both versions agree that the disputation had to be stopped because of the mob's displeasure with Ramban.

Graetz has some interesting remarks regarding the attitudes of the four disputants. " Die Disputation zwischen Nachmani und Pablo Christiani veranschaulicht, wenn man sie mit der zwischen R. Jechiel und Nikolaus Donin vergleicht, den bedeutenden Vorsprung, den die spanischen Juden von ihren nordfranzösischen Brüdern hatten. Der Rabbiner von Paris und der Dominikaner Donin kämpften wie zwei rohe Boxer, die mit derben Faustschlägen, von Schimpfwörtern begleitet, auf einander losgehen; der Rabbiner von Gerona und der Dominikaner Pablo dagegen traten wie zwei feingebildete Edelleute auf, welche ihre Hiebe mit Höflichkeit unter der Beobachtung der feinen Sitte austheilen. "
(139)

The disputation lasted for four days, beginning July 20, 1263. It was held in the presence of the royalty, many high church dignitaries, knights, and rabble. Graetz is certain that Jews also must have been
(139)
part of the audience.

The Hebrew text of the disputation begins with the statement that

one Friar Pablo gave an "evil report" of the Jews to the king of Aragon. The king invited Ramban to appear before the royal court to answer the friar's charges. Ramban consents to do so on the condition that he be granted freedom of speech. Raymond de Pennaforte agrees to this condition, if Ramban promises not to make blasphemous statements about Jesus.

Ramban requests that the disputation involve only essential beliefs and practices of both religions. Aiming at a discussion of fundamentals of both religions, Ramban announces the following as the subjects to be discussed:

- 1- Has the messiah come, or is he going to come ?
- 2- Is the messiah a divinity, or is he completely human, born of the union of a man and a woman ?
- 3- Do the Jews or the Christians observe the "true" Torah ?

Pablo's first statement is that he is going to prove from the Talmud that the messiah, to whom the prophets bore witness, has already come. This corresponds to Ramban's first question. In the course of the disputation the second question was touched upon, but the third question was never reached.

Ramban first sets himself the task of proving that the sages of the Talmud did not believe in Jesus. He points out that Jesus preceeded all of the rabbis in point of time. If they recognized Jesus, why did they remain Jews, and not follow Jesus as Pablo had done ? It is upon the work of these sages, the Talmud, that Judaism is founded, and the function of the Talmud is to teach the commandments of the Torah.

Pablo disregards this argument, and starts a discussion of Gen. 49:10,

משיח יבוא - 'עליון' 628 7/0' 10/1. משיח is the messiah.

Pablo gathers from this interpretation, that Judah was to have temporal power until the messiah came. Therefore since the Jews have no government of their own, the Messiah must have already come.

Ramban replies that it was not the intention of the " prophet " to say that Judah would ever enjoy permanent dominion. Dominion could be taken from Judah for its sin. He mentions that at times Israel had dominion, and Judah did not, and vica versa; for a period neither had dominion. The last was the case during the Babylonian exile.

During the period of the " Second Temple," there was only a king in Judah during the lifetime of Zerrubabel and his sons. From this time until the destruction of the Temple, a period of 380 years, the priestly Hasmoneans and their servants bore the rule. Thus as long as the people are in exile there will be no king - for as long as there is no people to rule, there can be no king.

Pablo answers that throughout its history, Judah has had some type of native ruler, though he might not have been a king. He cites as examples of such rulers the exilarchs and the heads of the academies in Babylon. To establish his point of view he cites Sanh. 5a, which interprets 'עליון 628 7/0' 10/1 as meaning the Babylonian exilarchs, who rule the people with a scepter. 'עליון 628 7/0' 10/1

refers to the descendants of Hillel, who teach the people the Law. And the argument is incontrovertible because now there are not even "legitimate" rabbis because S'michoh has been discontinued. Whoever, therefore, has been using the title " maestro," i.e. " rabbi " has unjustly assumed the title.

Ramban answers that the discontinuance of S'michoh is irrelevant to the disputation. He feels the necessity of answering Pablo nevertheless. "Maestro" is not the equivalent of "Rabbi", but of "Rav". "Rav" signifies any unordained teacher, and "Rabbi" is a teacher who has been ordained. Ramban points out that no one mentioned in the Talmud is called "Rabbi" and cites Rashi to this effect, i.e. Rashi to Ketub. 43b. There Rashi comments on the name *ר' אבהו*, and states that this man was also known as *ר' אבהו*. Rashi says that in as much as there was no ordination in Babylon, scholars were called "Rav." But there are some who say, continues Rashi, that before ordination the scholar is known as "Rav" and thereafter "Rabbi."

The rabbis interpreted Gen. 49:10, continues Ramban, only with reference to actual kingship, and they mention it to establish the principle that magistrates derive their power from the king. In later times the exilarchs of Babylon, and the patriarchs of Palestine assumed the function of investiture of judges. The exilarchs and patriarchs could do this because their authority was derived from the king. In this manner the sages of the Talmud conducted themselves for 400 years after Jesus' lifetime. The sages also understood that the cessation of kingship was not permanent.

Friar Pierre de Genuza volunteers to uphold Ramban's point of view; in his opinion Scriptures say that a cessation of kingship would only be temporary. Ramban acknowledges Pierre's statement and tells the king that Pierre has properly expounded the Law. Pierre objects to this interpretation. He holds that there is no comparison between the interregnum of the Babylonian exile and the present one. The former lasted only 70 years.

The latter, however, has already lasted 1,000 years, and must therefore be permanent.

Ramban replies that mere length of time does not prove the permanence of the interregnum. There have been previous long interregna. And furthermore Jacob promised that Judah would control its rulers and those of its brothers: Gen. 49:8, "Judah thy brothers shall praise thee etc," I Chron. 5:2, "For Judah prevailed above his brothers, and of him came he that is prince." The dominion of Israel is nullified by Solomon's statement in I Ki. 12:20, "There was none who followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah alone." On the basis of these verses Ramban concludes that the right to rule was not permanently taken from Judah. He adds the argument that the Babylonian exile was considered neither ^{מדינה} nor ^{שליטה} ¹⁶² with regard to Judah's dominion. ^{628 7/10 16/1}

^{מדינה} was not spoken to Judah but to the whole people; this verse assured Judah only that it would have dominion only as long as there was a house of Israel.

Having no answer to this argument, Pablo launches into the ^{first} ~~next~~ question, has the messiah already come. Pablo says that the Talmud states that he has already come, citing Midrash Echa Rabbosi 1:57 as proof. This passage relates that an Arab came upon a Jew who was tending his herds, and urged the Jew to forsake the Torah since the Temple had been destroyed; according to the Midrash text the Jew asked the Arab how he knew this. The Arab said from the lowing of the cattle, and finally the Arab tells the Jew to forsake his Torah because the Messiah has been born.

Ramban answers that this Midrash is evidence for his own case, but

he does not believe it. When Pablo decries him for not believing in his own religious books, Ramban replies that he does not believe that the messiah was born on the day the Temple was destroyed. He says that either the Midrash does not tell historical fact or it needs an explanation other than the obvious. For his present purposes, Ramban chooses to interpret it literally:

1- If the Messiah was born on the day of the Destruction, Jesus is not the messiah, for Jesus died long before the Destruction.

(A royal magistrate interrupts Ramban to say his last statement is irrelevant, since the question under consideration is not " Who is the messiah, " but " Has the Messiah come ? ")

2- The sages say that the messiah has been born, but has not yet " come. "

Moses did not " come " until he went to Pharaoh, Ex. 9:1. The Messiah will not " come " until he has been anointed by Elijah, and goes to the pope demanding the emancipation of the Jews.

Pablo then cites Is. 52:13-53:12 which he calls '328 פס' ה' עבד, which tells of the suffering of the " servant of God. " For Pablo this proves that since Jesus suffered he is the messiah. Pablo asks Ramban if he thinks that this passage refers to the messiah.

Ramban replies that the passage refers to the people of Israel, and he cites other instances in prophetic literature where '328 refers to Israel: Is. 41:8 '328 פס' ה' עבד, and Is. 44:1 פס' ה' עבד '328 פס'. Pablo says he can prove from rabbinical literature that the " servant " passages refer to the Messiah. Ramban says the rabbis may have used '328 פס' ה' עבד passage homiletically to apply to the messiah. He defies Pablo to cite one instance in rabbinic literature which tells of the death of the messiah or of his

betrayal to his enemies.

Pablo cites Sanh. 48a in which R. Joshua b. Levi, seeking to learn when the messiah would come, met the messiah in Rome caring for the sick. Ramban answers that this aggadah proves that he had not "come" though he was living.

The King asks, " If the messiah had been born on the day of the destruction (some 1200 years ago) and he had not yet "come", when is he coming ? " It is not man's nature to live so long, says the king. After first refusing to answer, Ramban points to Adam and Methusala as examples of men living to an extremely advanced age. Where is the messiah now, wonders the king. The debate comes to an end, when Ramban sarcastically evades the question.

On the following day, Ramban asks leave to explain his conception of the messiah more clearly. He first wanted to explain why he rejected the Jewish authorities cited by Pablo. He explained that there are three kinds of Jewish books: the Bible, literally accepted by all Jews; the Talmud, explaining the laws of the Torah and believed by all; Aggadah, a mass of homiletical material in which belief is optional.

Ramban then turned to a fuller explanation of the midrash from Echa Rabbosi. Ramban explains that he interpreted it literally for the disputation proving thereby that Jesus was not the messiah. With regard to king's question about the longevity of the messiah, Ramban said Adam lived 930 years, and would have lived longer if he had not sinned. This interpretation is based on Gen 3:19. The sin of man cannot affect the messiah, and he may consequently live forever, Ps. 21:5.

In answer to the king's question, where is the messiah now, Ramban again compares him with Adam. Before he sinned Adam lived in the garden of Eden, from which he was driven, Gen. 3:23. Since the messiah is free of the sin of Adam, he is living in the garden of Eden. (Marguelis gives Zohar, Sh'mos 5b as the source for this statement, but the reference is inaccurate) The king reminds him that one of the previously mentioned midrashim said that the messiah was living in Rome. Ramban answers that the messiah was not living in Rome, but had merely been seen there once.

Fearing the reaction of the audience Ramban addresses an aside to the king explaining why he had denied that the messiah was living in Rome. He said, the midrash says that the messiah will remain in Rome until it is destroyed. (The source for this statement is not legible in the text of the disputation) Similarly Moses dwelt in Pharaoh's house until it was destroyed. Ramban cites as examples of wicked cities that had to fall because of their sin: Tyre (Ezek. 28:18), and an unnamed city (Is. 27:10). ל'אזר נבס'ן
5:1 reports that at the time that Rome is to be destroyed, people will ask one another, " Is Rome and all that is in it worth a penny ? "

In answer to a question from Ramban, Pablo and the king agree that the messiah will nullify the sin of Adam. Ramban then points out that the punishments inflicted upon Adam for his sin (Gen 3:17 - 19) are still visited upon mankind, though many years have passed since Jesus' death. Ramban makes sarcastic remarks about the atoning powers of Jesus, suggesting that they still stand because no one can contradict them. The rabbi challenges his Christian opponents to present incontrovertible proofs for these claims. In answer to

the Christian view of sin, Ramban stresses the Jewish principle of individual responsibility, denying the inheritability of sin.

Pablo interrupts to say that he has more evidence that the messiah has come. Ramban ignores him. He goes on to say that belief in a messiah is not fundamental to Judaism. Ramban assures Jaime that for the Jewish people the king of Aragon is as important as the messiah. Both the messiah and Jaime are human kings, Jewish and Gentile. Ramban explains that there is much greater merit in remaining faithful to the Jewish law, living as the subject of a Gentile king, than there is ^{now} obeying the Jewish law under compulsion as a subject of King Messiah. The most fundamental question in the disputation is not whether the messiah has come, but of the nature of God. Since the king is a Christian and the son of a Christian, he is acquainted only with Christian doctrine. The principle dogma of Christianity, that god was gestated in a Jewish woman; that he was born after seven months; lived as an ordinary mortal; was delivered to and killed by his enemies is unthinkable as the description of a god's career. And that after all of this, that Jesus should return !

Has the messiah come.? No. Ramban says that no one but Jesus ever admitted being the messiah, and it is impossible for Jesus because he does not meet the biblical specifications. They are:

- 1- Ps. 72:8 The messiah is to rule the world; Jesus never bore dominion.
- 2- Jer. 31:34, Is, 11:9, 2:4 The messiah is to usher in a golden age; there has been no golden age.
- 3- Is. 11:4 The messiah is to rule by word of mouth; but Christian rulers are not able to hold sway with armies.

Pablo scolds Ramban for being unnecessarily verbose, and asks the king's help in keeping him in check. Pablo holds that the sages taught that the messiah is more honored than the angels; this could only refer to Jesus, who is God Himself. He arrives at this conclusion on the basis of YALKUT SHIMONI to Is. 52:13, which says that the messiah is more exalted than Abraham, Moses, and the ministering angels.

Ramban replies that this aggadah has reference to the righteous, i.e. the righteous and Israel are more exalted than the ministering angels. Israel prays three times a day and the angels only once, Sanh. 93a and Chul. 91b. The homiletic intent of the aggadah to which Pablo referred was to show that the messiah would be more daring than Abraham the proselytizer, Moses the Egyptian liberator, and the angel Michael who made war on the heavenly representative of Persia. The messiah would force the pope and the gentile kings to release Israel, and he would remain in Rome until it had been destroyed.

Pablo then quotes Daniel 9:24: *שבעת שבועות ושלשים ימים יבנה ירושלים ויהיה המלך המשיח יושב עליה*.

Pablo maintains that the seventy weeks correspond to the seventy years of the Babylonian exile, and the seventy years of the Second Temple. The "holy of holies" is Jesus. Ramban replies that according to the Jewish reckoning, Jesus lived thirty weeks before this time, and according to the Christian reckoning, ten.

Pablo then mentions Dan. 9:25, and identifies Jesus with the *מלך* *המשיח*, to whom the word for the restoration of Jerusalem came.

Ramban answers that this too is a traditional error. The numbers

Manifest with

should be interpreted as follows:

7 weeks	-	until coming of ז'ל'ן ה'ל'ן
62 "	-	for building of "broad place"
$1\frac{1}{2}$ "	-	for strengthening of covenant
$70\frac{1}{2}$ "	-	total

Jesus came after sixty of these weeks had elapsed, and not after seventy weeks as the Christian calculation. Neither Pablo nor Ramban make clear the meaning of these calculations. Ramban scolds Pablo for presuming to speak about something that he doesn't understand. Ramban says he will show that the ה'ל'ן is Zerubabel. Pablo asks, how could Zerubabel be called messiah? Ramban answer that Cyrus, Is. 45:1, and the patriarchs, Ps. 105:16, were also called messiah.

Ramban shows the king that throughout the book of Daniel, with one exception, 12:11, there is no connection between the coming of the Messiah and that of the "Ketz." In all places where such a connection apparently exists, Daniel is merely praying for a knowledge of the "Ketz." Ramban then undertakes to interpret this verse $\text{א'ת'ה'ל'ן ה'ל'ן ה'ל'ן}$ פ'ל'ל'ן פ'ל'ל'ן פ'ל'ל'ן פ'ל'ל'ן פ'ל'ל'ן פ'ל'ל'ן . He says that 1290 years would elapse from the cessation of the perpetual offering until the removal of the people's shame. This verse uses the word פ'ל'ן to describe the units of time involved in the prophecy. Since the verse intended to indicate years rather than days, Ramban points out instances in the Bible in which פ'ל'ן signified years or periods of time rather than days: Lev. 25:29, Ex. 13:10, Gen. 24:55.

Ramban then quotes Daniel 12:12 which says, " - happy is he who waiteth unto the 1335 days. " The forty-five years difference between 1290 (12:11) and 1335 (12:12) represents the period during which the redeemer would remove " the detestable thing. " At the

end of this time the messiah will gather the scattered of Israel, as the first redeemer, Moses, had done. At the time of the disputation, ninety five years were still lacking until the " Daniel " redeemer would come. He was to appear in 1358, and faithful Jews awaited his coming at that time.

(141)

Pablo quotes PESIKTA RABBATI, sec. 15, to the effect that the latter redeemer would be hidden for 45 days, as the first redeemer had been. Pablo insists that the פ'ל' here mentioned were days and not years. Ramban interrupts to say that these פ'ל' also mean years. Pablo grows angry, and protests that Ramban is twisting words. Pablo says that any Jew would admit that פ' means " day ", and insists that the king summon a Jew at random to confirm his contention. A Jew is summoned and he agrees that the word means "day." Ramban answers by twitting Pablo - the Jew summoned was fit to sit in judgement of Pablo but not of himself. Ramban insists that פ' signifies time in general: e.g. Nu. 3:13, 8:17. The word פ' is preferable to נ/ל because, the aggadist wants to פ'ל' ד' פ'ל'ס. The angels frequently spoke to Daniel in the manner of 12:4 נ/ל פ'ל'ח' פ'ל'ל' פ'ל'ח'. Arnold de Sigarra ends the discussion by quoting Jerome to uphold Ramban.

Pablo then cites DERECH ERETZ ZUTA to the effect that the Messiah is in the Garden of Eden; why? Because he beheld his ancestors steeped in idolatry, and so he hid himself in the Garden, where he could truly serve God. (142) Ramban teases Pablo saying, that this statement is proof that the messiah is a human being, the descendant of idolators. He seizes the book that Pablo has been reading. The account relates that fourteen persons entered the Garden alive, and among them were Serach bas Asher, Pharaoh's granddaughter. If

Jesus had been a divinity, he would not have wanted to dwell among women, said Ramban. The king ended the discussion by leaving the place of meeting. At the end of the second day, the question, is the messiah a divinity or a human being, was under discussion.

On the fifth day (Thursday ?) the king arranged for the disputation to continue in secret. Pablo began *למה נקרא המשיח* (143), and then promised to bring proof from the greatest Jewish authority of 400 years, " Maestro Moses de Gifti. " (144) This authority stated that the messiah had died and had been succeeded in his messianic office by his son. This, declared Pablo, did not correspond to the Jewish conception of the messiah as presented by Ramban. Pablo asks for a copy of " the book of Judges. " (145)

Ramban insists that Pablo is misinterpreting. The rabbi admits that there is difference of opinion among Jewish authorities on matters pertaining to the messiah. Aggadic material (such as the ECHA RABBOSI passage which Pablo cited) says that the messiah was born on the day of the Destruction, and that he will live forever. The *גמרא* (146), on the other hand say that he is to be born close to the time of the " Ketz; " that he would rule for a limited time, die, and be succeeded by his son. The only difference between the non-messianic and the messianic age is the matter of the ruler of the Jews. Ramban prefers the latter view.

The book for which Pablo had asked arrives at this point, and when it is given to him, he is unable to find what he had wanted. Ramban takes the book, and reads therefrom, " King Messiah is going to reestablish Israel, build the Temple, and gather the scattered of Israel. " (146) After hearing this, Arnold calls Maimonides a liar.

Ramban baits Arnold. Until he has heard something of Maimonides, the churchman regarded Maimonides an authority; after becoming ^{acquainted} with his writings, Arnold calls him a liar.

Ramban then volunteers to prove from the Torah and the Prophets that Maimonides' conception of the messiah is correct. Jesus, Ramban maintains, did not bring one diaspora Jew to Palestine; he did not rebuild the Temple, because he did not live in the time of the dispersion. Not only did Jesus have no universal dominion, but he also did not rule himself. Ramban then started to read Deut. 30, and stopped at verse 7: $\text{וְיָשָׁבְנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהָיָה לָנוּ יֵשׁוּעַ כִּי יִשְׁמַחַן ה' בָּנוּ כִּי נִשְׁמָח וְנִשְׁמָח ה' בָּנוּ כִּי נִשְׁמָח וְנִשְׁמָח ה' בָּנוּ$. He equates וְיָשָׁבְנוּ with the Christians, and $\text{וְהָיָה לָנוּ יֵשׁוּעַ}$ with Islam. With this, "the opposition is silenced" and the meeting is adjourned.

On Friday (16th /12) the meeting was again public. Ramban asked the king to stop the disputation because the large hostile gathering frightened him. The rabbi said that certain courtiers and clergymen had threatened him because he had made " deprecating" remarks about their religion. Friar Pierre de Genuva had advised him that " 1/16

216 7237). ⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ Certain Jews had attempted to stop his participation in the discussion. When the king expressed the desire, the disputation continued.

Ramban requested to ask instead of answering questions. His request was rejected. Pablo then went into the second question of the debate; he asked Ramban if he believed the messiah to be both human and divine. Ramban replied that Pablo was disregarding the rules by which the debate was conducted. Pablo had not yet proved, claimed Ramban, that the messiah had come. Ramban wanted to follow the first question

further and establish whether or not the Messiah has already come; and to prove especially whether or not Jesus is the messiah. The dispute is to be concerned strictly with the claims and nature of "past" messiahs, and not with the messiah who is going to come to the Jews. The king and the judges admitted the legitimacy of Ramban's contentions, but insisted that he answer Pablo's question.

Ramban answered that the Messiah is going to come, and that he shall be a human being, a descendant of David, Is. 11:1. If ^{וְיָבִיאוּ} ^{לְךָ} ^{וְיָבִיאוּ} ^{לְךָ} is read ^{וְיָבִיאוּ} ^{לְךָ} ^{וְיָבִיאוּ} ^{לְךָ}, it is established that he will arrive in this world in a placenta, in a word he would be born in the same manner in which other human beings are born. If the messiah were a divinity he could not be of the "stock of Jesse," nor could he germinate within a Jewish woman. If he were to be the messiah, he would be a descendant of David in the male line, for David's line has male seed in every generation. The implication of these remarks is obvious - Ramban again finds an opportunity to question Jesus' claims to messianism. Was Ramban acquainted with such tracts as Oso V'es B'no and Toldos Yeshu, wherein the idea of Jesus' being a descendant of David in the female line is developed?

Pablo then cites Ps. 110 - "A psalm of David, "My lord, sit thou at my right hand - " ^{יְהוָה יֹאמַר} ^{לְיָדוֹ} ^{יְהוָה יֹאמַר} ^{לְיָדוֹ}. David could only have addressed words like these to a divinity - how could a human sit at God's right hand, asks Pablo. The king praised Pablo for so astute a question. If the messiah were a human, says the king, David would not call him "my lord." Jaime insists that if he had a relative that ruled the whole world, the relative would have to kiss his (Jaime's) hand as all of his vassals must.

Ramban asks Pablo if he was the great scholar that was needed to discover this glorious truth; was it because of this profound discovery that Pablo became converted to Christianity? Was it to discuss this discovery that the disputation was arranged? The king asks Ramban to proceed with his answer to the analysis. The rabbi answers that David was a poet who composed by divine inspiration, but did not sing himself. This psalm was written for use in the Temple ritual; David was not permitted to sing, for this was the function of the Levites, I Chron. 16:4. Therefore David had to phrase the psalm in a manner in which it would have been proper for the Levites to sing it.

'*YH*' *28* had a definite meaning for David. It signified that God had protected David throughout his lifetime, and had made David prosper in his dealing with his enemies. "Sitting at God's right hand" symbolizes David's superhuman conquests. A similar meaning of the expression is to be found in Ps. 18:36, 118:15, Is. 63:12, and Ex. 15:6. By way of summary, the psalm was written under divine inspiration, and it was to be sung about David and his son who was to succeed him. And what was done for David in part was to be done for his son completely. God's right hand supported David while he conquered his enemies; but It will support the messiah until he shall have conquered the whole world. For the whole world is pitted against the messiah: it subjects his people, it denies his coming and his kingship, and part of the world has set up a rival against him.

Pablo insists that Ramban's argument is impossible. The Jewish sages say that in the future, God will place the messiah at His right hand, and Abraham at His left, Midrash Shochar Tov 8:29. Ramban counters by insisting that this midrash bears out his own analysis

of the proportions of the Divine Help that would come to David and to the messiah. Taking the book from which Pablo had been reading, Ramban shows that Pablo's interpretation is erroneous. Upon hearing Ps. 110:1, Abraham will be displeased that a descendant of his would be given greater honor than himself, says the Midrash. The midrash goes on to say that in view of this situation, God will appease Abraham by saying, "Your descendant will sit at My right hand and I will sit at your right hand." This midrash, continues Ramban, proves that the messiah is a human being, and that he is not Jesus. It proves also that the messiah has not yet "come." The elaborate resumes that have concluded Ramban's last two speeches seem to indicate, that he was feverishly trying to bring the disputation to a close. His fine analysis of the various problems of the last day must have had a most telling effect upon his audience.

Pablo answers with a parable based on Lev. 26:12 from YALKUT SHIMONI, sec. 672. This Pablo interprets as meaning that eventually God will again become a human being as He was when he "walked among men as Jesus the human being."

Ramban replies that everything mentioned in the Midrash is to take place in the future. Jesus did not stroll with the righteous in the Garden of Eden, in the figure of the midrash, but spent all of his life fleeing from his enemies. The actual meaning of the Midrash, explains Ramban, is that in this life, the righteous are not able to grasp the full truth of prophecy, nor are they able to behold the glory of God's presence, as Nu. 12:6. At the beginning of his career, Moses was not able to gaze upon God, Ex. 3:6, but as he progressed in it, he was able to speak to God face to face, Ex. 33:11. (148)

When, as in the Midrash, God says that He would be as a human being, He was speaking figuratively. In the future, men will not be afraid to gaze upon God, because they will be free of sin. Men would be godlike in their complete observance of the mitzvos, and this is the meaning of Gen. 3:22 and Zech. 12:8.

Pablo recites Gen. 1:2, *והי ה' אלהים* . He equates *הי* and the messiah, who must therefore be a divinity. This interpretation is a quotation from Bereshis Rabba 2:5. After calling Pablo an ignoramus who thinks he is a sage, Ramban insists that *הי* (149) is the soul of Adam. He accuses Pablo of distorting the meaning of the midrash. The midrash refers the various parts of the verse to the future, and equates them with nations. "Void" is Babylon, Jer-4:23; "formlessness" represents Media, Es. 6:14; "on the face of the waters" refers to the "kingdom of wickedness;" and "the spirit of God" refers to the messiah. This is a repetition of the larger part of B. R. 2:5. The messiah is to be a human being filled with the spirit of wisdom and with the spirit of God as Bezalel was, Ex. 31:3. He was to be filled with the spirit of wisdom as was Joshua, Deut. 34:9. Ramban says that he cannot explain the structure of the midrash to Pablo, because the principle of its structure is R'mizus, a concept which Pablo could not understand. With this statement of Ramban's, the formal disputation comes to an end, at Ramban's request.

Why should it have ended at this particular point? It was no more appropriately ended here than at a number of other points in the last day's proceedings. I have indicated two effective summaries earlier in the day, which would have more appropriately ended the argumentation. At this point neither Pablo nor Ramban

had more effectively refuted the other's presentation than at any other point of the day's discussion. The Hebrew text does not mention any reason for the adjournment of the meeting. It may be that the disputation ended sooner than Ramban admits to. He began the last day's proceedings by saying that the hostile audience frightened him. Yet throughout the day he makes remarks hostile to the fundamental beliefs of Christianity. It is not true that Ramban did not have the courage to say in public whatever he was ready to put into writing. As we shall see later his entire manuscript was examined by an ecclesiastical court of inquiry. Thus it would have required as much courage to write something anti-Christian as it would have ~~been~~ to have uttered it in public.

Ramban assures the reader that he has faithfully reproduced the proceedings of the disputation. He heard that the king and certain of the clergy wanted to come to the (Barcelona?) synagogue. They came on the Saturday eight days after the adjournment of the disputation. (150)

In a speech, which is not reproduced in the Hebrew text, the king contends that Jesus is the messiah. After paying his respects to the king's words, because they are delivered by the king, Ramban answers him as follows. He states that Jesus brought his messianic claims to his contemporaries, and they spurned them to his face. If a man's contemporaries, who knew him well, will not accept his claims, how can an individual, who has heard of them through century-old rumor, be expected to accept them. It seems most unusual that this argument was left unchallenged. As we have already

indicated Father Denifle was revolted by it.

Raymond de Pennaforte then delivered a lecture on the nature of the trinity, and maintained that its component parts represent Wisdom, Will, and Power. Ramban answered this by relating an incident of the disputation. He quotes Pablo as having asked him if he believed in the trinity. Ramban's answer ^{is} supposed to have been that the trinity is nothing more than three material bodies supposedly divine. Neither the question nor the answer are to be found in the Hebrew text of the disputation. Pablo is then supposed to have replied that the elements of the trinity are souls or angels. He suggests as an alternative that the trinity is a substance composed of three elements, as human bodies are substances composed of four elements. And in answer to a question from Ramban, Pablo identified these elements as Wisdom, Will, and Power.

Ramban objects to this analysis because it makes accidental qualities the basis of the Divine Nature. Ramban admits that God is wise without being foolish, that He has will and not sensation, and that he is possessed of power and not weakness. He maintains that the language of "trinity" is erroneous, for wisdom in God is not a characteristic apart from Himself. God and His will are one, and so forth with respect to all of His "qualities." Even if God had accidental qualities, and the general belief is to the contrary, He would still not be a triple divinity, but a unit possessed of three accidents.

The king then tells a parable that he heard from the p'v'v' (Are these Christian heretics?). Wine has three characteristics: color, taste, and odor, and together they compose one substance.

The rabbi rejects this analysis. Color, taste, and odor are merely accidental qualities of wine; combined or separate they do not produce wine. Wine has an essence which permeates it, and in addition to its essence is composed of these three accidental qualities. It may have more than three of these accidents. If this figure is followed, the trinity would become a quadripartite: divine essence, wisdom, will, and power. But in addition to these component parts the Divinity is a living phenomenon; thus the trinity becomes at least a quintipartite. Therefore Ramban concludes that the analysis of the godhead made by Pablo, the king, and Raymond is erroneous.

Pablo retorted that his conception of the trinity was one of a trinity within a unity. In his desire to avoid any discussion of this statement, Pablo explained that this configuration of unity and trinity was beyond human understanding. As a matter of fact, not even the angels and heavenly beings understand it. Ramban answers curtly that a person should not be expected to believe what he does not understand. With this premise, Ramban concludes that the angels do not believe in the trinity.

The king and his company thereupon leave the synagogue. When Ramban presented himself to the king on the following day, he was given a gift of 300 dinars, and was sent home in peace and affection.

The ending of the latin account relates that Ramban all but admitted defeat. He therefore promised that he would submit a written statement of his arguments to the king and the judges. He fled the city during a temporary absence of the king. (151)

If this disputation was the climax of a campaign of proselytization,

the campaign was a dismal failure. Pablo's poor luck in converting Jews seemed not to want to leave him. After the disputation the Dominicans undertook a more ambitious program of proselytization among the Jews. They secured a royal decree, August 26, 1263, forcing the Jews to attend Dominican missionary meetings. The Jews were not to scorn or persecute those Jews who had submitted to baptism. In a decree of August 29, Pablo was empowered to preach in synagogues and private homes. The Jews were ordered to listen respectfully to Pablo, and to answer any questions that he might put to them. They were to give Pablo their books for censorship, and were to scratch out of them any passages that he pointed out for this treatment. On the following day, August 30, a new decree permitted Jews to remain away from any missionsry meeting held outside of the Jewish quarters.

In the following year, the censorial clause of the August 29 decree was modified out of existence. In 1265, Jaime freed the entire Barcelona Jewish community from the act. In the same decree, missionaries were forbidden to enter synagogues with a mob - their retinue was not to exceed ten, and these ten had to be ^{persons} of a good reputation. (153)

The clerical group was very dissatisfied with these developments, and they prepared to carry on their anti-Jewish efforts. They patiently awaited an opportunity to punish Ramban for his presumptuousness. The opportunity was not long in coming.

Pablo had been circulating an account of the disputation for his own purposes. Ramban wrote and circulated a version of his own to counteract the effects of Pablo's account, and to expose Pablo.

The Dominicans resented any questioning of their triumph in the Barcelona encounter. A copy of Ramban's account was given to the bishop of Gerona. Pablo read most vicious remarks about Jesus' origins and the trinity into it. It was of course written in Hebrew, and therefore unintelligible to the clergy. The ecclesiastics demanded a blasphemy trial for Ramban. The formal charges of blasphemy were entered against Ramban by Pennaforte. Jaime invited Ramban to defend himself. Ramban replied that in his written account he had not added one word to what he had said in public after Jaime and Raymond had granted him freedom of speech. The king's verdict was that Ramban was guilty of the above charges. His book was to be burned, and he was to be banished from Aragon for two years.

The Dominicans were infuriated by the clemency of the royal sentence. In 1266, they appealed Jaime's sentence to pope Clement IV. Clement responded to the appeal by writing a letter to Jaime, scolding him for permitting Jews to occupy important government positions. Clement demanded severe punishment for one who would presume dishonestly and falsely to defame Christianity. Expecting further actions against himself by the Inquisition, Ramban fled from Spain, and arrived in Palestine in August, 1267. Moses b. Nachman died about three years after his arrival in Palestine. He was buried beside his colleague Jechiel b. Joseph in Haifa. After his opponent's trial for blasphemy, Pablo disappeared as sudd only as he had appeared. Donin and Pablo had inflicted severe injury upon their former co-religionists to no one's benefit.

By way of concluding this study, I would like to examine three sets

Chapter V
Miscellany

of problems which are presented in the disputations; the place of Aggadah in Jewish theology as represented by Jechiel and Ramban; the place of the messiah in the Judaism of the thirteenth century with special reference to Ramban; and finally the Jewish attitude toward Jesus in the Middle Ages. The uncensored Jewish conception of Jesus, is hinted at in both disputations.

The problem of the place of Aggadah in Jewish theology is noteworthy for several reasons. First the Christian-Jewish polemics place Aggadah in a conspicuous position. The Christian polemicists insisted that the Talmudic Aggadah and the Midrashim were sources for the validity of Christianity. The so-called "bizarre" aggados seemed especially practicable for these purposes. Donin and Pablo made extensive use of them, and Martini in his PUGIO FIDEI establishes as a principle that Jewish literature proves the validity of Christianity.

The question of the Aggadah's binding force upon Jews was an issue in the Maimonidean struggle.

Traditionally Aggadah represented everything in Judaism that was not strictly legal. M. Guttman quotes R. Samuel ha Nagid, "Alles was in Talmud sich nicht auf eine gesetzliche Vorschrift bezieht, ist Haggadah, und man kann daraus lernen, was man will, während den Halachot weder hinzugefügt noch genommen werden kann." In a word Samuel Ha Nagid confirms my first contention and adds an important detail - that no special restrictions were placed on the interpretations of Aggadah, "und man kann daraus lernen was man will." In the course of time the scope of Aggadah, originally the non-legal sections of the Talmud and the midrashim, was expanded to include

all of human knowledge except the original confines of Halacha. It is of course only the Talmudic Aggadah and the Midrashim which we are now considering.

In his discussion of the nature of Aggadah, Abraham Maimuni adds (160) that when interpreting aggadah, one must reckon with two factors.

First one must accept that "the age of miracles" has never ended. Miracles are constantly performed for the pious and the learned.

Second one must reckon with an apparent and a hidden meaning of a particular aggadah. And to this definitive material, we add the remarks about Aggadah which Jechiel made during the disputation.

He says that it is aggadah's function to edify and entertain $\text{לְעֵדוּת וְלְהַנְהִיג}$ (161) וְלְלַמֵּד , and to teach the reader to understand parables $\text{לְפָרֹשׁ מִפְּסָלִים}$.

And finally Jechiel suggests that the orthodox Jew accepted literally at least the aggadah of the Talmud. He goes on to say, $\text{פְּסָלִים אֵלֶּיךָ מִן הַתּוֹסֵפִים}$. The Talmudic aggadah was to be interpreted ^{literally} then because it was an integral part of the Talmud.

With few exceptions there is no reason to believe that Jechiel did not accept the orthodox interpretation of Aggadah. After all he was a Tosafist, and director of the Tosafist Yeshivah at Paris. In his disputation utterances, Jechiel found another use for Aggadah - to (162) evoke the faith of the "denier", the epicurean, and the sectarian.

In his interpretation of aggadah during the disputation, Jechiel tried to be as literal as possible. When Donin challenged him with aggados regarding Jesus and Mary of an uncomplimentary nature, Jechiel was in a compromising position because of his orthodoxy. The best that Jechiel could do ~~was to~~ was to say that the Jesus and

Mary mentioned in the Talmud are not the Christian notables of the same names. Jechiel apparently convinced no one but Queen Blanche of the validity of his remarks. We shall have occasion to treat the Jewish attitude toward Jesus in some detail later. Though I have no authority for saying so, it seems that Jechiel was merely repeating current Jewish conceptions of Jesus' origins and work.

The Maimonidean attitude toward aggadah is quickly stated; its effect upon the orthodox was both shocking and antagonizing. For the philosopher Maimonides, Aggadah could only be irrelevant. When Aggadah was too flagrant in its anthropomorphisms or too crude in its outlook, he completely rejected it. There could be no question for Maimonides as to the binding character of Aggadah; it has no hold upon the Jew, His disciples readily took up his views.

Yet for all his orthodoxy, Jechiel had some sense of proportion. Though in the passage from the disputation to which we referred, Jechiel tacitly admitted the binding character of Aggadah, yet in a number of instances he maintained that a particular Midrash was to be interpreted as a figure of speech rather than literally. The cases in point were the statements from the Talmud which Donin insisted were proofs that the Talmud is a nonsensical document: the cities fortified to the heavens, Og's teeth, the large bird, et al. Was this attitude in keeping with rabbinic tradition? I believe that something of a sense of humor was always in place even among ^{medieval} orthodoxy's most conservative elements.

The problem of Nachmanides' attitude toward the Aggadah is not as simple a matter as it was in the cases of Jechiel and the Maimonists. Apparently Ramban publicly uttered view^s with regard to Aggadah

which did not agree with what Ramban's apparent attitude toward Aggadah would seem to be. Baer feels that Ramban's public utterances do not bespeak the real man. It is not conceivable that he did not believe in Aggadah. The fact of the matter probably is that he found basic justification for his own position in Aggadah, which fact he could not admit to the Christians for ~~for~~ diplomatic reasons. His life's work demonstrated his belief in Aggadah. After all Ramban was one of those who tried to discredit rationalism, or at least the rationalism of his day.

It is very difficult to take exception to this point of view. Especially is this true when we recall that Baer does not consider the Hebrew account of the disputation completely reliable. Unfortunately he did not specify how much of the Hebrew account he considered unreliable,

Ramban was thoroughly steeped in Talmudic tradition as is evidenced by his long continued interest in the Talmud, and by his numerous Talmudic writings. At the beginning of his discussion of Ramban's life and work, Graetz says of him, " - war er von Autoritätsglauben durch und durch beherrscht. " ⁽¹⁶⁵⁾ Authority was a fundamental in his thinking - authority ranging from the Bible to Alfasi. For him the work of a scholar consisted of becoming acquainted with this Authority, making it part of himself, and establishing its teachings as ⁽¹⁶⁵⁾ the measure of all things - so runs Graetz's figure.

Yet as Ramban grew older and his outlook broadened, he was attracted by the fateful MOREH. He admired Maimonides' broad outlook and his systematic approach to philosophic problems. In the matter of basic

criteria, however, the two parted company; for Maimonides the final authority was reason, for Ramban it was Bible and Talmud. (166) Though he differed fundamentally with philosophy, Ramban was not unreasonable in his attitude. In his effort to make clear his objections to Maimonidean rationalism, he wrote a bit of philosophy. Hence it seemed correct for him to intervene in the conflict with the disciples of Maimonides, cautioning both sides to proceed circumspectly, - - to no avail.

Graetz appreciates the difficulty that Ramban's attitude toward Aggadah occasioned him. He could not follow the Maimonists in discarding Aggadah, because of his respect for authority. He preferred to settle the problem by compromise, accepting or rejecting individual aggados on the basis of their import. (167) In keeping with this spirit of compromise, he says in the disputation that the Aggadah is to Judaism as the episcopal sermon is to Christianity. If the layman wishes to accept the aggadah without question, it is proper, and likewise he may reject it. (168) And in this spirit he says he does not believe in the ECHA RABBOSI statement which Pablo cited. Ramban may be said to represent a transitional type in Judaism - the Talmudist who was slowly being won away from strict interpretation. But he refused to accept the only alternative, an extreme Maimonidean Aristotelianism. According to Graetz Ramban was incapable of producing a solution to this problem. (169)

We now turn to a study of the place and significance of the messianic concept in Jewish theology. The messiah idea was given prominence by polemical attacks upon Judaism, and because traditional dates for the coming of the Messiah were drawing near. Ramban was one those who indulged in messianic calculations.

It would be interesting to come upon statements by laypersons testifying to the extent of their interest in the messiah's coming. Certainly a belief in such a figure might have comforted the Jews of France in the days following the Donin incident. Our problem remains, however, what did the messianic concept of the thirteenth century consist of ?

Ramban was a leading scholar throughout the period of his scholarly activity. He was especially interested in the problem of the messiah both as a cabbalist and as an interpreter of rabbinic Judaism. And so we will present Ramban's messianic ideology as that of a typical orthodox Jew of the thirteenth century.

Ramban's messianic ideals are presented chiefly in his book *חזקוני* or *חזקוני*. For him the messiah idea was an integral part of the Jewish doctrine of "reward and punishment," both in its individual and communal aspects. Whoever, therefore, does not accept the messiah is a *חסיד*, because in rejecting the Messiah that individual rejects the agent of the principle of compensation. (170)

Ramban felt very strongly that Israel's hope for the future, the messiah, should be a source of pride to Jews. Though the dispersion be long and stormy, the individual Israelite should not lose faith in the Torah or in the future. Though the highest goal of Jewish religious efforts is not the messianic age, but "the world to come," the importance of the messiah idea was not to be minimized. The Redemption would bring about a change in the status of the Jew and of all humanity. In the messianic age the Temple and its sacrifices would be restored, Israel would be reestablished in Palestine, the Shechina would reappear, and the Yetzer Hora would be destroyed forever. (171)

Ramban pleaded with his people to cling to this messianic concept because it is Jewish. This attitude must have developed from necessity, for he goes on to say, that it is not wise to forsake the Jewish faith for the novel and the transient. ⁽¹⁷⁴⁾ We will undertake at this point to describe thirteenth century Jewish messianism as represented by Ramban. 172

Ramban derives his messianism from the interpretation of certain Biblical passages. In justification of his messianic calculations, Ramban says that it is the desire of all men to know the future destined for them. Other peoples have resorted to various means of learning this, but Jews have made use of the word of God, the Bible.

The six days of creation represent six millenia of human history. The third day of creation witnessed the creation of fruit trees, which symbolize the appearance of the Torah in the third millenium. The heavenly luminaries created on the fourth day symbolize the two Temples erected during the fourth millenium: the Solomon Temple and the " second " Temple. The sea monsters created on the fifth day foretell the oppression of the tyrannical empires during the fifth millenium. Man was created on the sixth day - this fact symbolizes the emergence of man during the sixth millenium in the person of the messiah. ⁽¹⁷³⁾ He will come in 5118 A.M. The seventh day of creation symbolizes the millennial sabbath, the " world to come," when God will be the supreme ruler of the universe. 173

Ramban, in good traditional style, interprets certain biblical personages in the light of Jewish history. The difficulties of Jacob and Esau paralleled the differences between Israel and the " nations. " The war of Moses and Joshua against Amalek foretells the war which

the prophet Elijah and the Messiah b. Joseph will wage against Rome in 1358, which war must antedate the advent of the Messiah b. David. Gen. 49:10 is given the following interpretation (this is not taken from the disputation but from the *נשיען נדון*); Judah was to have ascendancy over the Israelite tribes, and the ascendancy was to culminate in the reign of King David. After a lapse of time a descendant of David will come as the messiah. The fact of the messiah's human origin is detected in the reading of Gen. 49:10: *נשיען* of the original text is read as *נ' לע* or placenta. (174) The messiah is to have dominion over all mankind.

The import of this analysis is ethical rather than eschatological. All of these details were foretold by Moses as lawgiver rather than as prognosticator.

Ramban finds additional support for his messianism in the prophetic books of the Bible. The traditional triple division of the book of Isaiah is especially suited to his interpretation. The first division, Ch. 1-39, describes the plight of Israel and the preeminence of King Hezekiah. Ch. 40-51 depict the deliverance from Babylon. 51:12 - end is messianic in nature. The "idealizations" in the first section refer to Hezekiah, and some of the prophecies therein mentioned were fulfilled in Hezekiah's lifetime. The "exaggerated" prophecies could not have been fulfilled in the past, but will be by the messiah. Ramban goes on to say that the realization of Isaiah's predictions depended on the merit of Hezekiah and his people. (175)

This scheme of things was not disrupted by the Babylonian exile. Israel can always achieve salvation through repentance.

Ramban interprets Is. 53 as referring to the universal experience of the Jewish people. '32Y in Is. 52:13 has the same meaning as those in 44:2 and 49:3: Israel, Jacob, Jeshurun. The chapter describes a suffering servant of God. These sufferings the messiah will experience before he is recognized. (175) The Christological explanation of this passage is impossible because the passage does not mention the execution of the messiah. If anything the messiah will finally experience prosperity and happiness, Is. 53:10. Is. 65:17 describes the actual conditions that will obtain in messianic times - the creation of a new heaven and a new earth, long life for all, etc.

Jer. 30:24 and 31:1 foretell liberation of the Jewish people at the " End. " This " End " does not refer to the end of the Babylonian exile. At the time of Cyrus only Judah was liberated. Therefore (176) these prophecies must refer to the messianic era. Ezekiel frequently spoke of the reestablishment of the northern and southern Israelite tribes and of their complete fusion. These conditions did not come to pass during the return under Cyrus. Ch. 38 which is concerned with Gog undoubtedly speaks of the future redemption. Ch. 47 and 48 describe the distribution of the land, did not come to pass in the recorded history of the Jewish people and must therefore refer to the distant future.

The explanation of the messianic passages in Daniel constitutes a separate and important problem to Ramban. In understanding his explanation of them in his *חזקוני*, we will understand how he arrived at the messianic calculations which he briefly mentions in his disputation.

*no everybody
in every detail*

He begins his presentation with the idea that the messianic passages in Daniel refer to the final redemption. It is Ramban's intention to harmonize the various dates of the coming of the messiah arrived at from different verses in Daniel. Daniel 12:11 mentioned in the disputation says that 1290 days (i.e. years) will elapse between the Destruction and the advent of the first messiah (i.e. messiah b. Joseph); hence he will appear in the year 1358. We conclude from this that Ramban dated the destruction in 68. 45 years later, that is 1403, Messiah b. David will appear. This last detail is based on 1335 days mentioned in Dan. 12:13. (177)

Daniel 7:25 and 12:7 $\sqrt[3]{38 \times 100} / 1381 / 38 \times 38$ and $\sqrt[3]{801 \times 1381 \times 381} \sqrt[3]{3}$ when computed properly result in the figure 1540. The unit "time" refers to the length of the Egyptian bondage, 440 years. Hence 440, 880, and 220 equal 1540. This figure represents the length of time that Israel was to be subject to the fourth kingdom, Rome. Ramban holds that this period began in 138 B.C.E., when Rome conquered Greece. This figure corresponds very closely with the above-mentioned 1403. 1540 years after 138 B.C.E. is 1402. (178)

And finally we consider Dan. 8:14 where the number mentioned is made to correspond closely to the date already arrived at. The verse says $\sqrt[3]{2300} \sqrt[3]{2300} \sqrt[3]{2300} \sqrt[3]{2300} \sqrt[3]{2300} \sqrt[3]{2300} \sqrt[3]{2300} \sqrt[3]{2300} \sqrt[3]{2300} \sqrt[3]{2300}$. The 2300 days here mentioned refer to the time from the reign of David, the first messiah, to the end of the Exile. Silver lists the following table in explanation of this number: (178)

Reign of David	40 years
Duration of first temple	410 "
Babylonian exile	70 "
Duration of second temple	420 "
Duration of last exile	1335 "
	<hr/> 2275 years

The number 2275 approximates the number 2300 mentioned in Dan. 8:14, the number 2300 was never meant to be exact as suggested by the words

עשרת אלפים . From the table we gather that the messiah will appear 1335 years after the Destruction or 1403.

Ramban was opposed to the notion that the restoration under Cyrus was the Restoration for which the prophets had been looking. At the time of Cyrus, Judah and Benjamin were the only tribes who responded, and they only in part. Prophecy was to be one of the features of the new dispensation. In the second commonwealth prophecy flourished only a short time. Hence the hope for a messianic state in which
(179)
prophecy would be uninterrupted.

We have observed the development of Ramban's system of messianic thinking. We have seen from what configuration of thought Ramban's remarks about the messiah were taken. And most important, we have seen that Ramban expressed a point of view characteristic of the Jewish messianism of the thirteenth century.

In conclusion let us examine the medieval Jewish views of Jesus.

Whatever the medieval Jewish views of Jesus, they effected both disputations in at least one respect. From these views both Ramban and Jechiel drew such statements as: Jesus is a descendant of David in the female line, that Pandera was Jesus' father. I have often wondered why Donin in his attack on the Jewish attitude toward Jesus made no mention of unofficial Jewish accounts of Jesus' origin and life. Certainly such accounts as 'עשרת אלפים and 1/2 נתיב נתיב were well known by the twelfth century. Surely Donin if he were as educated in Jewish lore as various authorities claim, would have known these works. And if it had been his intention to destroy

the Jewish people, he could hardly have done better than to have referred to such writings. 'Strangely enough' he made no mention of them.

The question then arises, was Jechiel's attitude toward Jesus an outgrowth of this folk-loristic material. Where could he have gotten his theory of the two Jesus' ? Does he confuse a Talmudic and a folk-lore Jesus ? Donin's deprecatory statements against Jesus were of Talmudic origin - and if there be any doubt as to whether Donin was a Talmudist, where could he have learned of these statements?

Let us therefore outline Ma'asay Yeshu Hanotzri , so that we may discover any connection between the Jesus described in the disputation and the Jesus of this tract. This tract is assigned to the thirteenth century; it is an anonymous work. Waxman suggests that it may be a compilation of several collections of Jesus stories. (180) Krauss maintains that it is at least 1500 years old, and that certain church fathers were acquainted with it. (181)

The tract relates that Mary was betrothed to one Jochanan, who was accustomed to cohabit with her before their formal marriage. But for all that he was a pious man and a scholar. One night a certain wicked fellow, Joseph Pandera, disguising himself as Jochanan forced his attentions upon her, in spite of the fact that Mary warned him that she was menstruating. In OSO V'ES B'NO Joseph and Mary were married, and Jochanan was the evil-doer. (182) When Jochanan discovered that his bride-elect had been wronged, he came to Shimon b. Shetach to lodge a complaint. Though Jochanan suspected the culprit, he was unable to produce any witnesses, and so Shimon was unable to help him. It was from this tradition that Jechiel learned that Jechiel lived in Shimon's lifetime.

Shortly thereafter Jochanan, becoming discouraged with the situation, deserted Mary, and went to Babylon. In due time Mary bore a son, and named him Joshua for her brother. He was given a Jewish education, and he adhered to traditional practices. One day in a fit of impudence, he uncovered his head, and so the sages recognized that Joshua was a *חז"ל / 2 חז"ל*.

Some time later Joshua delivered a speech which proved that Moses was greater than Jethro - it was a brilliant speech. In answer to questions from the sages, Mary stated that Joshua's father was Jochanan the scholar who had gone to Babylon. From the brilliance of his address and from Mary's statement, the sages again recognized that Joshua was a *חז"ל / 2 חז"ל*. But the sages insisted that Mary was not deserving of punishment, for she had no way of knowing who it was that had been with her. When Joshua learned that his origin was known, he went to Jerusalem - he had been studying in Tiberias. Was it on the basis of such traditions that Jechid maintained that the " talmudic Jesus " did not live in Jerusalem-but that the Christian Jesus did ?

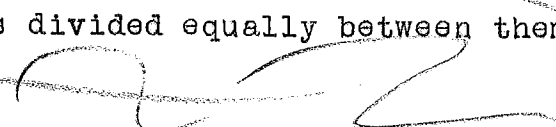
There had been placed in the Temple court-yard, the stone which Jacob had anointed, Gen. 28:18; the Ineffable Name was written upon it. Fearing the consequences, the sages ordained that no one should learn to pronounce It. If someone did learn to pronounce it, brazen dogs would bark at him as he left the Temple premises. Joshua disregarded the injunction; as a result of the dogs' barking, he was afflicted with boils.

Apparently after he had recovered, Jesus gathered 310 young men, and tried to convince them that he was the messiah. He insisted that he

met the messianic requirements of Is. 7:14 and Ps. 2:7 - this established that he had not been born of the sexual union of a man and woman. When they asked him for a sign, he healed a lame man, a leper, and many sick through the use of the Ineffable Name. Fearing trouble, the sages seized Joshua and brought him to Queen Helen. They accused Joshua of sorcery and of leading the people astray: he answered that he was the messiah foretold in Is. 11:1. Helen remarked that Joshua must be of the Davidic seed, for had he not quoted Scripture in support of his claim? The sages' attitude was that anyone could quote Scripture. The true messiah, they continued, would prove his identity with signs, for it is said that the messiah was to rule by word of mouth, Is. 11:4. Joshua answered that he could revive a dead person, and he did. Helen was duly impressed and sent the sages away in disgrace. This situation apparently produced a breach in the Jewish nation.

Joshua then transferred his activities to Upper Galilee. Meanwhile the sages again presented themselves to Helen and repeated their charges against Joshua. She sent officials to investigate, and they discovered him telling the Galileans that he was the son of God. The officials did not seize him when he performed miracles in their presence with the use of The Name. When they reported to Helen, she was pleased that they had not arrested Joshua. She called the sages together, and scolded them for their attitude toward Joshua.

The sages found one Judah *1061' 700/c*, and they taught him the Name. Though he too performed miracles with the Name, Joshua was not dismayed. Joshua and Judah were flying, but they ~~fell~~ to the ground because the power of the Name was divided equally between them.



When Judah beheld that they were falling, he defiled Joshua so that the Name departed from him. Whe Joshua was brought to Helen, she delivered him to the sages.

Joshua was taken to the synagogue in Tiberias, tied to the ark, and whipped. They made Joshua a crown of thorns. Dismay divided the ranks of his followers. Joshua quoted Biblical verses to describe his sorry state: Ps. 69:2, Is. 50:6, and Dan. 9:26. Thereupon his disciples stoned the sages, and fled to Antioch with Joshua. They remained in Anti~~och~~ until the eve of Passover.

Joshua rode back to Jerusalem on an ass, and his disciples bowed and wept before him. They repaired to the ~~city~~ ^{city} of the city. Judah b. Zechariah, one of his disciples, offered to deliver him to the sages - apparently the sages did not recognize Joshua. On the following day, Joshua was pointed out to the sages when b. Zechariah bowed to him. His disciples were unable to rescue Joshua, and Joshua was immediately executed, ~~hanged~~ ^{hanged}. When they took him to hang him on a tree, the tree broke because he retained the power of the Name. So they hanged him on an iron rail, because the Name was not supposed to have power over metal. His friends buried him on the following Sunday.

Certain individuals expressed the desire to see Joshua in his grave. When the grave was opened, Joshua was not in it. These sightseers came to Helen and claimed bodily ressurection for Joshua, and thus messiahship for him. Helen summoned the sages, and ordered them either to produce the corpus delicti, or prepare to die. Joshua, the text assures the reader, was not in his grave, because someone had disinterred him, and buried Joshua in his garden. R. Tanchuma

wandering about in tears met the owner of the garden. When told of Helen's charges to the sages, he admitted the theft of the corpse. The people of Jerusalem came to get the owner of the garden, and bore him festively to Helen's presence.

In OSO V'ES B'NO, after Mary's trial, Joshua is known as Yeshu, because they wanted for him *וְיֵשׁוּעַ בְּנוֹ*. These two tracts were indeed damning documents. There is no obvious connection between these accounts and the picture of Jesus in the Jechiel disputation; there were detail resemblances between them: the placing of Jesus' life in the days of Shimon b. Shetach; the naming of Jesus' father as Pandera. In any event it is obvious that Jechiel's attitude toward Jesus during the disputation had nothing in common with the hostile attitude of the two tracts.

NOTES

1- Schaff, D.S., History of the Christian Church, Vol. V., Pt. I, New York, 1926, p. 443.

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3- Dubnow, S., Weltgeschichte des jüdischen Volkes, Vol. 5, Berlin, 1927, p. 13.

4- ibid, p. 13.

5- ibid, p. 13f.

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8- ibid.

9- Grayzel, S., The Church and the Jews in the XIIIth Century, Philadelphia, 1933, p. 41.

10- ibid, p. 42, footnote 11.

11- ibid, p. 43.

12- ibid, p. 46.

13- Dubnow, op. cit, p. 87.

14- ibid, p. 88

15- ibid.

16- ibid, p. 89.

17- The point of view expressed in this paragraph, is fully developed in and based on ibid, p. 89f.

18- ibid, p. 23.

19- The details mentioned in this paragraph are paraphrased from Graetz, H., Geschichte der Juden, Vol. VII, Leipzig, 1873, p. 102.

20- Grayzel, op. cit., p. 10.

21- Schaff, op. cit., p. 443.

22- Dubnow, op. cit., p. 16.

23- Graetz, op. cit., p. 92.

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- 25- Grayzel, op. cit., p. 9.
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- 29- The unacknowledged details in the following presentation of the influence of the Fourth Lateran Council upon Jewish life in France and Aragon are based upon Dubnow's presentation, p. 15-26. The most important decrees and interpretations will be individually acknowledged.
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- 31- ibid, p. 23.
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- 37- Genesis 18.
- 38- Kahn, op. cit., p. 22.
- 39- Genesis 14:18.
- 40- Kahn, Z., ETUDE SUR LE LIVRE DE JOSEPH LE ZELATEUR, Revue d' Etude Juives, 1880, p. 222ff.
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- 42- ibid, p. 14.
- 43- ibid, p. 15.
- 44- Grayzel, op. cit., letters of 1/27/17, 1/26/18, 3/18/19, 4/29/29.
- 45- ibid, letter of 1/27/17.
- 46- ibid, letter of 3/20/19.
- 47- The three letters mentioned in this paragraph are reproduced in Grayzel, 8/26, 8/27, 9/3/20

- 48- *ibid*, p. 151.
- 49- *ibid*, letter of 3/4/31.
- 50- *ibid*, p. 217.
- 51- *ibid*, p. 181.
- 52- *ibid*, p. 201.
- 53- *ibid*.
- 54- *ibid*, p. 203.
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- 56- Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. VI, Cambridge, 1929, p. 331.
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- 58- *ibid*, p. 347f.
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- 64- *ibid*, p. 82.
- 65- *ibid*.
- 66- *ibid*, p. 83.
- 67- *ibid*, p. 84.
- 68- *ibid*, p. 85.
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- 70- Margulies, R., *VICUACH RABBENU YECHIEL*, Lwow, p. 13.
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- 84- *ibid*.
- 85- Kobak, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
- 86- *ibid*, p. 15.
- 87- *ibid*, p. 18.
- 88- *ibid*, p. 23.
- 89- *ibid*, p. 28.
- 90- The following discussion is based on Schechter, S., STUDIES IN JUDAISM, first series, Philadelphia, 1896, p. 99ff (article on Nachmanides).
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- 92- *ibid*, p. 104.
- 93- *ibid*, p. 105.
- 94- *ibid*, p. 123.
- 95- *ibid*, p. 124.
- 96- *ibid*, p. 125.

- 97- Grayzel, op. cit., p. 237f.
- 98- Lewin, op. cit, p. 109.
- 99- Grayzel, op. cit, p. 241.
- 100- ibid, p. 240, footnote 1.
- 101- ibid, p. 243.
- 102- Lewin, op. cit., p. 108.
- 103- Kisch, op. cit., p. 71.
- 104- Loeb, I., LA CONTROVERSE DE 1240 SUR LE TALMUD, Revue de Etudes Juives, 1880
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- 105- Kisch, op. cit, p. 62.
- 106- Lewin, op. cit., p. 145.
- 107- ibid, p. 147.
- 108- Kisch, op. cit., p. 63f.
- 109- ibid, p. 64f, This refers to the entire discussion of the VI-CUACH D'RABBI YECHIEL.
- 110- Lewin, op. cit., p. 147f.
- 111- ibid, p. 149.
- 112- ibid, footnote 2.
- 113- Kisch, op. cit., p. 129 & footnote 2.
- 114- Lewin, op. cit., p. 151.
- 115- Margulies, op. cit., p. 28 (footnote)
- 116 - This sentence was to have been recorded among the notes -
- 117- In the form in which it is here found, the expression " V'yad R'shoim Tiktzar " is not found in the Bible.
- 118- Graetz, op. cit., p. 106.
- 119- Lewin, op. cit, p. 205.
- 120- Dubnow, op. cit., p. 43.
- 121- Kisch, op. cit., p. 205f.
- 122- Dubnow, op. cit., p. 44.

- 123- Grayzel, op. cit., p. 251f.
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- 125- ibid, p. 275ff.
- 126- Dubnow, op. cit., p. 45.
- 127- Denifle, op. cit., p. 225f.
- 128- ibid, p. 228.
- 129- ibid, p. 229.
- 130- Baer, F., *ספר חסידים*, Tarbitz, Jerusalem, 1931, p. 172ff.
- 131- ibid, p. 177.
- 132- ibid, p. 178.
- 133- ibid, p. 179.
- 134- ibid, p. 180.
- 135- ibid, p. 182.
- 136- Margulies, R., VICUACH HORAMBAN, Lwow, p. 33.
- 137- Baer, op. cit., p. 183.
- 138- ibid.
- 139- Graetz, op. cit., p. 132.
- 140- In footnote 45, p. 35, Margulies cites as the source for this statement MIDRASH MISHLAI on the verse, LIFNAI HASHEMESH YOGON. There is apparently no such reference in MIDRASH MISHLAI, ed. S. Buber.
- 141- In M. Friedman's PESIKTA RABBATI, p. 73a.
- 142- In footnote 60, p. 37, Margulies cites DERECH ERETZ ZUTA as the source for this statement. Investigation of Derech Eretz Zuta failed to reveal any such statement.
- 143- Margulies, op. cit., p. 37. *who is!*
- 144- ibid, footnote 62, p. 38, says this person is Maimonides.
- 145- ibid, footnote 64, p. 38 says SEFER SHOFTIM CORRESPONDS to MISHNAH TORAH of Maimonides. *Yes one of the 14 books of Mishnah*
- 146- MISHNAH TORAH, HILCHOS M'LACHIM, 11:1.
- 147- Marguelis, VICUACH HORAMBAN, p. 38, end of column 2. *is called*

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149- This statement is apparently a quotation from B'RESHIS RABBAH, ch. 2. The text of the Midrash does not equate V'ruach Elohim with Adam, but in 2:4 Adam is equated with V'hooretz hoy'so sohu vovohu.

150- Margulies, op. cit, p. 42, column 1.

151- Dubnow, op. cit., p. 95.

152- *ibid.*, p. 96.

153- *ibid.*, p. 97.

154- Graetz, op. cit., p. 136f.

155- *ibid.*, p. 137.

156- Dubnow, op. cit., p. 98.

157- Graetz, op. cit., p. 138.

158- *ibid*, p. 143.

159- Guttman, M., ENCYCLOPADIE JUDAICA, Vol. I, article on Aggadah, p. 970.

160- Maimuni, Abraham, MA'AMAR AL ODOS D'RASHOS CHAZAL, EN YAAKOV, Vilna, 1883, p. 14.

161- Margulies, YECHIEL, p. 13, col. 2.

162- Graetz, op. cit., p. 33.

163- *ibid*, p. 33.

164- Margulies, YECHIEL, p. 25, col. 2.

165- Graetz, op. cit., p. 42.

166- *ibid.*, p. 44f.

167- ^{CHS} ibid, p. 48.

168- Margulies, RAMBAN, p. 32, col 1.

169- Graetz, op. cit., p. 49.

170- Sarachek, J., THE DOCTRINE OF THE MESSIAH IN MEDIEVAL JEWISH LITERATURE, New York, 1932, p. 164.

171- ibid.

172- *ibid*, p. 165.

173- Sarachek, op. cit., p. 166f.

174- ibid, p. 167.

175- ibid, p. 170.

176- ibid, p. 171.

177- Silver, A.H., A HISTORY OF MESSIANIC SPECULATION IN ISRAEL, New York, 1927, p. 83f.

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179- Sarachek, op. cit., p. 172.

180- Waxman, M., A HISTORY OF JEWISH LITERATURE, Vol. II, New York, 1933, p. 539.

181- Krauss, S., DAS LEBEN JESU NACH JÜDISCHEN QUELLEN, Berlin, 1902, p. 1.

182- I have consulted the texts of MA'ASAI YESHU HANOTZRI and OSO V'ES B'NO reproduced in Krauss, op. cit., p. 38ff and 64ff.

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