

A STUDY OF ISAAC BEN ABRAHAM'S HIZUK ² EMUNAH

by

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THIS THESIS IS DEDICATED

TO MY PARENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: THE LIFE OF ISAAC BEN ABRAHAM OF TROKI

1-Biography	Page 1
2-Karaite or Rabbanite?	4
3-Historical Background, Christian and Jewish	8

CHAPTER TWO: THE HIZUK EMUNAH

1-Its Place in Jewish Apologetics and Polemics	15
2-Contents	22
3-Editions	23
4-Sources	
A-Jewish Sources, and Isaac's Use of Them	27
B-Christian Sources, and Isaac's Use of Them	40
5-Isaac's Criticisms	
A-The New Testament	44
a-Internal Contradictions	45
b-Falsification and Misquotation of Texts	47
c-Errors	49
B-Jerome	50
6-Errors in the Hizuk Emunah	51
7-Influence of the Hizuk Emunah	52
8-Later Criticisms of the Hizuk Emunah	57

CHAPTER THREE: THE THEOLOGY OF THE HIZUK EMUNAH

1-Introduction	
A-Isaac's Orthodoxy	59
B-His Attitude toward Christianity	59
2-God	

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>2-God</u>	
A-Trinity and Unity	Page 62
B-Providence	66
C-Original Sin and Retribution	67
D-Salvation through Messianic Restoration and through Repentance	68
E-Immortality and Resurrection	70
F-The Messiah a-Isaac's Refutation of the Messiahship of Jesus	74
<u>3-Torah and Mitzvoth</u>	
A-The Abrogation of the Torah	88
B-The Dietary Laws	92
<u>4-Israel</u>	
A-The Exile	94
B-The Mission of Israel	99
C-Israel the Suffering Servant	100
NOTES	102
BIBLIOGRAPHY	107

EXCERPTS FROM HEINE'S "DISPUTATION"

In the Aula at Toledo
To the intellectual tourney,

Trumpets peal their fanfares loud;
Gaily decked, the masses crowd.

'Tis no common earthly combat, And no iron weapons glance;
Nay, by learning sharply pointed, Tis the word that is the lance.

Those who tilt here serve not ladies, Are no gallant Paladins;
In this combat all the knights are Rabbis grave and Capuchins.

Not on helmets, but on skull-caps And on cowls they place reliance,
And their sacerdotal vestments Form their armour of defiance.

Is the Hebrew God the true one, He, the One, the fixed, the far,
For whose glory stands, as champion Rabbi Judah of Navarre?

Is the Christian God the true one Triune God of grace and love,
As the champion, Franciscan Friar Jose hopes to prove?

By the logic linked sorites And by arguments of weight,
By quotations from the authors Most acknowledged in debate,

Fain each champion his rival Would to ad absurdum lure,
Of the true and only Godhead Giving demonstration sure.

The agreement is: whoever Is defeated in the fight
The religion of his rival Shall accept, and own as right.

He informs him that the Godhead Is composed of persons three
Who, however, when convenient One, and only one, may be.

Great the mystery and only To be understood of those
Whom the prison walls of reason No more darken and enclose.

CHAPTER ONE

THE LIFE OF ISAAC BEN ABRAHAM OF TROKI

BIOGRAPHY

Isaac ben Abraham of Troki was born at Troki, near Vilna, in the year 1533. He died in the same city in the year 1594 at the age of 61.

The disciple of the Karaite scholar Rabbi Zephaniah ben Mordecai of Troki, he was carefully instructed by him in all branches of Jewish learning, although probably with special emphasis on the Bible.

As a physician, and as a generally cultured individual, he had free access to the highest social and religious circles of the Christians. Being frequently questioned on religious matters, and finding himself frequently engaged in religious disputations, he undertook a systematic study of Christian philosophy, theology, dogma, and literature, under the guidance of Christian scholars.

The age in which he lived was one of religious controversy. The Protestants had broken with the mother church. Soon schisms appeared within the Protestant groups. Some were far more radical than others. Adherents of the new liberal sects, the Socinians, the Servetians, the Ebionites, the Aryans, the Unitarians, found refuge in Poland, and formed part of the society in which Isaac moved.¹ Therefore he applied himself to a study of the doctrines of the different sects. In addition to Hebrew, he knew Latin and Polish, and, probably, Yiddish. We have only one indication that he knew Yiddish: In Part 2, Chapter 23, of his work, in translating John 12:3, which tells of Mary anointing the feet of Jesus: "Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and

the house was filled with the odour of the ointment," Isaac renders "pound" as "Pfund" where we might have expected him to use the Hebrew "litra". The Rabbanite Jews spoke Yiddish, and it is likely that Isaac learned it from them.

He read the works of both the anti-Christians and the anti-Semites. To all intents and purposes, as far as the Jews were concerned, these were the same men. The outstanding of these contemporary writers whom Isaac read were Simon Budny, Martin Czechowitz, and Nicholas Paruta. At first these men were only anti-Christians, hoping to be able to convert the Jews to their Christological point of view, for even though they denied the Godship of Jesus, the Virgin Birth, the Trinity, et cetera, they still remained Christians. When they saw that they were unsuccessful in their attempts to proselytize the Jews, they turned anti-Semitic and started writing against the Jews. Isaac carefully studied everything they wrote.

He held his disputations with Greek and Roman Catholics, Protestants, Evangelists, laymen as well as scholars and priests, or, as he himself says, "with anyone who was inclined to argue". Isaac wrote down all of his arguments as "an aid to his memory."

At the age of 60, he decided to collate all his notes and arguments and publish them. He was appalled at the ignorance of most Jews in the matter of defending themselves against the Christians in verbal arguments, and was motivated by a desire to help them. He wanted to answer all the arguments advanced by the anti-Semites, and to demonstrate the superiority of Judaism over Christianity, for this was a period of great missionary activity on the part of the Christians. Isaac refers to this in 2-65. This is the genesis of the Hizuk Emunah.

Death overtook him before all of the work was finished. It was completed by his pupil, Rabbi Joseph Malinowski of Troki, in the year 1594. Malinowski furnished the book with a preface and he completed Isaac's introduction.²

During the course of his life Isaac also wrote the following works:

1-"Kiddush ha-Chodesh", a book on the intercalation of the months, based on the book "Gan Eden" by Rabbi Aaron ben Elijah the Younger, with illustrations.

2-"Hilchot Schechita", a book in the form of questions and answers, also based on the book "Gan Eden" by Rabbi Aaron ben Elijah.

3-Poems of a liturgical nature, two of which are to be found in the Karaite siddurim among the piyyutim: 1-"O, My Heart, Grope after my Rock"; and 2-"I Will Praise God, my Tower of Strength, with my Supplication."

4-A Study of the Ten Articles of Faith of Solomon ibn Adret.

5-A Commentary on the Chapters in Solomon ibn Adret which deal with the Laws of Purification.

6-A Homily, of the year 5337 (1577).³

WAS ISAAC A KARAITE OR A RABBANITE?

Authorities have differed on this. Because of the fact that a Rabbanite Jew didn't want the credit for this valuable polemical work to go to the Karaite Isaac, he removed all evidences of its authorship. "Already in 1615 a Rabbi prepared a copy of it which he provided with arbitrary additions and changes. Altogether it is a work of exceeding ignorance and carelessness; it is too bad that this copy should be the source of our editions. This copyist mistakes, intentionally so, the author's fatherland, his faith, his age, his philological and philosophical education. Instead of making him a Trokite, a place which evidently he does not know of, he makes Isaac a Kracower, he destroys all traces of Karaism, and, if that were not enough, he adds Rabbinicisms. He changes the year 1593 to 1615, although traces of the former date remain, he corrupts Isaac's style, he leaves out his philosophical observations, and thereby truncates Isaac's expressions."⁴ Thus the book went forth into the world seemingly the product of a thoroly cultured Rabbanite Jew who was steeped in Rabbinical learning, as witness the frequent references to it and quotations from it.

Some thought it impossible for this to be a Karaite product, for it was then erroneously believed that Karaites studied only the Bible, and ignored the Talmud and other Rabbinical books. It was not generally known that an early Karaite teacher, Nissi ben Noah, a Persian living during the eleventh century, had made it mandatory for Karaites to study early Rabbinic literature, since the larger part of their teaching was founded on the true national tradition.⁵

Doubt existed in the minds of others. For instance, Dubnow thought that the Talmudical sections were insertions by a Rabbanite. He inclined toward believing that Isaac was a Karaite, since the

editor of the book, Isaac's pupil, Joseph ben Mordecai Malinowski, was known to be a Karaite. Dubnow writes: "It is still undecided whether the author of the Hizuk Emunah, who comes from Lithuania, is a Karaite or a Rabbanite. The fact that the book put out by Malinowski affixes a criticism to a Karaite writer who at the same time is a disciple of Isaac, points to the first view. However, the author of the work refers so often and with such great respect to the Talmud that the opposite surmise cannot be so easily brushed aside, unless we are to regard the evidence which for a long time remained in excerpt form, as a Rabbanite interpolation."⁶

Zunz refuses to commit himself, since he isn't sure. He writes that Hungary is mentioned in the writings of the following Jews who lived since the tenth century: Chasdai, Josippon, Saadya, Jehuda haCohen, Rashi, and Isaac ben Abraham.⁷ It is to be noticed that he does not describe Isaac either as a Karaite or as a Rabbanite.

But Geiger has no doubts whatever, and proceeds on the assumption that Isaac was a Karaite. It may be that he could not envisage the possibility that a sixteenth century Rabbanite Jew would be able to have such free social intercourse with the Christians of his time as Isaac had. For Isaac tells us that he was eagerly welcomed and highly regarded everywhere.⁸ Therefore Geiger must have concluded that Isaac was a Karaite.

We have noted that Isaac makes no mention of great Rabbanite scholars like Isserles and Luria, and their schools, which became prominent toward the close of his life. This may be interpreted as evidence that he was a Karaite. In any event it proves that he was not a Kabbalist. Isaac probably considered himself a greater

authority than either of these men, and therefore doesn't mention them. He may have looked down upon them socially, for, as Geiger⁹ remarks, the Rabbanites didn't keep up with the times, while the Karaites did.

The fact that the book is written in a pure Biblical, Hebraic, style, may furnish proof that Isaac was a Karaite, since the Karaites emphasized the study of the Bible more than the study of Rabbinic sources.

No significance is to be attached to the fact that Isaac does not quote or use the anti-Christian works of his three great Karaite predecessors, for both Kirkisani and Japheth ben Ali wrote their attacks against Christianity in Arabic, a language unknown to Isaac. And as for Hadassi's Eshkol ha-Kofer, we cannot be sure it was accessible to Isaac.

Joseph ben Mordecai Malinowski tells us of the hesped he delivered at the grave of his teacher, Isaac.¹⁰ Since we know Malinowski to be a Karaite, we may assume that his teacher was also a Karaite.

Zerach ben Nathan of Troki, in a letter of 1630 insists that this book should be published.¹¹ If the work were by a Rabbanite it is most unlikely that a Karaite would take such an interest in seeing it published.

The Karaite bibliographer Simcha Isaak Iuzki dedicated several halachic works to Isaac. Further, several of Isaac's poems appear in the Karaite prayerbooks.¹² This is conclusive proof that he was a Karaite.

On the basis of new evidence, Dr. Mann in his forthcoming book will attempt to prove that Isaac was a Karaite; that he was the

(7)

secretary of the Karaitic community at Troki, and drew up its various Takanoth; that he was a physician by profession; and that a Karaite sent Troki's Hizuk Emunah to Manasseh ben Israel for printing, but that Manasseh ben Israel did not publish it during his lifetime. It did appear after Manasseh's death.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN

The Poles originally were a barbaric, pagan people, who dwelt between the Oder and Vistula Rivers. They did not begin to accept Roman Christianity until the last half of the tenth century. Altho they had to suffer greatly as a result of the Mongolian invasions, they, unlike the Russians, were never subjected to the Great Khan. All during medieval times, the Teutonic Knights attacked Poland in an attempt to extend their German influence.

Intimately interwoven with the early history of the Poles is the history of the Lithuanians, a related people, from whom nevertheless the Poles remained distinct. The Lithuanians had their origins among the vast forests and marshes of the Niemen River. Like the Poles, they lagged far behind the rest of Europe in civilization and culture and in the acceptance of Christianity.

In the year 1569 the Poles and Lithuanians, motivated by a common fear of the Germans and the Russians, united at the Union of Lublin. Poland and the grand duchy of Lithuania merged into one state, with one King, one Diet, and one currency. The capital at Cracow was moved to Warsaw.

Poland was badly constituted in a geographical sense. Its boundaries were entirely artificial. There were no natural barriers of rivers or mountains to separate it from many neighbours: Russia, the land of the Hohenzollerns and Hapsburgs, and the Ottoman empire.

It was just as badly constituted in a racial sense. Poland housed not only Poles and Lithuanians, but also many Russians, many Germans and Swedes, and in the towns, many Jews. All these peoples differed not only in race and language, but also in religion, for the Poles, and most of the Lithuanians were Roman Catholics, the

Germans and the Swedes were Lutherans, and the Russians were of the Orthodox Catholic faith. Later, in the sixteenth century, many more sects were to make their appearance.

Altho feudalism had almost entirely died out in western Europe, it thrived in Poland. There were at least one million Polish nobles, most of whom were exceedingly poor, but nevertheless each was the owner of a part of the land. There was no large and wealthy middle class. The Jews were the middle class. The Polish lords had the power of life and death over their peasants who lived in a miserable state of serfdom.

Politically, Poland was badly constituted. The monarchy was elective rather than hereditary, with the result that the king was a pawn in the hands of the noble electors. If the king did not receive the unanimous consent of the national assembly, he could not make either war or peace, pass laws, or assess taxes. Thus the nobles quickly swelled their own power and privileges at the expense of their King. It was little short of a miracle that Poland survived until the period of the partitions.

Probably Jews first came to Poland in appreciable numbers as a result of the Crusades, which drove many German Jews to Poland as a place of refuge. By the sixteenth century, during which Isaac ben Abraham lived, Poland had become a thriving country, and its merchant Jews, who constituted the middle class, also prospered. Situated as they were between the nobles or Schlackta, and the peasants, they were the favorite intermediaries. It was not long before Poland acquired a large Jewish population. The kings Boneslaus of Kalisch (1246), Kasimir the Great (1347-1370), Witowt (1388), Kasimir IV (1447), gave privileges and security to

the Jews.

Inevitably, the cultural life of the Jews quickened with their financial prosperity. Rabbinical studies flourished. Moses Isserles, Rabbi of Cracow, and Solomon Luria, Rabbi of Ostrog, were the leaders of the Rabbanites. Their reputation soon spread abroad among the Jews of Europe. Many yeshiv^oth were founded all over the country and produced learned Talmudic scholars. The Jewish printing presses in Cracow and Lublin worked overtime.

The Jews in Poland and Lithuania had complete autonomy. The Kahal, the communal government, was in the hands of the Rabbis, who selected its "college of judges" from its own rabbinical group. The center of this hierarchy was the "Synod of the Four Countries."¹³

Among the Rabbanites secular knowledge and philosophy were interdicted. Only Rabbinical studies might be pursued. In Poland the Rabbanite Jews lived a completely separatistic existence. The external conditions of Polish life made this easily possible.

But there existed in Poland not only Rabbanite Jews, but also Karaite Jews. At the close of the fourteenth century, the Lithuanian Grand Duke Witold settled some Crimean Karaites in Lithuania as colonists. In the government of Vilna, a section of the city of Troki was set aside for these Karaites. From here some of them moved on to other Lithuanian cities, to Lutsk, in Volhynia, which then belonged to Lithuania, and to Halitsch, in Galicia. The Karaites of Troki were the first to become well known.¹⁴

¹⁵
As Geiger points out, they imbibed the general culture of the period, and did not hold themselves aloof from Christian influences. Thus the tremendous changes that had been taking place in Europe's religious life had an almost immediate effect

upon the Karaitic population of Poland. We shall briefly discuss these momentous world events.

In the Christian world the Reformation had already taken place. There had been a sharp break with the authority of the Pope and with the teachings of the Church. The causes of the Reformation were political and economic as well as religious.

In the fourteenth century and in the fifteenth century the worldliness of the Catholic Church had called forth sharp criticism. Wycliffe and Huss demanded complete changes in Catholic belief and worship. Martin Luther, the real founder of the Reformation, took his cue from them. The posting of his 95 Theses ultimately led to the Diet of Worms in 1521, which pronounced him a heretic and outlaw. But he soon became the leader of the German Reformation. People flocked to him for a variety of reasons, not all of which were religious. The practical minded German Princes seized upon Luther as a pretext to acquire Church lands and revenues.

Lutheranism spread to Scandinavian lands, and became the official religion. Zwingli, a contemporary, but not a disciple of Luther, started the Reformation in Switzerland. He insisted that the Scriptures were to be the sole guide of faith. In this the Reformers and the Karaites had something in common.

The Frenchman Calvin spread his religion over a large part of Europe: Holland, Scotland, France, England, and also into New England.

The Reformation was almost completed by the close of the sixteenth century. Whereas in 1500 the Roman Catholic Church reigned supreme in all Europe west of Russia and the Balkan peninsula, by 1600 almost half of its adherents had broken away. Most of Germany and Switzerland and all of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Holland, England,

Wales, and Scotland, threw off the yoke of the Papacy. The unity of western Christendom was forever destroyed.¹⁶

Protestantism had some common features. The reformers all insisted on the authority of the Bible. They sought to restore apostolic Christianity, and therefore abolished those dogmas and practices which were thought to have developed during the Middle Ages. Among these were the belief in purgatory, veneration of relics, invocation of saints, devotion to the Virgin, indulgences, pilgrimages, and most of the sacraments.

The cleavage that had existed between clergy and laymen disappeared. Priests married and lived among the people. Therefore it is not to be wondered at when Isaac tells us of his frequent disputations with clergymen of all the many religious sects.

Divisions soon appeared among the Reformers. They had set up the Bible as authority. But there was more than one way of interpreting that authority. And so sixteenth century Protestantism broke up into three main groups: Lutheranism, Anglicanism, and Calvinism, from which stem the multitudinous present day Christian sects. Of these three, Calvinism represented the furthest departure from Roman Catholicism.

It was inevitable that there should have been a Catholic Counter Reformation. There was a reform in the Papacy. One of the first acts of the new Pope Paul III, elected in 1534, was to establish the order of the Jesuits, whose work as preachers, confessors, teachers and missionaries helped to stem the rising tide of Protestantism in Europe. In Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia, the Jesuits were especially active, for in these three countries Roman Catholicism was in the greatest danger.

Poland at the time of Isaac ben Abraham was a seething ferment

of religious and political discussion. We have noticed that Christianity was too new to Poland to be as firmly established there as it was in other European countries. While the Protestants were fighting among themselves, Poland offered a haven of refuge to liberal thinkers who were being hounded by the three dominant Protestant groups.¹⁷ Isaac in Part I Chapter 10 of his *Hizuk Emunah* speaks of the rise of the Servetians, Aryans, Ebionites, the Socinians, and the anti-Trinitarians in Poland. They were considered to be radicals. They aimed their shafts at the fundamental doctrines of Christianity--the trinity, the original sin, and the redemptive death of Jesus.

The three outstanding writers of the period: Budny, Czechowicz, and Paruta confidently expected that their liberal ideas would lead many Jews to abandon Judaism, and flock to their anti-Trinitarian banner.¹⁸ But the Jews had entertained the same hope of converting these radicals--who were Christians even in their radicalism--to Judaism. The spirit of conversion was in the air. Everyone tried to convert everyone else, seemingly. Two factors contributed to the fact that these liberals who formerly had been friendly to the Jews now attacked them: first, they failed in their efforts to convert the Jews, and second, the Catholics had begun to stigmatize them as Judaizers, or, semi-Jews. So they set out to demonstrate that they differed just as much from the Jews as they did from the conforming Christians.

This led to many public and private theological disputations not only in Lublin, but elsewhere, between Jews and Christians. Jacob of Belcyze who defended Judaism against the attacks of Czechowicz in his "Retorts to the Dialogues of Czechowicz" (1581) gives us an interesting account of the general methods of disputation

of the times: "It often happens that a Christian puts a question to me from Holy Writ, to which I reply, also from Holy Writ, and I try to argue it properly. But suddenly he will pick out another passage from the Bible, saying: "How do you understand this?" and thus he does not finish the first question, on which it would be necessary to dwell longer. This is exactly what happens when the hunter's dogs are hounding the rabbit which flees from the road into a by-path, and, while the dogs are trying to catch it, slips away into the bushes. For this reason the Jew too has to interrupt the Christian in the midst of his speech, lest the latter escape like the rabbit as soon as he has finished speaking."¹⁹

In many of these disputations Isaac ben Abraham also took part. In his book he lists no less than forty different disputations in which he participated. It will be the purpose of this thesis to analyze and classify the arguments presented in the *Hizuk Emunah*.

CHAPTER TWO

THE HIZUK EMUNAH

ITS PLACE IN JEWISH POLEMICS AND APOLOGETICS

Jewish polemics and apologetics are as old as the first contacts of the Jewish people with other peoples. A defense of one's own viewpoint is by its very nature also a polemic against the differing viewpoint. When an individual insists that he has the ^{only} right religion, he implies that any other religion is not the right one.

So the Bible preserves for us the earliest polemical and apologetical writings. I Kings 18 records the conflict between the adherents of Baal and those of Jahweh. When Elijah insisted on a public trial of strength between himself, as the representative for Jahweh, and the prophets of the foreign baalim, and then taunts them with his victory, he is engaging in a polemic against Baal and an apology for Jahweh.

Deutero-Isaiah Ch. 45, Jeremiah 10, Psalm 115 offer other Biblical examples. Some of the prayers in our ritual are of the same nature.

In Egypt, where there was a considerable Jewish community in Alexandria, there was much apologetical and polemical activity. Attacks on the Jews were written by Manetho, a Theban priest, c. 250 B.C.E. Other attacks on the Jews at this time were written by Posidonius in his history of Persia, by Apollonius Molon, Chaeremon, Lysimachus, Apion and others. These were soon repeated with amplifications by the Roman historian Trogus Pompeius, and especially by Tacitus.

In Hellenic times, from c. 200 B.C.E. to c. 200 .C.E. there was great activity in these fields. Hellenistic literature foreshadows many of the problems which later appear in Christianity. Hellenistic books of an apologetic nature are: 1-the Letter of

Aristeas, 2-the Sybelline Oracles, 3-The Wisdom of Solomon, Ch. 12 ff., 4-Philo's "De Legation in Calipha", 5-Josephus'"Contra Apione"' (perhaps the greatest polemic of all time). All of these works criticized the idolatry and immorality of the pagan world, and pointed out the superiority of Judaism.

With the rise of Christianity, the Old Testament became the focal point of contention between the mother and daughter religions. The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles in the New Testament were directed against the Jews. About the time of the Bar Cochba revolt against Rome there appeared the dialogue between the Church Father Justin Martyr and the Jew Tryphon, concerning the applicability of the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament to Jesus.

At the same time there appeared a dialogue written by the meshu'amad Ariston of Pella, in which a Christian named Jason and a Jew named Papiscus discussed the nature of Jesus. Other important polemical works which attacked the Jews were the following:

- 1-"The Canon of the Church," or, "Against the Judaizers," by Clement of Alexandria (see Eusebius, "Hist. Eccl." vi.13);
- 2-"Contra Celsum", by Origen;
- 3-"Adversus Judaeos," by Tertullian;
- 4-"Adversus Judaeos" and "Testimonia," by Cyprian;
- 5"Demonstratio Evangelica", by Eusebius;
- 6-"De Incarnatione Dei Verbi," by Athanasius of Alexandria;
- 7-the "Homilies" of John Chrysostom;
- 8-the "Hymns" of Ephrasem Syrus;
- 9-"Adversus Haereses" and "Anagyrotus," by Epiphanius;
- 10-"Dialogus Christiani et Judaei de St. Trinitate," by Jerome.

The arguments in these works centered around the following points: 1-the Trinity, 2-the Abrogation of the Mosaic Law, and 3-

the Messianic Mission of Jesus, which the Christians sought to prove from the Old Testament.

The Talmud and Midrash preserve some dialogues between Jews and non-Jews. The Rabbis who participated were Johanan ben Zakkai, Gamliel II, Joshua ben Hananiah, Akiba, and Eleazar. These are in a comparatively friendly spirit. (cf. Bek. 5b, Hul. 27b, Yer. Sanh. 19b, Pesik. 40a).

A more bitter tone characterizes the polemics of Rabbi Simlai, who attacked the doctrine of the trinity and a later Palestinian Amora Rabbi Abbahu, who attacked the basic dogmas of Christianity.

SPAIN

In the sixth century Spain started polemics against the Jews. The most important of these was the "Contra Judaeos" by Isidorus Hispalensis, the Archbishop of Seville.

In the ninth and tenth centuries with the growth of Karaism, Rabbinic scholars wrote defenses of the Jewish belief against the Karaites and the Christians. David ibn Merwan al-Mukammaz refuted Christian dogmas in the eighth and tenth chapters of his "Ishrun al-Makalat." Saadya attacked Christianity in his commentaries on the Bible, and in the second chapter of his "Emunot ve-Deot."

Karaites who attacked Christianity were Al-Kirkisani, in the third treatise of his "Kitab al-Anwar wal-Marakib" Ch. 16; Japheth ben Ali, in his commentaries on the Bible, and Hadassi in his "Eshkol ha-Kofer".

Complete books against Christianity appeared in Spain from 1150-1200. Christian priests, fired by the Crusades, sought to convert the Jews through works written by meshu'amadim, who sought

to prove from the Hagadah that Jesus was the Messiah. Petrus Alfonsi (Moses Sephardi) wrote a series of dialogues against the Jews. In defense, Judah ha-Levi wrote the "Cuzari", and Jacob ben Reuben wrote the "Sefer Milhamot Adonai", and Joseph Kimchi wrote the "Sefer ha-Berit", a dialogue between an observant Jew and a meshu'amad.

From 1200 to 1400 Spain saw even more active polemics. Christian works are the "Capistrum Judaeorum" and the "Pugio Fidei", the last named by Raymond Martin. Pablo Christiani, in his disputation with Nachmanides used some of Martin's arguments. Nachmanides later wrote his "Wikkuah" which contains the arguments and their refutations as given in the disputation. Solomon Adret wrote a refutation of Martin's "Pugio Fidei".

Until 1500 many meshu'amadim continued their writings against the Jews. Alfonso of Valladolid (Abner of Burgos) wrote "Moreh Zedek" and "Teshubot al Milhamot Adonoi"; Dios Carne (Astruc Raimuch) wrote a letter defending Christian doctrines; Pablo de Santa Maria (Solomon Levi of Burgos) wrote a satire on Purim; and Geronimo de Sante Fe (Joshua b. Joseph al-Lorqui) wrote "Tractatus Contra Perfidiam Judaeorum", and "De Judaeis Erroribus ex Talmuth."

The Jews defended themselves against these attacks by publishing the "Ezer ha-Dat of ibn Pulgar, which contains a refutation of Alfonso of Valladolid's book; and Solomon ben Reuben Bonfed's answer in rhymed prose to the letter of Astruc Reimuch. Pablo's satire was answered by Joseph ibn Vives al Lorqui.

Hasdai Crescas wrote a philosophical work against Christianity in Spanish "Tratado" (Bittul Ikkere ha-Nozerim); Shem Tob b. Isaac ibn Shaprut wrote, c. 1400, his "Eben Bohan", the last chapter of which contains a refutation of Alfonso of Valladolid's book against

the "Milhamot Adonoi" of Jacob b. Reuben.

About the same time Moses Cohen of Tordesillas wrote his "Ezer ha-Emunah"; and Hayyim ibn Musa wrote "Magen wa-Romah." An exceptional satiric work was Profiat Duran's "Iggeret al-Tehi ka-Aboteka", addressed to the meshu'amad David Bonet Bongoron. In 1397, at the request of Crescas, Duran wrote his "Kelimas ha-Goyim", which was the basis for Simon b. Zemach Duran's "Keshet u-Magen."

FRANCE

The first anti-Jewish polemics in France appear during the period 800-850. Agobard, Bishop of Lyons, wrote "De Insolentia Judaeorum" and "Concerning the Superstitions of the Jews" (Agobardi Opera). The next Bishop of Lyons, Amolo, wrote "Contra Judaeos,"

The Crusades resulted in a series of anti-Jewish polemics from 1100 to 1300. They include the following works:

- 1-"De Incarnatione, Adversus Judaeos", by Guilbert;
- 2-"Annulus seu Dialogus Christiani et Judaei de Fidei Sacramentis", by Rupert;
- 3-"Tractatus Adversus Judaeorum Inveteratam Duritiem," by Pierre le Venerable;
- 4-"Contra Judaeorum" anonymous;
- 5-"Liber Contra Perfidiam Judaeorum," by Pierre of Blois;
- 6-"Altercatio Judaei de Fide Christiana," by Gilbert Crepin;
- 7-"De Messia Ejusque Adventu Praeterito," by Nicolas de Lyra.

From the thirteenth century polemical works in French began to make their appearance, such as:

- 1-"De la Disputation de la Synagogue et de la Sainte Eglise" (Jubinal, "Myseries du XV Siecle," ii.404-408);
- 2-"La Disputation du Juyf et du Crestian" (Histoire Litteraire de France," xxiii. 217).

In Northern France Joseph the Zealot published the "Wikkuah" of the disputation in 1240 between Nicholas Donin and the four Jewish representatives: Jehiel of Paris, Judah b. David of Melun, Samuel b. Solomon, and Moses de Coucy.

In Provence, in southern France, there were published by Jews the "Sefer ha-Berit" of Joseph Kimhi (see above); the "Mahazek ha-Emunah" of Mordecai b. Josiphiah; the "Milhemet Mizwah" of Meir b. Simon of Narbonne, and three works by Isaac b. Nathan.

A polemic of unusual interest which appeared c. 1800 was the "Kur Mazref ha-Emunot u-Mar'eh ha-Emet" of Isaac Lopez. Lopez drew heavily on Isaac ben Abraham's "Hizuk Emunah", the book which is the subject of this thesis.

ITALY

The first disputations were held here as early as 608. Alcuin (735-804) mentions a disputation between a Jew named Julius and Peter of Pisa.

The first anti-Jewish writing appeared in the eleventh century. It was the "Antilogus Contra Judaeos" of Damiani.

With the advent of Pope Innocent III anti-Jewish works appeared in profusion. The various charges against the Jews were: 1-the Talmudic blasphemies against Christianity, 2-ritual blood murder, 3-piercing the consecrated host until the blood of Jesus flowed forth.

The first answer by a Jew was by Moses of Salerno in the thirteenth century. He wrote "Ma'amar ha-Emunah" and "Ta'anot". Other answers were:

- 1-Solomon b. Jekuthiel's "Milhamot Adonai."
- 2-Abraham Farissol's "Magen Abraham," and
- 3-Brieli's "Hassagot 'al Sifre da-Shilluhim."

GERMANY AND AUSTRIA

All during the Middle Ages anti-Jewish writings were numerous in these countries. But not until the fifteenth century did the harassed Jews respond with Lipmann Mulhausen's "Sefer ha-Nizzahon".

The Christians answered with Wilhelm Schickard's "Triumphator Vapulaus, sive Refutatio Blasphemi Libri Hebraici;" Stephen Gerlow's "Disputatio Contra Lipmanni Nizzachon" and Christian Schotan's "Anti-Lipmanniana."

The meshu'amad Samuel Brenz wrote "Schlangenbalg." This was answered by Solomon Offenhausen in a Judaeo-Germanic work called "Der Jüdische Theriak."¹

RUSSIA

Jehudah Halevi tells of the disputation arranged at the instigation of the Chazar King, Bulan c. 740, as a result of which Bulan became a Jew.

Another disputation took place at the court of Prince Vladimir c.986. This disputation did not result favorably for the Jews.²

None of all of these preceding works called forth the attention and opposition of the Christian world that was aroused by Isaac ben Abraham's "Hizuk Emunah", which was written in Poland at the end of the sixteenth century. This book is the subject of this thesis.

CONTENTS

The book is in two parts. The first part, which is an apology for Judaism, contains fifty chapters. It deals with the elements of the Jewish faith and proves their verity. In this first division, Chapters 1 to 9 deal with Isaac's answers to the questions of various Christian scholars as he presented them in his disputations. Then Isaac says: "We shall now proceed to the explanation of such biblical passages as are assumed to bear reference to certain points of their Christian faith."³ This is done from Ch. 9 to Ch. 43. Then Isaac says: "Here we shall conclude our answers to the proof passages cited by Christians in support of their faith."⁴ Chs. 43-50 consist of general discussions and summaries of his preceding arguments.

The second part of the work is a polemic against Christianity. It consists of 100 chapters. Isaac's procedure is to consider the books of the New Testament seriatim, to refute them and to point out the many internal contradictions, misquotations, and errors, contained therein. Each chapter deals with one verse, which Isaac discusses at great length. His chapters are of unequal length. He refutes the Christians out of their own mouths, as it were. He deals with the New Testament books in the following order: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, I Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, I Thessalonians, James, Epistle to the Hebrews, and Revelation. He tells us at the outset of the second part that the version of the New Testament he used was that of Simon Budny, written in Polish, published in 1572, "whose version is considered the most authentic."⁵

Isaac proceeds in a most methodical and systematic manner. In each case he first clearly states the problem and then answers it clearly and comprehensively.

EDITIONS OF THE BOOK

Isaac's book, valuable as it was in containing a thorough and clear refutation of Christian arguments against the Jews, became at once most popular among the Jews, although it was not published, since Malinowski feared Christian reaction to Isaac's outspoken attacks on Christianity.

In 1615 a Rabbi made a faulty copy of it. He added and subtracted from the book at will, and his bad copy became the basis of subsequent editions. Specifically, he deleted passages which proved that the author was a Karaite. He added Rabbinic passages to make it appear that a Rabbanite rather than a Karaite had written this valuable book, as we have described above.⁶

In 1621 a cultured Spanish Jew of scholarly descent, Isaac Athias, translated it into Spanish, called it "Fortificacion de la Ffee."

In 1624 a Rabbanite Jew of Hamburg--Aharon b. Gabriel Luria--prepared a more correct edition of the Hebrew.

In 1630 a Rabbi of Vilna made an excerpt of the original (1605) codex by Malinowski.

In 1631-3 the meshu'amad Michael Gelling made a German translation on the basis of Luria's text, at Hamburg. This was not printed.

In 1640 it was found among Karaites and Rabbanites in Constantinople.

In 1657 the first part of the manuscript was copied after the original codex of Malinowski of 1605.

In 1661-7 the scholar Johann Wagenseil, on a trip with Prince Abensberg, came to Ceuta in Africa where at a fair he became friendly with the Jews, who had gathered there from all parts of Africa. Geiger is of the opinion that Wagenseil was probably

aiming at their conversion. In any event, one of the Jews gave him a copy of the *Hizuk Emunah* out of gratitude for the news of his Jewish correligionists which Wagenseil related to him. In 1681 Wagenseil edited it with a Latin translation along with some other works of similar nature, in Altdorf. The collection he named "*Tela Ignea Satanae*": "The Fiery Arrows of Satan", truly an "awe-inspiring title". This collection was published for missionary purposes. The copy Wagenseil had of the *Hizuk Emunah* was based on the 1615 incorrect edition.

In this connection it will be of interest to provide a translation of Wagenseil's Latin preface to his translation of the *Hizuk Emunah*: "In the company of the illustrious Traunius of Abensberg, to whom I was a companion, I traveled in Spain. By the second day we had journeyed as far as Calpe, with its Pillars of Hercules which were made famous by the lies (!) of the poets. We conceived the idea of going to Abyla, which was on the shore of Africa opposite us. We took sail on a skiff, and in a short time we had crossed the channel from Cadiz. In this manner we were bourne to Septa just at the time when a fair was being celebrated in that city, at which Jews had gathered together from the more distant parts of Africa in order to buy and sell merchandise. I immediately came into unbelievably great favor with these people by telling them the history and status of the European Jews. In return they not only informed me about their own institutions and the history of Africa, but, moreover, one of them--a native of Septa--gave me this book in manuscript form. His intention was to render both himself and his gift pleasing. He had added a preface to it. Furthermore, he also confessed that the Portuguese Jews secretly had a translation of it in Spanish,

together with certain remarks which Rabbi Gamliel ben Aharon is said to have added. But I have never seen the Spanish translation. A famous theologian of ability and merit--Johann Muller--in a book which he wrote in German against the Jews, only occasionally makes mention of it, but nevertheless almost entirely refutes it. For this reason it behooves me to gather together in entirety the comments of this great man, and to add somewhat to it in the interests of Christianity. This Hizuk Emunah is indeed a bulwark which deserves that we Christians should put forth our efforts to refute it, lest it might further strengthen them in their errors, and hinder them in the acknowledgement of truth. This devilish book was conceived about the middle of the last century, but the more recent it is, the more bestial, and the better calculated to deceive its readers. Indeed, this harmful book has corrupted many among the Jews, and they will soon produce more such depraved books unless we put a clamp on them in a befitting manner, or unless my keen arguments defeat the Jewish polemicists."⁸

In 1690 a Provence Jew, Isaac Lopez, quoted much of the Hizuk Emunah in his book "The Furnace which Purifies the Faith," but doesn't give credit to Isaac as being his source.

In 1705 in Amsterdam, a copy of the Wagenseil edition without translation, and without some of the errors of the original in it, was prepared by Judan.

In 1715 the learned Christian pastor Gottlieb Unger compared the printed text with a good manuscript and restored the correct residence of Isaac as being Troki. He made it clear that Isaac was a Karaite and not a Rabbanite, set the date of its composition at 1593, and restored the original text.

In 1717 a poor Yiddish translation, prepared on the basis of the

1705 Wagenseil edition, was published in Amsterdam. The author is anonymous.

In 1845 there appeared in Jerusalem a copy based on the 1705 Amsterdam edition.

In 1856 it appeared in an English translation by Moses Mocatta, of London. This translation often fails to present the sense of the author, and often attempts to give only an abstract of his thought. It is unreliable.

In 1857 it appeared in Leipzig.

In 1865 it was published in Sohrau, translated into German, along with the Hebrew text, by Rabbi David Deutsch, who provided valuable notes.

In 1873 a second edition of the Deutsch translation appeared.

ISAAC'S JEWISH SOURCES AND HIS USE OF THEM

Isaac's Jewish sources include the Bible, the Apocrypha, the Talmud, the Seder Olom, the Seder Olom Zuta, the Yosippon, the Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela, Isaac Abrabanel's "Mirkebet Hamishneh", "Announcing Salvation (Mashmia Yeshua)", "Wells of Salvation (Mayne Hayeshua)"; Isaac Arama's "Akedas Yitzhok", his "Chasuth Kaschah"; Abraham ben David's "Sefer HaKaballa"; David ben Solomon Gans' "Zemach David"; David Kimchi; Rashi; Jehuda Halevi's "Kuzari"; Joseph Albo's "Ikkarim"; Sephardic ritual; Joshua Lorqui's "Igeres"; Nachmanides' "Wikkuah". From the Talmud he quotes Avoda Zora, (1-4); Baba Ba sra (1-34); Sanhedrin 107b and Sota 47a (2-46); Ovos, 3, (2-19), (1-22). Also Yoma and Midrash Rabba to Shir ha-Shirim (1-17).

He quotes Abrabanel in 1-6, 1-7, 1-42.

He quotes Arama in 1-7.

He quotes Rabad in 1-34, 1-42.

He quotes Benjamin of Tudela in 1-8.

He quotes Albo in 1-2, 2-67.

He quotes Gans in 1-19.

He quotes Yosippon 1-6, 1-17, 1-34, 1-42, 2-25 (often more than once in each of these indicated chapters.)

He quotes Seder Olom Zuta in 1-14.

He quotes Kimchi 1-22, 1-28, 1-31, 1-33, and especially 1-36. He uses Kimchi but doesn't quote him in 1-21, 1-35, 1-37, 2-68, 2-95.

He uses Seder Olom in 1-21, but doesn't quote.

He uses Abrabanel's "Announcing Salvation" in 1-6.

He uses Rashi in 1-10, 1-37, but doesn't quote.

He uses Halevi's Kuzari in 1-22, but doesn't quote.

He uses Albo in 1-19, but doesn't quote (cf. Deutsch p. 384).

He uses Longui's "Igeres" in 1-6, but doesn't quote.

He uses Nachmanides "Wikkuah" in 1-6, but doesn't quote.

He uses the Sephardic ritual in 1-22, but does quote.

In 1-6, Isaac enumerates twenty conditions that must be fulfilled before the Messiah can be said to have come. They are:

- 1-The ingathering of the Ten Tribes, and their union with Judah and Benjamin under the dominion of one king of the house of Judah.
- 2-The rise of Gog and Magog, and their incursions into the territory of Israel.
- 3-The Mount of Olives shall be rent asunder.
- 4-The river of Egypt shall be divided and dried up prior to the gathering of the exiles of Judah.
- 5-Living waters shall go out from Jerusalem and great fertility of products will result.
- 6-The conversion of the Gentiles to Judaism.
- 7-The annual pilgrimage of the remnant of all nations to Jerusalem, "to bow down to the King, to the Lord of Hosts."
- 8-The celebration of the Sabbath, and the new moons, by all the Gentiles.
- 9-The total extinction of idolatry.
- 10-Unity of faith shall prevail throughout the world.
- 11-The kingdom of Israel shall be the principal one in existence.
- 12-Peace shall be restored after the subjugation of the resisting powers.
- 13-There shall be peace and harmony even among the animals in the land of Israel, and they shall not harm man.
- 14-Sin shall no longer prevail.
- 15-Ancient troubles and sorrows shall cease for ever.
- 16-The Divine presence (Shechina^h) shall be restored.
- 17-The prophet Elijah will appear before the coming of the Messiah.
- 18-The future temple will be rebuilt according to the design predetermined by God.
- 19-The ancient division of the Holy Land will be resumed.
- 20-The resurrection shall take place in the latter days.

Joshua Lorqui in his "Igeres" lists eight conditions that must be fulfilled before the Messiah can come.¹⁰ We list and compare them with Isaac's list:

1-The Messiah shall be of the seed of David. Although Isaac does not include this as one of the conditions, he does make reference to it in his discussion of his #14, wherein he quotes "And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd; they shall also walk in my judgments and observe my statutes and do them." (Ezekiel 37:24)

2-All the exiled Jews shall be gathered together from among the nations. This corresponds to Isaac's #1.

3-Jerusalem and Palestine shall be reestablished and shall eternally prosper. Isaac includes this in a general way in his discussion of his #11 when he quotes Isaiah 60:10 "And the children of strangers shall build thy walls, and their kings shall serve thee."

4-The knowledge of God shall overflow the world, and all men will acknowledge God and be attracted to Truth. Isaac refers to this in his discussion of his #16 when he quotes Isaiah 11:9: "And the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

5-The Messiah will have the Temple rebuilt, and will re-establish the Temple service by the priests of the family of Levi. This corresponds with Isaac's #18, which he bases on Ezekiel 40-45.

6-The Schechinah will have great influence. All will be able to prophesy. This corresponds to Isaac's #16.

7-There shall be an increase of Peace. This corresponds to Isaac's #12.

8-The destruction of Gog and Magog. This corresponds to Isaac's #2.

Isaac Abrabanel in his "Mashmia Yeshua" presents 14 conditions⁹ that must be fulfilled before the Messiah can come. We state them and compare them with Isaac's conditions:

1-God will revenge himself on foreign nations, using their own weapons for the purpose. No parallel in Isaac.

2-God will take greater revenge on Edom (Christianity) than on any other of the nations. He will fully accept all other nations into Judaism and into His worship, but Edom (Christianity) will be forever excluded. No parallel in Isaac.

3-The gathering in of the exiles from the Galuth. This parallels Isaac's #1.

4-The ten tribes exiled by Sennacherib into Assyria will be taken back. This also parallels Isaac's #1.

5-The coming redemption will be like the redemption from Egypt:

a-Every person in the world will come out of exile into Palestine. None will be left in the world, just as no Jews were left behind in Egypt.

b-Those nations that treated Israel badly will be destroyed, just as Pharaoh was destroyed.

c-The redemption will be by one who performs miracles, like Moses.

Isaac has nothing to parallel this.

6-The righteous shall inherit the goodness of the land. The wicked will be destroyed at the time of the Hevle Meshiah. The redemption will not fail to come at a designated time. Until that time there will be many sins in the world. This parallels Isaac's #14.

7-Redemption will come only after the Jews have been for a long time in exile. Isaac doesn't list this as one of his conditions, although he makes the remark elsewhere in his book, (1-16, 1-23).

8-The Schechinah will return. This parallels Isaac's #16.

9-All sinners who left Judaism for any reason whatsoever will return to Judaism. This will be accomplished either by peaceful or forceful means. Isaac has no similar statement.

10-The Messiah will be of the House of David. The Lord's spirit will rest upon him. This is touched upon in Isaac's discussion of his #14.

11-There will never be any need of another redemption, for the Lord will make all people righteous. This parallels Isaac's #14.

12-All the nations will accept Judaism and seek our God and our Torah forever. This parallels Isaac's #6, and #10.

13-Peace will reign. This corresponds to Isaac's #12.

14-The resurrection shall take place. This parallels Isaac's #20.

Isaac's Indebtedness to Judah Halevi's "Kuzari"

In Part 1, Ch. 22 Isaac's opponent quotes Isaiah 52:13 "Behold my servant shall prosper, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high," and then says that this refers to Jesus, because to him alone it is asserted these words can be attributed: "Surely he has borne our sicknesses and our pains. He was wounded by our transgressions and oppressed by our iniquities".

Isaac answers that "my servant" refers to Israel,¹¹ not to Jesus, and that Israel shall be exalted and extolled in the future, altho now, in the exile, it must be the suffering servant of God and bear "the sicknesses and the pains" of a sinful world.¹² Sickness and wounds are but prophetic expressions for the humiliations and adversities of the Jews. But Israel is a superior people and can bear its burden.

In all likelihood Isaac drew upon the Kuzari. Halevi says that Israel amidst the nations is like the heart amidst the organs of the body.¹³ When the organs do something wrong, the heart (Israel) is affected.¹⁴ It suffers for the sins of the organs (the nations of the world). Isaac quotes the verse, also used by Halevi, to prove Israel's superiority: Amos 3:2 "You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."¹⁵ Kuzari says of the heart (Israel): "Its extreme sensibility caused by the purity of its blood and its great intelligence causes it to feel the slightest symptoms, and expels them as long as it is able to do so. The other organs lack this fine sensibility....Just as the heart is pure in substance and matter, and of even temperament, in order to be accessible to the intellectual soul, so also is Israel in its component parts."¹⁶

When Isaac says: "The Almighty God in afflicting and humbling

us during our captivity purposes, therefore, to bring to pass our ultimate benefit, and to strengthen our number in the time of our restoration," he is probably basing himself on Halevi's statement in the mouth of the Rabbi: "The trials which meet us are meant to prove our faith, to cleanse us completely, and to remove all taint from us."¹⁷

Isaac's Indebtedness to Nachmanides' "Wikkuah"

When Isaac, in Part 1, Ch. 14, in discussing Gen. 49:10:¹⁸
 "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, as long as men come to Shiloh; and unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be," says that *דגליו לא יקל* means *דגליו, גלגליו לא יקל*--that it means the tribe of Judah, he may be following Nachmanides in his Disputation with Pablo Christiani of 1263 in Barcelona, where Nachmanides made the identical answer.¹⁹

When Isaac in Part 1, Ch. 7,²⁰ says that the length of our present captivity is no proof of our total rejection from the special favor of the almighty, he may be basing himself on Ramban, who, in answering Paul's statement that although the Babylonian exile lasted only 70 years, the present exile has already lasted 1000 years, asserts that the length of the present exile makes no difference whatever.²¹

When Isaac, in Part 1, Ch. 5, in answering the question why Israel isn't prosperous if God favors the Jews, replies with another question: "Why isn't Christianity prosperous if God favors the Christians?...As a matter of fact the Mohammedans are the prosperous ones in this world, and their religion and their power is spread over a large portion of Asia and Africa,"²² he may be basing himself on Nachmanides 90a, when he says "The Messiah hasn't

come, for, according to Psalm 72:8: "May he have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the River unto the ends of the earth", the Messiah will have dominion over a larger area--Jesus never had such a dominion. Today the Mohammedans have a larger area than you have": *אין עתה עולם, אחרי שכל אדם יוכל להגות, וזה חכם*

When Isaac, in Part I, Ch. 6,²³ proves that the Messiah hasn't come because it says that peace will be restored when the Messiah comes, as it says, Isaiah 2:4: "And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more"; Hosea 2:20: "And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground; and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the land, and will make them to lie down safely;" Micah 4:3;--he may be quoting the "Wikkuah" where Nachmanides quotes the same verse Isaiah 2:4, and says that during the Messianic era there is supposed to be peace, yet there has been much war since Jesus.²⁴

When Isaac, in Pt. I, Ch. 6,²⁵ quotes his criteria for the coming of the Messiah, he lists as #1, the ingathering of the 12 tribes; as #18 the rebuilding of the Temple according to the design predetermined by the Almighty,²⁶ and as #11, that the Kingdom of Israel shall be the principle one in existence,²⁷ he may be quoting the Ramban, who claims he is quoting the Rambam, and gives these same three criteria,²⁸ and says that Jesus failed in all of them.

When Isaac, in Part II, Ch. 45, after quoting John 7:5: "For neither did his brethren believe in him", says that if his own

brothers, men of the same flesh and blood, and the nearest judges of the powers attributed to him wouldn't admit he was the Messiah, surely we Jews may be excused for discrediting what his own contemporaries and brothers rejected as incredible,²⁹ he may be quoting the Ramban, who, in writing of the incident of the King's appearance in the synagogue on Shabbas to preach to the Jews the Messiahship of Jesus, says: "Now, if the people of Jesus' own generation could not believe Jesus himself when he came in the flesh, and told them he was the Messiah, how can we believe the King when he says Jesus is the Messiah, on the basis of reports of people who neither saw Jesus nor lived in the same country, as did our forefathers, when they rejected Jesus."³⁰

Isaac repeats the frequently asserted, but ever amusing statement that if, as in the trinity, three are one, why shouldn't fifteen or any other number larger than three equal one. In Pt.2, Ch. 14, Isaac quotes Matthew 10:40: "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me", to prove that Jesus made the apostles identical with himself,^{and says:} therefore, since the Christians are taught that three make one, they should deduce from the present passage that the trinity, with the twelve apostles, make altogether one unity.³¹ (Deutsch himself cannot refrain from remarking in a note³² "Können drei eins sein, so auch hundert".) Apropos of this same point, Nachmanides quotes his discussion with the King in the synagogue when the King, trying to prove the Trinity, likened it to wine, which has three characteristics: taste, appearance, and smell, and yet is only one thing. Nachmanides points out the falseness of the analogy, since taste, appearance, and smell are not accidents, for they are not related, and then goes on to say that God really has two

והיה זה חכם וחפץ ויכול ועוזר בידו האלהות חמה ה

Isaac's Use of his Jewish Sources

He doesn't give credit to Joshua Lorqui, although he employs seven of his eight Messianic features; he doesn't mention his indebtedness to Abrabanel's list of fourteen, although he employs six of them, as we have seen; he doesn't mention Nachmanides, to

whom he is indebted. He uses Albo's "Ikkarim" twice, but quotes him only once. He quotes him 2-67, on the length of Saul's kingship; but doesn't quote him 1-2, or 1-19, on the celebration of Shabbas by Christians.

He uses the Zemach David of David Gans twice, but quotes it only once. He quotes it 1-19 on the Sabbath; but he doesn't quote it when in 1-7 he gives the length of time from the Creation to the Exodus as being 2448 years. (cf. Deutsch p.74) It is interesting to notice here that this book by David Gans was not published till 1592 in Prague,³⁵ and Isaac wrote his Hizuk Emunah in the following year in Poland, which indicates that there was a free exchange of books among the Jews at that time. Or, Isaac may have had the manuscript before it was published.

Isaac's most popular source was the Yosippon of Joseph ben Gorion. He quotes it very often when giving historical facts. Max Schloessinger tells us that "By the Jews of the Middle Ages the Yosippon was much read and was highly respected as a source!"³⁶ This tells us at once that we may expect errors of fact, since the Yosippon was full of "historical errors and misconceptions of its sources".³⁷ Schloessinger further informs us that "The Yosippon is written in comparatively pure Biblical Hebrew".³⁸ Isaac's Hebrew may be similarly described. Since Isaac was so familiar with the Yosippon it is within the bounds of possibility that his own Hebrew style was influenced by it.

Isaac's sources for his historical facts include also the Bible, the Apocrypha, the New Testament, the Seder Olom, the Seder Olom Zuta, the Sefer HaKabbalah of Rabad and the Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela. It is worthy of notice that not once does he quote Josephus.

He is well acquainted with the political development of the Jewish people from the Exile through to the fall of Jerusalem, when they were successively subject to the Persians, the Greeks, the Hasmoneans, the Herodians, and the Romans. He says that "only 42,360 men of Judah and Benjamin availed themselves of the permission given by Cyrus, king of Persia, to return to Jerusalem, while the majority still remained in Babylon.....when settled in Jerusalem, they were tributary to the Medes and Persians... subsequently the cruelties experienced proceeded from the Greeks, and afterward from the Romans....the Jews sometimes rebelled, and nominated their own king....the Hasmoneans were of the tribe of Levi, and members of the priesthood; and they were succeeded by Herod and his descendants until the ruin of the second Temple, as we have mentioned above."³⁹ 1-17

When Isaac speaks in 1-17 of Herod "committing great bloodshed among the sages and the pious ones of Israel, his source is Yosippon Ch. 13, (Breithaupt edition). He also gives as his source the New Testament when, in 1-3, he discusses these same historical facts. There he cites Luke 3:1 and John 19:15.

Isaac identifies the Kittim with the Romans and bases himself on the statements of "our sages" 1-6. Compare Rashi on Daniel 11:30: "For ships of Kittim shall come against him." Cf. also the statement of Budny and the Yosippon Ch. I.

He quotes Yosippon to prove that Jerusalem fell because of the quarrels between Agrippa and the leaders,⁴⁰ 2-25. Again he quotes Yosippon saying that Titus did not wish to destroy Jerusalem or the sanctuary, but instead only asked that the people should submit, 1-42.

In 1-21, in answering the question about the almah in

Isaiah 7:14, Isaac goes into long calculations about the length of the rule of the various kings. He tells us that he follows Czechowitz in his "Chronology". But he is also following the Seder Olom. (cf. Deutsch p. 388).

Of Jewish history during the Middle Ages, Isaac seems to know, or at least he says, very little. He does mention the Jewish expulsions from England, France, and Spain in the order named 1-46,⁴¹ but he doesn't furnish us with any particular insight into the life of the Jewish people. Since this is a polemical rather than a historical work, this is not surprising. It would appear that the Karaites placed as little emphasis on history as the Rabbanites did.⁴²

His attitude toward his sources is sometimes keenly critical. For example, he says that the Apocrypha was not an inspired writing like the Old or New Testaments. In modern fashion he points out that it is a compilation of Jewish and Christian propagandist literature containing works of morals, science, and history 1-43.⁴³ He tells us that he knows the Apocrypha through Budny's Polish translation. He shows that the Christians themselves have denied that it had a prophetic character. The books written by Jews deal with ethical subjects, like the Book of Joshua, or the Book of Sirach; or merely stories like the Book of Tobias or the Book of Judith; or common incidents, like the Book of Maccabees. He says that sections dealing with Jesus in the fourth Book of Ezra are insertions and falsifications.

Geiger and others tell us that Isaac's philosophical discussions were deleted by the Rabbanites. We can nevertheless see traces of his philosophical knowledge in the medieval philosophical terminology he uses in 1-10.

It is a source of wonder that Isaac who was a Karaite does not mention a single Karaitic author and that when he quotes a prayer, he chooses a Sephardic prayer when one of his own would have served the same purpose. (Deutsch p. 404 tells us that the Sephardic prayer quoted in 1-22 is only a part of a longer prayer, which is to be found in the Likute Zevi. This prayer is to be said at the end of the Neilah prayer on the Day of Atonement.) There are three possible explanations of this avoidance of Karaite sources: first, perhaps he did mention them in his original manuscript, and they were deleted by Rabbanites whose manuscripts are the basis of most of the editions extant today. We have seen that traces of Karaitic authorship were removed in several ways. The second possibility is that he intentionally avoided using them, in order to make his book acceptable to all classes of the Jews, for most of whom the writings of a Karaite would have been anathema. Third, although the Karaites were familiar with the writings of the Rabbanites, they had themselves produced comparatively few books.

ISAAC'S CHRISTIAN SOURCES AND HIS USE OF THEM

Isaac's Christian sources include the works of Simon Budny, Martin Czechowicz, Nicholas Paruta, and a Chronicle of Church History in Polish by Martin Bielska. All four men were his contemporaries and his compatriots.

His most important source is Simon Budny. He used Budny's translation of the Bible into Polish; his "Ibroni" a polemic; his "Commentary to Daniel, Jeremiah, Ezra, Zechariah"; his "Commentary to the New Testament"; his "Of the Most Important Articles of Christian Belief; namely: of the one God, of his Son, and the Holy Spirit, a simple confession composed by Simon Budny" (referred to by Geiger, p. 14).

Budny was a Lithuanian priest; founder of the Polish sect of the Budnians, who were called "Semi-Judaizantes" (Half Jews). He studied at the University of Cracow, where he made the acquaintance of the disciples of Socinus, Blandrata, and other Unitarians who, persecuted by both Catholics and Reformers, had found shelter in Poland, where they were permitted to live and have freedom of speech. Budny began his Polish translation of the Bible in 1562. It was published in Meswicz in 1572. Shortly after this Budny became a Socinian, and was one of their most active missionaries in Lithuania.

Isaac considered him the outstanding liberal Christian theologian of the day. For all that, Isaac was by no means blind to his faults and doesn't hesitate to object to his critical method on occasion. Speaking of Budny's translation of the Bible into Polish (in 1-11 and 1-15) he says: "If you will read Budny's translation, you will rejoice". He often quotes Budny, as in 1-6, 1-11, 1-15, 1-19, 1-43, 2-63, 2-69. Yet when Isaac's

orthodox views about the literal inspiration of the Old and New Testament were shocked by Budny's translation of Acts 7:14:

"Then sent Joseph and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, three score and fifteen souls", in which Budny emended the text to read the proper number 70 instead of 75 souls, Isaac sarcastically remarks: "He emended this arbitrarily as he does in other places."⁴⁴ Isaac's point of view prohibited emendations. Cf. 1-6, 1-16, 2-63, where he states similar views about emendations of the sacred text.

When Budny emends Ezra 2-70 "And all Israel in their cities", Isaac objects to the emendation and proves that Israel may mean Judah, but not vice versa, and proves his point by referring to II Chronicles 28:19: "For the Lord brought Judah low because of Ahaz, king of Israel; for he had cast away restraint in Judah, and acted treacherously against the Lord." This is typical of Isaac's exegetical method in general, that he approaches the problem in a scientific and dispassionate manner, rather than become excited about it.

Another of Isaac's sources was the works of Martin Czechowicz. Isaac uses his "Dialogues" Part 2 of which was an attack on the dogma of the trinity, a work written in Polish; and his "Three Days: a Conversation on the articles of belief, especially on Child Baptism" written 1565, (referred to by Geiger p.11). Also, his various pamphlets on controversial subjects were read by Isaac. Isaac quotes Czechowicz in 1-10, 1-21, 1-26, and 2-50.

In 1010 Isaac shows that he knows the anti-trinitarian arguments of Czechowicz. In 1-26, where he is engaged in a discussion of the "olom" which occurs in Jeremiah 17:4: "And thou, even of thyself, shalt discontinue from thy heritage that

I gave thee; and I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in the land which thou knowest not; for ye have kindled a fire in my nostril which shall burn for ever", Troki says that "olom" is often used for an indefinite period, not necessarily for eternity, and quotes Czechowitz on "olom" 1-26.

Typical of Czechowitz's advanced ideas, for his time, is his statement, quoted by Geiger on p. 12, that the Gospels do not abrogate the prescriptions of the Bible. He attributes little worth to Scriptural passages like Daniel's 70 weeks, etc.

Another of Isaac's Christian sources was Nicholas Paruta, whose work "De uno vero Deo": "On the Single True God", Isaac quotes in 1-10.

Isaac twice refers to the "Kronika Polska", the first historical work in Polish, written by Martin Bielski, a Protestant: the first reference is in the preamble to part 1, and also 2-65. This work was published at Cracow in 1564. It is typical of Isaac's use of sources that in refuting Acts 8:9-11: "But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one; to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God, and to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries"--Isaac uses contemporary material in which he finds it said that Simon Magus performed many miracles by the aid of magic, such as bring back the dead to life, and that as a result he was worshipped as a God. Isaac says that it happened similarly with Jesus, he performed miracles and the simple people thought him a God.

Isaac knew not only the Polish translation of the Bible, but

also the Roman Catholic translation and the Socinian translation. He also used the writings of the followers of Martin Luther.

In his attitude toward the New Testament, Isaac shows that he is well aware of the contradictory points of view therein expressed. Yet he doesn't question the validity of the texts, but proceeds to refute them on the basis of their contradictions. Indeed, he says: "We Jews are not anxious to reconcile the discrepancies occurring in the New Testament, and to decide whether more truth is to be found in one or the other of these opinions;" 2-93. He points out in 2-93 that the view of Salvation through Works expressed in the Epistle of James is diametrically opposed to Paul's conception of Salvation through Faith. Isaac was not original in observing this, for it had been several times pointed out by Jewish scholars who preceded him.

It is interesting to notice that Isaac adopts a much more critical attitude to the New Testament than he does toward the Old Testament. The result of this approach is that his attitude toward the New Testament is highly modern, and sounds as if he were a modern Biblical critic. His findings often agree with the results of modern criticism. His critical method is best expressed in 1-1, where he says that if witnesses and their testimony disagree, it is impossible that they should contain the truth.

He tells us that the Epistle to the Hebrews is the work of an anonymous writer, that some have ascribed it to Luke, others to Paul, and that in the early days of Christianity, it was rejected as Apocryphal. S.C. Gaylord, writing in "A New Commentary on Holy Scriptures," repeats the same facts.⁴⁵

But in spite of his generally critical attitude to the New Testament, he does not seem to suspect that the Synoptic

Gospels are not completely historical, that they are only
Tendenz Schriften.⁴⁶

ISAAC'S CRITICISMS

Contradictions, Errors, and Wrong Quotations in the New Testament

Isaac devotes the second part of his book to pointing out the manifold contradictions, misquotations, and errors in the New Testament. He has some harsh things to say about them. For example, he writes: "If our Christian brethren are sincerely anxious to separate truth from falsehood, they ought to examine the passages of the Old Testament quoted in the Gospel, and ascertain whether they are really applicable or not. A brief survey of such topics shows, that the quotations in the Gospel can never be considered cogent or satisfactory. Whoever reads the statement made by the prophets must at once grant, that they never had it in contemplation to afford any clue or even a preference for the admission of a change or abjuration of the Faith of Israel. Besides this, the authors of the Gospel have occasionally garbled and perverted the form as well as the sense of the original text, and have thus based their erroneous opinion on an unstable foundation. Even in matters relating to history, where the fact has no relation to prediction and fulfilment, they have resorted to misrepresentation, which does not argue in favour of the veracity of their faith, or of their sound knowledge of the Scriptures." 1-45

We proceed to a listing of the contradictions, misquotations, and errors in the New Testament as pointed out by Isaac in his writings:

CONTRADICTIONS IN THE
NEW TESTAMENT

- 2-1 Matthew 1 contradicts Luke 3:23,24 on the geneology of Jesus.
- 2-3 Matthew 1:1-end contradicts Matthew 8:55.
- 2-12 Matthew 8:19,20 contradicts Luke 9:57. Shows that Jesus
was aware that he was not a God.
- 2-15 Matthew 11:13,14 and Luke 16:6 contradict Matthew 5:17.
- 2-15 Matthew 17:10-13 in which Jesus says that John was the Elijah
of the Bible, contradicts John 1:21 where John answers:
"I am not Elias".
- 2-16 Matthew 12:32 contains internal contradictions.
- 2-19 Matthew 19:16 ff. prove that Jesus did not regard himself
as a God.
- 2-21 Matthew 26:28 and Mark 10:45 tell that Jesus was man, not
a God.
- 2-23 Matthew 26:6,7 and Mark 14:3 say that the woman anointed
Jesus' head, but John 12:3 and Luke 7:37 say that the
woman anointed Jesus' feet.
- 2-26 Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34 show Jesus to be a man, not
a God.
- 2-27 Matthew 28:17 shows Jesus to be a man, not a God.
- 2-31 Mark 13:32 portrays Jesus as a man, not as a God.
- 2-32 Luke 1:26 contradicts Mark 3:31 and John 7:5, also Matthew
1:22, I Corinthisans 15:28.
- 2-35 Luke 3:23 contradicts Matthew Ch.I. Luke counts 26 gener-
ations from Abraham to Jesus; Matthew counts 42
generations.
- 2-41 John 1:21 contradicts Matthew 11:13,14.
- 2-44 John 6:38 contradicts Luke 2:7.

- 2-48 John 8:40 and Romans 5:15 prove Jesus to be man, not God.
- 2-50 John 10:30 and Mark 13:32 prove Jesus to be man, not God.
- 2-51 John 10:33-36 tell that Jesus was man, not God.
- 2-52 John 10:38; 14:11; 17:21 say Jesus is both man and God.
- 2-53 John 13:3; 16:15 and Matthew 28:18 contradict Mark 13:32.
- 2-53 Matthew 20:23 in which Jesus at one time has supreme dominion
and at another time has not supreme dominion.
- 2-53 Matthew 8:19 Jesus as man, not God.
- 2-53 John 14:28 Jesus as man, not God.
- 2-54 John 13:34 contradicts Matthew 19:19; 22:39. In John, Jesus
says: "I give you a new commandment, that ye love each
other". Matthew admits that Moses was the first to
advance this precept.
- 2-55 John 17:3 and Timothy 1:17 Jesus as man, not God.
- 2-56 John 18:3 contradicts Matthew 26:47; Mark 14:43; Luke 22:47
on the betrayal of Jesus by Judas Iscariot.
- 2-58 John 20:17 tells that Jesus is man, not God.
- 2-59 Acts 1:6,7 tells that Jesus is man, not God.
- 2-66 Acts 10:11-15; Acts 11:6; Corinthians 10:25; Mark 7:16 all
contradict Matthew 15:1-25.
- 2-70 Acts 15:1-12 and Galatians 5:1 contradict Matthew 19:16-23.
- 2-74 Acts 16:2 contradicts Galatians 5:1.
- 2-75 Acts 16:30 contradicts Matthew 19:16; Mark 10:17; Luke 18:19.
- 2-77 Romans 5:14 contradicts "another version" (cf. Deutsch p.339).
- 2-82 Romans 16:20 contradicts I Thessalonians 2:18.
- 2-88 Galatians 1:18 contradicts John 7:5.
- 2-93 James 2:14 contradicts Romans 3:19,28; Galatians 2:16;3 entire;
and Hebrews 9:1-end. James says that good works are
superior to faith. Paul says the opposite.

FALSIFICATION AND MISQUOTATION OF TEXTS
IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- 2-1 Matthew 1:8 misquotes I Chron. 3:11.
- 2-2 Matthew 1:22,23 misquotes Isaiah 7:14.
- 2-3 Matthew 1:23 (And they shall call his name Emanuel) misquotes Isaiah (And she shall call his name Emanuel).
- 2-4 Matthew 2:14,15 is a misapplication of Hosea 11:1 (Hosea speaks of the chosen people delivered from bondage, not of Jesus).
- 2-5 Matthew 2:16,17 misquotes Jeremiah 31:15-17.
- 2-6 Matthew 2:23 "And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, ~~that~~ it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, He shall be called a Nazarene." This is a false quotation, it is nowhere found in Jewish literature.
- 2-11 Matthew 5:43 "Ye have heard it hath been said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy". This is a false quotation, for we are nowhere told to hate our enemies.
- 2-22 Matthew 23:35 speaks of Zachariah, son of Barachias. But 2 Chronicles 24:21 speaks of Zachariah, son of Jehoiada.
- 2-25 Matthew 27:9,10 misquotes Zachariah 11:12,13.
- 2-28 Mark 2:25, Matthew 12:3, and Luke 6:3 are misquotations of I Sam. 21:1 and I Sam. 22:20. Mark says David gave shewbread to priests that were with him. I Sam. says he was alone: "Why art thou alone, and no one with thee?"
- 2-36 Luke 4:17-21 misquotes Isaiah 61:1-3.

- 2-51 John 10:33-36 misquotes Psalm 82:6, Judges 13:22; Exodus 22:9; and Psalm 82:1.
- 2-54 John 13:34 misquotes Leviticus 19:18.
- 2-61 Acts 7:4 misquotes Gen. 11:26,32; 12:4; 21:5; 25:7,8,26; 35:20,28.
- 2-62 Acts 7:7 misquotes Gen. 15:14; and Exodus 3:12.
- 2-63 Acts 7:14 misquotes Gen. 46:27; Deut. 10:22.
- 2-64 Acts 7:43 misquotes Amos 5:26,27.
- 2-68 Acts 13:33 misquotes Psalm 2:7.
- 2-69 Acts 13:35-37 misquotes Psalm 16:10; 7:16; 94:13; and Proverbs 26:27.
- 2-71 Acts 15:17 misquotes Amos 9:12.
- 2-78 Romans 9:24-26 misquotes Hosea 1:10 and 2:1,3.
- 2-79 Romans 9:33 misquotes Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16; also Peter 2:6 misquotes Isaiah 28:16; and Romans 10:11 misquotes Isaiah 28:16.
- 2-80 Romans 10:6-9 misconstrues Deut. 30:2,3,10-14.
- 2-81 Romans 11:26 misquotes Isaiah 59:20.
- 2-87 I Corinthians 15:54 misquotes two unconnected verses: Isaiah 25:8 and Hosea 13;14.
- 2-91 Ephesians 4:8 misquotes Psalm 68:18.
- 2-95 Hebrews 1:5-9 misquotes Psalm 2:7; 45:6-8; 97:5,7; Daniel 2:44; 7:18; I Chron. 29:23.

ERRORS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- 2-61 Acts 7:4 reads "Then came Abraham out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran, and from thence, when his father was dead, God removed him into the land wherein ye now dwell." In the first place, Abraham left Haran during his father's lifetime. Since Terah, the father of Abraham, died in Haran at the age of 205 years, he must have lived in Haran for 60 years after Abraham had left. Genesis tells us that Terah was seventy years old when he begat Abraham, and the latter, when 75 years old, left his father. Since Terah died at the age of 205, he lived, therefore, for 60 years after his son had left him. The errors in the verse in Acts are due to the order in which the history of Terah and Abraham is written in Genesis 11 and 12.
- 2:67 Acts 13:21 Paul says concerning the Israelites: "And afterwards they desired a king, and God gave them Saul, the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years." Saul reigned not for 40 years, as the verse says, but for 10 years, according to Isaac.
- 2-86 I Corinthians 10:8 says "Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand!" Numbers 25:9 tells us that "four and twenty thousand" died as a result of the pestilence.
- 2-99 Revelations 7:5 In the list of the twelve tribes, the tribe of Dan is omitted, and the tribe of Manasseh enumerated in its place, although the tribe of Manasseh might well have been included under the tribe of Joseph.

JEROME

Isaac speaks his mind about the Christians who change the vocalization of the text in order to give it a Christological twist. Thus on Jerome's Vayikra in Isaiah 9:5 "For a child is born unto us, a son is given unto us; and the government is upon his shoulder; and his name is called Pele-joez-el-gibbor@abi-ad-sar-shalom", Isaac says: "We know how the Christian Hieronymus is accustomed to change the holy text according to his desire in his endeavor to establish an authority for his belief in the divinity of Jesus. But, all such endeavors have failed."⁴⁷

Isaac refers to the fact that Jerome changed the vocalization of Vayikra, which is active, and is correctly translated "And he called", to the passive, as if it were to be translated "And he was called."

The J.P.S. translates this verb in the passive sense also: "And his name is called, etc." cf. p.489. But this is an acceptable translation of a verb that is Kal. We are not faced with the same problem that bothered Isaac, more than three hundred years ago.

ERRORS IN THE HIZUK EMUNAH

In noting the several historical errors made by Isaac, we observe that they are really the errors of his sources. The Rabbis of old did not concern themselves with the accuracy of their historical facts. In the section on Isaac's Jewish sources and his use of them, we have indicated that such sources as the Yosippon were unreliable, the Yosippon being filled with "historical errors and misconceptions of its sources."⁴⁸

In 1-3, Isaac, speaking of the destruction of the Kingdom in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, says "this event took place more than 400 years before the existence of Jesus." Correctly, 600 years before. ✓

In 1-8, Isaac says that the tribes were led into captivity by Salmonassar, King of Assyria. Correctly, by Sargon, King of Assyria. 8.2X17: -6

In 1-14, Isaac says Nebuchadnezzar led Zedekiah King of Judah into captivity in 430 B.C.E. (Joseph Kimchi makes a similar error in his Sefer ha-Bris.) But Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 586. (cf. II Kings 24:17.)

In 1-38, Isaac says that Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi lived about three hundred years before Jesus. Correctly, c. 520 B.C.E.

In the introduction to Part 2, Isaac says that the New Testament was written down in the time of Constantine. Bacon⁴⁹ informs us that "At the end of the second century, there had in fact come to be a real canonical New Testament set over against the Old Testament."

INFLUENCE OF THE HIZUK EMUNAH

We have noted the many editions of Troki's "Hizuk Emunah". It had a great influence on both the Jewish and Christian worlds. Fuenn tells us that "This book gave a great opportunity to the scholars to strengthen and fortify themselves therein, and to Christian scholars to trample down this fortification. The sage Rabbi Isaac Lupis quoted copiously from it in his book "The Furnace which Purifies the Faiths", and some of the non-Jewish sages were so troubled about it that one duke of the dynasty of Orleans, who did not find its annotations adequate, took it upon himself to write such annotations to it, but because he was busy with various intrigues, he was not able to fully adjust his thoughts to this work. Through it also, later Christian scholars who philosophized about their religion were aided. The last one who mentions it is Voltaire, who says about it: "He questions much about that which preceded him, and his questions are powerful ones."⁵⁰

Graetz puts it more forcefully: "When Reason, awakened and strengthened, applied the lever to shake the foundations of Christianity, and demolish the whole superstructure, it was to this storechamber that she turned for her implements."⁵¹

Deutsch says in his introduction: "The work spread very soon among all Jews in many copies and was highly respected." After commenting on the fact that only a century after its composition in Poland, this work was already found in so distant a place as Africa, he says: "It spread in all directions and became a book over which many significant Christian scholars strove. How little they were satisfied with the refutations is seen from the circum-

stance that a Prince of Orleans who is distinguished by his scholarliness and piety was not satisfied with it, but himself undertook a refutation of it which he did not have time to finish. The Freethinkers of the eighteenth century found this book a well from which they drew richly and inexhaustibly, and the most valid proof of this is Voltaire. He says of our Isaac in his philosophic literary mixed writings:⁵² "He gathered together all the difficulties which the unbelievers have since then made popular. In short, the most important free thinkers have quoted nothing but what is already to be found in this fortress of belief by Rabbi Isaac."

Although it is only too apparent that all who have written on Isaac of Troki are deeply indebted to Geiger, it is most apparent in the case of Deutsch, who quotes him verbatim, but without quotation marks. This will be apparent from the following, which is translated from Geiger:⁵³ "It therefore became a book over which many Christian scholars strove. How little they were satisfied with the refutations is seen from the circumstance that a Prince of Orleans who is distinguished by his scholarliness and piety was not satisfied with it, but himself undertook a refutation of it which he did not have time to finish. The atheists of the eighteenth century found a source in this book from which they derived much information with little trouble, and the most valid proof of this is, of course, Voltaire. He says of our Isaac in his philosophic literary mixed writings," etc.

Dubnow says that Wagenseil "could not foresee that his edition would be subsequently employed by men of the type of Voltaire and the French Encyclopedists of the eighteenth century as a weapon to attack the doctrine of the Church."⁵⁴

Many refutations of Isaac's book have been written by Christian scholars. The Latin translation of Wagenseil also contained a partial refutation of the *Hizuk Emunah*. This translation was the foundation for a refutation of Troki's assertions by Jacob Gousset, Professor in Groningen, Holland, who wrote: "Shemesh Zedekah, sive Jesu Christi Evangelique Veritas Salutifera, demonstrata in confutatione Libri Chizzouk Emounah, a Rabbi Isaco scripti." This elaborate answer in Latin was published in Amsterdam in 1712, eight years after Gousset's death.

Another Christian scholar who wrote against Isaac was Brandanus Henricus Gebhardi, Professor of Theology in Greifswald (Pomerania). His book was the "*Centum Loca Novi Testamenti, quae R. Isaac ben Abraham, in suo Hizuk Emunah, i.e., Munimine Fidei depravaverat, vindicata*," Gryphiswaldiae, 1699, pp.234 quarto. This book consisted of a series of disputations concerning the hundred chapters in the second part of Isaac's book in which Isaac attacked the New Testament. Some years later Gebhardi published several disputations which concerned themselves with Isaac's general apologia for Judaism in the first part of his book.

A German pastor, Johann Philip Storr, of Heilbrunn, wrote the second part of his "*Evangelische Glaubenskraft*" to refute Isaac.

In the preface to his "*Das Judenthum aus den Schriften der Rabbinen aufgedeckt*", published 1699 in Hamburg, Johann Muller informs us that he had Isaac in mind while writing this book. He tells us of the great care that the Jews took in preserving Isaac's book. He mentions having seen it in Hebrew, and in Spanish and German translations. His own refutation of it was

based on Aaron ben Gabriel Luria's manuscript.

Fuerst tells us that no other work by a Karaite ever received as much attention as did this one. During the entire seventeenth century, theologians busied themselves with refuting this "offensive" work.⁵⁵

In the year 1873, Pastor Carl Becker wrote a reply to the first part of the Hizuk Emunah. It exists only in the German manuscript.

In the year 1879 in Leipzig, J.Z.Lichtenstein wrote his "Hizuk Emunas Emes", a reply to the second part only. It was printed in Hebrew of "microscopic characters."

In the year 1889 Hermann L. Strack wrote an article which consisted of an exposition and refutation of the Hizuk Emunah, which appeared in his magazine "Nathanael", the full title of which was "Nathanael, Zeitschrift fuer die Arbeit der evangelischen Kirche an Israel." The magazine was published in Berlin. The article appears on pp. 52-69.

In our own day, Christian missionary scholars have attempted a point by point refutation of the Hizuk Emunah. A.Lukyn Williams, Canon of Ely Cathedral, and Tyrwhitt Hebrew Scholar in the University of Cambridge, has written two volumes entitled "A Manual of Christian Evidences for Jewish People" to answer Isaac's work. He explains that the greater number of Isaac's arguments are still considered valid by Jews of today, and are reproduced each day. Therefore they must be refuted. "It is in fact almost impossible to take up a Jewish paper, or religious book, without recognizing on nearly every page, one or other of the arguments adduced in Rabbi' Isaac's famous work."⁵⁶

Hermann L. Strack, of the University of Berlin, says in his Preface to Volume I of William's work that : "The Hizuk Emunah

was of great influence and has ranked as a high authority among the Jews of the last three centuries. Not a few Christians felt it to be their duty to write works in confutation of it.".....

"At the present time, the Hizuk Emunah is in great repute among the Jews. Dr. Isaac Broyde, in the Jewish Encyclopedia, Volume 12, p. 265, styles it epochmaking, and orthodox Jews in their discussions with Christians, or when they desire to strengthen themselves in their faith, often, either consciously or unconsciously, make use of the arguments adduced by R. Isaac of Troki."

The two volumes by Williams are ingeniously written, and with a great show of scholarship. They are well worth the reading, for we learn from our enemies as well as from our friends.

We conclude that Isaac's well constructed arsenal of arguments against Christianity and in defense of Judaism is indeed a book which has exerted great influence both in the past three centuries and in our own twentieth century.

LATER CRITICISMS OF THE HIZUK EMUNAH

Dr. Julius Fuerst writes "obgleich es vom Standpunkte einer geschichtlichen und tieferen Auffassung des Christenthums kaum der Widerlegung werth war."⁵⁷ We cannot fully subscribe to this criticism. While it is true this is not a philosophical piece of writing, such as is Profiat Duran's "Climas haGoyim", it is a worthy piece of work. Fuerst's reputation as a scholar is not enviable, so that his comment need not be taken too seriously.

Abraham de Harkavy in his article on the Karaites⁵⁸ says that Isaac's work is "mediocre". But this is the judgment of a bookman, a librarian, who did not fully appreciate the immense practical value of such a systematic compendium of polemics and apologetics. It has been charged that Harkavy has an anti-Karaite bias, but the charge is ill-founded.

The commonly repeated criticism of prolixity and repetitiousness is justified. Isaac himself is aware of this, for he writes at the conclusion of the first part of his work: "Let not the reader blame us for having occasionally made repetitions. It is true I have given the same citation from the Prophets and from the New Testament in two, three, or even more places, but I didn't do it without a purpose in mind; in each case I had something else to prove, as will be clear to the zealous and thoughtful reader." So Isaac, while admitting the charge, defends himself against it.

On the other hand, some rather too extravagant compliments have been paid the book, as when Isaac Broyde styles it "epoch-making";⁵⁹ or when Dubnow, in speaking of the first part of the work, mentions "die von dem Verfasser selbst erfundenen Gegengruende!"⁶⁰

Such a statement indicates either that Dubnow is writing about a book which he hasn't taken the trouble to read, or that he is unfamiliar with the writings of the many scholars upon whom Isaac drew so liberally.

A much more reasonable view is taken by Geiger when he says: "Isaac called his work the Hizuk Emunah, a strengthening of faith, and that it is indeed, for without going into the deep profundities of the subject, it masters the material completely and comprehensively, and it is animated by a warm and firm Biblical belief, without any disfiguring elements. It is written in a charming and entirely correct style, so that one is willing to endure the prolixity and the repetitiousness, for notwithstanding all the sharpness of the polemics, there shines through it a mildness of judgment and a gentle disposition."⁶¹

CHAPTER THREE

THE THEOLOGY OF THE HIZUK EMUNAH

CHAPTER THREE

THE THEOLOGY OF THE HIZUK EMUNAHINTRODUCTIONIsaac's Orthodoxy

We shall attempt to prove that Isaac was absolutely orthodox in his theology. When we remember that Isaac was exposed to many liberal and radical influences during the entire course of his life, this becomes a significant fact. The most advanced Christian thinkers of his day were his constant companions, either in person or through their written works. Isaac was a liberal to the liberals, but when among the Jews, or when writing in defense of them, as in the Hizuk Emunah, he is an orthodox of the orthodox. There is no single indication to the contrary. We shall proceed point by point to establish this fact.

His Attitude toward Christianity

In general Isaac tries to maintain an air of philosophic detachment as he writes his defense of Judaism. But his deep sympathies as a Jew draw him away from his resolution, and occasionally he gives vent to what were probebly his true feelings toward Christianity. Thus, he calls Christianity "a lying faith" 1-10; "a perverted faith" 1-38. He does not hold Catholics in high esteem, for they are "idolaters" 1-4, 1-5. He gives them the benefit of the doubt, and says that most Christians do believe in God as the First Cause, but when it becomes a matter of practice, they worship manmade ikons and idols 1-38. He writes: "Observe how they distort the holy text in order to bring forth proofs for their false faith". 2-79.

Isaac gives us an insight into the methods of missionary

activity in his day when he says: "The Christians force the Jews to accept their lying belief". 2-75. There may have been freedom of speech and thought in the air, but seemingly it was not carried into practice; rather does persecution seem to have been the order of the day. Perhaps the poorer Jews were not molested, but the wealthy Jews were probably the prey of the Christians. In 1-22 Isaac lets a Christian speak: "And so we killed the rich Jews". But Jews died not only because they had money. Many died for Kiddush haShem. In 1-7 and in 1-22 Isaac speaks of the Jewish martyrs who were killed by the Christians because they adhered to their belief in the Unity of God, and immediately thereafter he quotes Psalm 44:23: "For thy sake we are killed all the day; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." We may well shudder if we believe that Isaac meant this to be taken literally.

He believes that the Christians are already paying for their sins in this world, and that they will have to pay for them in the future as well. Their persecutions of the Jews are the cause of their own internal troubles. The Catholics are being made to suffer for their oppressive treatment of the Jews, by having to undergo the pangs of the Protestant Reformation, a scourge sent by God, 1-46. Isaac quotes Isaiah 34 to prove his assertion. The chapter begins: "Come near, ye nations, to hear, and attend, ye peoples, let the earth hear, and the fulness thereof, the world, and all things that come forth of it. For the Lord hath indignation against all the nations, and fury against all their host; He hath utterly destroyed them, He hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and the stench of their carcasses shall come up, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood, etc." The rulers of the Gentiles will be overthrown and punished.

(61)

Isaac declares that eventually all of Christianity will be destroyed, because both its actions and its religion are a profanation of God's Holy Name, and also because of its bad treatment of the Jews.1-6.

Withal, Isaac writes that we Jews have a mission to the Christians. We are to instruct and to teach them, and thus try to lead them to the light of truth.1-22.

GODTrinity and Unity

Isaac devotes much of his energy to attacking the dogma of the trinity. His first step is to examine the passages in the Old Testament which the Christians cite as proof of the doctrine.

In the famous passage Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth", Christians pointed out to Isaac that the name of God has a plural form, "Elohim", therefore it refers to the trinity. Isaac correctly refutes this by saying that it is the plural of majesty, and represents authority and power, having no reference at all to a plurality of persons in the Deity. 1-9.

Isaac considers the passage Genesis 1:26: "And God said: Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." The Christians assert that the expression "Let us make man in our image" indicates the trinity. Isaac shows that God spoke these words to the angels who surround the heavenly throne and who are vitally concerned in whatever He does. 1-10.

Isaac then goes on to say that the Old Testament contradicts in the most direct terms every opinion which does not sustain the belief in an immutable Deity. He states: "The Old Testament opposes the belief in more than one God; Ours is an absolute Unity, free of any taint of mysticism." 1-10.

He argues that Reason remonstrates against the idea of the trinity, for should we maintain that a divisibility of essence can be ascribed to God, we would have to agree with the Polytheists

that He is not omnipresent, and that he can be compared to created matter. God cannot be made up of two or more parts. A God so constituted does not satisfy the most exalted conception of Unity that our intelligence demands.

Isaac thinks that it is not good philosophy to believe in the Incarnation, since ~~since~~ our minds cannot grasp the conception of a being who is at the same time constituted both of Divinity and of flesh. Neither can we conceive of God becoming Incarnate. Such an idea can only originate in a sophisticated or a perverted mind, not in a Faith based on Reason.

Further, Isaac says that the New Testament authors themselves disprove the idea of the trinity as an essential part of their creed. Matthew 12:32 says that "Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." This verse is repeated in Mark 3:28, 29, and in Luke 12:10. These verses prove that the Holy Spirit and the Son are not identical, and therefore the three of the trinity are not one; and also that Jesus is the son of man and not God.

Isaac cites Mark 13:32 "Of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." This verse also proves that there is no identity between the Father and the Son; also that the Son cannot be God since he does not know the future.

Far from finding proofs in the New Testament **for** the trinity, Isaac says that the **contrary** is proved in Matthew 10:40: "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and He that receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me," where Jesus doesn't speak of himself as God, but

rather merely as a messenger of God. In Romans 5:15, Paul says: "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many". Matthew 20:18: "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death."

Isaac cites the Lord's prayer, instituted by Jesus, in which the disciples are taught to invoke God in Heaven, but where nothing is said of praying to Jesus.1-10.

He points out that among the Christians themselves, both in the past and in his own day, there were many opponents of the Divinity of Jesus and the doctrine of the trinity. He referred of course to the new sects which were flourishing in Poland in his own day.

We have previously indicated that in 2-14 Isaac pokes fun at the doctrine of the trinity, asking: why stop with three?

In 2-20 Isaac asks that if the Son is not as powerful as the Father, how can Christians believe that Father and Son are all one?

When Jesus asked "Why hast thou forsaken me?" he admitted that he and his Father were not identical, and that the design of one differed from that of the other. 2-24.

Jesus himself taught monotheism, for in saying that there is none good but one, that is, God, Jesus taught his followers a monotheistic principle.(2-19).

Similar arguments against the trinity are offered in 2-7; 2-12; 2-14; 2-16; 2-19; 2-20; 2-21; 2-24; 2-26; 2-27; 2-32; 2-35; 2-44; 2-48, 2-50.

Isaac's own belief in the Unity of God is emphasized in such statements as when, in speaking of the future, he states: "The one God and his one and only law of Sinai will be acknowledged by all the inhabitants of the earth; no principle of duality or of trinity will then prevail" 1-44; and the statement with which he closes his book in 2-100: "I offer thanks to God who is One and Indivisible".

PROVIDENCE

Isaac believes in a Heavenly Power which guides the destinies of the world for a high purpose. In the sore troubles of the Jews, Isaac can yet see the divine hand of God. Answering the argument that the length of Israel's present exile is a proof of God's rejection of Israel, Isaac asserts that the designs of God take their regular and unerring course through the long centuries. 1-7. In this Isaac again displays his traditional belief, for the prophets of Israel taught that God uses nations as instruments with which to work out his purposes among mankind.¹

With reference to the Christians, Isaac believes that the Protestant Reformation was a divine visitation on the Catholics for their bad treatment of the Jews. It is the hand of Providence. "All this has come to the Christians because of their sins, for these nations have spilt the blood of the nation of Israel." 1-46.

ORIGINAL SIN AND RETRIBUTION

In answering the Christian argument that the punishment meted out for the transgression of Adam was of a hereditary nature, Isaac asserts that Holy Scriptures completely refutes such an idea, and quotes Deuteronomy 24:16: "Fathers shall not die for children, nor children for fathers." Isaac insists upon individual responsibility. Neither parents nor children are to be held responsible for each other's sins. 1-11. Isaac says: "We see that man receives rewards and punishments according to his performance of the Divine commandments, and that he is individually responsible for his actions." 1-11.

Geiger dwells on the fact that Budny and Czechowitz, in commenting on Romans 5:14: "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, also over them who did not sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression", remark that in the old texts the "not" is missing, and that this destroys the original sin idea of death hanging over all mankind. Because of it only the guilty are punished. ²

Just as the pious Jew has always looked upon his misfortunes as God's punishment for his sins, so, too, does Isaac look upon the Exile of the Jews as God's retribution for the sins of the people of Israel. 1-16. He says: "Just as the leaves dropping from the tree are carried away by the wind, so, in punishment for our sins, we have been dispersed throughout all the quarters of the globe." 1-23.

SALVATION THROUGH MESSIANIC RESTORATION AND THROUGH REPENTANCE

Isaac asserts that our salvation does not entirely depend on our own imperfect individual merit and righteousness, but rather on the mercy of God, who is changeless and abiding in his mercy to us even though we do not deserve his favor. His expression sometimes sounds very much like the Christian expression of salvation through grace, and indeed, Judaism does possess something analogous to it.³ Salvation comes through God's grace, and not through the fulfillment of God's commandments. Intentions, not deeds, count. Isaac admits that a man does not attain salvation merely by virtue of his own acts. Man must evidence not only piety, but also complete submission to God's mercy and loving-kindness.1-23.

The salvation of the Jews will come about through the Messianic restoration, at a time that will see the destruction of the Gentile nations, especially of Ishmael (Islam) and Edom (Christianity). In this connection Isaac quotes Numbers 24:17-19, 24: "I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not nigh; There shall step forth a star out of Jacob, And a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite through the corners of Moab, and break down all the sons of Seth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also, even his enemies, shall be a possession; while Israel doeth valiantly, and out of Jacob shall one have dominion and shall destroy the remnant from the city.....But ships shall come from the coast of Kittim, and they shall afflict Asshur, and shall afflict Eber, and he also shall come to destruction." This Isaac interprets to mean not only the triumph of Israel, but also the overthrow of the other nations. His proof that the Mohammedans will be destroyed is Joel 4:19: "Egypt shall be a desolation,

And Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land;" and on the basis of Isaiah 66:17: "They that sanctify themselves and purify themselves, to go unto the gardens, behind one in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the detestable thing, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord," Isaac proves that Egypt means Ishmael. He makes Isaiah 66:17 refer both to the Christians and to the Mohammedans. The statement he makes is that the Mohammedans are always busy washing themselves before prayer, but they are still unclean because they eat unclean things. "Eating swine's flesh" Isaac takes to refer to Christians, 1-6, 1-17.

The time of the Messianic Restoration can be hastened through repentance on the part of the children of Israel. The exile has lasted a long time because Israel has committed many sins. Its redemption lies within the hands of Israel itself. No one has been informed of the day of the end of the present exile. Not even the prophets know it. "Our redemption from this exile depends upon complete repentance....and repentance depends entirely on our own choice and will." Israel has the power to shorten the exile, and bring closer the day of the Restoration through Repentance. 1-7, 1-27.

Isaac's doctrine of repentance is in line with that of traditional Judaism, which teaches that although man may sin, God in his Divine Love has prepared for him the freeing power of repentance. Repentance was created by God even before He created the world.⁴

IMMORTALITY AND RESURRECTION

In many places Isaac states his firm belief in the immortality of the soul. His first statement is that nothing but the inanimate corpse is the prey of its native element--the earth. He says that the reduplication of the verb in the expression "mos tomoos" has reference to the perishable state of the body, and not to the soul. On Leviticus 7:27, which states that each man who dies in his own guilt must suffer for his own sins, and is severed from his people, Isaac explains that his soul is excluded from a reunion with the souls of those who have preceded him into the heavenly realms. He offers as another proof Leviticus 22:3, wherein God says: "That (unclean) soul shall be cut off from before me, I am the Lord." 1-11.

Isaac says that these early records clearly teach the immortality of the soul. It is the pious and the deserving who are rewarded with undisturbed beatitude, but the unclean and the sinful will not enjoy the glorious contemplation of God in the hereafter. 1-11.

Isaac devotes the entire Chapter 18 of the first part of his book to an attempt to refute the Christian statement that the Mosaic laws do not give promise of future immortality to the faithful, but that they limit all reward and punishment to our existence on earth. We must admit that Isaac often fails to make out a good case, so far as the Pentateuch is concerned. The verses he quotes as proof, such as Gen. 17:7,8; 25:8; 28:21; Leviticus 18:5; 26:11,12; Numbers 23:10; Deut. 32:46,47,50, and Deut. 33:29 actually contain no clear reference to a future state. Somewhat better proofs are offered from Leviticus 22:3: "Whosoever

he be of all your seed throughout your generations, that approacheth unto the holy things, which the children of Israel hallow unto the Lord, having his uncleanness upon him, that soul shall be cut off from before Me: I am the Lord." Similarly Leviticus 23:29: "For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from his people;" and the next verse, also: "And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any manner of work in that same day, that soul will I destroy from among his people."

Acceptable proofs are offered from the other divisions of the Bible. Particularly do the Psalms offer material which Isaac uses to good advantage. He also quotes from Ecclesiastes 3:21: "Who knoweth the spirit of man whether it goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast whether it goeth downward to the earth?"; and Ecclesiastes 12:7: "And the dust returneth to the earth as it was, And the spirit returneth unto God who gave it;" also Proverbs 11:7: "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish, and the hope of strength perisheth"; Proverbs 14:32: "The wicked is thrust down in his misfortune; but the righteous, even when he is brought to death, hath hope;" Proverbs 23:17,18: "Let not thy heart envy sinners, but be in the fear of the Lord all the day; for surely there is a future; and thy hope shall not be cut off;" Proverbs 24:14: "So know thou wisdom to be unto thy soul; if thou hast found it, then shall there be a future, and thy hope shall not be cut off"; Isaiah 45:17: "O Israel, that art saved by the Lord with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end;"

Ezekiel 18:8,9: "He that hath not given forth upon interest, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true justice between man and man, hath walked in My statutes, and hath kept Mine ordinances, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God;"

Job 33:29,30: "Lo, all these things doth God work, twice, yea thrice with a man, to bring back his soul from the pit, that he may be enlightened with the light of the living;"

Daniel 12:2: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to reproaches and everlasting abhorrence";

Zechariah 3:7: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts: If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep My charge, and wilt also keep My courts, then I will give thee free access among these that stand by";

Psalms 19: "The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul";

Psalms 27:13: "Unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living";

Psalms 116:8,9: "For Thou savest my soul from death, my eye from tears, my foot from stumbling; I shall walk before the Lord in the land of the living";

Psalms 26: "Do not gather in my soul with the sinners";

Psalms 16:10,11: "For Thou wilt not leave my soul in the grave; Thou wilt not let thy pious men see corruption; Thou makest me know the path of life; fulness of joy is in Thy countenance; delights are at thy right hand forever";

Psalms 49:15: "But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for He will take me, Selah";

Psalm 25:12,13: "Who is the man who feareth the Lord, him shall he teach in the way he should choose, his soul shall abide in bliss, and his seed shall inherit the earth";

Psalm 31:19: "How great is Thy goodness which Thou hast preserved for those who fear Thee";

Psalm 36:7-9: "How precious is Thy mercy, O God, and the children of men shall be protected under the shadow of Thy wings; they shall be satisfied with the fatness of Thy house, and Thou shalt give them drink from the stream of Thy delights, for with Thee is the source of life; in Thy light we shall see light;"

Psalm 73:25: "Who will be for me in Heaven, if I delight not to be with Thee on earth?"

Thus it is clear that Isaac's views are in accord with the traditional Jewish view on immortality.⁵

It is likewise plain that Isaac firmly believes in the resurrection, for one of his proofs (the twentieth) that the Messiah has not yet come is that the resurrection of the dead has not yet taken place. As proof he cites: Deut. 32:29: "Behold, I, even I, am ever the same, and there is no other god with me. I bring to death, and I bring to life again;"

Isaiah 26:19: "Thy dead shall live again, together with my dead body shall rise again. Awake and sing, ye that live in the dust;" and Daniel 12:2: "And many of those that sleep in the dust shall awake; these for eternal life and those for disgrace and everlasting horror." 1-6.

THE MESSIAHIsaac's Refutation of the Messiahship of Jesus

Isaac groups his arguments under four heads to prove that Jesus was not the Messiah: 1-the geneology of Jesus; 2-his actions; 3- the time of the Messiah's coming; and 4-the signs of his coming.

Under the heading of geneology, Isaac states: 1-that Jesus did not descend from David, for, according to the teaching of the Christians, Jesus was not the son of Joseph, and we have no knowledge of Mary's forebears, and 2-even if we take it for granted that Jesus was the son of Joseph, Joseph's geneology is not established, since Matthew and Luke contradict each other about it. Under 2, which declares that the evidence for the geneology of Joseph is unreliable, Isaac enumerates three objections: 1-Matthew says that Joseph's father is Jacob, and that his family descends through Solomon; but Luke says Joseph's father is Eli, and that his family descends through Nathan the son of David; 2-Matthew counts 42 generations from Abraham to Jesus; Luke counts 56 generations from Abraham to Jesus; 3-Matthew errs in saying that Joram begat Uziah, for in so doing he leaves out Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah. cf. I Chronicles 3:11,12: "Joram his son, Ahaziah his son, Joash his son; Amaziah his son, Azariah his son, Jotham his son".1-45; 211.

Isaac's second group of objections concerns the actions of Jesus. He says that the description that Jesus gives of his own work proves that he cannot be the Messiah. First, Matthew 10:34,35 tells us that Jesus said that he came to bring a sword, not peace, and divisions in families; whereas concerning the true Messiah

we read that "He shall speak peace to the nations" Zech. 9:10; that "they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks" Isaiah 2:4; and when the true Messiah comes, Elijah the prophet "shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children." Malachi 4:6.

Secondly, Matthew 20:28 tells that "The son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." But of the true Messiah we are told that "All kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve him" Psalm 72:11; and "His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth" Zech. 9:10; and "All dominions shall serve and obey Him", Daniel 7:27.

Isaac's third group concerns the time of the coming of the Messiah. He says that there is no correspondence between the time when Jesus came and the time when the prophets say the true Messiah will appear, for the prophets declare that He will come "in the last days". Therefore it is impossible that Jesus can be the real Messiah. He cites for his proofs:

Isaiah 2:2: "And it shall come to pass in the end of days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it, and many peoples shall go and say: Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob,"etc.;

Ezekiel 38:8: "After many days thou shalt be mustered for service, in the latter years thou shalt come against the land that is brought back from the sword, that is gathered out of many peoples, against the mountains of Israel, which have been a continual waste; but it is brought forth out of the peoples, and they dwell safely all of them";

Hosea 3:5: "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek their God, and David their king; and shall come trembling unto the Lord and to His goodness in the end of days";

Daniel 2:28: "But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and He hath made known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the end of days."

Isaac's fourth group deals with the signs of the coming of the Messiah. He lists twenty such signs which are to take place when the real Messiah comes, and shows that since none of them has yet occurred, it is clear that Jesus cannot be the true Messiah. The twenty signs, and his proofs for them are:

1-The ingathering of the Ten Tribes, and their union with Judah and Benjamin under the dominion of one king of the house of Judah. cf. Ezekiel 37:16-28: "And thou, son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it: For Judah and for the children of Israel his companions; then take another stick and write upon it: For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and of all the house of Israel his companions; and join them for thee one to another into one stick, that they may become one in thy hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying: Wilt thou not tell us what thou meanest by these? say unto them: Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his companions; and I will put them unto him together with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in My hand. And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thy hand before their eyes. And say unto them: Thus saith the Lord God: Behold I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, whither they are gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their

own land; and I will make them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all; neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them; so shall they be My people, and I will be their God. And My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in Mine ordinances, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob My servant, wherein your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their children's children, for ever; and David my servant shall be their prince forever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them--it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will establish them, and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in the midst of them for ever. My dwelling place also shall be over them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And the nations shall know that I am the Lord that sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for ever."

2-THE RISE OF GOG AND MAGOG, AND THEIR INCURSIONS INTO THE TERRITORY OF ISRAEL. Cf. Ezekiel Ch. 38, Ch. 39, and Zechariah

14:12-15. Ezekiel 38:3:"Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal."

Zechariah 14:12-15: "And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the peoples that have warred against Jerusalem: their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their

feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their sockets, and their tongues shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor. And Judah shall also fight against Jerusalem, and the wealth of all the nations round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in those camps, as this plague."

3-THE MOUNT OF OLIVES SHALL BE RENT ASUNDER. Cf. Zechariah 14:4:

"And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall be cleft in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west; so that there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south."

4-THE RIVER OF EGYPT SHALL BE DIVIDED AND DRIED UP PRIOR TO THE GATHERING OF THE EXILES OF JUDAH. Cf. Isaiah 11:15,16: "And the

Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with His scorching wind will He shake His hand over the River, and will smite it into seven streams, and cause men to march over dryshod. And there shall be a highway for the remnant of His people, that shall remain from Assyria; like as there was for Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt."

5-LIVING WATERS SHALL GO OUT FROM JERUSALEM AND GREAT FERTILITY SHALL BE IN THE LAND. Cf. Ezekiel 47:1-12; Zechariah 14:8;

Joel 3:18. Zechariah 47:1-12: "And he brought me back unto the door

of the house; and behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward, for the forefront of the house looked toward the east; and the waters came down from under, from the right side of the house, on the south of the altar. Then brought he me out by the way of the gate northward, and led me round by the way without unto the outer gate, by the way of the gate that looketh toward the east; and behold, there trickled forth waters on the right side. When the man went forth eastward with the line in his hand, he measured a thousand cubits, and he caused me to pass through the waters, waters that were to the ankles. Again he measured a thousand, and caused me to pass through waters that were to the loins. Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass through; for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed through. And he said unto me: 'Hast thou seen this, O son of man?' Then he led me, and caused me to return to the bank of the river. Now, when I had been brought back, behold, upon the banks of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other. Then said he unto me: 'These waters issue forth toward the eastern region, and shall go down into the Arabah; and when they shall enter into the sea, into the sea of the putrid waters, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that every living creature wherewith it swarmeth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live; and there shall be a very great multitude of fish; for these waters are come thither, that all things be healed and may live whithersoever the river cometh. And it shall come to pass, that fishers shall stand by it from En-gei even unto En-eglaim; there shall be a place for the spreading of nets; their fish shall be after their kinds, as the fish of the

Great Sea, exceeding many. But the miry places thereof, and the marshes thereof, shall not be healed; they shall be given for salt. And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow every tree for food, whose leaf shall not wither, neither shall the fruit thereof fail; it shall bring forth new fruit every month, because the waters thereof issue out of the sanctuary; and the fruit thereof shall be for food, and the leaf thereof for healing.'

Zechariah 14:8: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem: Half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea; in summer and winter shall it be."

Joel 3:18: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down sweet wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah shall flow with waters; and a fountain shall come forth out of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim."

6-THE CONVERSION OF THE GENTILES TO JUDAISM. Cf. Zechariah 8:23:

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts: In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, shall even take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying: We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

7- THE ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE OF THE REMNANT OF ALL NATIONS TO JERUSALEM. Cf. Zechariah 14:16: "And it shall come to pass, that

every one that is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles."

8-THE CELEBRATION OF THE SABBATH AND NEW MOON BY ALL THE GENTILES.

Cf. Isaiah 66:23: "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord."

9-THE TOTAL EXTINCTION OF IDOLATRY, FALSE PROPHETS AND UNCLEAN SPIRIT.

Cf. Zechariah 13:2; Isaiah 2:18; 42:17; Psalm 97:7.

Zechariah 13:2: "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, That I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered, and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land."

Isaiah 2:18: "And the idols shall utterly pass away."

Isaiah 42:17: "They shall be turned back, greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say unto molten images: 'Ye are our gods.'"

Psalm 97:7: "Ashamed be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of things of nought; Bow down to Him, all ye gods."

10-UNITY OF FAITH SHALL PREVAIL THROUGHOUT THE WORLD: FAITH OF ISRAEL.

cf. Isaiah 45:23; 52:1; 66:17; Zechariah 9:7; 14:9.

Isaiah 45:23: "By Myself have I sworn, the word is gone forth from My mouth in righteousness, and shall not come back, that unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear."

Isaiah 52:1: "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcized and the unclean"

Isaiah 66:17; Zechariah 9:7; Zechariah 14:9: "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall the Lord be One, and His name one."

11-THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL SHALL BE THE PRINCIPAL ONE IN EXISTENCE.

Cf. Isaiah 49:23; 60:10-12; Daniel 7:27; Numbers 24:17.

Isaiah 49:23: "And kings shall be thy fosterfathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their face to the earth, and lick the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord, for they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me."

Isaiah 60:10-12: "And aliens shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee; for in My wrath I smote thee, but in My favour have I had compassion on thee. Thy gates also shall be open continually, day and night, they shall not be shut; that men may bring unto thee the wealth of the nations, and their kings in procession. For that nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; Yea, those nations shall be utterly destroyed."

Daniel 7:27: "And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; their kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them."

Numbers 24:17: "I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not nigh; there shall step forth a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite through the corners of Moab, and break down all the sons of Seth."

12-Peace shall be restored after the subjugation of the resisting powers: universal peace. Cf. Isaiah 2:4; Micah 4:3; Hosea 2:20;

Zechariah 9:16.

Isaiah 2:4 : "And He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any

more."

Micah 4:3; Hosea 2:20: "And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground; and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the land, and will make them to lie down safely."

13-THERE SHALL BE PEACE AND HARMONY EVEN AMONG THE ANIMALS IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL. Cf. Isaiah 11:6-9; 65:25; Ezekiel 34:25; 34:28; Hosea 2:20.

Isaiah 11:6-9: "And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the basilisk's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Isaiah 65:25: "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, saith the Lord."

Ezekiel 34:25: "And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. " v.28: "And they shall no more be a prey to the nations, neither shall the beast of the earth devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid."

14-SIN SHALL NO LONGER PREVAIL IN THE WORLD.

Cf. Deut. 30:6; Isaiah 60:21; Jeremiah 3:17; 50:20; Ezekiel 36:25-27; 37:23,24; Zephaniah 3:13.

Deut. 30:6: "And the Lord thy God will circumcize thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."

Isaiah 60:21: "Thy people also shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land forever; the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, wherein I glory."

Jeremiah 3:17: "At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem; neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart."

Jeremiah 50:20: "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none, and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I leave as a remnant."

Ezekiel 36:25-27: "And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep Mine ordinances, and do them."

Ezekiel 37:23,24: "Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will

cleanse them; so shall they be My people, and I will be their God. And My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in my statutes, and do them."

Zephaniah 3:13: "The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies, neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid."

15-ANCIENT TROUBLES AND SORROWS SHALL CEASE FOR EVER.

Cf. Isaiah 65:16, 19-22: "So that he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself by the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from Mine eyes.....And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man, that hath not filled his days; for the youngest shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit, they shall not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree shall be the days of My people, and Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands."

16-THE DIVINE PRESENCE (SHECHINAH) SHALL BE RESTORED TO ISRAEL AND KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED.

Cf. Ezekiel 37:26-28; 39:29; 43:7; Joel 2:27; 5:9; Isaiah 11:9; Jeremiah 31:34.

Ezekiel 37:26-28: "Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them--it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will establish them, and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in the midst of them forever. My dwelling place also shall be over them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And the nations shall know that I am the Lord that sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for ever."

Ezekiel 39:29: "Neither will I hide My face any more from them; for I have poured out My spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God."

Ezekiel 43:7: "And He said unto me: 'Son of man, this is the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever; and the house of Israel shall no more defile My holy name, neither they, nor their kings, by their harlotry, and by the carcasses of their kings in their high places.'"

Joel 2:27: "And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and there is none else; and my people shall never be ashamed."

Isaiah 11:9: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Jeremiah 31:34: "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying: 'Know the Lord'; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more."

17-THE PROPHET ELIJAH WILL APPEAR BEFORE THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH.

cf. Malachi 3:23,24: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet

before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers; lest I come and smite the land with utter destruction."

18-THE FUTURE TEMPLE WILL BE REBUILT ACCORDING TO THE DESIGN PREDETERMINED BY GOD. cf. Ezekiel 40-45.

19-THE ANCIENT DIVISION OF THE HOLY LAND WILL BE RESUMED.

cf. Ezekiel 47:13-48:35; "Thus saith the Lord God: 'This shall be the border, whereby ye shall divide the land for inheritance according to the twelve tribes of Israel, Joseph receiving two portions. And ye shall inherit it, one as well as another, concerning which I lifted up My hand to give it unto your fathers; and this land shall fall unto you for inheritance. And this shall be the border of the land: on the north side, etc.'"

20-THE RESURRECTION WILL TAKE PLACE IN THOSE LATTER DAYS.

cf. Deut. 32:39; Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2.

Deut. 32:39: "See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no God with Me; I kill, and I make alive; I have wounded, and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of My hand."

Isaiah 26:19: "Thy dead shall live, my dead bodies shall arise--Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust--For Thy dew is as the dew of light, and the earth shall bring to life the shades."

Daniel 12:2: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to reproaches and everlasting abhorrence."

TORAH AND MITZVOTHThe Abrogation of the Torah

Since it is clear that Isaac believes that our Torah is "min-hashomayim", for he says: "We Israelites are convinced that the Divine revelation proceeds from Infinite Wisdom, and is therefore complete and perfect in itself"(1-19), it follows that it cannot be improved upon or changed in any way. The Torah is immutable.

Isaac devotes his entire Ch. 19 of the first part of his book to a refutation of the Christian assertion that the Mosaic law was established not for a permanent, but rather for a limited period, and was totally abrogated by Jesus, who gave a new law.

He quotes the New Testament itself to answer this charge. Matthew 5:17,18,19,20: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Not only this, but Paul himself kept some of the laws and advised his disciples to do the same. We know that Paul circumcized his disciple Timotheus, as is related in Acts 16:3: "Then

came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcized him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek." This verse proves that even after the existence of Jesus, the law was not abolished. Also the Sabbath was observed by the Christians for many hundreds of years after Jesus, until one of the Popes changed the Sabbath Day from Saturday to Sunday. Therefore, says Isaac, the law of the Sabbath cannot be abrogated, the more so since this is one of the ten commandments which all Christians accept.1-19.

Isaac shows that the words of Jesus and his disciples in the New Testament give no support th those who seek sanction for breaking with the divine laws of Israel. He asks how the Christians explain the fact that Jesus expressly urged the observance of some of the Old Testament laws, such as the honor due to parents, neighborly love and charity; why did he warn them, as in Matthew 19, against homicide, adultery, theft and false testimony; whence did the apostles derive the prohibition given in Acts 15:20: to avoid idolatry, incest and the eating of ~~it~~ blood and strangled animals: "But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood."1-19.

Isaac then pauses to refute the assertion that it is easier to practice the law of Jesus than that of Moses, and dwells upon

Matthew 19:21: "Jesus said unto him, if thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me;" and Luke 18:22: "Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." Isaac contrasts this with the Mosaic injunction to give only a tenth to charity. He also mentions the New Testament injunction in Luke 6:27-29: "But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also," and points out that neither Jesus nor Paul followed this command, as is proven by John 18:22,23: "And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him: If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?" This is also proven by Acts 23:2,3: "And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth. Then said Paul unto him: "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?"(2-37)

Isaac objects to the fact that the Christians make changes and alterations in the divine law, suiting them to the customs of the day. This is unthinkable to one who believes in the Revelation at Mount Sinai. Isaac then quotes from the Old Testament to prove that no changes are to be made in the law: Deut. 4:2:

"Thou shalt not add unto it, and not diminish therefrom";
Deut. 4:8; Deut. 13:1: "All this word which I command you, that shall ye observe to do; thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."

Deut. 30:8: "And thou shalt return and hearken to the voice of the Lord, and do all His commandments which I command thee this day."

Psalm 19:8-10: "The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean enduring forever; the ordinances of the Lord are true, they are righteous altogether."

Psalm 111:7,8: "The works of His hands are truth and justice; All his precepts are sure. They are established for ever and ever, they are done in truth and in righteousness."

Psalm 119:44: "So shall I observe Thy law continually, for ever and ever."

Malachi 3:22: "Remember ye the law of Moses, My servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, even statutes and ordinances."

Isaac says that these verses prove that the divine law in its perfection and simplicity is neither to be enlarged nor curtailed, and how much the less to be abrogated and superseded by any other code, such as the New Testament.

Isaac closes his chapter by quoting from Budny's "Ibroni" (p.31) to prove that Jesus did not give a new law; and that the law of God, given to Israel, is eternal and perfect. Jesus didn't give a new law, in fact he confirmed the immutable commandments given by God through Moses. (1-19)

The Dietary Laws

Isaac upholds the Biblical command to observe the dietary laws. Certain foods have been forbidden to the Jews by the Torah. No subsequent statement in the New Testament has the power to invalidate the original commandments.

These foods have been forbidden to the Jews because they are unclean foods, whereas the Jews are a holy, clean people, and must not defile themselves. Isaac observes that there is nothing to keep the Gentiles from eating these unclean foods, for they are not a holy people in the sense that Israel is a holy people.

He spends some time in refuting the frequently heard assertion from Matthew 15:11: "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man." He shows that unclean foods and drinks taken in excess do assuredly defile both body and soul, and he cites Leviticus 11:44 "Neither shall ye defile yourselves", which he interprets to mean "your souls". And further to refute the statement in Matthew he says that out of the mouths of men come, not things which defile, but "praises of God and words of morality and wisdom."

Isaac takes occasion to mention the letter of the Apostolic Council held in A.D.49 at Jerusalem, which is mentioned in Acts 15:20, which tells the Christians to refrain from eating animals that have been strangled, and blood. (1-15, 1-49, 1-50, 2:72).

He observes that Christians do not agree among themselves about the observance of these laws, not only about not eating blood, but the other three things prohibited in Acts 15:20, namely, eating meats offered to idols, fornication, and things

strangled.1-49.

In the last chapter of part one he writes that the Christians have without authority abolished the law, repeated in the New Testament, to abstain from these four prohibited things.1-50.

He cites Zechariah 9:7 to show that in the future, even the Gentiles will refrain from eating blood and unclean and abominable food: "And I shall remove his blood from his mouth, and his abomination from between his teeth."

Geiger mentions that Budny also asserts that the Mosaic law has not been abrogated by the Gospels, and that it has been forbidden to all people to enjoy blood, unclean things, creeping things; and that Budny takes the Christians to task for not observing these laws. (p.16)

ISRAELThe Exile

In his introduction to the Hizuk Emunah, Isaac tells us that one of his purposes is to give strength to those whose faith has weakened because of the long duration of the exile.⁶

He writes that although Israel is now in exile, an exile that has been foretold because of the sins of the people of Israel, it is only a temporary exile, and the Jews will ultimately triumph. (1-16).

In Part 1, Ch. 7 the problem of the exile is introduced by the Christian argument that the Jews were kept in the Egyptian captivity for 400 years; in the Babylonian captivity, 70 years; whereas the present captivity has been prolonged more than 1500 years (at time of Isaac). Further, that Abraham and Jeremiah had received predictions which established with exactness the length of the two earlier exiles, but that no date had been revealed, even to the prophets, as to the end of the present exile. The Christian interrogator states that the reason for this is that this exile will have no end, since Israel is suffering under the curse written down in Leviticus 26:38: "And ye shall be lost among the Gentiles, and the land of your enemies shall consume you." Finally, it is asserted, that Reason itself shows that it is futile now for the Jews to expect deliverance, for if God hasn't delivered them after 1500 years, it is hardly likely that he will ever do so.

Isaac answers that Abraham was told the length of the Egyptian captivity for the sake of his own faith and the faith of his descendants in Egypt, in order that they might not be too

impatient for the end of the exile. Jeremiah was informed of the length of the Babylonian captivity in order to teach Israel that the sin of neglecting the sabbatical years had to be atoned for by the seventy years of the exile.

But what of the present exile? Why has no date been revealed for its end? Isaac answers that: "This exile has been decreed to atone for the iniquities, transgressions, and sins, which Israel sinned from the day of their entrance into the Land until they came into captivity. For iniquities are a grievous uncleanness for the souls of sinners, and separate between them and God, and they need washing and purification by the many strokes and cruelties done to them during the long time of their captivity. For in the Captivity of Babylon they were not cleansed properly. Only the sin of not keeping the years of release in Palestine was atoned for. But the iniquities, transgressions, and sins: immorality, idolatry, bloodshed, et cetera, were not atoned for in the Captivity of Babylon, because of the shortness of the time, therefore Divine wisdom decreed that Israel should come into this captivity, and that they should stay in it a very long time, until the end of the days, to receive their punishment, to destroy the transgression of idolatry, to annihilate the sin of immorality, and to atone for the iniquity of bloodshed, as it is said in Ezekiel 22:15 and Lamentations 4:22. Ezekiel 22:15: "And I will scatter thee among the nations, and disperse thee through the countries, and I will consume thy filthiness out of thee." Lamentations 4:22: "The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion, he will no more carry thee away into captivity; he will punish thine iniquity, O daughter of Edom, he will uncover thy sins."

"But in Babylon not only were their iniquities not effaced (except their sin about the years of release) but they sinned still more. Therefore they were obliged to go into captivity again to atone for all iniquities and sins. For after our iniquities are atoned for, and our uncleanness effaced by the chastisements of this bitter and hard captivity, then we shall no more sin, and then Deut. 30:6 will be fulfilled: "And the Lord thy God will circumcize thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." So also will be fulfilled Ezekiel 36:26,27: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep Mine ordinances, and do them." Further, says Isaac, "in that God determined to prolong the days of this captivity for the abundance of our iniquities, transgressions, and sins, and that the complete and perfect redemption from it depends upon our repentance, His wisdom determined to hide the date of the future redemption even from the Prophets: (Deut. 32:34: "Is not this laid up in store with Me, sealed up in My treasures?)" , and not even Daniel was allowed to know it: (Daniel 12:9: "And he said: 'Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end.") For the knowledge of the distance of the time would have been a hindrance and would have brought harm. Jews in this exile would be tempted to despair, and to break off the yoke of the law, as indeed as has happened to many."1-7. Further, says Isaac: "Our

redemption from this captivity depends on complete repentance. Deut. 30:1-6 says: "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt bethink thyself among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and hearken to His voice according to all that I command thee this day; thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; that then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the peoples, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine that are dispersed be in the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will He fetch thee. And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and He will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the Lord thy God will circumcize thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Isaac continues: "Therefore it is not possible to set a fixed time, seeing that we are able to shorten the time of the end if we turn to Him with all our heart in perfect repentance. For God's knowledge of the time does not do away with the freedom of our will." (1-7)

Isaac shows that the apostles had looked forward to the establishment of the kingdom, and then quotes Acts 1:6, saying: "When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Isaac asserts that the answer given by Jesus in the following verse: "And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the

times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power," proves that Jesus was not the Messiah, for he did not say that he would establish the kingdom, but rather he did say that God alone knew when the end of the exile was to be.

Isaac concludes that there is no valid basis for the argument that the length of Israel's present captivity furnishes proof that Israel has been totally rejected from God's special favor. On the contrary, it is all part of God's plan, and even though we cannot fully comprehend the wisdom of God, we must have faith in Him and believe that what He does is for the best.1-7.

The Mission of Israel.

Isaac believes that the mission of Israel is to be "a priest people," "a chosen people," "a holy people," "servants of God", whose duty it is, whose mission it is, to teach religious precepts to all: "It is our mission to instruct the nations of the world among whom we are dispersed, in the law of the living God, and, as the Psalmist says in Psalm 96:3: "To declare God's glory among the nations, his marvellous works among all the peoples," 1-22.

To support this conception of the Mission of Israel, Isaac cites Exodus 19:6: "And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel;"

Deuteronomy 33:10: "They shall teach Jacob Thine ordinances, and Israel thy law; they shall put incense before Thee, and whole burnt offering upon Thine altar;"

Isaiah 61:6: "But ye shall be named the priests of the Lord, men shall call you the ministers of our God; ye shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their splendour shall ye revel;"

Psalm 105:1: "O give thanks unto the Lord, call upon His name; Make known His doings among the peoples."

Isaac's view of the mission of Israel is an orthodox view,⁷ for Second Isaiah teaches that Israel is to be a light unto the nations: Isaiah 42:5-7: "Thus saith Lord the God, He that created the heavens, and stretched them forth, he that spread forth the earth and that which cometh out of it, he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and have taken hold of thy hand, and kept thee, and set thee for a covenant of the people, for a light to the nations."

Israel the Suffering Servant

Isaac devotes his entire Chapter 22 to a description of Israel as the suffering servant of mankind. Yet he does not, as one might expect, conceive this to be Israel's mission on earth.

The question arises when one of Isaac's disputants asserts that Isaiah 52:13: "Behold my servant shall prosper, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high", through Ch. 53, has reference to Jesus, concerning whom Isaiah is supposed to have said: "Surely he has borne our sicknesses and our pains. He was wounded by our transgressions and oppressed by our iniquities."

Isaac at once states that these verses have reference, not to Jesus, but to the people Israel. These verses don't describe the condition of Jesus, for he did not prosper and he was not exalted and extolled. On the contrary, he died an inglorious death. Isaac proves by numerous quotations that the expression "my servant" means Israel: i.e.: Isaiah 41: "And thou, O Israel my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham, my friend," and also, "And I say unto thee, Thou art my servant;" Isaiah 44:21: "And now hear, O Jacob my servant, and Israel whom I have chosen", and later, "Fear not, my servant Jacob", and "Remember these things, O Jacob and Israel, for thou art my servant"; "I have formed thee to be my servant". Isaiah 45:4: "For the sake of Jacob my servant and Israel my chosen one;" Jeremiah 30:10: "Fear not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord, and be not dismayed, O Israel;" "Fear not, O Jacob my servant, saith the Lord"; Psalm 136:22: "An inheritance to Jacob his servant."

Isaac then elaborates on the fact that Israel the nation has

borne the sicknesses and the pains of the nations of the world, and that it was Israel who was wounded by the transgressions of the nations, and heartlessly oppressed by the persecutions of the nations.

Isaac gives many quotations to show how much Israel has suffered, and adds that in his own day Israel was reduced to such straits that when a Christian wanted to describe an unpleasant sight, he would say: "He looks as miserable as a Jew".1-22. Or, Isaac comments, "No human language can adequately describe the incessant afflictions endured by the Jews".1-22. But, although Israel has been made to endure great suffering, it will be amply compensated at the time of the redemption from captivity.

God's purpose in afflicting and humbling Israel was to strengthen it in the time of its restoration. Israel's suffering is the divine test of its adherence to the faith of the fathers, for which God will reward it at the time of the Redemption. Then Israel will receive a portion and a spiritual reward among the patriarchs and the holy prophets. Israel will enjoy both worldly prosperity and spiritual beatitude. This will be Israel's compensation for the bodily and the mental suffering it has endured during the long exile, for being the suffering servant of mankind. 1-22.

THE END.

NOTES

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

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