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THE JEWS IN GERMANY DURING THE FIRST CRUSADE .

A Translation

of

Hebräische Berichte über die Judenverfolgungen während der Kreuzzüge.

By

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TO  
LEORA

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# INTRODUCTION



## INTRODUCTION

Upon the suggestion of the "Historische Commission für Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland", there was published in the year 1892 a book containing documents about the persecutions of the Jews during the Crusades, under the title "Hebräische Berichte über die Judenverfolgungen während der Kreuzzüge", "Hebrew Documents on the Persecution of the Jews during the Crusades". The book was edited by A. Neubauer, and M. Stern, with a critical introduction by H. Bresslau, with a German translation of the text by S. Baer. Five Hebrew reports comprise the book, of which the first and the fifth are published for the first time. The second document was edited in Leipzig 1854 by A. Yellinek, under the title קונטרס גזירות המלך; The third in Berlin 1878 by M. Mannheimer; and the fourth in Leipzig 1858 by M. Wiener. These documents will be referred to in this present thesis by the numbers I, II, III, IV, V, in accordance with their respective order in Neubauer and Stern's edition.

Since the writer has limited his scope to "The Jews in Germany during the First Crusade", this thesis shall deal with documents I, II, and III, each of which concerns itself with the events of the First Crusade only.

Before entering upon the analysis of the relationship between these three documents, it might be well to list the manuscripts from which the texts, as published by Neubauer and Stern, were taken, and to discuss cursorily, the probable authorship of each.

I - "Report of Solomon bar Simeon". This document was taken from the unique ms. no.28, of the Jews College Library in London, folio 151 -163. The ms. was often ~~dampered~~ tampered with by censors, and in many places was incorrectly copied. Many of these erased places were restored by the use of chemicals, by Neubauer, while many others were emended by Stern, by comparison with other documents. The beginning of this ms., dealing with the persecutions in Speyer and Worms is lacking in our present ms., as may be inferred from the opening statement: "And now I shall relate how the persecutions spread in the rest of the communities, etc.", and by two references to a preceding account on page two. The added section (p.31-35) which has nothing to do with the report in I, and which is supposed to have been taken from French sources, tells, not about the return of the Mayence Jews to Speyer and the rebuilding of the Mayence synagogue, as some scholars maintain, but tells about the first settling of the Jews in Speyer (1084) and the building of the synagogue in Altspeyer (1104). This, according to Elbogen was irrefutably proven by A.Epstein in "Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums" Vol.XLI, 1897, p.30 ff.

From a reference on p.21, document I was ascribed to a man by the name of Solomon bar Simeon, of whom we know nothing except that he lived and wrote about the year 1140. Some scholars maintain that this remark on p.21 is an insertion by a later redactor. Elbogen, on the other hand denies that this is an insertion, and maintains that the passage was misunderstood because of the misplaced colon after the words ~~וְהָיָה~~. The colon, he claims, should have been placed after the word ~~וְהָיָה~~. Punctuated

thus, the passage reads: "And from that day on, she fasted every day, and did not eat except once a day with the exception of Sabbaths and main Holidays and New Moon Days, until now, the year 900(1140). I, Solomon bar Simeon, recorded this event in Mayence, etc." This passage, says Elbogen, is a genuine part of the original text. "One might suppose from this one mention of his name, that Solomon bar Simeon was the author of this one episode only, were it not for the fact that the unified style and similar use of language throughout the entire report, points to a single authorship, who in all probability was this same Solomon bar Simeon."<sup>1</sup>

II - "Report of Elieser bar Nathan" is contained in the following mss: -

- (1) Bodleiana in Oxford, Cod. ms. Hebrew.
- (2) Cod. Hebrew. no. 2585, 3d of Bodleiana in Oxford.
- (3) Cod. Hebrew. Chart. no. 45 of the State and University Library in Strassburg, folio 8' - 10'.
- (4) Cod. chart. 171 in Jewish Theological Seminary Library in Breslau. Cf. also A. Yellinek's ms. "Zur Geschichte der Kreuzzüge. Nach handschriftlichen hebräischen Quellen" (Leipzig 1854).
- (5) A community record book, containing the report of Elieser, possessed by the Jewish community of Worms.

The name of the author of II has been inferred from the name woven in the acrostic poems included in this report. There was a writer by the name of Elieser bar Nathan from Mayence, who flourished about the middle of the twelfth century. He was famous as Talmud commentator, Païtan, and composer of the work "Eben Haezer".

1. Elbogen "Zu den Hebraischen Berichten etc." p.9.

He was called Rabban (רַבָּנָא) (Rabbi Elieser bar Nathan). He must have lived through the terrors of the First Crusade, for he described them in a piut for the Sabbath before Shebuoth. He reached the ripe old age of over ninety. This statement that Elieser bar Nathan of Mayence reached the great age of more than ninety, says Neubauer, is not based on documents. We only know that Elieser bar Nathan of Mayence was in correspondence with Rashi's son-in-law and his two grand-sons, Rashbam and Rabbi Tam. Whether this Elieser bar Nathan of Mayence, and the redactor of report II, and the author whose name is woven through the poems, are all one and the same person, cannot be established for certainty despite the striking similarity of the name. And yet, the composition of this document which mentions nothing about the sufferings during the Second Crusade, must therefore have been written before the year 1146. Bresslau says that it cannot be agreed with Graetz that this Elieser bar Nathan of Mayence is to be distinguished from a contemporary Elieser bar Nathan Halevi of Cologne, and that the latter is to be credited with the authorship of II. Bresslau credits Graetz's error to the fact that he was evidently misled by Joseph HaCohen, who in turn was misled by the fact that <sup>in</sup> the mss., IV followed immediately after II, and what Ephraim bar Jacob said about himself in IV was erroneously ascribed to Elieser Halevi, the author of II.

III - "Report of an anonymous writer of Mayence". The only known ms. is in the Grand Ducal Library at Darmstadt, Cod. or.25, fol.17' col.2 - fol.22' col.1. It is called "Report of an anonymous writer of Mayence" because it deals for the greater part with the martyrs of Mayence. It is incomplete as it now stands. The beginning



and conclusion, as well as many pages in the middle have been damaged by fire; as may also be inferred from the concluding sentence:

"Something is lacking here. I do not know how much". M.Mannheimer made a study of this ms. in his "Die Judenverfolgungen in Speyer, Worms and Mainz im Jahre 1096, während des ersten Kreuzzuges," Darmstadt 1877.

It has been argued by some scholars that this report was written at a later time than the two preceding ones because of the introductory and concluding sentences: "I will begin the story of the earlier persecutions. May God protect us and all Israel from the hand of persecutions", "The end of the story of the earlier persecutions". These scholars imply that the redactor must have been acquainted with later persecutions from which he distinguished these earlier ones. But, say other scholars, these remarks are not parts of the original text, but insertions of later copyists. (cf. Elbogen p.22, n.1.) Whether or not this is true must be decided on other grounds. Therefore I have attempted to present in the following paragraphs a comparative study of the relationships between the three reports.

A great deal of dispute has welled up among scholars as to the mutual relationship between reports I, II and III. Numerous opinions and proofs have been proposed. The most plausible and logical are those presented by H. Bresslau and I. Elbogen. Bresslau, who, although handicapped by a lack of knowledge of Hebrew, states that although there seems to be a general agreement between all three reports, there are, nevertheless, many variations.<sup>2</sup> I, in its report about Worms and Speyer coincides in many ways with II, while III stands quite independent. I and III, on the other hand, agree in their reports

2. Bresslau: Zur Kritik der Kreuzzugsberichte, p. xviii.

about Mayence, while II is decidedly brief and less detailed. The report about the lower Rhine is entirely omitted in III, but found in agreement in many ways in I and II. As to the other communities and the later fate of the Crusaders, we find only more or less completely in <sup>I</sup>III. Therefore concludes Bresslau: "It appears less probable that one of the three reports is derived directly from either one or the other." In proof of this theory, he argues that the author of III could not have preceded I. Take for example the concluding sentence of III (p.57): "All this did they whose names we have mentioned. And as for what the rest of the community and the leaders of the congregation did and accomplish for the unity of the Name of the King of the King of Kings, the Holy One, praised be He, and blessed be His Name, like Rabbi Akiba and his associates, I do not know." If the author of III had known I, he would have been able to tell about a number of the Mayence martyrs, and especially about the later fate of Rabbi Kolonymous, the leader of the community - whose death he knows nothing - all of which is fully narrated in I(p.15). Likewise, the author of II could never have preceded I, for in their respective accounts about Worms and Speyer, there are wide variations. For example, I(p.2) tells of eleven persons being killed, while II tells of only ten persons. Regarding the mutual slaughtering in Worms, I (p.2) speaks only of those who fled into the palace of the Bishop, while II (p.38) speaks also of those who remained in their houses. II (p.38) gives an account about the boy Simcha, who killed a relative of the Bishop and then himself, which is entirely lacking in I, (cf. III p.50). II(p.39) estimates the total number of slain at 1300, while I (p.8) estimates it at 1100. II (p.39) estimates the total number who fled to the villages at 60, while I (p.14)

estimates it at 53. I (p.12) tells that Mar Isaac had a son and a daughter, while II (p.40) says that he had two daughters. II (p.40) says that Mar Uri was burned in the synagogue, while I (p.13) says he was not able to reach the synagogue, but was murdered on the way. As to what happened in Cologne and vicinity, II gives a more accurate account than I, especially regarding the dates. II (p.42) misplaces the martyrs of forced conversion in the city of Altenahr, while I (p.18) reports the same event in Neuss. Very often II adds something to the account given in I; for example II (p.41) adds the name Wevelinghofen, which is lacking in I (p.18); II (p.42) speaks of a "Rabbi" from France", of whom I knows nothing. Now since according to these facts, says Bresslau, it is improbable that II and III are derived from I, it remains to be considered whether I could be a compilation of II and III, which Solomon bar Simeon, supplemented with facts gathered from oral tradition. This, however, he says, seems very improbable. While on the one hand, II and III in some places contain more facts than I, I nevertheless contains about the same facts, a number of declarations which are missing in II and III. For example: in regard to the characterization of Imco, I (p.5) mentions the alleged vision, which is lacking in III (p.52); I (p.8) calls Menachem, son of Judah, while III (p.50) calls him son of David; I (p.9) gives the name of Rachel's husband, while III (p.54) does not. I tells of the death of Samuel bar Gedaliah, which II omits; I knows the fate of Sarith, daughter-in-law of Mar Judah ben Abraham; I names in Xanten, Rabbi Natronai and Rabbi Moses; I knows the names of the sons of Mar Schemaria, who lived in Mörs.

concludes  
Considering all these facts, Bresslau/that there is no direct, but an indirect relationship between these three reports. No one is taken from the other two, but their relationship rests upon the use of common sources<sup>3</sup>. They may not have used the same mss., but they evidently used many different mss. which contained small variations in names and in dates. These common sources consist chiefly of two: M, the Mayence source; and K, the Cologne source. They are to be distinguished from one another by their form of presentation. M, has a vivid and direct style, utilizing mostly the first person plural (found mostly in B and III), while K is calmer and more subdued. The author of M must have lived close to the time of the events he describes, while the author of K must have lived much later than the time of the events he describes, yet, in a time when eye-witnesses were still alive. (about 1120-1140).

So much for Bresslau's view-point. Elbogen, on the other hand, is much less positive about his conclusions. He says: "From a comparison of the three sources, it is sufficient to confirm the opinion that the present texts, especially that of I, are too corrupt to establish a positive view of their mutual relationship. It cannot be positively determined whether the errors are due to faulty reports or to carelessnesses of the copyists."<sup>4</sup> Dr. M. Brann, editor of the "Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschafts der Judentums", held this same opinion as early as the year 1893. But, maintains Elbogen, from a comparison of the variations, it must be concluded both II and III are dependent upon I and are practically extracts of I. There are however, a few incidents, such as the inserted songs of Lamentation in II, and the account of Speyer and

3. Bresslau : p.xx1.

4. Elbogen : p.20.



Worms in III (p.47-51), which are separate and entirely independent of I, and which in all probability are additions by later editors or copyists. As our present text stands today, the beginning of I is missing. This missing part must have told about the saving of the communities of Speyer and Worms, as may be inferred from any number of statements in I. It is very probably, therefore, that III (p.48) made use of this missing section for its detailed descriptions, about the events in Speyer and Worms. And to justify his opinion, Elbogen says: "It may sound far fetched to accuse a writer of the rank of Elieser bar Nathan of being dependent upon a copy, but middle age writers are not to be judged by present day standards."<sup>5</sup> And this is absolutely true, for we know of many cases where writers copied whole pages without giving their source or without even putting their quotation within quotation marks.

In proof of the theory that the variations in the three reports, are due to the carelessnesses of the copyists, Elbogen cites the following examples: II (p.37) differs from I (p.2) in regard to the number of slain in Speyer. The entire account of Speyer in II was taken almost verbatim from I. In regard to the total number of slain in Mayence, II (p.39) gives 1300, while I in two places (p.8,14) gives 1100. Since these figures were recorded in Hebrew letters  $\text{ק"ל}$  (1300) and  $\text{ק"י}$  (1100), it can easily be seen how a copyists might have made an error. And similarly with the numbers of those slain with Kolonymous where II (p.39) gives 60 (  $\text{ס}$  ), while I (p.14) and III (p.53) give 53 (  $\text{ל"ג}$  ). In regard to the account of the burning of the synagogue in Mayence, what I (p.11-13) describes in one and

5. Elbogen : p.22.

a half pages, II (p.40) cuts down to six lines. The variations in dates and days of the week can also be traced to the carelessness of the copyists, for where I (p.23) lacks the date, II (p.43) lacks the day of the week.

As to the question of sources of information, Elbogen claims we are not able to say positively. He disagrees with Bresslau's assumption that they go back to middle Rhine and lower Rhine sources. The author of I in all probability must have collected his information from those very places where new Jewish communities re-arose. We do not know where he lived. On the one hand, he obtained data about the events in Xanten (p.53) from his relatives, and on the other hand, he secured information about the martyrs in Speyer, (p.2), and the burning of the synagogue (p.31), from an eye-witness, for it is written in the first person. It can also be inferred that the author gathered much of his information from Christians, for the description of Imco's vision and the later fate of the Crusaders could have come only from Christian sources. Likewise the imperial decrees, for the protection of the Jews must have served as valuable sources of information for our redactor. "We do not know what change in the dwelling of the Jews this catastrophe of 1096 caused", says Elbogen, "nor how the reports travelled, nor how one living in Mayence could have described an event that happened in Elber; but to enter into these and other questions would be futile, so long as we are hindered by such an insufficient text."<sup>6</sup>

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6. Elbogen : p. 24.

No finer appreciation of the style and composition could be given than that with which Elbogen concludes his article. Speaking of the author of I, he says: "He may not be, according to our standards, a master of style, but we must not forget that he had practically no predecessors. With the exception of Josippon, there is no older historical work in Hebrew dealing with the period of our first document; and in the native country of the author, neither before nor for a long time after, was there composed any coherent independent writings in Hebrew. Thus, it is to be greatly acknowledged that the author presented clear and distinct descriptions in good biblical Hebrew without doing violence to the language. He is neither pathetic nor sentimental. He remains, with all warm hearted sympathy for the innocent martyrs, the calm reporter, who stands over the events and seeks to present the development of the events by means of trustworthy reproduction. He knows each time how to give the various scenes, their correct coloring, and he has produced a valuable picture. He has endeavored to distribute correctly light and shadow, although by no means extreme in his hatred; he has applied typical evil designations to the Crusaders and to all Christians - otherwise he would not have been a person of the twelfth century. He was devoutly permeated with the future hope and promise for the Jewish people, but showed himself free from the belief in miracles and superstitions, and from the attempt to collect and gather all kinds of fairy tales and stories. For the seriousness of his task, he possessed the correct comprehension, and was therefore very careful to insure his information with the greatest possible credibility."<sup>7</sup>

Weighing the theories of both Bresslau and Elbogen, it seems to me that Elbogen has arrived at the more logical conclusion of the two, and is to be preferred, because of his thorough study

<sup>7</sup> Elbogen : 222.

of the original Hebrew text. It is a known fact that Bresslau based his study not on the Hebrew text but on the faulty translation of S.Baer.

The present thesis is a literal translation of the Hebrew text contained in Neubauer and Stern's edition of "Hebräische Berichte über die Judenverfolgungen während der Kreuzzüge". The writer did not attempt a free translation, but made an effort to follow the Hebrew text as closely as possible. If, therefore, the translation be found crude in parts, it must be blamed not to translation, but to the crude style of the original author or to the imperfect copy of the original manuscript.

REPORT  
OF  
SOLOMON BAR SIMEON

I.

REPORT OF SOLOMON BAR SIMEON.

And now I shall relate how the persecution spread in the rest of the communities which (permitted themselves to be) killed for the sake of the Name of the Only One, and to what extent they clung to God, the Lord of their fathers, and declared His unity (even) with their last breath (to the expiration of their souls).

And this occurred in the year 4856 (after the creation of the world) in the 1028th year after our exile, in the eleventh year of the 256th cycle, at which time we had hoped for deliverance and consolation, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, the prophet; "Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout at the head of the nations, etc." (Jer. 31:7) It was turned to the contrary, (however) to mourning and sighing, weeping and crying, for we found that the many evils, which were spoken in all the threats of punishment (Deut. 25:15f) written and unwritten, befell us.

There arose at first a haughty people, foreigners, a bitter and impetuous nation (of Hab. 1:6) Frenchmen and Germans, who took it into their minds to go forth to the Holy City "which robbers had profaned" (Ezek. 7:22); there to search out the grave (of the hanged bastard), and to drive out the Ishmaelites, (Turks), the inhabitants of the land and to conquer the land by their own hands. "They set up their own signs for signs" (Ps. 74:4), and placed a (sign) graven image, a cross, upon their garments, on every man and woman who was willing to go on the crusade, to the grave (of the Messiah) until



the men, women and children became more numerous than the locusts on the face of the earth; and it was said concerning them: "The locusts have no king" (Prov.30:27). And when they passed through the cities, in which there were Jews, they said one to another, "Behold, we are going on a distant journey in search of the House of Idolatry (grave), and to take vengeance on the Ishmaelites, while Jews whose forefathers killed and crucified <sup>him</sup> without cause, dwell here amongst us. Let us first take vengeance upon them, "and cut them off from being a nation that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance" (Ps.83:5); or else let them become like us, and acknowledge the Son of Impurity (Jesus)."

When the communities heard their words they adopted the ways of acting of our fathers, (namely); repentance, prayer, and righteousness. The hands of the holy nation became lax, and their heart melted away, and their strength grew weak. They hid themselves in their innermost chambers from (before) the flaming sword, and afflicted their souls with fasting. They fasted three days in succession, night and day, besides the other days they afflicted themselves, until "their skin is shrivelled upon their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick". (Lam.4:8). They cried (and uttered) a loud and bitter cry, but their Father heard them not. He shut ~~them~~ out their prayer and covered Himself with a cloud, so that their prayer could not penetrate (cf. Lam.3:8,44). He abhorred the tent (of Israel) (cf. Ps.78:67), and removed them out of His sight (cf. II Kg.17:18). For it was an ancient decree since "the day of My visitation" (cf. Ex.32:34), and this was the generation that was chosen by Him to be His portion. For they

possessed the strength and might to minister in His temple, and to do His word, and to sanctify His great Name in His world. And concerning them, David said: "Blessed be the Lord, ye Angels of His, ye mighty in strength, that fulfill His word, etc." (Ps.103:20)

In that year Passover fell on the fifth day of the week, (Thursday), and the month of Iyar on the sixth day of the week ( Friday ). On the eighth of Iyar, on Sabbath, the enemies arose against the community of Speyer, and killed among them eleven holy souls, who were the first to sanctify their Creator on the Holy Sabbath, and did not want to defile themselves in their stinking fluid (be baptized). And there was a distinguished and pious woman there, who committed suicide for the sanctification of the Name. She was the first in all the communities to kill herself or to be killed. The rest were saved by the hands of the Bishop<sup>8</sup>, without defiling themselves, according to all that is written above.

And on the twenty-third of Iyar, they attacked the community of Worms. The community divided itself into two groups; one group remained in their houses, while the other fled to the Bishop. The "Wolves of the Desert" (Jer.5:6) arose against those who had remained in their houses and robbed men, women and children, young and old. They threw down the stairs, destroyed the houses, and looted and plundered. They took the Torah, trampled it in the mire, tore it, burned it, "and devoured the Children of Israel with open mouth" (Is.9:11). Seven days after, on the new moon of Sivan, the day when Israel came to Sinai to receive the Torah, they frightened those who yet remained in the palace (room) of the Bishop. The enemies tortured (made sport of) them like the former ones, and subjected them to the sword. And they, encouraged by the example of

8. Bishop John 1090 - 1104.



their brethren, ( let themselves be) killed sanctifying the Name before the eyes of all. They stretched out their necks to let their heads be cut off, for the sake of the Name of their Creator. Many of them committed suicide. They fulfilled (the verse): "The mother was dashed in pieces with her children and the father fell with his sons for he was killed in their stead" (Hos.10:14). One slaughtered his brother, another his kinsman, or his wife, and his children; bridegrooms slaughtered their brides, and tender-hearted women, their beloved ones. And all accepted the judgment of Heaven with willing hearts, and surrendering their souls to their Creator, cried: "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One". The enemies stripped them, dragged and hurled them about. They left none save a few whom they forcibly baptized in their stinking water against their wills. Nearly eight hundred was the number of the slain on these two days, and all of them were brought to the grave naked. And concerning them Jeremiah mourned: "they that were brought up in scarlet embrace dung-hills" (Lam.4:5). I have mentioned their names above. May God remember <sup>them</sup> for good.

Now when the holy men, the pious men of the Almighty, of the holy community in Mayence, the shield and protector of all communities, whose name was spread throughout all lands, heard that a part of the community of Speyer and the community of Worms, was killed a second time and was attacked by the sword, their hands weakened, and their hearts melted and became like water. They cried to God with all their hearts and said: "Lord, God of Israel, wilt Thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel" (Ezek.11:13), and where are all thy mighty wonders, about which our fathers told us,

saying : 'Did you not bring us up from Egypt and Babylon, and deliver us many times ?' How is it that you have forsaken and abandoned us now, O Lord, to deliver us into the hands of Edom, the wicked one, that he destroy us.' 'Be not far from us, for trouble is near, and there is none to help us' (Ps.22:12)". And the leaders of Israel gathered together to give them good advice, how they might save themselves. And one said to another: "Let us select (someone) from our elders, that we shall know what to do, for this great evil will swallow us". And these came with one purpose; to ransom their lives by using (spreading) their money as bribes to the princes, governors, Bishops and dukes. And the heads of the congregation, who were respected in the eyes of the Bishop, arose and came to the Bishop and to his princes, and his servants to speak with him; and they said to them: "What should we do about the report we have heard regarding our brethren who were killed in Speyer and Worms?" And they answered: "Listen to our advice; bring all your money into our treasuries, and you, your wives, your sons and daughters, and all who are with you, assemble in the palace of the Bishop, until the invaders have gone away. Thus you will be able to escape from the hands of the crusaders." They did this and gave such advice, in order to gather us together and deliver us over into their power, and to seize us like fish, which are captured in an evil net, so as to take away our money, as they actually did in the end; the end thus proves the former designs. And the Bishop even assembled his princes and servants, high-princes, noblemen, in order to help us, because at the beginning it was his intention to save us with all his might, because we gave him and his princes and his servants a heavy bribe for this,

in that they had promised to protect us. But in the end, all that bribe and all that persuasion did not help to protect us on the "Day of Wrath", before the evil dispensation.

At this time (end of 1095) there arose a duke, by the name of Godfrey (of Bouillon) - may his bones be crushed to pieces - a ruthless fellow, whose spirit of harlotry let him astray to join those who go to idolatrous festivals (the crusaders). He swore an evil oath that he would not set out on his journey until he would avenge the blood of Jesus upon the blood of Israel, and that he would not leave a remnant nor a survivor, of those upon whom there was the name of Jew, for his anger was great (full) against us. But there arose the "Repairer of the Breach" (Is.58:12), the wonder of the generation, a God-fearing man, (who was worthy) to sacrifice upon the inner altar, Rabbi Kalonymos, the president of the congregation of Mayence, who swiftly sent a messenger to King Henry in the Kingdom of Pule (Italy); for he had been lingering there for nine years. He told him all the happenings. And the anger of the king became inflamed, and he sent to all the provinces of his Kingdom, to the princes, bishops and dukes, (especially) to Duke Godfrey, letters, words of peace, that they should protect the Jews, so that no one should touch them, or do them harm, and that they should be a help and a refuge unto them. But the wicked duke swore that it had never come upon his mind to do them any harm. And for all this they conferred upon him in Cologne five hundred marks of silver, and they conferred an equal amount upon him in Mayence, and he promised to obtain for them peace with protection. But the Maker of Peace departed from them, lifted up His eyes from His people and "hurled them to the power of the sword" (Jer.18:21). No prophet nor seer nor any wise or discerning man is able to fathom the reason why the sin of the congregation

9. The following episode does not belong here, but at beginning of doc.

was found so great that the holy congregations had to suffer (with their lives), as tho they themselves were blood-guilty. Nevertheless, He is a righteous Judge, and the guilt (evil report) is ours.

And then the seething waters (misfortunes) increased, and they (the enemies) invented fictions about the people of God, which were not true, saying: "Ye are the children of those who killed our God, and hung him on a tree". Even he (himself-Jesus) says: "There will still be a day when my children will come and avenge my blood". We are his children and it is up to us to seek vengeance upon you, for you are his traitors and transgressors. And <sup>from</sup> aforetime your God, who had promised to do good, was not satisfied with you, because you did evil before Him. Therefore, He forgot you, and favored you no more for you were stiff-necked. He separated Himself from you, and shined upon us, and took us for His portion. And when we heard that, "our heart trembled, and moved out of its place" (Job 37:1). We became silent, "and sat in darkness, as those who had been long dead, until God looked forth and beheld from Heaven" (Lam.3:6,50).

And also (the) Satan,<sup>10</sup> the pope of the wicked Rome came, and issued a call to all the nations who believed ~~him~~ Jesus, urging that they, the children of Seir, should gather together and go up to Jerusalem and conquer the city for themselves (in order that there should be a) paved road for the crusaders to go to the grave.....(of him)whom they have accepted as their God. The Satan came and mingled among the people; and they gathered together as one man to obey the command. They came, as numerous as the sand which is upon the shore of the sea, and their voice was like the tumult of whirlwind and tempest.

10. Pope Urban II - Council of Clermont Nov. 1095.



After the embittered ones had assembled, they planned a wicked plot against the people of God, saying: "Why should we (they) be so busy fighting the Ishmaelites round about Jerusalem? Is there not among us a people who ~~don't~~ not care for our (their) God, and whose fathers even hung our (their) God? Why should we let them live and why should we let them dwell among us? Let our sword, begin on their head, and after that we will go on the way to our (their) idol." And the heart of the people of our God weakened and there was no spirit left among them, for these evil plagues smote them many times. They came and laid down their supplications before God, fasted and so diminished their blood and fat that the heart of Israel melted within them. "And God did as He spoke, because we sinned against Him" (Jer.40:3). "He forsook His tabernacle at Shiloh the little sanctuary, which He had made to dwell among the nations" (Ps.78:60). His anger raged and He drew (emptied) these swords upon (after) them, until as few remained "as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign upon the top of a hill" (Is.30:17). "He delivered His strength into captivity" (Ps.78:61), and trampled upon it with feet. "See O God, and consider to whom Thou hast done thus!" (Lam.2:20). Is not "Israel a robbed and spoiled people" (Is.42:22) of your inheritance? Why did you raise the shield of his oppressor, and why does their might prevail? When they heard how I sighed, the ears of all who heard it tingled. How the mighty stay, the magnificent staff, the holy congregation, the richly treasured community of Mayence was broken! For it was a Divine Dispensation from God to try those who feared Him, whether they would carry the yoke of His pure fear.

One day there came a Christian woman who brought a goose with her, which she had raised from a fledgling. The goose would go every place the woman went. And she would shout to every passerby: "See, this goose has understanding. When I say that I am going on the crusade, it also wants to go with me." Then the crusaders, the city dwellers, and people of the land assembled against us, and said to us: "Where is your divine promise? How will you be able to save yourselves? Look now, for Jesus will do these wonders before our (their) very eyes, in order that we may reek vengeance upon our (their) enemies." And they all came with swords to destroy us. But a few of the important men of the city came and stood in front of them, and would not allow them to harm us. In that moment, the crusaders arose with one heart against the city dwellers, and smote one another until they killed one of the crusaders. They said: "All this the Jews have brought about". With the exception of a few, they all gathered against them and said: "You are cruel to prevail and overtake us (them)". When the holy men saw all these things, their hearts melted. And when they heard their words, the old men and the young men said: "Would that we should die by the Hand of God than by the hand of the enemies of God, because He is a merciful King, the Only One in the universe." They left their houses desolate and did not come to the synagogue, except on the Sabbath nearest the new moon of Sivan, which was the last Sabbath before our persecution. For a few men entered there to pray; and Rabbi Judah bar Isaac also entered there to pray among that group. They cried a great weeping, until their soul went out, for they realized that it was the decree of the King of the King of Kings; and who was there to

annul it. And there was a distinguished scholar, Rabbi Baruch bar Isaac, who said to us: "Know for truth and certainty that the decree was ordered upon us by God, and that we cannot escape it; for that night my father-in-law, Judah, and I heard the souls who were praying, like crying, in the synagogue. And when we heard the voice, we thought that perhaps a few of the community came from the court of the Bishop to pray in the synagogue at midnight because of their trouble and their bitterness of heart. We ran to the door of the synagogue to see who the praying ones were. But the door was locked. We heard the voice, a loud weeping, but we could not understand a thing it said. Trembling, we returned to our houses, for the house was near the synagogue. And when we heard these things we prostrated ourselves and said: "Wilt Thou, O Lord God make a (full) end of the remnant of Israel?" (Ezek 11:13)". Then they (Baruch and Judah) went and told their experiences to their brethren who were in the court of the duke and in the rooms of the Bishop. They knew that the decree came from God, and they cried a great wailing, and justified the judgment saying: "Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and upright are Thy judgments" (Ps. 119:137).

And on the new moon of Sivan, the Duke Imco, the oppressor of all the Jews - may his bones be ground to pieces in ~~an~~ threshing sleds, - came with a mighty army, with crusaders and common people, and set up tents outside of the city; for the gates of the city were closed before him. For he also said: "I desire to go on the crusade". And he became the head of the invaders. He imagined (in his heart) that a messenger of Jesus came to him, and set a sign upon his flesh to let him know that as soon as he would come to Greek Italy (Sicily) he himself would come and crown him with the kingly crown, in token that all his enemies were overcome. He was the head of all our

oppressors. Upon the old men and the virgins, he had no mercy. Upon the child, the suckling, and the sick, he had no compassion. He treated the people of God as dust of threshing. Their youths he killed by the sword; and the pregnant women he ripped open. They encamped outside of the city for two days. At the time when this wicked man came to Mayence, on his way to Jerusalem, the elders of the people went to their bishop, Ruthart, and bribed him with 300 marks of silver. His intention was to go the villages, which were under the control of the bishop, but the community that bribed him came and beseeched him to remain with them in Mayence. He brought the whole community into his inner chamber and said: "I am willing to help you ". And the duke also said: "I am also willing to tarry here to be a help to you, and to give you all our protection until the crusaders have gone." The community consented to do so and both the Bishop and the duke agreed, saying: "We will either die or live with you." Then the community said: "Now after our neighbors and our acquaintances have agreed to help us, we shall also send our money to Imco, the wicked, and place letters in his hand, that the communities on his way will show him respect. Perhaps God will show us great mercy, and leave us alone." Therefore we threw away our money in giving it to the bishop, his princes, his servants, and to the city dwellers; about 400 marks of silver. And we gave to Imco, the wicked, seven litres of gold in order that he might help us. But it was of no avail, for our wounds did not receive any healing until now. For<sup>we</sup> were not even regarded like Sodom and Gemorrah. To save them, only ten were required, but to save us, neither twenty nor ten were sufficient.



On the third of Sivan, which was a day of sanctification and separation for Israel, the day of the giving of the Torah, on which Moses, our teacher, may he rest in peace, spoke: "Be ready on the third day" (Ex.19:15); on this day, the community of Mayence, the pious of the Most High, were separated in holiness and purity, and all were sanctified to go up to God together. For since they were friendly (pleasant) in their lives, even in their deaths, they were not divided (cf. II Sam.1:23). All of them were in the palace of the Bishop when the anger of God was kindled against his people. He established the plan of the crusaders and prospered their hands. Neither fortune, nor fasting, nor affliction, nor crying, nor righteousness availed. Not a single one was found to heal (stand in) the breach; Neither teacher nor chief; even the holy torah was not able to protect its disciples. "And all the splendour went out from the daughter of Zion" (Lam.1:6), which is Mayence, for the voice of the mighty men of the flock had ceased, the voice of warriors, "who turned back the battle" (Is.28:6), "who turn the many to righteousness" (Dan.12:3), "the city of praise, the city of my joy" (Is.49:25), which scattered so much money to the poor and there was no one to write in the annals with iron pen the many deeds which happened there since time immemorial. In one place were united, Torah, Greatness, Riches, Honor, Wisdom, Humility and Good Deeds, to make a double fence around their deeds (words). And now their wisdom was swallowed up and they were destroyed like the children of Jerusalem at the time of their destruction. And at noon, Imco, the wicked, the oppressor of the Jews, he and all his army came against the gate, and the city dwellers opened the gate for him. And the enemies of God said, one to another: "See they have opened the gates for us,

Let us now avenge the blood of Jesus." But when the children of the holy covenant, the Holy Ones, those who fear the Most High, saw that the mighty multitude, the great army, was as numerous as the sand which is upon the shore of the sea, they clung to their Creator. They then put on armour and girded themselves with weapons of war, old and young. And Rabbi Kalonymous bar Meshulam, the president, was at the head. But because of their many troubles and fastings, they did not have enough strength to withstand the enemies. And then came groups and troops, flowing like a river, until Mayence was filled from one end to the other. The enemy, Imco spread a rumor in the ears of the community to drive out and chase the enemy from the city."And the tumult from God"(Zesh.14:13) was great in the city. And each man of Israel in the inner court of the bishop girded himself with weapons and all drew nigh to the gate to fight the crusaders and the city dwellers. And they fought one against the other into the midst of the gate. But our sins caused the enemies to prevail and to capture the gate. And God's hand was heavy upon His people, and all the Gentiles, gathered against the Jews who were in the court to wipe out their name. And the hands of our people were weakened when they saw that the hand of the wicked Edom attacked them. The men of the Bishop, who had pledged them help, also fled at first, in order to deliver them into the hand of the enemies, for they (the men of the bishop) were like broken reeds to them. The Bishop himself also fled from his abomination ( church), because they wanted to kill him also, because he had spoken in favor of Israel. And the enemies entered the court on third of Sivan, on Tuesday, "A day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness"(Zeph.1:15).

"Let darkness and the shadow of death claim it for their own"(Job 3:5).  
"Let not God inquire after it from above, neither let the light shine upon it" (Job 3:4,5). Woe to this day, upon which we saw the affliction of our souls. Ye stars, why did ye not darken your light? Is not Israel compared to the stars, and the twelve signs of the Zodiac to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob? Why did you not withhold your light from shining upon your enemies, who planned to destroy the name of Israel? When the Children of the Covenant saw that the decree was fulfilled and that the enemies conquered them and entered the court, they all cried together, old and young, virgins and boys, men-servants and maid-servants, to their Father in heaven, weeping for them and for their lives. They justified the judgment of Heaven, saying one to another: "Let us take courage and bear the yoke of the Holy Fear. Only for the time being will the enemies kill us, and only by means of the easiest of the four types of death, by the sword. We shall be alive but our souls will be established in Paradise, in the great lucid speculum for ever and ever. " And they said with peaceful heart and willing spirit:"After all, one should not criticize the ways of the Holy One, Praise be He, and blessed be His Name, who gave us His Torah and the command to let ourselves be killed and slain for the Unity of His Holy Name. Happy shall we be, if we do His will. Happy is every one who is killed and slaughtered, and who dies for the Unity of His Name. He is destined for the world to come and he will dwell in the group with the righteous, with Rabbi Akiba and his comrades, the pillars of the world, who were killed for the sake of His Name. And not only that but a world of darkness will be changed for him into a world of light,

and a world of trouble to a world of gladness, and an ephemeral world to a permanent world, for ever and ever. And then they all shouted in a loud voice, as one: "From now on we cannot delay any longer, for the enemies are already coming upon us. Let us go in haste, and sacrifice ourselves as a sacrifice before God. Let everyone who has a knife, examine it, lest there be a defect in it, and let him come and slaughter us, for the sanctification of the unity of eternal life, and after that, let him slaughter himself at his own throat or let him stab himself in the stomach." As soon as the enemies entered the court, they found there a few of the perfect pious men with our teacher, Rabbi Isaac bar Moses, uprooter of mountains. He stretched out his neck and they cut off his head first. They wrapped themselves in praying shawls and fringes, and sat thus in the court, ready to fulfill the will of their Creator. They did not want to flee into the room, so as to prolong their life an hour longer, for out of love they accepted the judgment of Heaven. The enemy cast stones and arrows at them, but they did not think of fleeing. They smote all whom they found there "with the stroke of the sword and with slaughter and destruction" (Esther 9:5). And when those who were in the rooms saw the deed of these righteous ones, and how the enemy fell upon them, they all shouted: "..... Better would it be to offer ourselves as sacrifices." And the women there girded their loins with strength and slaughtered their sons and their daughters and then themselves. Many men also plucked up courage and slaughtered their wives and their children and their babes. The tender and soft hearted mother slaughtered her favorite child. And they all, men and women, arose and slaughtered



each other. Maidens, brides and grooms looked out of the windows and cried in loud voices: "Look and see, our God, what we are doing for the sanctification of Thy great Name, in not changing Thee (for a hanged, crucified, dirty, detestable, abominable, bastard, son of uncleanness, son of carnality)."

"And the precious sons of Zion" (Lam.4:2), sons of Mayence, were tried with ten trials, like Abraham, our father, and like Chananya, Michael and Azariah. And afterwards they tried their sons, like Abraham tried Isaac his son, and willingly received upon themselves the yoke of the fear of Heaven, the King of the King of Kings, the Holy One, Praised be He. They did not want to deny nor exchange the fear our King for the offspring who is an abominable bastard, a son of uncleanness, a son of carnality. They stretched out their necks for the slaughter, and surrendered their innocent souls for their Father in Heaven. And righteous and pious women stretched out their necks, one to the other, to be sacrificed for the Unity of the Name. A father was slaughtered by his son or his brother; a brother by his sister; a mother by her son or her daughter; a neighbor by his neighbor or friend; a groom by his bride; a betrothed by his betrothed. One slaughtered and was slaughtered, and another slaughtered and was slaughtered, until blood mingled with blood; the bloods of husbands with that of their wives; of fathers with their children; of brothers with their sisters; of teachers with their disciples; of grooms with their brides; of cantors with their scribes; of children and sucklings with their mothers. They were killed and slaughtered for the Unity of the Honored and Awe-Inspiring Name. The ears of whosoever heard this or the like tingled. "For who hath heard such a thing? Who hath

seen such things?" (Is.66.8) Ask and see whether there was ever such a multifarious sacrifice since the time of the first man, in which 1100 offerings were sacrificed on one day; all of them like the offering of Isaac, the son of Abraham. On account of this one offering, which was offered on Mount Moriah, the world trembled; for it was said: "Behold their valiant ones cry without"(Is.33:7) and the heavens become black. What did they do? Why did not the "heavens grow dark, and the stars withdraw their shining?"(Joel 2:10). And why did not the moon and sun grow dark in their orbits (cf.Is.5:30) when one one day, the third of Sivan, 1100 holy souls were killed and slaughtered, and as many children and sucklings who neither transgressed nor sinned, poor innocent souls? Wilt Thou be carried away, O Lord, on account of this? because for your sake numberless souls were killed. Mayest Thou avenge the blood of Thy servants, which was shed, speedily in our days, and before our eyes! Amen! On that day, the crown of Israel fell, the scholars of the Torah fell, the distinguished scholars ceased, the honor of the Torah fell, as it is written: "He hath cast the beauty of Israel from heaven to earth" (Lam.2:1). Those who feared sin ceased; the men of deeds, the glory of wisdom, purity, and abstinence, the glory of priesthood, men of faith, the Repairers of the Breach, and those who removed the evil decrees, the anger of their Creator-they all died. Those who give in secret were diminished. "Truth was lacking (rejected)" (Is.59:15). Preachers ceased. Distinguished and respected old men fell, on that same day upon which many hardships befell us, where there was no way to turn, neither to the right nor left (Nu.22:26), "because of the fury of the oppressor"(Is.51:13). Ever since the

the day of the destruction of the second Temple, there was none like unto them in Israel, and after them, there shall be none; for they sanctified and unified Thy Name with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their might. Happy are they, and happy is their lot! For all of them are destined for life in the future world. May I also have a portion with them!

"And He hath multiplied in the daughter of Judah, mourning and moaning" (Lam.2:5), when the enemy arose against them and killed children, and women, youths and old men on one day. "They respected not the (faces of) priests; they were not gracious unto the elders" (Lam.4:16). They had no pity on children and sucklings; they had no mercy on advanced pregnant women, until they left not a fugitive, but merely two or three <sup>data</sup> pits. For they all yearned to sanctify the name of their Creator. And when the enemy came upon them, they all cried in a loud voice, with one heart and with one mouth: "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One". And there was a pious and righteous man, one of the greatest of his generation, our teacher, Rabbi Menachem bar Judah, who spoke in the ears of the people and expounded before them: "Just as Jacob, our father did to his sons;-when he sought to reveal to them the end, when the Schechinah departed from him, and he said: "Lest there be found in me a blemish, like that which issued forth from Isaac, our father;" But they answered and said; "Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one"; and as our fathers did when they received the Torah on Mt.Sinai at this time, saying: "We shall do and hearken"; (Ex.24:7) and they answered in a loud voice: "Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One",-- so must you do today!" They declared the unity of God with full heart, and did as the Lord of the land commanded, and cried, all with

one mouth and one heart: "Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one." At that time, our teacher, Isaac bar Moses, and the rest of the rabbis, and important men, were sitting in the court of the Bishop and were crying. With their necks stretched out, they said: "When will the robber come, that we may receive upon us the judgment of heaven? We have already arranged the offerings, and made altars for His Name's sake."

And now I will tell and narrate about these great wonders which were done on that day by those pious men. Behold, did this ever occur since days of old, that one should press the other saying: "Let me be the first to sanctify the name of the King of King of Kings, the Holy One, praised be He." And also the innocent women, daughters of kings, threw their money and silver through the windows to the enemies, in order that they should busy themselves picking up the money, (thus) detaining them a little thereby, until they should finish the slaughtering of their sons and their daughters. And the hands of the merciful women slew their children, in order to do the will of their Creator. When the enemies came into the rooms and broke down the doors, they found them still struggling convulsively and wallowing in their blood. They took away their money, stripped them naked, and smote the remaining ones, not leaving among them a remnant nor a survivor. And thus they did to all the rooms in which were the children of the Holy Covenant, with the exception of one room which was a little stronger; but the enemies fought against them until evening. And when the holy ones saw that the enemy was stronger than they, and that they were not able to withstand them any longer, they strengthened themselves and arose, men and women,



and slaughtered their children first. Meanwhile the pious women would hurl stones through the windows upon the enemies, who in turn hurled stones back at them. The stones struck them so much, that their bodies (flesh) and faces were cut to pieces. Then they reviled and blasphemed the Crusaders in the name of Jesus, the profane and abominable one, the son of harlotry, saying: "In whom do you put your trust? In a putrid corpse?" The Crusaders then drew nigh to break the door. Who ever saw or heard what this righteous and pious woman, Rachael, the eldest daughter of Rabbi Isaac bar Asher, the wife of Rabbi Judah, did? She said to her friends: " I have four children. Spare them not, lest these uncircumcized ones come and seize them alive, and they be confirmed in their abomination. Even upon them sanctify the name of the Holy God." And one of her friends came and took the knife to slay her son. But when the mother of the children saw the knife, she let out a great and bitter cry, and beat herself upon her face and breast saying: "Where is Thy mercy, O God?" (Ps.89:50). Then the woman said to her friends, in the bitterness of soul: "Slay not Isaac before Aaron his brother, that he (Aaron) see not the death of his brother". Then (Aaron) ran away. And the woman took the boy (Isaac) and slew him; for he was the younger and very good looking. The mother spread out her two hands to catch the blood and caught the blood in her sleeves instead of in a blood bowl. And when the boy Aaron saw his brother being slain, he cried: "Mother, slay me not." He ran away and hid under a chest. She (the mother) had two daughters, Belle and Matrona, beautiful pretty virgins, the daughters of Rabbi Judah, her husband. These girls took the knife, and sharpened it that it be not dull, and stretched out their necks, and she (the mother) sacrificed them to

God, Lord of Hosts, who commanded us not to exchange his holy fear, but to be whole-hearted with him, as it is written: "Be thou whole-hearted with the Lord, thy God." (Deut. 10:10) After the pious woman had finished sacrificing her three children before their Creator, she raised her voice and called to her son Aaron: "Aaron, where are you? I cannot even spare you, nor have mercy upon you." She pulled him by the foot from under the chest, where he had hidden and sacrificed him before the high and exalted God. Then she placed them in her two sleeves, two on each side near her body, while they were still struggling convulsively beside her, until the enemies seized the room, and found her sitting and lamenting over them. And they said to her: Show us the money which you have in your sleeves." But when they saw the slain children, they beat her and killed her upon them; her spirit escaped, and her soul came to an end. And concerning her it was said: "The mother was dashed to pieces with her children" (Hos. 10:14). She died with her four children just as the (other) pious woman died with her seven children. Concerning them, it was said: "As a joyful mother of children" (Ps. 113:9). And the father burst into crying and howling, when he saw the death of his four charming and beautiful children, and went and cast himself upon his sword, and his entrails oozed forth, and he wallowed in blood in the middle of the street with the slain ones who were still struggling convulsively and wallowing in their blood. The enemies slew all those who were left in the room, and stripped them naked. "See, O Lord, and behold how abject I have become!" (Lam. 1:11)." Then the crusaders began to profane <sup>5576 converted</sup> the name of Jesus, for they did their will against all those who were found in the room of the bishop, and there was not a fugitive left among them.

And they raised their banners, and came with loud noises upon the rest of the community in front of the court of the Duke, and besieged them until they captured the entrance gate of the court, and also smote those who were found therein.

And there was a pious man by the name of Moses bar Helbo, who had two sons, who called to his sons and said to them: "My sons, Helbo and Simson, in this hour hell and paradise are open. Into which of them would you now care to enter?" And they answered and said to him: "We would like to enter the door of paradise!" And they stretched out their necks and the enemies smote the father together with the sons. May their souls linger in paradise in the light of life! And the scroll of the Torah was also there in the room. And when the crusaders came into the room and found it, they tore it to pieces. And when the holy and pure women, daughters of kings, saw that the Torah was torn, they cried out with loud voices to their husbands: "See, see, the <sup>9</sup>enemies have torn the holy Torah." And all the women said, as with one mouth: "Woe! - the holy Torah, the crown of beauty, the splendor of our eyes, before which we used to prostrate ourselves in the Synagogue, which our small children kissed, and which we have honored! - Woe, it has now fallen into the Hands of those uncircumcized unclean ones!" And when the men heard the words of the holy women, they grew very zealous for the Lord our God, and His holy precious Torah. A young man by the name of Rabbi David, bar Rabbana Rabbi Menahem, called and said to them: "My brethren, rend your garments, in respect of the Torah!" And they rent their garments. They found one crusader in the room, and all the men and women arose and stoned him to death. And when the city-dwellers and crusaders saw that one of the crusaders was dead, they fought against them. They climbed upon the roof, in

which house the children of the holy covenant were. They tore down the roof, shot them with arrows, stoned them with stones, and stabbed them until they made an end of them. There was a very good man by the name of Jacob bar Sulam, who however, did not come from an honorable family and whose mother was not a Jewess, who cried with loud voice to all who were standing near him, saying: "Until <sup>you</sup> now/have despised me, but now see what I am going to do!" He took the knife which was in his hand, put it to his throat, before the eyes of all, and slaughtered himself in the name of the ~~G~~lorified of the ~~G~~lorified, the Lord of Hosts is His Name. And, there was yet another man by the name of Samuel bar Mordecai, the elder, who also sanctified the Name. He called to all who were standing near him and said: "See, my brethren, what I am going to do today, for the sanctification of the Name of the Ever-living One." He took his knife, and stabbed it into his belly, and his entrails spilled on the ground. Thus fell an old man in his holiness, for the unity of the Name, and the sanctification of His fear.

And the Crusaders and city dwellers turned from there, and came presumptuously into the midst of the city, into one of the courts, when they saw that they (the Jews) exercised their will against their enemies. And David bar Nathaniel, the tax collector, his wife, his children and all his household were hidden in a court belonging to a priest. The priest said to them: "See, there is neither a remnant nor a survivor left in the court of the Bishop, nor in his castles, nor even in the court of the Duke. All were killed or cast out, or trampled upon in the mire of the streets, except the few of them whom they converted, who turned to our teaching. If you <sup>will</sup> do likewise, then you will be able to save yourself, your money, and all your



household from the hand of the Crusaders." And the God-fearing man answered: "Go outside to the Crusaders and city dwellers and tell them in my name, that they should all come to me." And when the priest heard the words of the pious man, David, the tax collector, he rejoiced exceedingly over his words, for he thought: "Already is such a prominent Jew willing to hearken to our voice." He ran outside before the people and told them the words of the pious one, who had sent him. And also they all rejoiced exceedingly. Many thousands gathered round about the house. When the righteous<sup>97</sup> saw them, he put his trust in the God of his fathers, and proclaimed unto them, saying: "Ye are the children of harlots; you believe in a God who is (a crucified bastard), but I believe in an eternal living God, the glory of the high heavens, in whom I have trusted to this day, and will do so until my soul departs. I know for certainty that if you will kill me (him), my soul will rest in paradise, in the light of the living; but you will go down to a dark pit for eternal dwelling, and will be banished in hell (with your God),<sup>98</sup> boiling filth, for he is the son of a Harlot". When they heard the words of the pious man, they grew very angry, because he reproached them and told them their shame. They raised their banners and encamped roundabout the house, and began to shout and cry in the name of Jesus. They went up to him, and killed him, his righteous wife, his son, his daughter, his son-in-law, and all his household and his maid servant. All were killed for the sanctification of His Name. There fell the righteous one with the men of his household; and they cast them out through the windows into the streets. The citydwellers and Crusaders turned from there, and came to another house, to the house of Rabbi Samuel bar Neaman, who also sanctified the name of the Holy One. They gathered around his house, for he alone of all the



community was left in his house, with a few of the other remaining ones. They entreated him and sought to baptize him in their putrid water; but he and all who were with him, put their trust in their Creator, and would not hearken to them, to submit to them. So they killed them all and trampled upon them with their feet (troops).

"For these things I weep; Mine eyes runneth down with water" (Lam.1:16), because the sanctuary of our God was burned, and because of the burning of the leader, Isaac bar David, who was burned in his house.

And now I will tell and make known to all how the thing happened. On the fifth day of the month of Sivan, on the eve of Shebuoth, these two pious men Isaac, the righteous, bar David, the chief, and Uri bar Joseph, came and acknowledged their Creator, and sanctified exceedingly the Name of their Creator. For on the third day (of Sivan) when the community was killed, on that same day, these two pious men were rescued for hell (Gehinom) since the enemies baptized them against their will. And therefore they received upon themselves a death, such as was not written in all the punishments. Isaac, the pious, came to his father's house to look after the hidden treasures which were concealed there since the days of his father. He came to the cellar and found that the enemies had not touched it. He thought: "What good is all this money to me now, since the enemies have practiced the cunning of their heart on me, in order to separate me from my God, and to make me rebell against the law of our Holy Lord? And in addition, a priest seeks to strengthen<sup>me</sup> in his faith! Is there any righteousness for me in this money? for one carries to the future world neither silver nor gold, but only repentance and good deeds." He meditated: "I shall repent. I shall be perfect and

complete with God, the Lord of Israel, until I shall deliver my soul to Him, and fall into His hands. Perhaps He will do according to His mercy, so that I shall still be united to my comrades and come with them into their camp, to the great light. It is revealed and known to Him who tries hearts that I listened to the enemies only in order to save my children from the hands of the sons of iniquity, so that they should not be confirmed in their abominations; for they are (still) young, and do not know how to distinguish between good and evil." He went to his father's house, hired laborers, repaired the doors of the house, which the enemies had broken. And when they finished repairing the doors on the fifth day, on the eve of Shebuoth, he came to his mother and told her what he intended to do. He said to her: "Woe, my mother, my mistress, I have decided to bring a sin-offering to the God of Heavens, by means of which I shall find atonement." And when his mother heard the words of her son, that he feared God, she made him swear that he would not do this thing, for she was moved to compassion for him, since he alone of all her dear ones was left to her. His holy wife Scholaster, the daughter of Rabbi Samuel, the elder, was killed. His own mother also was lying in bed because the enemies had inflicted many wounds upon her. And this son, Isaac, she saved from death without baptism, after they had already defiled him. Isaac, her son the pious one, did not understand her words, nor did he listen to her. He came and shut the doors of the house upon himself, his children and his mother, on all sides. Then the pious one asked his children, "Are you willing that I should sacrifice you to our God?" And they answered: "Do whatever you wish with us." And the righteous one answered, saying:

"My children, my children, truly He is our God, there is no other." And Isaac, the righteous, took his two children, his son and his daughter, and led them thru the court at midnight, and brought them to the synagogue before the holy ark, and slaughtered them there for the sanctification of the great Name, the high and exalted God, who commanded us not to exchange his fear of the Torah, but to cleave to his holy Torah with all our hearts, and with all our souls. He smeared their blood on the pillars of the holy ark in order that they should be a remembrance before the Only Ever-Living King, and before the seat of His glory. (He said:) "May this blood be an atonement for all my sins." And the pious one returned through the court to his father's house, and set the house on fire at the four corners. And his mother who was left in the house, was burned for the sanctification of the Name. The Pious Isaac returned a second time to burn the Synagogue, and kindled the fire at all the doors. And the pious one kept walking from corner to corner (from corner to corner), his hands spread heavenward to his Father in heaven, praying from the midst of the fire to God in a loud and sweet voice. And the enemies cried to him through the windows: "You wicked man, come out of the fire; you are still able to save yourself!" And they handed him a pole, by which to pull him out from the fire but the righteous one was not willing. And there was burned a perfect, upright, God-fearing man. (Job 1:1) Verily his soul is hidden in the lot of the righteous ones in Paradise. And Uri also had this same plan to burn the Synagogue, because he had heard that the enemies and city dwellers were speaking of building a house of idolatry or a mint out of it. So while Isaac was setting his father's house and the Synagogue on fire, Uri was in another house. He also wanted to join Isaac in

burning the Synagogue just to sanctify the Name in company with his friend Isaac, but he could not reach him. For the enemies arose from their beds at midnight when they noticed the fire and before he (Uri) could come to him (Isaac), they killed Uri on the way, before he reached the fire. And Isaac was burned. There both of them fell before God with one heart, with a complete heart, for His Name, which is called "Hosts". And concerning them, and those like unto them, it was said: "Whosoever sacrifices a thanksgiving offering honors me" (Ps/50:23). Some say that the converts heard that they wanted to make a mint out of the Synagogue, and for that reason, the pious one burned it, and was himself burned in the Synagogue. Others say that they heard that the enemies wanted to make a house of idolatry out of the Synagogue, and for that reason they burned it.

One year before the Day of God came, (Mal. 3:23) before the destruction came, most of the rabbis who were in the communities died, and the prominent men in Israel departed, as tho to fulfill the verse: "The righteous are taken away from the evil to come" (Is. 57:1). And Rabbana Rabbi Eleazar died.

And there were many women, who sanctified the name of their Creator until the expiration of their souls, but who were not willing to exchange Him for the hanged Bastard. Rachael, the comrade of the dead Rabbana Rabbi Eleazar, the comrade of Rabbi Judah bar Isaac, the great guide, who was killed for the sanctification of His Name, and also other holy women who were with them, sanctified the Name. They brought the innocent ones before the court of the idolators, and persuaded them to let themselves be washed in their putrid waters. And when they reached their church (House of Idolatry), they did not



want to enter there-- that house of idolatry. Unwillingly, they placed their feet upon the threshold, but did not want to enter their house of idolatry, to smell the odor of abominable incense(skins). When the Crusaders saw that they did not want to accept their abominations and that they also trusted and relied in a living God, with all their heart, the enemies then jumped upon them and beat them with hatchets and hammers. And there the innocent women were killed for the sanctification of the Name. Furthermore, there were two pious women, one was Guta, the wife of Rabbana Rabbi Isaac bar Moses, who was killed earlier, and the other was Scholaster, the wife of Isaac, who was burned for the sanctification of the Name. They also sanctified the Name of the Holy and OnlyOne, who is unified by the mouth of all the living. At the time when the holy ones were killed in the court of the Bishop, these (women) were in the court of one of the city-dwellers. Then the enemy outside pressed against the house, and the crusaders and city dwellers joined them, and sought to baptize (defile) them in their seething waters. But they put their trust in the Holy One of Israel, and stretched out their necks, while the Crusaders smote them mercilessly. There the holy women were killed for the sanctification of the Honored and Unified Name. Samuel bar Isaac bar Samuel also sanctified the Name, for he was hidden in a house. When they told him that the holy ones were killed, he ran out of the city to save his life with the community of Speyer. But the enemies caught him and asked him: "If you will allow yourself to be baptized, it will be well with you, but if not, we will cut off your neck in this place." And Samuel was silent, and uttered not a word. He justified (God's) judgment and immediately stretched out his neck, and they cut it off.



Then fell the pious one for the sanctification of the Name, and he unified the name of our God, who is the Holy God. After the children of the Holy Covenant who were in the rooms, were killed, the uncircumcized came upon them, to strip the slain ones, and to take them out of the rooms. They threw them out of the windows to the ground naked in mounds and heaps, until they formed a high mountain. Many of them were still alive when they threw them; their soul still bound to earthly life, for there was still a little life in them. They indicated to them with their fingers: "Give us a little water that we may drink." When the crusaders saw that there was still some life left within them, they asked them: "If you are willing to baptize yourselves, we will give you water to drink, for you are still able to save yourselves." But they shook their heads (negatively) and looked to their Father in heaven saying: "No!" pointing with their fingers to the Holy One, blessed be He. They were not able to utter a word because of the many wounds that were inflicted upon them. And they (the enemies) continued to beat them more upon these same wounds, until they had killed them a second time.

Those whose names we have mentioned did all this, and the deeds they did served as food for the journey. As for the rest of the community and the heads of the congregations, whose deeds and piety were not mentioned, how much the more did they yet do. And their deeds served to unify the name of the King of the King of Kings, the Holy One praised be He, like Rabbi Akiba and his comrades. They stood in the trial, like Hananiah, Michael, and Azariah. A miracle happened to them, like that which happened to the slain ones of Bethar, regarding whom they coined the phrase: "The good; and he who does good. The good: that he should not smell badly. He who does good: that he be

given a (decent) burial. And likewise this miracle also happened to these righteous and pious men, namely that the city dwellers buried them with the money which they had entrusted in their charge. But they were buried naked. They dug nine graves in the cemetery, and buried there youths, with old men; men with women, father with son, daughter with mother, servants with masters, maid servant with mistress - all together - they threw one upon the other, and buried them there. May the Lord of Heaven remember them and avenge them speedily in our day! Concerning them it is said: "He will judge among the nations. He filleth it with dead bodies, He crusheth the head over a wide land." (Ps.110:6) And further it is said "O Lord, Thou God, to whom vengeance belongeth, Thou God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shine forth." (Ps.94:1) <sup>17</sup> Those who committed murder will get eternal ~~honor~~. And those <sup>177</sup> who were killed for the sanctification of his Holy Name, God Almighty, deserve life in the future world, and their souls will be tied in the bundle of the Living in Paradise. Amen.

Now I shall relate about the murder of Rabbi Kolonymous, the pious leader and his followers. May God avenge him speedily in our day!

And on the day when God spoke to his people: "Be ready on the third day" (Ex.19:11) this day, they prepared themselves, stretched out their necks, and sacrificed themselves as offerings of pleasing flavor to God. There were killed on that day, for the sake of His great Name, for He is the Only One in the Universe, and besides Him there is no God, - eleven hundred holy souls, with exception of Rabbi Kolonymous, the righteous leader and some of the youths of Israel - fifty three persons - who were saved with him on

that day. For they fled through the room of the Bishop, and came into the vestry of the church (Idolatry), which was the treasury, called "Secretarium". And there they were in straits and in distress because of the sword which was upon their necks. The door of the vestry was narrow, and it was dark, so that none of the enemies could perceive them; silence reigned. The sun went down, and darkness came and trouble..... they listened..... Their tongue cleaved to their palate from ~~thirst~~ <sup>thirst</sup>. They drew near to the window to speak to the priest, who was in charge of the treasury, for (to give them) water to restore their life; but he would not until they would give him ten marks of silver for a glass full of water; fulfilling the verse: "Thou shalt serve the enemy in hunger and thirst, etc." (Deut. 28:48). But when he came near the window with the glass, the opening was too narrow, and he was not able to hand in the water until he took a lead pipe and poured the water thru it. And they drank in measure, without satiation.

Now I shall relate how it happened that these righteous ones were killed. At midnight, the Bishop sent a messenger to the window of the vestry to Rabbi Kolonymous, the leader, and called to him saying: "Listen to me Kolonymous - Behold, the Bishop sent me to you to find out whether you are still alive, and commanded me to save you, and all who are found with you. Come out to me! He (the Bishop) has three hundred warriors with drawn swords and clothed in armor; and (we pledge) our lives for you unto death. (cf. Josh. 2:14) If you do not believe me I hereby swear to you that thus did my Lord the Bishop command me. He is not in the city, for he went to the village Rudesheim, and sent us here to save your remaining survivors, for he wishes to be your helper." But they did not believe him until he

swore to them. Then Rabbi Kolonymous and his followers went out to him. The prince placed them in ships and carried them across the Rhine River, and brought them at night to the place where the Bishop was, in the village of Rudesheim. With great delight the Bishop rejoiced that Rabbi Kolonymous was still alive, and promised to save him and the men who came with him. However, the sword of the enemy sought (empty) after them, and God did not remove the fury of his wrath from them. "He, in whose hand the heart of the king and his princes are as the watercourse," (Prov 21:1), inclined the heart of the Bishop to deal kindly with them as at first. But afterwards he retracted his word, and called to Rabbi Kolonymous saying: "I am not able to save you any longer. Your God has abandoned you, and does not wish to leave to you a remnant nor a survivor, for no longer <sup>have</sup> the power to save or to help you from now on. Now, know what you and your followers, who stand by you, can do; either believe in our faith or bear the iniquity of your fathers." The pious Kolonymous answered and bitterly cried: "True it is that it is not the will of our God to save us, therefore are your words true and discerning, that you no longer have the power to help us. But (now) give us time until tomorrow to answer your words." Then Rabbi Kolonymous turned to his pious comrades, and repeated to them the words of the bishop. And all together they arose and blessed their sacrifices, justified and received upon themselves the yoke of reverence with one mouth and one heart. Before he went back to the Bishop, the pious Rabbi Kolonymous took his son Joseph, kissed him, and slaughtered him. And when the Bishop heard that he slaughtered his son, he became very angry and said: "From now on, I certainly do not desire to help you any more." When the inhabitants of the village



heard what the Bishop had said, they gathered together with the Crusaders to kill the Jews. Meanwhile Rabbi Kolonymous returned to the Bishop on that day, and on the way he understood and heard what the Bishop said. So when he returned before him, he took a knife in his hand and came before him and wanted to kill him. But the Bishop's men and he (Bishop) himself also perceived the plan and he (the Bishop) commanded to remove him (from before him). And the servants of the Bishop arose against him and killed him with a wooden club. Some say that he did not return to the Bishop a second time; that immediately after he slaughtered his son, he took his sword, stuck it in the ground and fell upon it and pierced his belly. Others say that the enemies killed him on the way. Either way the chief was slain for the unification of the name of the King of the King of Kings, the Holy One praised be He. He was perfect and wholehearted with God, the Lord of Israel. There the righteous one fell and was killed with his community. And Rabbi Judah ben "abban Isaac and his uncle Isaac bar Asher, were also killed. All the daughters of Israel, who were there were also killed and slaughtered for the unity of the Name of the Lord of Israel. And those of them who were in this second group were Mar Senior, R. Kolonymous bar Joseph, the elder of Speyer, Mar Isaac bar Samuel, Mar Isaac bar Moses, and R. Eleazar bar Jacob, Mar Chelbo bar Moses, and also many others with them, who trusted in the Rock of Israel. R. Senior killed a Christian and the inhabitants of the villages gathered together against them in the forest, wherein the Bishop had chased them, and stoned them with stones, shot them with arrows, stabbed and killed them with the swords, until the mighty ones of Israel fell there by the hand of God. Could you have restrained yourself on this account, O God?



And also the following were in the second group in another place in the forest: Mar Abraham bar Asher, Mar Samuel bar Tamar, and many others who sanctified the Great Almighty. The enemies gathered against Mar Abraham bar Asher, and sought to baptize him in the seething water, for he was a distinguished and beloved man..... Some of his acquaintances (gathered?) <sup>helped him</sup> until him and he said unto them: "Is there anyone here who knows if there is left even one of all my household or children?" And they said: "We do not know." And they sought eagerly to defile (baptize) him. But he answered and said: "How long will you detain me. By your life, kill me, for I will not hearken to you in this matter. I shall trust in the living God and to Him will I cleave until I surrender my soul to Him." And thus spoke Mar Samuel to Mar Abraham: "I shall be with you in life or in death." And the enemies beat them because they did not ~~want~~ to listen to their words. And they smote Mar Abraham and he fell to the ground and died. And Mar Samuel was also killed there with him. For they put their trust in the Holy One of Israel. And both together entered the crown-treasury, until the day of the requital of the spilled blood of His servants. "Then he will judge among the nations. He filleth it with dead bodies, etc." (Ps. 110:6) as it is said: "Sing aloud, O ye nations of his people, for he doth avenge the blood of His servants, etc." (Deut. 32:43) And they killed R. Yekutiel bar Meshullam and his son-in-law on the way between ~~Magna~~ and Rudesheim, while they were returning from the place where Rabbi Kolonymous, the leader, his (Yekutiel's) brother was killed. For they decided to return to the city of ~~Magna~~ in order that the enemies might kill them there, and bury them there in the cemetery with their pious, upright, perfect brethren. But they

were not able to reach the place of which they planned, because the abominable ones struck them and killed them on the way. Verily, their souls are tied in the bundle of the living with the Lord, our God.

He who spoke and the world came into being, He will avenge the spilled blood of His servants, for they (the enemies) said: "Let us take to ourselves in possession the habitations of God"(Ps.63:13). They said: "Come and let us cut them off from being a nation that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance."(Ps.83:5) "The Lord will not see, neither will the God of Jacob give heed".(Ps.94:7) And they said: "O Lord, Thou God, to whom vengeance belongeth, Thou God to whom vengeance belongeth, shine forth."(Ps.94:1) "Nay for Thy sake were we killed all the day" (Ps.44:23) "For they devoured us with open mouths, etc".(Is.9:11) "See, O God, and consider to whom Thou hast done thus! Shall the women eat their fruit, the children that are dandled in their hands? The youth and the old men lie on the ground in the streets. My virgins and my young men are fallen by the sword. Thou hast slain them in the day of Thine anger. Thou hast slaughtered and their eyes had no pity upon us" (Lam.2:20,21) "And render unto our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom" (Ps.79:12) "lift up Thyself, Thou Judge of the earth, render to the proud their recompense"(Ps.94:2). Bring your anger upon their adversaries, and avenge them, as it is said: "Even the Lord and the weapons of His indignation come to destroy the whole earth, etc" (Is.13:5) And after "He will cry, yea, He will shout aloud, He will prove himself mighty against His enemies, etc."(Is.42:13) "Pour out Thy wrath upon the nations that know Thee not: and upon the kingdoms (that call not upon Thy Name, etc.)" (Ps.79:6). "Pour out thy indignation upon them ( and let

the fierceness of Thine anger overtake them)" etc.(Ps.69:25). Receive of them the blood of thy servants which was placed upon a polished rock;" O Earth, cover not Thou my blood, and let my cry have no resting place" (Job 16:18)....."Let our vengeance be given in our hands, and let the avenging of thy servant's blood that is shed be made known among the nations quickly in our sight" (Ps.79:10), for the sake of Thy great Name, which was called upon us, in order that all creatures may know and understand their sins and guilt, which they did to us; and according to their recompense let it be returned upon their heads, just as they did to us. Then they shall become wise, and understand, and take to heart that in vain did they cast our bodies to the ground; and for trifling reasons did they kill our pious ones; and for the sake of a stinking corpse did they shed the blood of righteous women; and because of the words of an instigator and seducer did they shed the blood of babes and sucklings; it is false.....his friends; who has created it...that they neither went on a good path nor a straight road; that they did not grow wise nor take to heart Him who created the sea and the dry land. In their affairs, they were stupid..... they destroyed their wisdom....they put their trust, but they did not acknowledge nor remember the Name of the living God, the King of the Universe, who exists forever and ever. May the blood of His pious ones serve as a merit and atonement to our generation after us, and to our children's children forever, like to offering of Isaac our father, when Abraham our father, bound him on top of the altar. These pious ones did not say to each other; "Spare yourself", but they said:"Let us spill our blood on the ground like water, that it shall be regarded before the Holy One, praise be He,

"like the blood of the deer and ram."(Deut 12:15) It is written in the Torah: "Ye shall not kill it (cow or ewe) and its young, both in one day."(Lev.22:28) But here, (however), father and son, mother and daughter were killed in one day. Let not the reader say, regarding these things that these only who we mentioned here, sanctified the name of the God of heaven, but even those whose names which we have not mentioned, and their deeds which they did while dying, even they also sanctified the Holy and Respected One; for thus did those few who were left, who were forcibly converted testify that they heard with their own ears and saw with their own eyes what these pious ones did, when they killed them, and what they spoke at the time of their slaughtering and killing. Their merit and righteousness and piety and whole-heartedness and offerings shall be to us as an upright defender and advocate before the Almighty, that He should deliver us from the Exile of Edom (the wicked) speedily in our day, that our righteous Messiah might come, Amen, speedily in our day.

Now I shall relate what the community of Cologne did, and how they sanctified His Only and Exalted Name. It was on the fifth of Sivan, on the eve of Shebuoth, that the report came to the province of Cologne, a beautiful city where the scholars assembly met, where good things were brought about through the agency of good men, from where issued life and sustenance, and established law for all our scattered brethren in all corners. (On that same day) They began to kill them from Pentecost until the eighth day of Tamuz. When they heard that the communities (Speyer, Worms and Mainz) were being killed, each Israelite fled to his Christian acquaintance, and remained there during the two days of Pentecost."And it came to pass on the third day, when it was morning (at dawn), that there were thunders(Ex19:16)



the enemies arose against them, broke their houses, robbed and plundered them. They demolished the Synagogues, took out from there the scrolls of the Torahs, desecrated them, and placed them to be trampled upon in the streets. On the same day, when it was given, "the earth shook and its pillars trembled," (Job 9:6) so now, violent men, doers of wickedness, tore it, burned it and trampled upon it, "robbers came and profaned it" (Ezek. 7:22). Will you not requite them for this? "How long can you look and be silent, when the wicked swalloweth up?" (Hab. 1:13) "See, O God, and behold, how abject I have become!" (Lam. 1:11) On that day, they found a pious man by the name of Isaac bar Eljakim; as he went out of his house, the enemies seized him and brought him to their house of idolatry. He spat in their faces and upon their idols, and blasphemed and reviled them. They killed him there for the sanctification of the Name, because he did not want to flee, on account of the honor of the festival, and because he rejoiced in accepting the judgment of Heaven. They also found there a prominent woman by the name of Rebecca. The enemies met her as she was going out of the house, loaded with gold and silver vessels in both arms, for she wished to carry them to her husband, Rabbi Solomon; for he had already left his house and was in the home of a Christian friend. They took the money away from her and killed her. There died a righteous woman in holiness. And similarly (yet) another woman, Matrona. The rest of the community was saved, remaining in the houses of their friends, whither they had fled. They remained there until the ~~next~~ Bishop<sup>11</sup> went to his villages on the tenth day of the month of Sivan. He divided them and placed them in his seven cities, in order to save them. And they remained there, until the new moon of 'amuz,

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on Monday and Tuesday, and likewise on the following day they also fasted at night and day, three successive days.

On the third day those that were in the village of Neuss were killed, and were buried, because this was the day of their festival, and all were gathered there from the villages. The pious Samuel bar Asher was there, whom they killed on the bank of the Rhine River together with his two sons, and they buried him in the sand near the river. One of his sons they hung upon the door of his house as a mockery. And there was also another pious man by the name of Rabbi Isaac the Levite, whom they chastized with cruel torture. When they saw him afflicted, they baptized him against his will, since he did not know what he was doing because of the blows which they inflicted. But when he regained consciousness after three days he returned to Cologne, entered his house, tarried for just an hour, and then went to the Rhine River and drowned himself in the river. Concerning him and his <sup>like</sup>, it is said: "I will bring back from Bashan, I will bring them back from the depths of the sea, etc." (Ps. 68:23) He floated in the water thus, until he reached the village of Neuss, and there the water cast him out upon the bank of the river and he was then rolled at the side of that pious Samuel who was killed in Neuss. These two pious men were buried there near the bank of the river in the sand, together in one grave. They had sanctified the Name of God publicly (openly). Mar Gedalia was in the village of Bonn before the persecution. And his wife and children also were killed there in the village of Neuss for they sanctified the Name exceedingly.

On the same day, on the third day, the enemies, the enemies of the Lord came to a village at eventide. And they also sanctified the Name very much. <sup>by</sup> Grooms and pretty brides, old men and old women, youths and maidens, stretched out their necks and slaughtered d

each other. They sacrificed their lives for the sanctification of the Name in the midst of pools of water, which were round about the village. And when the enemies came before the village, a few of the pious men climbed up to the tower, and threw themselves into the Rhine River, which surrounded the village, drowning themselves in the river; and all of them died with the exception of two youths, who could not die in water, the groom Rabbi Samuel bar Gedalia and Mar Yehiel bar Samuel, "pleasant in their lives, because they loved one another, and even in their deaths they were not divided, etc" (II Sam.1:23). When they decided to cast themselves into the water, they kissed each other and took hold of each other, and embraced each other (around their shoulders) and cried, one to the other, saying: "Woe to our friendship, that we did not merit to see the seed issuing forth from it; that we did not reach the days of hoary old age. Nevertheless, let us fall into the hand of God, who is the faithful and merciful King. Better for us to die here for His great Name and promenade in paradise with the righteous ones, than that these uncircumcized and unclean ones should seize us, and defile us in their seething water against our wills." Afterwards, when those who were left in the village, those who did not climb up to the tower came and saw those who were drowned, they found there these two dear perfectly righteous friends, holding and squeezing each other. When the pious Samuel saw his son, Mar Yehiel, throw himself into the river, - and did not die immediately; for he was a handsome young man like the Lebanon, (Deut.5:14) he cried: "Yehiel, my son, my son, stretch out your neck before your father, and I will offer you as a sacrifice before God, my dear child. I will bless the slaughtering, and you will answer: 'Amen' ". And the pious Rabbi Samuel did so and slaughtered his son with his sword in the water. And when his son-in-law Rabbi

Samuel bar Gedalia, heard that his comrade, the righteous Mar Yehiel, submitted himself to his father to be slaughtered in the water, he also decided to do likewise. He called Menahem, the warden of the Synagogue of Cologne and said to him: "By your life, take your sharp sword, examine it carefully that there be no defect in it, and kill me likewise, that I may not see the death of my friend. And as you bless this slaughtering I will answer after you, 'Amen'". And so these pious ones did. And after they had been slaughtered together in the river, fulfilling the verse, "Even in their death they were not divided" (II Sam. 1:23). And when Rabbi Samuel, the elder, the pious one, the father of R. Yehiel saw this sanctification which they did, he also said to Mar Menahem, the pious warden: "Menahem, like a hero, subdue your <sup>weakness</sup> ~~passion~~ and slay me with this same sword with which I slaughtered my son Yehiel. I have examined the sword carefully and there is no blemish which can make the slaughtering void." And Rabbi Menahem took the sword in his hand, examined it carefully, and slaughtered the R. Samuel, the elder, just as he had slaughtered Rabbi Samuel, his son-in-law. He blessed the slaughtering and he answered after him, 'Amen'. Then Mar Menahem, the pious of the God of Heavens, fell upon his sword, and pierced his stomach and died there. And so these pious ones sanctified the holy, zealous, and revengeful Name in the water. Come now, all ye children of the world, and see if there was ever a unification of the Name like this, since the days of the first man. How great was the strength of these righteous ones, who all were slaughtered by their own swords! How great was the strength of the father who would not let himself be moved to compassion for his son. Many there were who did thus, but the eye that saw it will testify thereto, and the ear that heard it will confirm it (cf. Job 29:11)

Some drowned themselves in water, and there was not left of them (as much as) three berries. There was also an old man, by the name of Mar Kleazar, the Levite, with his righteous wife-(He was the father-in-law of R. Levi bar Solomon)-. The enemies chastized them with great tortures and wounded them with many wounds, to force them to believe in their abominations; but they were not willing to believe in their idolatries; the pious woman soon died from hunger and thirst. The pious man, however, lived three days longer, altho he cried in a loud voice, to the God of Heavens to take his soul. The enemies came to him every hour--for the pools of water from which they had gone out were near to the village-- and they smote them with severe tortures. When the enemies wanted to feed them their food (Dan.1:5) they refused to eat, and both died of hunger and thirst and were buried there."Wilt thou refrain thyself, for these things, Lord?" (Is.64:11) "The Lord will go forth as a mighty man" (Is.42:13) And it is said: "Sing aloud, O Ye nations, of His people, for He doth avenge the blood of His servants" (Deut.32:43). Many others were there in those two villages, whom I have forgotten and did not record, were killed for the sanctification of his great Name. Of all of those persons, there remained only two young men and two small children.

And on the third of the month of Tamuz, on Wednesday,<sup>12</sup> the pious ones of the Most High were killed in the village of Altenahr; for they also sanctified exceedingly the Only Name. There remained of them only a few men.

And on the fourth day of the month of Tamuz, on Thursday,<sup>13</sup> the enemies banded together against the holy ones of Altenahr, to afflict them with great and terrible chastisement until they should consent to be baptized. When the matter became known to the pious ones, they confessed before their Creator, and vowed to chose five pious,  
<sup>12.</sup> Should be Thursday.      <sup>13.</sup> Should be Friday.



righteous, religious, God-fearing, men who should slaughter all the others. There were about three hundred loyal souls there in the communities of Cologne, who were all slaughtered; and not a man was left of them, for they all died in purity for the sanctification of the Only Name. And the leader, the head of all, the most loyal of the loyal, head of all the speakers, Mar Judah bar Abraham, the wise and respected counsellor, was there. When all the communities came to Cologne to the markets three times a year, he was the chief speaker at the head of them all in the Synagogue, and they would keep silent in his presence, and understand his words. And when the heads of the communities began to speak, they would all rebuke and silence them in order to hearken to his words, for they said: "He is right, and his words are true and reliable (crafty). He is from the tribe of Dan, a trustworthy and distinguished man of his generation, who suffered martyrdom for the burdens of his fellowmen, who did no evil to his friend all his days. He is beloved by God and desirable to people, for the entire Psalm of David says of him: "A psalm of David. Lord, who shall sojourn in thy tabernacle?" (Ps. 15) And the women, likewise, greatly sanctified the Name in the presence of all. And when Sarith, the virgin bride, - beautiful of form and beautiful of face and very sweet in the eyes of those who looked upon her - saw how they killed themselves with their own swords and were slaughtered by one another, she wanted to flee from the horror which she saw outside through the window. But when her father-in-law, the pious Mar Judah bar Abraham, saw that such was the intention of his daughter-in-law, he called to her and said: "My daughter, since I shall not have the good fortune to (see you) marry my son Abraham, you must not marry another, a



stranger." And he seized her and led her away from the window, kissed her on the mouth, raised his voice in weeping (together) with the girl, and cried in a very loud voice, in bitterness of soul, saying to all who were standing by: "See, all of you, this is the marriage ceremony of my daughter, my daughter-in-law, which I perform this day!" And all wept with a great weeping, howling, and lamentation. And the pious Mar Judah said to her: "My daughter, come and lie in the bosom of Abraham our father, for in another instant (hour), you will acquire your world, and will come in the camp of the righteous and pious." And he took her, and hid her in the bosom of his son Abraham as his betrothed and cut her into two halves with his sharp sword, and after that, slaughtered his son also. On account of this, I weep and my heart wails. And when they had resolved to fast three days, night and day, youth and maiden, child and suckling; together with aged, and their tongue cleaved to their palate, by reason of thirst, and (children) did not nurse at the breasts of their mother before their slaughtering, they then on the third day, strengthened themselves and rose up early, at the command of their Creator, and loved Him, even until death. And also this pious man David bar Isaac weakened his strength through fasting, that not a fourth part of his blood was left in him. And when they slaughtered him, there did not ooze forth from him a fourth of a fourth part of his blood. Then his spirit disappeared and returned to its God, and then his pure soul departed. Know, therefore, how they sanctified the Holy Name and did not have pity on their children! Three days after when the enemies of the Lord had departed, the converted (forced) "ebrews, who took pity on them, came and wanted to bury them, for they had become the food of the fowl of heaven and the beasts of the earth.

They found a woman (her) writhing in blood. They washed the blood off of her, and took her to a house. She remained there seven days without speaking, and no food nor drink entered her mouth. But after that time, her spirit revived within her, and she became well. And from that day on, she fasted every day, and did not eat except once a day, with the exception of Sabbath and main holidays, and new moon days, until now, the year 900 (1140 C.E.). I, Solomon bar Simon, recorded this event in Mainz. There I questioned the old men concerning the whole matter, and from their account I arranged every detail in its proper places. They related to me this sanctification.

On Friday, the fifth (must be fourth) of the month, The sabbath eve, at twilight, preceeding the day of rest, the enemies, enemies of the Lord, came to the pious ones of Xanten. The enemies rose up against them in the hour when they were sanctifying the day. while they were sitting down to eat bread and to sanctify the day with "Va-yechooloo" (And--were completed) (Kiddush), and were making a blessing over the bread, behold, they heard the voice of the attacker, and the seething waters came upon them. They had only eaten (a morsel of) the blessing bread, when the head of them all began saying: "Son of Aaron, the Priest, you are worthy of greatness. Woe, woe to the irreparable loss." "Therefore is my harp turned to mourning, and my pipe into the voice of them that weep" (Job 30:31) And everyone who heard his voice when he prayed, said: "This voice is like the harp and the pipe, the drum and the flute." His prayer ascended on high, before the heavenly throne of the Eternal and became a crown and wreath upon the head of the Almighty, the King of King of Kings, the Holy One, praised be He. But a decree was issued which became like a brass

*Y. H. H.*  
griddle between us and our Father in Heaven. Our prayer was cut off, and we could not find "an upright intercessor, one among a thousand." (Job 33:23) But to test this generation, God came to make know their love to all, even among the heavenly household. And thus did King David say: "Therefore do they love thee vigorously; till death do they love thee" (play on words and ) (Midrash Rabba to Cant 1:3) Thus it says: "Nay, but for Thy sake are we killed all the day. We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter", (Ps. 44:23) Then the pious one, the faithful man, the highest of the priests began and said to the congregation seated around the table with him: "Let us make the blessing over the food to the living God, to our Father, who is in heaven: for instead of the altar, the table is now spread before us (Cf. Berachoth 55). Now, let us rise and go up to the house of the Lord, let us do the will of our Creator speedily- for the enemies have come upon us this day. Let each man, this Sabbath, slaughter his sons, his daughter, and his brothers, and bestow blessing upon us this day. (cf. Ex 32:29) And let no man show compassion, neither upon himself, nor upon his fellowman; and let the last one who remains, cut his own throat with his knife, or stab himself in the stomach with his sword in order that the defiled ones may not defile us with their hands of wickedness and their abominations. Let us offer ourselves as a sacrifice of the Lord like whole burnt-offerings unto the Most High, sacrificed upon the altar of the Lord, in order that we may come into the other world, which is all day, into Paradise, in the lucid speculum, that we may see Him eye to eye in His glory and His greatness. Then a golden crown, beset with precious stones and pearls, will be placed on everyone's head,

and we will sit there among the pillars of the world (the Pious) and feast in the company of the Righteous, in Paradise, in the group of Rabbi Akiba and his associates, sitting upon a golden throne, under the Tree of Life. Each one of us will then point to Him with his finger, as it is said: 'Lo, this is our God, for whom we waited; and we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation' (Is. 25:9) There we will keep the Sabbaths; since in this suspicious world we are not able to rest or keep it as prescribed." And they all answered unanimously and with one heart: "Amen! So shall it be, and so may be His will." Then the pious Rabbenu Moses began to make the blessing after the meal; for he was a priest unto the Most High God: "Let us praise our God, from whose (food) we have eaten." And they answered after him: "Blessed be our God, etc". Then he prayed: "May the Merciful One, in the days that remain after us, before their very eyes, avenge the blood of His (thy) servants, which was spilled, and which is yet destined to be spilled. May the Merciful One save us from men of iniquity, from conversion, from idolatry, from the defilement of the nations, and from their abominations." And he made many other blessings according to the nature of the event, because of the persecution which had befallen them; just as my fathers and other elders, who busied themselves in this work, related to me, when they beheld this great occurrence. And when they arose from the table, the pious one said unto them: "You, children of the Living God, proclaim in a loud voice unanimously: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord, our God, the Lord is One.'" And so they did. "Now, do not delay any longer, for the time has come to offer our lives as a sacrifice before HIM." And on the eve of Sabbath, at twilight, they offered themselves as a sacrifice before the Lord, in the same place where the "Tamid" (was wont to be offered) at twilight, and sacrificed themselves like the morning "Tamid". And as he who rejoices and revel



in serving our God, and in sanctifying His great and holy Name. And they all came, joyous and happy before the high and exalted God. And of similar ones, it was said: "As a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course" (Ps. 19:6) so did they rejoice to run and enter the very inner chamber of chambers - Paradise-. And concerning them the prophet prophesied: "Neither hath the eye seen a God besides Thee, who worketh for Him that waiteth for Him" (Is. 64:3). And there also was an upright man, R. Natronai bar Isaac, to whom came priests, his acquaintances, the entire previous day, urging him to defile himself with their seething waters - for he was a handsome goodlooking young man, - But he rebuked the imputation (pruned the vine) saying: "Far be it from me to deny the Most High God; in Him I shall trust, even until my soul departeth." And he slaughtered his brother, and after that himself, for the unity of the One and Holy Name. And also a servant of the Lord, a righteous proselyte, was there, who asked Rabbeni Moses, the High Priest saying: "My Lord, if I slaughter myself for the unity of His great Name, what good will it do me?" He answered: "You will dwell with us in our camp, for you will be a righteous proselyte. And you will dwell with the rest of the righteous ones, the righteous proselytes, in their camp. And you will be with Abraham, our Father, who was the first of the proselytes." When that pious one heard this, he immediately took a knife, and slaughtered himself. And behold his soul is tied in the bundle of the living, in Paradise, in the light of the Lord. In this sacrifice, none remained among them, except those who were bleeding and writhing in the midst of blood among the slain. When the enemies captured the tower, before all of them had been slaughtered, all the others fled by night from the dead. And they all were given burial,

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common

praised be the Creator! Their merit and the merit of the others who were slaughtered and stabbed and strangled and burned and drowned and stoned, and buried alive, and who accepted in love and esteem the seven deaths, - according to the days of the week-, for the sake of the perfect-holy and pure Name,- may their merit stand up for us as an upright intercessor before the Almighty God; to redeem us speedily from the exile of Edom (the wicked) speedily in our day; and to rebuild for us the walls of Ariel (Jerusalem)(Is.29:1) and to gather the dispersed of Judah and Israel "who were fanned with a fan in the gates of the land" (Jer.15:7) <sup>the</sup> remaining remnant that is left among the nations (a prey) to captivity and plunder, distress and anguish, for the sake of His great, mighty and revered Name, which is called upon us.

On Sunday, on the month of Tamuz, the enemies of the Lord also rose up against the pious of the Almighty, in M<sup>ts</sup>rs, in order to destroy them from the world. People, as numerous as the sand on the shore of the seas, besieged the city. The prince of the city came forth to meet them in the field and requested them to wait until the light of the next morning. And thus ~~and~~ he speak unto them: "Perchance I can incite the Jews, so that they will listen to me, out of fear, and do my will." And this thing seemed favorable in their eyes. The prince returned immediately to the city, and ordered to call the Jews and bring them before him. And thus did he speak unto them: "In truth, in the beginning, I vowed unto you to protect and defend you, as long as there should exist one Jew in the world. And this stipulation I have fulfilled for you. But from now on I shall not be able to save you from all these peoples. Now consider (see) what you desire to do. Know, that if you do not do thus and thus, the city will surely be

destroyed. It is better for me to deliver you into their hands, before they come unto me in seige, to destroy the fortress." And they all answered, from the youngest unto the oldest, all of them with one acclaim: "We are ready and we are eager to stretch forth our necks for the faith of our Creator, and for the unity of His Name. And when the prince saw that he was not able to master them, he immediately devised another scheme to place upon them the fear of the Crusaders, by means of which they would do their will, and defile themselves, led them outside of the city to the place where the Crusaders were encamped. But all this was of no avail, for they said: "We do not care for the faith of the Crusaders." And thus did they all answer him. And when they realized that what they did was of no avail, they made them return to the city, seized them and placed each one separately under guard until the morning, in order that none should commit suicide, since they had heard that the others had killed themselves. (They rocked him in his cradle, for they were moved to compassion for him; but they threw him from the tower and he died) On the morrow, they seized them, against their will and delivered them to the Crusaders. Frightened and rushed they went out of the village. Some of them they killed, and those that they let live, they baptized against their will, and did with them as they so desired.

And a pious man by the name of Mar Shemaria fled from there that night; he and his wife and his three sons. For the treasurer, the servant of the bishop had promised to free and save him, on condition that he give him a large sum of money. He led them in the forest until the ninth of Ab. And he continued to lead them here and there, everywhere, until he (Shemeria) sent someone to Speyer to his sons, R. Nathan and R. Mordecai, for money. And they sent him Gold (pieces).

After he (the treasurer) received the money from the hand of its deliverer, he led them to the city of Tremonia. When he arrived there, they rejoiced greatly over him, because they knew him. He consented to remain until the morrow and to do according to their every wish. Immediately, in great joy, they prepared a banquet, but they (the Jews) did not want to eat with them from their impure vessels, but only from clean and ritually permitted ones, and with new knives. For they said: "While we yet have our own faith, we wish to do as we were accustomed until now; tomorrow, we will become another people. Place us tonight in one room until tomorrow, for we are tired and weary from the difficult journey. And they did just as the pious one had spoken, to fulfill his wish. And he arose during the night, took the knife in his hand, mustered up courage, and slew his wife and three sons, and then himself. Altho his spirit weakened, he did not die immediately. On the morrow, when the enemies came unto him, they thought that they (the Jews) would come to them, as he had vowed to them, but they found him lying upon the ground. And they asked him: "Do you wish to change your God yet, and turn to our faith (abomination) for then you will be able to live." So he answered and said: "God forbid that I should renounce the living God (for the sake of a dead person, a trampled carcass). Rather would I kill myself for the Name of the Holy One, praised be He, and for His holy Torah, and thus come today with the righteous ones into their camp; for which day I have hoped all my life." Then they said: "We will not kill you as you expect. Verily we will (either) bury you alive in a grave, or else you can accept our faith (abomination)." And he answered them again: "Let it be according to your words; I will accept all



upon myself out of love." And the wicked ones dug a grave for him. And Rabbi Shemaria himself, the pious one, walked into the grave, took his three sons and placed them on his left, and his wife (on the right) and himself in the middle. Then they sprinkled dirt from above him. He cried and wept loudly, and lamented for himself, for his sons, and for his wife, who were lying beside him, all that day until the next morning. And the enemies of the Lord came to him a second time and took him out of the grave alive, in order that he might retract and accept their faith (abomination). And they asked him again: "Do you wish to change your God?" But the pious Rabbi Shemaria did not wish to exchange with disgrace the great and the honored God, and therefore he held fast to his piety until his soul went out. And they placed him in the grave a second time and sprinkled dirt over him. And there the pious one died for the unity of the honored and awe-inspiring Name. And he stood there in his trial, like Abraham, our father. Happy may he be, and happy his portion. Concerning him and those like unto him it is said: "But they that love Him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might" (Judges 5:31). When is the sun in its might? In the circuit during the month of Tamuz. Draw the following conclusion (go and learn): Just as the superiority of the sun is more during the circuit in the month of Tamuz than in all the days of the year, so are the righteous ones greater in the world to come than all the other peoples. And they will belong to that class which is more beloved to God than all the others who are destined to stand and dwell in the shadow of the Holy One, praised be He; to stand at his right hand, as it is said: "At his right hand was a fiery law unto them." (Deut. 33:2) And of them this verse is said: "In Thy presence is fulness of joy, In Thy right hand bliss

for evermore" (Ps.16:11) Do not read " "fulness" but " "seven" - These are the seven groups of the righteous, one higher than the other, whose faces are like the sun and the moon. And of them it is said: "Oh how abundant is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee, which Thou hast wrought for them that take their refuge in Thee." "Light is sown for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart" (Ps.97:11) And these righteous desired to sanctify the honored and awe-inspiring Name with rejoicing and goodness of heart, as a man who goeth to a banquet house, and to declare His unity "as the hart panteth after the waterbrooks" (Ps.42:2).

Of all those seven villages, in which the community of Cologne was scattered, none was saved except those few, who were in the village of Kerpen; they were not killed. But the hostile ruler of the village tried to do evil in another way. He commanded his servants to take the tombstones of the buried dead in Cologne, and to make for him a building with these tombstones. And they did so. But when they raised the stones with levers upon the building to build the wall, a stone rolled (this thing caused by the jealous and avenging God) and fell upon the head of the hostile ruler of the village, broke his head, crushed his brains, and he died. Thereupon his wife became insane, and lost her senses, and died in that sickness. And the jealous and avenging God intimated to us that he reeked vengeance upon them because of what they did. And so may He avenge, speedily in our days, the blood of his servants, which was spilled, and is being spilled every day in His behalf.

And just as the enemies did in these communities out of the cunning of their hearts - as we have related - so they did in

other communities; in the city of Trier, in Metz, in Regensburg, in Prague, in Voshel and in Pappenheim. But they all sanctified the great and awe-inspiring Name, in love and esteem. And all this happened in that year (4856) at one time. For God chose that whole good generation for his portion, in order to bestow blessing upon the generation to come after them. And so may it be the will of the exalted and revered God to regard their children after them for the deeds of former generations, and may their merit, and their righteousness, and their piety, and their uprightness be established for us forever - Selah - to bring near for us the redemption, and to lead us out of death into the land of the living.

The story of Trier was related to me. On the fifteenth day of Nissan, on the first day of Passover, a messenger came to the Crusaders from France; a messenger of Jesus, by the name of Petron. He was a monk, and was called Peter Pralat (Peter of Amiens). And when he came to Trier, he and the many men who were with him to go on the crusade to Jerusalem, he brought a letter from the Jews of the land of France, that in all the places where the sole of his foot might tread, or wherever his journey might lead, there the Jews should give him provisions for his journey. He, (in turn) would speak good for Israel; for he was a monk, and his words were well respected. But, when he came here, our soul went out and our heart broken, fear seized us, and our feast was turned to mourning. For until now, the city-dwellers had never spoken of doing anything evil to the community, before these shameful men came. And they gave (provisions) to Peter the monk, and he went on his way. Then our evil neighbors, the city-dwellers, came and were envious of

all the events that happened in the rest of the communities in the land of Lothringia; for they heard what had happened to them, and of the many punishments that were decreed against them, and that they took away their money. They (the Jews) bribed the city-dwellers each one separately; but all this was of no avail on the day of the fierce anger of the Lord. For it was a divine dispensation from God from Heaven, upon all that generation which He had chosen as His portion, to fulfill his commandments.

At that time, the children of the congregation of Trier, took their scrolls of the law, and placed them in a strong house. When the enemies perceived them they went there that very same day, broke in the roof from above, and took all the bands and the silver which was around the wooden scrolls. They threw the scrolls of the law on the ground, tore them and trampled upon them with their feet. The congregation have already fled to the Bishop. But he was not there. Then they took some of the chiefs of the Bishop and his servants and went to that place to submit their souls to death, (only) to find the scrolls of the Law trampled upon. They rent their garment. And they screamed in their bitterness of soul: "Behold O Lord my affliction, for the enemy hath magnified himself" (Lam.1:9). Then they picked up the scrolls of the Law from the ground, kissed them and fled with them to the palace. In those days, they increased fasts and afflictions and did repentance and righteousness. They fasted six weeks - from day to day, from Passover to Shevuoth, and every day after eventide they distributed their money to the poor and they placed a tax upon themselves; four times they gave of each liter a dinar. But they did not cease from increasing the bribes until they had given all



their property - even the praying shawl which was upon their shoulder. And finally, they decided (said) to give all that they had to the Bishop, in order that he might save them, from the hand of those who plan evil. But it did not help them any; for God had delivered them over to the hands of their enemy and His wrath was kindled against them. And he hid His face from them on the day of their visitation.

And on the first of Pentecost, on which same day was also the market day of their abomination (festival), they from the Rhine river came to the market place. Then the pious ones, men of holiness, fled to the palace of the Bishop - which is called - Palatinate. And the murderers were passing by and were boasting of their murders and their destructions which they had done to the men of God and the holy congregations. And the Bishop came to the cathedral (dome of abomination) to protect the Jews. But when the enemies heard the words of the Bishop, in which he mentioned the Jews, they gathered together to smite the Bishop. Thereupon the Bishop fled into the church, into one of the rooms, and remained there one week. And all the people came into the palace, wherein were the Sons of the Holy Covenant to fight them; but they were not able. And when they saw them their hearts wavered, like the wavering of the trees of the forest before the wind. (cf. Is. 7:2). When they saw that they were not able to fight them because it (castle) was very strong, and the wall of the building was five cubits wide and as high as the eye could see, they went away (from there) and decided (said) to kill the Bishop in the cathedral and the Bishop feared greatly for he was a stranger in the city and had neither relatives nor acquaintances;

nor had he the power to save them. Then the Bishop came to them with a plan as to what they should do. And he asked them: "What do you desire to do? Do you not see that on all sides Jews are already killed. It is my ardent wish to keep my faith in you as I promised you until the time I inform you,(namely) until there would not remain a community in all the kingdom of Lothringia. Behold, see now, the Crusaders have risen up against you to kill you, and I am still afraid of them. Behold, I have fled from them fifteen days. " And the congregation answered and said: "Did you not faithfully set a time for us that you would protect us, until the king should come into the kingdom?" And the Bishop answered and said: "The king himself is not able to deliver you from the hand of the Crusaders (those who march with the cross). Be converted or receive upon you the judgment of Heaven!" And they answered him and said: "Now, that if everyone of us had ten souls, we would give them for the unity of His Name before they would defile us." Then they stretched out their necks and said: "We give our heads but we will not bely our God." When the Bishop saw this he went away with his chiefs, and they had a four days rest, until the day of the giving of the Torah had passed; for this did the pious ones ask of him. They turned that festival to warning, for they knew and they heard that the Bishop and everyone who had anything to say were planning evil against them without cause.

One day, the Bishop sent a messenger to them (asking) what ~~he~~ should do and what plan he should follow for the whole world had risen against him to kill him. Thereupon they thought that he wanted them to give him a bribe. So they assured the messenger that they would bribe him with all their money. And the messenger answered and said: "The Bishop does not desire this." Thereupon the hands of the

pious ones relaxed. But the heart of the Bishop and his officers ~~were~~ turned against them for evil. And they took counsel together not to kill all, but only two or three, in order to weaken the hearts of the remaining ones; that perhaps they might turn to their gods. And the Bishop sent unto them and called the important men of the city and the leaders of the people. And they stood before the entrance of the palace; for in the midst of the gate there was a door like that of a furnace. And the enemies stood roundabout the palace, hundreds and thousands armed with sharp swords, and rose to swallow them alive, flesh and body. Thereupon the prince of the host of the bishop, with the princes, entered the palace and said unto them: "Thus hath our Lord, the Bishop said: 'Convert yourselves or leave his palace for I no longer desire to protect you'; for many times have they risen up against him to kill him on account of you. And you are not able to be saved and your God does not desire to deliver you now as he did in former days. See the great mob standing at the entrance of the palace. And when they saw that their misery was great the pious ones came, sat down on the ground, and raised their voices with crying. And they cried loudly, in the bitterness of soul, men, women and children. And they confessed their sins. Then they led outside Mar Asher bar Joseph, the leader, to kill him, in order to bring dread and fear upon the remaining ones, that they might confess to their ~~god~~(abomination). And Mar Asher answered and said: "Whoever there is among you of all the people of the Lord - may His God <sup>be</sup> with him - let him go up. (II Chr.36:23) And who desires to greet the ~~S~~chechinah? Behold in one small hour ( he can create) a world full of goodness." And a lad, by the name of Meir bar Samuel

answered and said: "Wait for me, I want to go with you in the world where all is light and I will acknowledge with you the Only and Honored and Awe-Inspiring Name with my whole heart and my willing soul." And when they came out of the door of the palace, the Crusaders brought (the crucifix) before them, in order that they should prostrate themselves before it. And they put the branch upon (cf. Ezek. 8:17).....

..... And there they killed these three pious ones for the sanctification of the Name. And Mar Abraham bar YomTov, a faithful, righteous, upright man, beloved by God, was there. Morning and night he was at the house of prayer. And he fell upon his face and confessed his sins before the King of King of Kings, the Holy One praised be He. And he raised his voice and wept and said: "I pray O Lord, God, why hast Thou forsaken Thy people Israel to scorn and derision and reproach to destroy us by the hands of people who are as unclean as the pig? For the people, whom Thou hast chosen to be unto Thee, a chosen people among all the peoples consume us. Thou hast raised them from the earth to heavens; but now Thou casteth them down from the heavens to the earth. Thou hast glorified Israel and Thou hast multiplied the slain ones among us. And the pious one fell to the ground, full length upon his face before the eyes of all. And they lifted him up, and hid him outside, for he was killed there for the sanctification of the Name. And there was a young girl, a daughter of a good family who also sanctified the Name in holiness. After these were slain, and the enemies saw that those who remained in the palace were still holding fast to their piety as at the beginning, and that their power did not become weak from what had happened previously they said one to another: "All this the women have done for they persuaded their



husbands to strengthen their power to rebel.....".

And all the captains came and seized the hands of the women with great force, smiting and wounding them and leading them to the church in order to baptize them. And after that they sent and forcibly took away a son from his mother's bosom, and led him with them to fulfill what it says: "Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given to another people" (Deut 28:32). The women raised their voices and wept. Three days before they made known to them this oppression, the captains who were in the palace, came and closed up the cistern, in which was the water of the palace, for they feared that they (the women) would cast their children therein to kill them. And they did not allow them to go up upon the wall in order that they should not throw themselves down from the wall. All night until the next morning they watched them, that they should not kill one another. And all this they did deliberately, for they did not want to kill them, but busied themselves in seizing them to force them (unto conversion). A girl stood before the entrance of the palace, stretched her neck to the outside and said: "Whoever wishes to cut off my head in the fear of my Creator, let him come and do it!" But the uncircumcized did not wish to touch her, for this girl was beautiful of form and very charming, but many times they wanted to take her and lead her away with them. They were inclined (to do it), but they could not, for she threw herself down on the ground and made off as though she were dead. And so she remained in the palace. Then her aunt came to her and said: "Do you wish to die with me in the fear of our Creator?" She answered and said to her: "Surely, and willingly!" They went and bribed the guard of the entrance and went out. They walked upon

the bridge and cast themselves into the waters because of the fear of the Ever-lasting King. And so did two maidens from Cologne, and of them and similar ones, it is said: "Thus saith the Lord: 'I will bring back from Bashan, I will bring back from the depths of the sea'"(Ps.68:23). Praise the Lord, that they be given a burial. May the Avenging One avenge, in our days before our eyes the blood of His servants, which was spilled. And their merit and their righteousness stand for us as a merit, and protect us in the day of evil.

And now I will relate(the story|of those who were in Metz. "Hast Thou utterly rejected Israel? Hath thy soul loathed the Holy community of Metz?"(Jer.14:19). Why were they and their seed smitten? In it were killed the pious ones of the Almighty, the honored ones of the land, the masters of the Law; Rabbi Samuel, the priest and leader, and even many other holy and strong ones, pillars of the earth, were killed there. And the number of those were slain in that place was twenty two. The majority of them were forced into sin and guilt, until the days of anger had passed. For after that they returned to the Lord with all their hearts. May God accept their repentance and forgive the sins of His people.

The community in Regensburg were all forced (to conversion), for they saw that they were unable to escape. And likewise those who were in the city. When the Crusaders and the people of the land assembled against them, they forced them against their wills. They brought them into a river, made the signs of a cross (evil) over the water, and immersed them, all at one time into that river, for the people were there. But even these returned to God. After the enemies of the Lord had gone away, they immediately made great

repentance; for what they had done they had done by great force, since they were not able to resist the enemies and the enemies did not want to kill them. May our Creator forgive our guilt!

And when the Crusaders came to the men of God, holy men who were in the city Shelo, they said: "Now, understand our words, and know what you are to do. Either turn to our God (abomination) or accept upon yourself the death sentence, as your brothers who dwell in the land of the Hurites (Christians) did. They demanded of the Crusaders and the inhabitants of their cities three days time, and made known the matter to their captains by means of a messenger. They sanctified those three days with fasting, and supplicated the presence of the living god with fasting, weeping and crying; and their prayer was accepted, and the merciful God delivered them. And the captain strengthened their hands during the three day period and sent to them a commander with one thousand horsemen, girded with sword. And there were also in the city of Shelo, men of Judah, sojourners, five hundred armoured and warrior young men, who would never turn their faces away from any enemy. They came upon the city unexpectedly and dealt the crusaders and the inhabitants of their city a great smiting. But only six of the Jews were killed. The light of Israel saved the rest of the community, and led them altogether into a village opposite the city of Shelo, on the other side of the river. And there they remained in peace and ease, until the enemies of the Lord went away.

And now it is gratifying for us to relate the praise of the converted ones. Everything they ate and drank endangered their lives. They would slaughter their meat ritually, clean away the fat,

and even examine the meat according to the regulation of the wise men. They drank no idolatrous wine. They did not go to their churches except a few times. For every time they went they went out of much force and much fear and went with a troubled soul. Even the Christians themselves knew that they were not converted with a willing heart, but because of the fear of the Crusaders that they did not believe in their religion, but only cleaved to the religion of God, and held fast to the Almighty God, Creator of the Heavens and Earth. Before the eyes of the Christians, they kept their Sabbath according to their Law, and secretly kept the Law of God. He who speaks evil against them is like one who speaks against the Schechinah.

And it came to pass after these things, after they (Crusaders) had executed their wishes and their wills that they turned to go on their crusades to Jerusalem. The first caravan consisted of priests from the land of France and with it was a very great army. And when it came to the border of the Kingdom of Hungary, it sent messengers to the King of Hungary, saying: "Let us pass through your land, on the highways (like the way of the King let us go). We will neither eat nor drink unless (we pay for it) with silver." And the King gave them permission to pass through all his borders, they (it) and all their army, if only they would go peacefully and do no harm to his people of any city. And they came to a large fortified city, in which there were many men. A plague of famine had already seized them, and they could only buy a little bread for a dinar. One of the crusaders brought a pair of woolen stockings in the market place in order to buy bread with them. A person of the city came and derided him. And Satan came between them until they rose up to kill one another. And an evil spirit was stirred between them and the crusaders arose and



killed all the inhabitants of the city, child as well as suckling. And the report of it came to the King. And the enemies of the Lord journeyed from there and came to a river by the name of Donau, all the banks of which were flooded. And there were no ships in which to cross the river, but there was a village near the river and they went and destroyed the village and took the wood of the houses and made a bridge with the wood and crossed the river. But then they came to a city with a wall, doors and bolts. The men of the city closed the gate before them and did not want to let them enter the city, for the King had already observed them and commanded them not to allow them to enter their fortress, in order that they should not destroy their kingdom. And they did so. And when ~~the~~ Peter ~~the~~ monk, saw that he was not able to enter the city, he sent a priest, as messenger to the city (asking): "Since you will not allow us to enter the city send us bread outside of the city, and we will pay for it." But the inhabitants of the city were not willing to do that, for it was the king's command. He (Peter) again sent messengers to the guard of the city to sell them bread worth one (Meah) (coin corresponding to a Tyrian Obolus) for two "Meahs". But they answered him saying: "Even if our life depended upon it we would not sell to you." And on that night the enemies of God had to fast. And they all came before Peter a monk and counselled with him as to what they should do. And he said: "Tomorrow we will take revenge on them." And Peter answered and said: "True and certain it is that among this nation there is no belief (substance) nor faith; for they have less faith than the Ishmaelites and verily are worthy of being stoned; for by their own testimony they do not care to let us live." And he called to the people and said: "Surround the city!" And the enemies came

upon the city, broke the gates, and killed all who were found therein. And they sojourned in the city three days, and ate everything which was found therein and they plundered the city and went their way. When the King of Hungary heard what the Crusaders had done and how they laid waste his two cities, his heart melted and he gathered together all his army to fight against the Crusaders; for they were very strong, and as numerous as the sand which is upon the shore of the sea. Then the king commanded his servants to tell the people that each man could return to his place, but that they should be prepared to come to the King at any moment the King might command. On the following day the King called his princes, governors and chiefs, and they took counsel with the King to close the gates at the border line of the Kingdom of Hungary in order not to allow another (Crusader) to enter there from now on. And as for those who had already entered, they would begin to cut off the straggling ones. And whenever they would seize a hundred Crusaders together, they would kill them. And thus they did on the morrow and likewise on the following day until they killed all of them who followed Peter, the monk. And the Holy One, praised be He, avenged the blood of His servants upon them and there did not remain of them even a single man. And the Hungarian Kingdom <sup>remained</sup> firmly closed from before the enemies. Then the dwellers of the Rhine River came with a very large army, the army of Swabia, of France, and of Austria; they are the inhabitants of Seir, Hurites, an army as numerous as the sand which is upon the shore of the sea. And at the head of all them was Inco, the wicked, the governor of Leiningen, - may his bones be crushed. They came to the border of the Hungarian Kingdom to the city of Sabortig (Wieselburg), and round about the wall were deep moats. And they went up to wage war

against it, but they were not able. Then the chiefs and governors came together in counsel to send to the King of Hungary that he, for the sake of Jesus should give them a passage through the land, and they in turn would surrender their weapons of war. And they took four men from among the governors and sent them to him with these same words. Then the King came and order to imprison <sup>him</sup> for three days. And on the third day, those four governors swore to him that they would bring the head of Inco, the governor. So he freed them with spoil. And the matter was told to Inco, and he fled during the night. And those that remained fled, but the army of the king of Hungary pursued after them and killed them with a great blow. Many died by sinking in the deep mire; more than those who were killed by the sword. And when one fled he would fall into the mire as deep as his thighs and would not be able to budge from there until he died. The Greeks (Hungarians) pursued after them on every side as far as the river Donau. And they fled upon the bridge which Peter, the monk, had made, and they tore down the bridges and drowned themselves in the river Donau; more than many thousands and many myriads, until they ( the pursuers) could walk upon their backs like one walks upon dry land. And the news of the escape made glad our heart; for God showed us vengeance upon our enemies. And in those days, the sun was dimmed, and on that day God broke the pride of our enemies and uprooted their name. But the enemies did not yet stop their evil plans and journeyed daily to go up to Jerusalem. And God delivered them over to slaughtering, "like sheep to the slaughter, and prepared them for the day of slaughter" (Jer.12:3). "And render to our neighbors sevenfold unto their bosom" (Ps.79:12). "Thou wilt render

unto them a recompense, O Lord, according to the work of their hands. Thou wilt give them hardness of heart, Thy curse unto them. Thou wilt pursue them in anger and destroy them from under the heavens of the Lord." (Lam.3:64-66) "For the Lord hath a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the controversy of Zion" (Is.34:8). "O Israel, that art saved by the Lord with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end" (Is.45:17).

At first, when we came to this Speyer, to pitch our tents - "the stakes whereof shall never be plucked up" (Is.33:20) - this, regarding the matter of burning, happened in the province of Mayence, the city of Speyer, the city in which we and our fathers were born, the oldest, most famous and praiseworthy community of all the communities of the Kingdom. All the Jewish neighborhoods, and their streets, were burned, and we were in great fear of the city dwellers. At that time, Meir, the priest, came from Worms and had the Law of the priests (Book of Leviticus) in his hand. But they (the enemies) thought it was silver or gold and they killed him. It was according to the short reckoning of the creation of the world that a priest and a prophet were in the sanctuary of God. (cf.Lam.2:20). Our Rabbi Meshulam said to them: "From now on, fear not, for this (death of Meir) outweighs all. Then we reconsidered to go out from there and to flee any place we could find a fortified city. Perhaps the gracious God will show grace, the merciful one show mercy, the helper give aid to let us live, as (He has) today. He (the bishop) took us up friendly and even sent his princes and horsemen after us and then gave us a special quarter of the city. He promised to surround us with walls, doors and bolts, to protect us from the oppressors; to be a fortress to us and show compassion upon us,



like a father (men) shows compassion upon his son. We offered prayer, to our Creator, morning and evening, days and days, and we were saved by the hand of the priest John. Eleven persons were killed but the rest of the community was saved - may his memory be blessed and praised forever. Afterwards we turned back to the city (Mayence), each man to his own house and place, but the inhabitants of the upper group were not able to go to the lower group. For evening, morning, and noon prayers, because of the fear of the cursed oppressors. And we of the upper group prayed in the school of our Rabbi Judah, son of Rabbana Kolonymous, and those of the lower group prayed in their places of the synagogue. And so it was the custom for many years.

And all the work ( of the new synagogue) was completed in the month of Ellul, of the year 4864, according to the short reckoning. On Rosh Hashonah eve, one of the elders came and said to the community: "Come, let us go up to the house that we may dedicate it upon its old place and plan." And the elders of the community, the priests and Levites, went and brought with great rejoicing the scrolls of the Law into the ark, which was in the synagogue and they are there even to this day. And on the next day on Rosh Hashonah, we began to pray therein, and we are praying, even until this day.

This is the end. May God reward us to see our rebuilding speedily in our own day. "To behold the graciousness of the Lord and to visit early in his Temple" (27:4). May He deliver us from our sorrows. Amen.

ABOUT THE PIOUS ONES  
WHO WERE BURNED

THIS (SECTION) IS ABOUT THE PIOUS ONES WHO WERE BURNED.

Hearts are weary to express, and hands of all ~~are~~ weary to write .....<sup>14</sup> who can withhold from writing the account of this misfortune without his heart bursting? Behold, when one hears it from his friend, both of his ears tingle and his spirit leaves him until almost losing his thoughts; how much the more we, who are bitter of heart! Can a man recount his misfortunes without his lips closing? Can the (hand) write without becoming weary? But it is the command of the King, and the command of our Rabbi Jacob, and we cannot withhold ourselves from it

We, of the community of Orleans take upon ourselves to bring the heifer (as a sacrifice).....in its place, because of our transgressions and our sins has all this (come upon us), and God was sanctified through those who were nigh unto him.(cf.Lev.10:3) Since the time when He gave His people for plunder and let our sanctuary be destroyed in fire; for there was not offered up holier burnt-offerings than these. Angels of God ascended in the flames - thirty one angels - . Above Him the seraphims, whom they, by the command of the oppressors brought out and burned. (The enemies) said: "Let us call them and inquire (ask their mouth) whether they will change their glory for that which doth not profit" (cf.Jer.2:11). And they answered unanimously: "No! but we will cleave to our God, the God of Israel, and Him we will revere with all our heart and with all our soul." While they were leading them out, they strengthened

<sup>14</sup> Next eight words impossible to translate.

their own hearts, lest one heart of them weaken, and they said, one to the other: "Shall we tremble before this fire? Were we not chosen for this day? " And thus did they speak on their journey, "Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived" (Deut.11:16). Be strong and be firm in the faith of our Creator in order that our death shall be an atonement for all our sins". These were the sin-offerings and guilt-offerings of the congregation, Through them was all Israel atoned. "For the offerings of the Lord made by fire, the bread of their God, they do offer; therefore they shall be holy" (Lev.21:6). And God accepted their pleasant scent-offerings on Wednesday, the twentieth day of the month of Sivan of the year 4931, according to the short reckoning. And (this day) was worthy to be set aside as a fast day for the children of our people. And the glory of this fast day was greater than the fast of Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, for it was a day of atonement. They were smitten and wounded; and the more they inflicted them with wounds and blows, the more they strengthened and made powerful their hearts, to love the name of God, to be His holy ones, and to follow God completely. Woe to us! How hot is the day! Tomorrow they will kindle the fire! And when the flames were kindled they sang as with one mouth, raising high their sweet voices. The Christians came and related to us and said: "What song of yours is this that is so sweet? For we have never heard such a sweet melody." For the song begins with a low tone and at the end they raise their voices with a loud tone and sing together: "It is for us to praise" (Olenu Leshabeach). And the fire burned (about them). Two priests were tied to one stake and they called to the servants of the oppressor Theobald the wicked and said: "Behold, although we



(stand) in this fire, it has no power over us." And they answered: "Get out of it." Rabbi Judah bar Aaron tore loose his hands and also the fetters of the hands of his associates and they said: "Let us go free! If He kills us we will die and if He lets us live we will live." And the three of them departed. The enemies rose up against them and smote them a great blow, and there these holy ones died before God, and did not allow a vile word to come out of their mouths. They remained in their righteousness from the beginning to the very end. They threw them upon the fire, raked the coals over them; and still they would not burn. These things, the inhabitants of our cities, and our acquaintances related to us, for they were there on the sea. And if we do not believe all these things of their mouth, there was also there at the time of the burning a Baruch bar David, the priest, who saw with his own eyes and heard with his own ears(everything) except the burning itself, he did not see, lest he be consumed with the people who were gathered there outside the city at the place of the fire. After that when the fury of the mob had abated when they returned, when the burning had ended, on the same day he fled immediately and escaped to Orleans.

The cause of the misfortune occurred when on Thursday, the day of the misfortune at twilight, Rabbi Isaac bar Eleazar came from Blois, to give his horse a drink in the river. He wore on his bosom a green skin, which he had brought from the house of one of the city-dwellers. One of the ends of the skin, which is called "Peau" (French) was seen from under his cloak. A common soldier also came to give his horse a drink. When the horse of the common soldier saw the white color of the skin, he sprang backward and he(soldier) was not able to bring him to the water. He did not cry or say

anything until he came to his master. And then he said: "Do you know that I met a Jew in your district who cast a dead child into the water. It was dark and the horse ran away and was frightened. It carried me away and would not sink." And his master said to him: "Be silent, I have waited for this day. For thus and thus have the Jews spoken, and thus and thus will I also do. As they have harmed me so will I harm them." And his cruel spirit was against the inhabitants of the city, who relied upon the strength of the ruler as a rock; for he treated all who came there with respect. The ruler loved them but the ruler's wife and her nurse were hostile toward them. And they saw that she was not with the ruler as yesterday and the day before yesterday, the inhabitants of the city began to design evil against her. Although she was seized, they were not permitted, to bring her in chains; but she was locked in the tower together with the entire community. She was allowed to speak anything that was in her heart, but <sup>to</sup> the ruler himself she was not allowed to speak, altho she did make a strong effort. For she could not believe that the heart of the ruler which all these days had loved her strongly should now be turned to do evil against her. And his thoughts were yet many as to what to do. Thereupon Satan came into their midst, a priest of Augustine, whose name was blotted out and whose remembrance was destroyed, who was anxious to do evil to the common soldiers, who saw Rabbi Isaac in the water by trying him in the defiled water. If he should sink..... against the Jews judgment was executed against them. They immediately listened to his voice. And thus the evil was done (pressed) through the hand of the strange priest. At first he

approached the ruler with a money fine, and he commanded Baruch bar David, the priest, and Rabbi Isaac bar Judah, who had gone to speak to the ruler concerning them (the Jews) to speak to the Jews and ask how much they could give. And they went and brought back an answer to the ruler, and they said to him: "A hundred <sup>pounds</sup> ~~ledars~~ they will give. Here are one hundred and eighty ~~ledars~~, is that enough for you?" When he heard that, his anger grew hot, and he ceased to speak to them. And while his anger burned he would not listen to them except to the priest alone he turned and did according to all which he commanded him. He brought the defiled one into the water, justified the wicked, made wicked the righteous ones, and burned the pious of the Almighty in wickedness. Though the soul burned, the body remained intact. And to this, all the uncircumcized testified that their bodies were not burned and they said: Only the bodies of their enemies were burned; and their words seemed (creditable) for they spoke these things because of their hatred of them.

The community of Loches, before this misfortune had made known that they had escaped safely, and the informer only was captured. I, Baruch bar Meir, will tell you how the incident happened. A young man from Loches desired a young maiden and sought her hand from her father and her relatives. But they answered him: "Sooner would we drown her in water than let her be married to you!" The youngman cunningly went and married the girl before witnesses and came to her father and said: "We are now united together without your consent." And the father answered: "This folly which you have done will not profit you anything." Then the young man went before the prince and

informed upon them, and they were seized. They, however, went free - may God be praised - but he (the informer) is not yet free. We do not know - God forbid - whether this misfortune disordered them or not. But they were not given a burial in the world to come. There was a deep place near the place of burning, and the ruler commanded that they cover them with dirt and stones. And we heard that the wrath of the ruler was so greatly kindled against the people who had thrown much stones and sticks upon those who were running out of the burning that they were killed. After completing all words of our writings, we recall yet one sanctification which we have forgotten. Happy are they whose numerical equivalent is equal to the word (seventeen); a single one of whom we have not found. Perhaps the two maidens and one boy who would not accept the forced (conversion) are included in the numerical course of Creation. Happy are they who have withstood the trial.

And this is the writing of the prominent men of Paris. Today is a day of good news to report to the people of Israel, (proceeding) from the great King who inclined the heart of man toward us favorably. For we went to the king in the village of Vassy to prostrate ourselves at his feet because of this thing. And when we saw that he approached us peacefully, we said to him that we would like to speak to him secretly. But he answered: "Speak only in a loud voice!" And he himself called all his servants, who were standing in the fortress and said to them; "Hear, all of you what the ruler Theobald has done; for he and all his seed shall be uprooted this year! If he has done uprightly, then it is good; if he has done not according to the law, then may it come upon his own body. For even I fear him for what he has done. And now the Jews in my land (need) have no fear of



of what this oppressor has done in his Kingdom. For if those people in the village of Pontoise and in the city of Joinville had cried out against (the Jews) that they did this thing, and if they had brought the matter before me, there would not have been found a true word of it." The king related before the Jews, the story of Pons Isarae (Pontoisara), which they made holy in Paris and which was really false; and similarly with this matter. "And now know, all Jews in my land, that I am not concerned in this matter; that even if the people should find a slain Christian in the city or in the field I would not say anything against the Jews on account of this. Therefore be not concerned about this thing. For the present we are not able to go there." And now - may God be praised - the king made a public notice to be sent in all his land to allow the Jews peace and rest and that they should treat respectfully all the prominent ones among the Jews and protect for all Israel their bodies and their wealth, more than has been done until now, and even more than what we wrote to you. Praise and thank the great King.

The publication ( public notice) I explained to the teacher Rabbi Yom Tov in order that he would reveal it to our holy teacher, (Rabbi Tam) in true writing, to thank the Rock of our help, because He inclined the heart of the king toward us. For when he heard of this evil thing, he was appalled for a while (Dan.4:16) and he said to the queen: "Today your brother has touched and broken my crown. For we have been forewarned by our holy ones to protect their (the Jew's) bodies and their wealth like the very apple of our eye. And that which he did seemed evil in his own eyes as he showed everybody. And when the princes asked him whether they should do likewise to their enemies, he answered: "It is not right to do so; on the contrary,

my spirit is inclined toward them to honor them twice as much as at the beginning. He issued (seal) his proclamation in all his land to the important men to protect the Jews, their bodies and their wealth like the pupil of their eye. Yesterday I came to the Bishop of Sens to ask to free the prisoners from the prison, who were under his brother, the wicked ruler, and the converted ones, the children of the pious. For I bribed the ruler with one hundred and twenty ledars, and a hundred ledars, already I have given him sureties. And he sealed the order to free them from the prison (together with) the lads who were converted. And he suggested to them that if they wanted to return to God then they might return openly (deliberately). And all prisoners went out from under the hand of the wicked, in their clothes only, and nothing more; For he kept everything that belonged to them, their claims and their wealth. And he gave his approval to everything good that we were able to mention that they should not accuse Israel anymore regarding something which never happened. All these things has God done for us. And concerning the inscriptions of the synagogue they have spoken lies and falsehood, but the thing was not so, however, it is true that the ruler said to Joseph the priest: "I have heard that the Jews are cursing me." And the priest answered and said: "My Lord, do not believe what could not come to the mind of any man. Who would contemplate to do such a thing? Do not believe it, our Lord." And his anger was appeased. May our Creator protect us from the hand of the oppressor and from the hand of all our enemies. May He lead us out to the light. Amen. May God do so!

And this is what our brothers from Paris wrote. We do not have their writings, for they were sent to another place. I write the things therefore from memory. When the king came from Flanders, the

prominent men of Paris and other places went out to meet him. They told the servants of the king that they desired to speak to the King. And they answered them: "Come in!" When the king saw them, he greeted them first, and they returned the greeting and rejoiced inwardly. They said to him: "Our Lord, King we desire to speak secretly." But he said: "I will not speak to you in secret; but publicly. I declare that Theobald has sinned in his life, and is very intolerable (hard) in my eyes, and I myself am afraid of him. And I do not believe it of them, that they ever killed a Christian; neither in Pons Isarae, which they have made holy nor this story of Theobald. Fear not, for I will add honor to your honor." And he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom to respect the Jews twice as much as they did before, and to protect their bodies and their wealth more than before. And the associate of Rabbi Nathan bar Meshulam, the teacher, reconsidered to give a bribe of two hundred and twenty ledars, if he were able, for a grave (to bury the dead), and for the freedom of the captured ones, and Henry the ruler, brother of the wicked one (Theobald) suffered to speak and said: "We do not find in the Torah of the Jews that it is permitted to kill a Christian and yesterday on the eve of Passover, a rumor went out in Epernay. I do not believe it." And everywhere they gave ledars to silence and put a stop to the rumor. And we, unimportant ones of Tours decreed upon ourselves and upon our inhabitants that we would call to the marriage canopy only inhabitants of the city. But if there was not a <sup>man</sup> <sup>for</sup> minion (ten witnesses), there, we would take additional ones from another place. Furthermore we have forbidden ourselves to wear silk clothes, neither men nor women for three years. And we

men have accepted upon ourselves a fast on Mondays and Thursdays until the appointed day. And so they fixed it in the whole land of Lothringia. Perhaps the Creator (Rock) may hear your voices, and do with us according to all of his wonders, to make known to all that He is doing this because of the blood of the pious ones. Erase this word from my writing, lest it be seen by the converted and surrendered ones. May the Rock of Israel bring them good tidings and peaceful words. Love righteousness, hate evil, choose the truth, abandon conspiracy, make the tongue upright, cleave to good taste and let anger depart.

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REPORT  
OF  
AN ANONYMOUS WRITER  
OF MAYENCE

III

REPORT OF AN ANONYMOUS WRITER OF MAYENCE

I will begin the story of the earlier persecutions. May God protect us and all Israel from the hand of persecutions.

*It was* In the year 1028 after the destruction of the Temple that this evil came upon Israel. The princes and governors and the people of the land, who were in the land of France rose up first, took counsel and planned to go up, -raised themselves up like an eagle - and to fight and to make a road to go to Jerusalem, the holy city, and to come to the sepulchre of the crucified one, that trampled carcass that cannot help nor deliver for he is vanity. And they said, one to the other: "Behold we are going to a distant land. We are going to wage war with the kings of the land. We pledge our lives ( our lives are in our hands) to kill and to destroy all the kingdoms which do not believe in Jesus; *especially* the Jews who killed and crucified him." And on every side and in every corner, they spoke evilly against us and took counsel and declared: "Either they turn to our abhorred abomination, or else we will destroy them, child as well as suckling. And they, the princes as well as the people of the land placed an evil symbol, a cross, upon their garments, and helmets upon their heads. And when the communities in the land of France heard that, ~~h~~ trembling, shaking, and fear seized them, (and they resorted to)

the ways of their fathers. They wrote letters and sent messengers to all the communities which were round about the river Rhine, to fast and suffer affliction, and to seek mercy for them from Him who dwells on High, to deliver them from their hand. And when the letter reached the holy ones in the land - they were men of God, Pillars of the world in Mayence - they wrote and answered to the land of France. And this was it written in them: "All the communities have decreed a fast and we have made ours. May God save us and deliver you from every misfortune and distress, for because of you, we fear a great fear. But as for us we need not fear so much; even a rumor we did not hear, nor did we realize that the decree that was issued against us, that the sword was approaching to deprive us of our very lives.

When the Crusaders began to come into this land, they demanded money to buy bread, and we gave it to them because we applied to ourselves: "Serve the king of Babylon and live" (Jer.27:17). But all this did not help us, for our sins consumed us. For the city dwellers in every city wherein the Crusaders came attacked us, for they also were allied with them to destroy the vine and the root on the entire way to Jerusalem. And when the Crusaders came, band after band, like the army of Sennacharib, some of the princes who were in this kingdom said: "Why are we sitting thus? Let us also go with them for whosoever goes on this Crusade and embarks on the way to go up to the defiled sepulchre of Jesus, he will be qualified and invited to paradise (hell). And the Crusaders gathered together from every district until they were as numerous as the sand which is upon the shore of the sea; even princes and common people. They spread a rumor of liberation,

that for everyone who would kill a Jew, all his sins would be forgiven." And there was a governor by the name of Dithmar, who said that he would never leave this kingdom until he killed a Jew; only then would he go on his way. When the holy community of Mayence heard this, they decreed a fast, and they fervently cried to God. Night and day they made a fast and afflicted themselves, and recited dirges, morning and evening, young and old. And with all this, our God did not withdraw the heat of his anger from off of us. For the crusaders came from before our houses with their crosses and flags. And whenever they saw one of us they would run after him and pierce him with a spear, until we were afraid to step, even upon our own threshold.

On the eighth day of the month of Iyar on Saturday (the Divine attribute of) justice began to become upon us. The Crusaders and the city dwellers arose first against the holy men, the pious of the Almighty, in Speyer, and planned against them to seize them together in the synagogue. But it was reported to them, and they (therefore) arose early in the morning on Saturday, prayed speedily and went out of the synagogue. When they (the enemies) saw that their plan to seize them together was not fulfilled they arose against them and killed eleven of them. For from there originated the decree to fulfill the Biblical verse: "And begin at my sanctuary" (Ezek.9:6). When the Bishop John heard it, he came with a great army and protected the community with all his heart. He made them enter his rooms and he delivered them from their (enemies') hands. He took some of the city dwellers and cut off their hands, for he was a pious man among the people and therefore God had applied the merit (of the fathers) and deliverance through his hand. And there stood



there in the breach, the leader Rabbi Moses bar Yekutiel, who had risked his life for them, and through whose influence the converted ones who were left here and there in the kingdom of Henry (were allowed) to return (to their faith). And through the king the Bishop John caused the rest of the community in Speyer to flee to his fortified cities - for God turned to them for the sake of His Great Name - and the Bishop concealed them there until the enemies of God had gone away. And they remained there in fasting, in weeping and mourning, and mutilated their lives exceedingly. For every day, the Crusaders and the people and Inco - may his bones be ground to pieces - and the common people gathered together against them to seize them and destroy them. But through (the influence of) Rabbi Moses the leader, the Bishop John saved them; for God fulfilled his heart to let them live without bribe. For it was from God, through Him, to give us a name, a remnant and a survivor.

And when the evil report came to <sup>Worms</sup> Worms, that a part of the community in Speyer were killed they cried out to God and wept a great and bitter weeping, for they realized that the decree was sent from Heaven; and there was no place to flee, neither forwards nor backwards. And the community separated itself into two groups. One group fled to the Bishop in his castles; and the other group remained in their houses, for the city dwellers had promised them protection with false and deceitful words. For like reeds they crushed them, to do evil and not good. For they were allied with the Crusaders to destroy our name and our remnant. And they said to us with vain, false, consolation: "Do not fear them for whosoever shall kill one of you, his life shall be taken for your life." But they did not give them a place wither to flee, for the community had deposited all its money

in their hands; therefore they handed them over (to the enemies).

On the tenth day of Iyar on Sunday, they devised a cunning plan against them. They took a trampled corpse, which had been buried thirty days prior to that time, and carried it into the midst of the city and said: "See what the Jews have done to our fellow man. They have taken a Christian and have boiled in water and have poured the water into our wells in order to kill us. And when the Crusaders and city dwellers heard this they cried out and gathered together, Everyone capable of bearing arms, from the oldest to the youngest and said: "Behold, the time and the occasion has come to avenge him who was killed on the cross, whom their fathers killed! Now let not a fugitive nor a survivor of them escape, not even a child or suckling in the cradles. And they came and smote those who remained in their houses. Handsome young men, pretty and beautiful maidens, old men, all stretched out their necks; even emancipated male servants and male servants were slain with them for the sanctification of the Awe-Inspiring Name, the exalted of the Universe, Ruler of Heaven and Earth, who was and shall be, the Lord of Hosts is His Name, And who was crowned by His laws with seventy two names. He created the Torah nine hundred and seventy four generations before the world was created, (and revealed it) twenty six generations after creation to Moses, the father of the prophets, through whose hand He gave the holy Torah. And Moses came and wrote in it: "Thou hast avouched the Lord, this day to be Thy God, etc." (Deut.26:17). For Him and for His Torah, they were killed like oxen, and dragged through the market places and streets to the slaughter. They lie naked; for they stripped and left them naked. And when those who were left, saw their brothers and the

virtuous daughters of Israel (lying) naked, they then submitted to them under great force; for the Crusaders said to them that they would not leave a fugitive nor a survivor among them. Some of them said: "Let us do their will now that we may go and bury our brethren and deliver our children from their hands." For they (the enemies) seized the few remaining children saying: "Perhaps these will be confirmed in our beliefs?" But they (Jews) however, did not turn away from their Creator and did not incline their hearts to Jesus but held fast to the exalted God. And also the rest of the community who were left in the rooms of the Bishop sent clothes to clothe the slain ones through the hands of those who were delivered. For charitable ones and the heads of the community were left there: for the majority of the community had escaped there the first time. And they sent words of consolation to the converted ones saying: "Fear not and take not to heart that which you have done, for as soon as the Holy One, praised be He, delivers us from the hand of our enemies we will then be (united) with you, in death or in life. Verily do not turn aside from following God."

And on the twenty fifth of Iyar, the Crusaders and the city dwellers said: "Behold those who are left in the court of the Bishop and in his rooms, even against them will we take revenge." And they gathered together from all the villages round about, the Crusaders and city dwellers together with them, and besieged them and fought against them. And there was a very great battle, one against the other, until they captured the rooms in which were the Children of the Holy Covenant. And when they saw the battle before and behind them they justified the decree of the King of King of Kings

and His judgment, and put their trust in their Creator, and offered sacrifices of righteousness. They took their children and slaughtered them with willinghearts, for the unity of the Honored and Awe-Inspiring Name. For there the prominent men of the community were slain. And there was a young man by the name of Meshulam bar Isaac, who called in a loud voice to all who were standing there and to his most beloved wife Zipporah: "Hearken to me, young and old, God has given me this son, for Zipporah bore him in her old age, and his name was Isaac. Now I will sacrifice him as Abraham our father did to his son, Isaac." And Zipporah answered him: "My Lord, My Lord, wait yet a little while. Do not stretch forth your hand upon the land whom I have reared, and raised and born in my old age. Kill me first that I may not see the death of the boy." And he answered and said: "I will not delay even a minute. Let Him who gave him to us take him for His portion, and cause him to rest in the lap of Abraham, our father." And he bound Isaac his son and took the knife in his hand to slay his son. And he made the blessing of the slaughter. And the lad answered: "Amen." And he slaughtered the boy. He took his sorrowful wife and the two of them went out of the room and the Crusaders killed them. Are ~~thou~~ <sup>they</sup> carried forth, O God on account of this? But with all this, the heat of His great anger did not depart from us. And there was a young man by the name of Isaac bar Daniel, and they asked him saying: "Do you wish to exchange your God for a despised idol?" He said: "Far be it from me to ignore Him. In Him I trust until I shall surrender my soul until Him." And they put a rope around his neck and dragged him through all the city, in the mire of the streets, as far as the house of debauchery, (their church).



And his soul was still bound to his earthly life. And they said to him: "You are still able to save yourself. Do you wish to change? And he indicated with his finger -for he was not able to bring forth a word from his mouth Because he was nearly strangled - as if to say: "Cut off my head." And they cut off his neck. And in addition there was another young man by the name of Rabbi Simcha, the priest, son of the teacher Isaac the priest. And they sought to defile him in their putrid water. And they said to him: "See, all of them are killed already and are lying naked." And the young man answered them in his wisdom: " I will fulfill all your desires. Only lead me with you to the Bishop." And they took and led him into the room of the Bishop. And the nephew of the Bishop was there with them. They began to preach (read) to him in the name of Jesus and left him in the room of the Bishop. And the young man took out his knife and gnashed his teeth against the prince, related to the Bishop, just as a young lion does when he howls over his prey. And he passed judgment upon him and stabb~~e~~d the knife into his belly so that he fell and died. And he turned from there and he stabbed the two others until the knife broke in his hand. All fled ~~th~~ither and thither. But when they saw that the knife was broken, they went up against him and killed him. There died the young man who sanctified the Name. And he did what the rest of the congregation did not do, in that he killed three of the uncircumcized with his knife. And the rest surrendered their lives and fasted all day, before which act men cried for their children and their friends until their strength was exhausted for they were not able to fight against them But they said: "It is the decree of the king. Let us fall by the hand of God in order that we may come and see the great light." There they all fell

for the unity of the Name. There was also there a prominent woman by the name of Minna, who hid herself in a house under the ground, outside of the city. And all of the men of the city gathered together against her and said to her: "Behold you are a virtuous woman! Know and see that God does no longer desire to save you; that they are lying naked on the top of all the streets and that there is no one to bury them. Let yourself be converted (defiled)." And they fell unto the ground before her, for they did not want to kill her because her name was so widely spread, since all the great men of the city and the princes of the land frequented her company. And she answered and said: "Far be it from me to ignore the exalted God. For His sake and for the sake of His holy Torah, slay me, tarry no longer!" There the praised one was killed in the gates. All of them were killed because they sanctified the Name with a perfect heart and a willing soul. And they slaughtered one another, all as one; youths, maidens, old men, and old women, even the children slaughtered themselves for the sanctification of the Name. And they whose names were mentioned did this; but how much the more did the rest do whose names were not mentioned. They did what no man ever saw. Of them and their like it was said: "From men by Thy hand O Lord, From men of the world whose portion is in this life" (Ps.17:14). Their portion no one has seen, except God alone; He will do it for those who wait for him. And they all fell by the hand of God. He brought them there to their resting place, to the great light of the Garden of Eden. Behold their souls are tied in the bundle of life with the Lord God who created them even to eternity.

And when the holy men, the pious ones of the Almighty, the holy community in Mayence, heard that a part of the community of Speyer and the community of <sup>Worms</sup> Garmisza were killed a second time, their spirit weakened and their heart melted and turned to water. And they cried to God and said: "Thou O God, Lord of Israel, do you want to make an end of the remnant of Israel? Where are all Thy wonders which our fathers told us saying: 'Did you not bring us out of Egypt, O Lord?' And now you break away to deliver us into the hands of the nations to destroy us!" And all the chiefs of Israel, of the congregation gathered together and came to the Bishop and his princes and his servants and said to them: "What shall we do regarding the rumor we heard about our brethren in Speyer and Garmisza, that they were killed?" And they answered them: "Listen to our advice. Bring all your money to our treasury and to the treasury of the Bishop, and you and your wives and your children and all that belongs to you, come into the court of the Bishop. Then you will be able to escape from the hand of the Crusaders. But they invented this advice in order to deliver us over (to the enemies), and to gather us together to capture us like fish which are caught in an evil net. And the Bishop had gathered together his princes and his servants, great princes, noblemen and prominent men, in order to help us and deliver us from the Crusaders; for at first his will was to deliver us, but in the end he changed for the worse.

One day a Christian woman came and brought a goose with her which she had raised from a fledgling. The goose would go every place the woman would go. And she would say to every passerby: "See, this goose has understanding. When I say that I am going on the Crusade, it also wants to go with me. Then the Crusaders and

the city dwellers gathered together against us and said to us: "Where is your divine promise? How will you be able to save yourselves? Look, Jesus will do these wonders for ~~them~~." And they all came with swords and with spears to destroy us. But a few of the city dwellers and would not let them. In that moment they arose with one heart and slew round about the river Rhine until they killed one of the Crusaders. And they said: "All this the Jews have brought about." Except for a few, they all were assembled. When the holy men saw all these things, their hearts melted, and they said: "You are cruel to prevail and overtake us." And when they heard their words, they exclaimed, from the oldest to the youngest of them: "Would that we should die by the hand of God and by the hand of the enemies of God, because He is a merciful King, the Only One in the universe." They left their houses desolate and did not come to the synagogue except on the Sabbath which was the last Sabbath before our persecution. For a few men entered there to pray; Rabbi Judah bar Isaac also entered there to pray on that Sabbath. They wept a great weeping until their soul went out, for they realized that it was the decree of the King of the King of Kings. And there was a distinguished scholar, Rabbi Baruch bar Isaac, who said to us: "Know, ~~that~~ for truth and certainty, that the decree was ordered upon us and we are unable to escape it, for that night my father-in-law Judah and I heard the souls who were praying in a loud voice, like crying. And when we heard the voice, we thought that perhaps a few of the community had returned from the court of the Bishop to pray in the synagogue at midnight, because of their trouble and bitterness of heart. We ran to the door of the synagogue but it was locked. We heard the voice, but we could not understand any of it.



Trembling, we returned to the house; for the house was near the synagogue. And when we heard these things, we prostrated ourselves and said: "Wilt Thou O Lord God make an end of the remnant of Israel?" They went and told their experiences to our brethren who were in the court of the Duke and in the court of the Bishop. And they also cried with great weeping.

And on the new moon of Sivan, Inco the wicked, - may his bones be ground to pieces in iron threshing sleds - came with a mighty army, with crusaders and common people, and (encamped) outside the city, for he also said: "I desire to go on the Crusades." And he was head of all our oppressors. Upon the aged and the youths and upon virgins and upon children and sucklings and the sick, he had no compassion. He treated the people of God as dust. Most of the youths he killed with a sword and the pregnant women he ripped open. They encamped outside of the city for two days. And the heads of the communities said: "Let us send him away and place our letters in his hand, in order that the communities upon his way will show him respect. Perhaps God will show His great mercy."

For before this, they ~~threw~~ away their money, in giving it to the Bishop and the Duke and his princes and his servants and the city dwellers; about four hundred marks of silver, in order that they might help them. But it was of no avail. We were not even regarded as like Sodom and Gemorrah, for as many as ten were required to save them, but to save us, neither twenty nor ten were sufficient.

And on the third day of the month of Sivan, on that day, When Moses said: "Be ready on the third day" (Ex.19:15); on that same day, the crown of Israel fell; the teachers of the Torah fell;

the scholars died; the glory of the Torah fell; the splendour of Israel was cast from Heaven to Earth; those who feared sin and humility ceased; men of practical piety and glory, of wisdom and purity ceased to exist; and those who had annulled the wicked decrees and the anger of the Creator ceased. Those who gave charity in secret were diminished. Truth was rejected; preachers died; and respected men fell; The arrogant increased. Woe to them! for from the day of the destruction of the second Temple, there has not arisen any like unto them, and after them there shall be none like them, for they sanctified the Name with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their might. Happy are they! And at noon, Inco the wicked, - may his bones be ground to pieces - came with all his army. And the city dwellers opened the gate for him. And the enemies of God said one to another: "See, the gate opened by itself! All this Jesus is doing for us in order that we should avenge his blood upon the Jews. And they came with their banners to the gate of the Bishop - in which were the Children of the Holy Covenant - a great host as numerous as the sand which is upon the shore of the sea. And when the Holy Ones, those who fear the Most High saw the great multitude, they put their trust in and cleaved to their Creator. Then they put on armour and girded themselves with weapons of war, old and young. And Rabbi Kolonymous bar Meshulam was at their head. And there was a pious man, one of the great ones of his generation, Rabbenu Menabhem son of Rabbana Rabbi David the Levite, who said: "All the congregation sanctify the Honored and Awe-Inspiring Name with perfect heart." And they all answered: "All of you, do what the sons of Jacob, our father did when he sought to reveal the end for them, and when the Schechinah had departed from him, saying: 'Woe there be

found in me a blemish, like in Abraham, my grandfather or in Isaac, my father; and like our fathers answered and said when they received the Torah at this time on Mt.Sinai: 'We will do and listen'" And he cried in a loud voice: "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One. And they all drew near to the gate to fight with the Crusaders and the city dwellers. And they fought against each other into the midst of the gate. But their sins consumed them and the enemies prevailed over them and captured the gate. Even the men of the bishop who promised to help <sup>them</sup> /who, fled first in order to deliver them over into the hand of the enemies; even they were crushed like reeds. And the enemies came into the midst of the court and found Rabbi Isaac bar Moses and killed and destroyed them with a blow of the sword. Only fifty three persons fled with Rabbi Kolonyous to the rooms of the Bishop. They went into a long room, which is called a Secretarium, and remained there. And the enemies entered the court on the third of Sivan, on Tuesday, "a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness" (Zeph.1:15). "Let darkness and the shadow of death claim it for their own"(Job 3:5) "Let not God inquire after it from above, neither let the light shine upon it" (Job3:4). Sun and moon! Why did you not darken your light? And ye stars which are compared with Israel and the twelve signs of the Zodiac and the number of tribes of Israel, the sons of Jacob, why did you not conceal your light from shining upon the enemies who planned to destroy the name of Israel? Inquire and see if there was ever, since the days of the first man, such a multitudinous sacrifice as this? When the Children of the Holy Covenant saw that the decree was fulfilled, and that the enemies

conquered them, they all cried, youths, and elders, virgins and maidens, and boys, ~~men~~ servants and maid servants; weeping for them and for their lives. And they said: "Let us bear the yoke of the holy fear. Only for the time being will the enemy kill us and only by means of the easiest of the fourtypes of death, by the sword. We shall be alive, but our souls will be established in paradise, in the great lucid speculum forever and ever. " And they all said with a good heart and a willing spirit: "After all one should not criticize the ways of the Holy One, praised be He, and blessed be His Name who gave us his Torah and the command to let ourselves be killed and slain for the unity of His holy Name. Happy shall we be if we do His will. Happy is he who is killed and slaughtered and who dies for the unity of His Name. It is not enough that he will merit to come in the future world, and ~~sit~~ in the group of the righteous, the pillars of the world, but a world of darkness will be changed into a world of light and a world of trouble into a world of joy, and an ephemeral world into a permanent world for ever and ever." And they all cried with a loud voice as one: "After all we cannot delay, for the enemies will come upon us speedily. Let us sacrifice ourselves before Our Father in heaven. Let every one who has a knife come and slaughter us for the sanctification of the Unified Eternal Name. And after that let him stab himself with his sword in the throat or stomach or slaughter himself." And they all arose, men and women and slaughtered one another. And maidens and brides and grooms looked out of the windows and cried out in a loud voice: "Look and see our God, what we are doing for the sanctification of Thy great Name in not changing Thy Divinity for a hanged, crucified, detestable, abominable in his being, bastard, son of uncleanness, son of carnality." And they all were slaughtered.



And the blood of the slaughtering flowed over the rooms, in which were the Sons of the holy Covenant. And they were lying in rows, slaughtered, sucklings, with hoary old men, struggling (choking) in their throats as do sheep that are slaughtered. Wilt Thou be carried forth on account of this O Lord etc. Avenge the blood of thy servants which was spilled. See whether this can be compared to olden times! For they were pressing one against the other saying: "I will be the first to sanctify the Name of the King of the King of Kings." And even the innocent women threw money outside in order to delay them (the enemies) a little until they could slaughter their children. Even the hands of tender hearted women strangled their children in order to do the will of their Creator, and then showed the faces of their tender children to the Christians.

And when the enemies came into the rooms and broke down the doors, they found them still writhing and wallowing in their blood. They took away their money, stripped them naked, smote the remaining ones, not leaving a remnant, nor a survivor. And thus they did to all the rooms in which there were Children of Israel of The Holy Covenant with the exception of one room which was too strong. And the enemies fought against it until evening. And when the Holy Ones saw that the enemies were stronger than they the men and women arose and slaughtered their children and afterwards slaughtered each other. One fell upon his sword and died and another killed himself with his sword or knife. Meanwhile the pious women would throw stones at the enemies through the windows and the enemies would throw stones back at them And the stones hit them so much that their bodies and their faces were cut to pieces. Then they reviled and blasphemed the Crusaders in the name of Jesus, the profaned and

abominable one, the son of harlotry (saying): "In whom do you put your trust? In a trampled upon ~~oases~~?" The Crusaders then drew nigh to break the door and there was a prominent woman by the name of Rachel the eldest daughter of Rabbi Isaac bar Asher, who said to her friends: "I have four children. Do not even spare them, lest these uncircumcized come and seize them alive, and they be confirmed in their abomination. Even upon them sanctify the Name of the Holy One." And one of her friends came and took the knife. But when she saw the knife she let out a great and bitter cry and beat herself upon her face and cried, saying: "Where is Thy mercy O God?" (Ps.89:50) And she took Isaac her youngest son, for he was very good looking, and she slew him. And she spread out her two hands between the two brothers and said to her friends: "By thy life, do not slay Isaac before Aaron." And when the boy Aaron saw his brother being killed he cried out: "My mother, my mother, slay me not! And he ran away and hid under a chest. And she took her two daughters, Belle and Matrona, and sacrificed them to God, Lord of Hosts, who commanded us not to change ~~His~~ pure fear, but to become whole-hearted with Him. After the pious woman had finished sacrificing her three children before our Creator, she raised her voice and called to her son Aaron: "Aaron, where are you? I cannot even spare you, nor have mercy upon you." She pulled him by the foot from under the chest, where he had hidden, and sacrificed him before the high and exalted God. Then she put them in her two sleeves, two on each side, near her body, while they were still struggling convulsively beside her until the Crusaders seized the room and found her sitting and lamenting over them.

And they said to her: "Show us the money which you have in your sleeves." But when they saw the slain children, they beat her and killed her. Concerning them and her it was said: "The mother was dashed to pieces with her children" (Hos.10:14). And she died with them just as that other righteous woman died with her seven children. And concerning her it was said: "As a joyful mother of children" (Ps.113:9). And the Crusaders slew all those who were in the room and stripped them naked while they were yet struggling convulsively and wallowing in their blood. And they stripped them. "See O Lord and behold how abject I have become." (Lam.1:11) And afterwards, they threw them naked out of the rooms through the windows in mounds and heaps, until they were like a high mountain. Many of the Children of the Holy Covenant were still alive when they were cast out. They indicated with their finger: "Give us water that we may drink." When the Crusaders saw that, they asked them: "Do you wish to baptize yourselves?" But they shook their heads (negatively) and looked to their Father in heaven saying: "No!" pointing with their fingers to the Holy One, praised be He. And the Crusaders killed them. All this, those whose names we have mentioned did; but how much the more all the rest of the community. They unified the Name of the Holy One and they all fell by the hand of God. Then the Crusaders began to desecrate in the name of Jesus.

And they raised their banners and came unto the rest of the communities, to the court of the Duke Burgrave. They besieged them also, fought against them and captured the entrance gate of the court, and also smote them. And there was a man by the name of Mar Moses bar Helbo, who called to his two sons and said to them: "My

sons, Helbo and Simeon, in this hour, Hell and Paradise are open. Into which of them would you care to enter?" And they answered and said: "We would like to go into Paradise." And they stretched out their necks and the enemies smote them, father with sons. And the scroll of the Torah was there in the room. When the Crusaders came into the room and found it, they tore it to pieces. And when the holy and pure women, daughters of kings, saw that the Torah was torn, they cried to their husbands loudly: "See, see, the holy Torah! The enemies have torn it. And all the men and women said together: "Woe!-The holy Torah, the crown of beauty, the splendour of our eyes, before which we used to prostrate ourselves in the synagogue which we kissed and honored - Woe, it has now fallen into the hands of those uncircumcized and unclean ones!" And when the men heard the words of the holy women, they grew very zealous for the Lord our God and ~~for~~ His holy precious Torah. A young man by the name of Rabbi David ben Rabbana Menachem, called and said unto them: "My brethren, rend your garments in respect of the Torah!" And they rent their garments, according to the commands of our teacher. And they found one Crusader in a room and all the men and women rose up and stoned him with stones so that he fell and died. And when the city dwellers and Crusaders saw that he was dead they fought against them. They climbed upon the roof in which house the Children of the Holy Covenant were. They tore down the roof, shot them with arrows, and stabbed them with spears. There was a man by the name of Mar Jacob bar Sulam, who did not come from an honorable family and whose mother was not a Jewess, who called loudly to all those who were standing: "All the days of my life until now, they have despised me, but now, I will slaughter myself." And he slaughtered himself in the name of Him who is called glorious and



Mighty, the Lord of Host is His Name. And there was yet another man by the name of Mar Samuel, the elder, bar Mordecai, who also sanctified the Name. He took his knife, stabbed it into his belly, and his entrails spilled upon the ground. He called to all who were standing near him and said: "See, my brethren, what I am doing for the sanctification of the Ever-Living One." There fell the old man for the unity of the Name, and the sanctification of His Fear.

And the Crusaders and city dwellers turned from there and came into the midst of the city, into a court. Mar David, the tax collector, bar Nathaniel, with his wife and children and household were hidden there in the court of a priest. And the priest said to him: "See there is neither a remnant nor a survivor left in the court of the Bishop nor in the court of the Duke. All were killed, cast out, and trampled upon in the streets, except the few whom they converted. If you will do likewise, you will be able to save yourself, your money and all your household from the hands of the Crusaders." And the God-fearing man answered: "Behold go out to the Crusaders and city dwellers and tell them that they should all come to me." And when the priest heard the words of Mar David the tax collector, he rejoiced very much over his words, for he thought: "Already is such a prominent Jew willing to listen to our voice." He ran outside before them and told them the words of the righteous man. And they also rejoiced exceedingly. And many thousands gathered round about the house. And when the righteous one saw them, he put his trust in his Creator, and called unto them, and said: "Woe, ye are children of harlots. Ye believe in a bastard (child born in harlotry), but I believe in an eternal

living God, the glory of the high heavens, in whom I have trusted this day, (and I will continue to do so) until my soul departs. On the day that you kill me my spirit shall rest in paradise, in the light of the living, but you will go down to a dark pit, for eternal dwelling, and will be banished in hell with your god, for he is the son of carnality and is hanged." And when they heard the pious one, they grew very angry, raised their banners, encamped round about the house and began to shout and cry in the name of Jesus. They went up to him and killed him, his righteous wife, his children, his son-in-law and all his household and his maid-servant. All were killed there for the sanctification of the Name. There fell the righteous one with the men of his household.

And they turned and went to the house of Rabbi Samuel bar Naaman, who also sanctified the Holy Name. They gathered round about his house, for he alone of the whole community was left in his house. They entreated him and sought to baptize him in their putrid uncleanwater, but he and all who were with him put their trust in their Creator and would not hearken to them. So they killed them all and cast them from the windows.

All this did they whose names we have mentioned, and as for what the rest of the community and the leaders of the congregation did and accomplished for the unity of the Name of the King of the King of Kings, the Holy One praised be He and blessed be His Name, like Rabbi Akiba and his associates, I do not know. May God deliver us from this exile! The end of the earlier persecutions!

Finis.

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