



1. 1305 Ban on Philosophy (tr. Yitzhak Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, pg. 301)

From this day on and for the next fifty years, no member of our community shall study the "Greek" works on science and metaphysics, either in the original (i.e., in Arabic) or in translation, before he will have reached the age of twenty-five; nor may any member of our community teach the aforesaid disciplines to anyone under the age of twenty-five, lest these studies draw the student away from the Torah of Israel which is superior to this other learning... We have exempted from our decree the study of medicine, although it is a natural science, for the Torah has given the physician permission to practice the art of healing.

2. Yitzhak Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, pg. 302

The reformers appear to us to have acted with circumspection and with relative tolerance. In setting the age of twenty-five as the proper time to begin the study of metaphysics they actually conformed to the academic practice then in effect among the Jews as well as among the Christians. Students did not, for the most part, enter upon the study of philosophy until the age of twenty-five or thirty.

3. Rabbi Solomon ibn Aderet, *A statement on an Ishmaelite who wrote of religions, and he was a fool who spoke even against our perfect religion* https://www.sefaria.org/Ma'amar_al_Yishmael.1

I saw a fool who was wise in his own eyes, a fool, an Ishmaelite whose eyes misled him and whose blindness confused him, to speak even upon our sacred book, the book of the Torah of our master Moses, peace be upon him. And this sad, degraded person collected scraps, to respond to the Torah's words which he did not grasp.

13th Century Christian Spain

4. Yitzhak Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, pp. 129-130

The sinister side of Alfonso's character was revealed toward the end of his reign, after his imperial ambitions involved his kingdom in the remote politics of the Holy Roman Empire, and later, when he was confronted with an uprising of the nobility and the rebellion of his son Sancho. The treatment of the Jews in the other European countries did not go unnoticed in Spain. Twice during this period the Jews were expelled from France. In England class interests and religioascetic tendencies were preparing the ground for their ultimate expulsion. Conditions in Spain had not yet reached this stage; yet a personal caprice of Alfonso X brought down upon the heads of the Castilian Jews the first catastrophic blow whose consequences are known to us in detail.

In 1278, Don Çag de la Maleha, as the head tax-farmer of Leon and Castile, was ordered to forward a sum of money to the army and navy besieging Algeciras. But the Infante Sancho got hold of the money and diverted it to his own ends, and the forces before Algeciras found themselves in dire straits. The king, in a vindictive mood, imprisoned all the Jewish tax-farmers in 1279. One of them saved his life through conversion. Another, apparently an intimate of Sancho, was dragged to death through the streets of Seville, past the monastery where the infante had taken up residence. Don Çag was hanged. Then, one Sabbath day in January 1281, the king had all the Jews arrested in their synagogues, and did not release them until they agreed to pay him 4,380,000 gold maravedís, a sum twice the annual tribute of the Castilian aljamas. Alfonso X thus followed the example set by Philip II of France a century earlier. Many of the leading Jews were kept in prison for several months, where they were subjected to torture and attempts to convert them. We don't know what took place elsewhere, but the Jewish community of Toledo was demolished, like "Sodom and Gomorrah."

5. Yitzhak Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, pp. 289-290

The cities of Languedoc—Montpellier, Narbonne, Perpignan—were the home of a number of versatile Jewish intellectuals, among them the well-known translators of Arabic works into Hebrew. Some religious zealots, also resident in these communities, began to suspect that the vines of philosophic rationalism, cultivated by these intellectual circles, had produced some very dangerous fruit. The rationalists, in their writings and oral preachings, at times adopted a radical approach to the Sacred Writings. They interpreted the biblical miracles allegorically and assigned

a symbolic function to the commandments of the Torah. It was also reported that they denied personal immortality and stripped the messianic ideal of its traditionally assigned concrete forms. To the fundamentalists such ideas were, naturally, naked heresy and outright blasphemy.

6. Rabbi Solomon ibn Aderet, Responsum 1:610

Reuven had a Jewish maidservant in his house, and he acted corruptly with her. After some time she became pregnant while with him; he didn't know whether it was from him or from another, and he expelled her from his home. After some time he brought her back, and she was pregnant from that time. He placed her in his relative's home at the time of the birth

7. Encyclopedia.com, *Prophet of Avila*

Name given to a seer who declared himself at Avila, Spain, in 1295. The prophet, an illiterate man, purportedly experienced visions through the medium of an angel, who "dictated" to him a Book of Wondrous Wisdom, on which the seer immediately compiled a detailed commentary... The work has not been preserved, but evidently resembled the Christian mystical prophecies of this type common in the 13th and 14th centuries. The prophet of Avila is also mentioned by the apostate Abner of Burgos, who records that a prophet announced that the ram's horn of the Messiah would be blown on the last day of the month of Tammuz. The Jews of the district prepared themselves by prayer and fasting, and on the appointed day gathered in the synagogue robed in white, whereupon crosses suddenly appeared on their garments. The community was panic-stricken; some were induced to adopt Christianity.

Who was Rabbi Solomon ibn Aderet (c. 1235-1310)?

8. Rabbi Solomon ibn Aderet, Responsum 2:134

The king's order to make an entrance and doors in the middle of the neighbourhood to protect the nation is within his authority. The law of Jewish kings is equal to that of the nations in this regard. Also, even Jewish kings are permitted to do such things, as part of protecting their nation.

9. Rabbi Solomon ibn Aderet, Responsum 6:254

To deduce from this [principle of obeying government legislation] to follow the ways of the nations and their laws – Gd forbid that this holy nation act thus! All the more so if they will now increase their sin, uprooting the portion of a father upon his children, depending upon this fragile reed! One who does this tears down the walls of the Torah and uproots root and branch, and the Torah will demand recompense from his hand. One who increases his wealth thus will stumble in his own deeds. And I say that any who rely on saying that this is permitted because we must obey the law of the land is mistaken and a thief... He uproots all of the laws of the complete Torah. Why would we need the sacred texts which Rebbe, and then Raveina and Rav Ashi, composed for us? Let them teach their children the laws of the nations, and build for them patchwork altars in the madrassas of the nations! Gd-forbid, let there not be such in Israel, lest the Torah wear sackcloth...

10. Rabbi Solomon ibn Aderet, Responsum 3:393

If you were to establish everything on the basis of biblical law, and you would not punish other than as the Torah does for injuries and the like, the world would be ruined, for we would require witnesses and warnings...

11. Rabbi Solomon ibn Aderet, Responsum 3:428

This [kind of] dispute did not begin with you alone, but also in the holy community of Girona, and Rabbi Moses [ben Nachman] z"l set a compromise between them, to have two *shlichei tzibbur*. And so happened to us in Barcelona, and one leads prayer on one Shabbat and the other leads prayer on the next Shabbat. Therefore, I advise you to eliminate strife and restore love and brotherhood and peace to their place. The *chazan* and the other *chazan* you chose should both be appointed. And because the first one was first, and to avoid embarrassing him, he should lead prayer on the first Shabbat, and then the second, and so each Shabbat. This is the way of truth and peace; "love truth and peace."

Fighting External Battles

12. Martin Jacobs, *Interreligious Polemics in Medieval Spain*, pg. 9

[Quoting Ibn Ḥazm] By G-d, I have never seen a people which, while acknowledging the (idea of) prophethood, ascribes to the prophets what those infidels ascribe to them!

Once they attribute to Abraham, peace be with him, that he was married to his sister (i.e. Sarah, cf. Genesis 12:13, 19; 20:2, 12), who bore him Isaac, peace be with him. Then they attribute to Jacob that he married one woman (i.e., Rachel, cf. Genesis 29:20-21), but that another woman who was not his wife (i.e., Leah, cf. Genesis 29:23) was brought to him secretly and that she (i.e., Leah) bore him children from whom Moses, Aaron, David, Solomon, and other prophets, peace be with them, are descended.

13. Camilla Adang, *A Jewish Reply to Ibn Ḥazm: Solomon b. Adret's Polemic Against Islam* pg. 189

[Quoting Ibn Ḥazm] This is one of the most nonsensical things that can be; that the sons of Kohath were only four, and that the sons of these four men were only seven in number...

14. Camilla Adang, *A Jewish Reply to Ibn Ḥazm: Solomon b. Adret's Polemic Against Islam* pg. 183

What is interesting is that Ibn Adret adopts a polemical style not unlike Ibn Ḥazm's own. He calls the Muslim scholar a vainglorious man who does not understand what he is talking about, a brainless idiot, and, most often, *hameshuga hazeh* – this madman. In comparison with Ibn Adret's polemical tract against the Ishmaelite, his tract against a likewise unidentified Christian (possibly Raimundus Martini, d. 1285) is completely dispassionate and devoid of the vilifications that characterize his tract against Ibn Ḥazm. It would seem, then, that Ibn Adret adopts the style of the tract – or set of excerpts – he is refuting...

15. Rabbi Solomon ibn Aderet, *A statement on an Ishmaelite who wrote of religions*

And if one would claim that all of this was added to the text, as well as that all that comes in the Torah in this section is from after the destruction [of the Temple], then anyone with sense, and anyone with a brain in his skull, would recognize – would it be possible to collect all of the texts that were in the hands of Israelites, east and west, north and the sea, and pervert them with the same error, and not one of them would escape to be different from the others in some matter or word? And who would be the perverter of the religion and enemy of the nation who would collect all of the texts such that not one would remain, and pervert all of them? Also the books of the Prophets and Writings, in which many such things appear. And all of this would be done without any member of the religion realizing it...

16. Rabbi Solomon ibn Aderet, *A statement on an Ishmaelite who wrote of religions*

Some [of the stories] mention something because we need to know [a lesson from] it in another context, to know from it something that mandates distancing from that which should be distanced, or to do something. Like the story of Lot with his daughters – to distance drinking a lot of wine for someone who knows that his nature is that he will become confused to the point of intoxication...

17. Rabbi Solomon ibn Aderet, *A statement on an Ishmaelite who wrote of religions*

You, sir, open your eyes and see: If this was inserted into the text from the mouth of our master Moses, peace be upon him, then it is true. And if it was added later, how did our king, David, and all of the kings who emerged from his line, tolerate this to be written in the text, saying explicitly that he was born from promiscuity, and they did not erase it? And that he would tolerate that it be recorded in his text that his mother came from Moav, with her root in promiscuity with her family, with her father Lot?...

18. Martin Jacobs, *Interreligious Polemics in Medieval Spain*, pp. 17-18

Ibn Adret's true target in writing the *Ma'amar* seems to have been a rationalizing interpretation of the Bible that could pave the way for a *Christian* exegesis. Refuting the Muslim doctrines of *tahrif* (i.e., corruption) and *naskh* (i.e., abrogation) and claiming that the Jews preserved the original Mosaic Law not only in its text, but also in their correct observance, Ibn Adret argued against the Christian charge that Judaism constituted a perversion of the religion of the "Old Testament"...

Moreover, the *Ma'amar al' Yishmael* has to be read in the context of the inner-Jewish dispute about rationalism that started in Provence and then spread to Spain. One of the topics of the Maimonidean controversy was the inclination of philosophically minded Jewish thinkers to interpret the Bible allegorically, an exegetical technique which – as Ibn Adret was afraid – might question the actual fulfillment of many Jewish religious precepts and thereby legitimize a Christian understanding of the Hebrew Bible.

19. Rabbi Solomon ibn Aderet, Responsum 4:187

To teach the people of Judah to answer statements with true statements and to write justly, it appeared just in my eyes to write before you regarding that which someone told me... that one of the Ishmaelite scholars spoke in the community on the day of gathering, and he filled ears with his words. And you asked me to give you answers for his words. Therefore, I have seen fit to record in text the dispute one of their scholars had with me regarding those matters... He tried a different tack: Still, Jacob said, "[The sceptre] will not leave [the tribe of Judah] until [Messiah] comes," and it has left!

I said: If the prophet Jacob was truly promising that the sceptre would not leave Judah until Messiah arrives, it left during the Babylonian Exile, which was long before the Messiah you claim has arrived!

He replied that [the sceptre] did not leave in that exile, for there still was a Sanhedrin that judged capital cases.

I replied that this is not so, for two reasons. First, they did not handle capital cases in Babylon... Further, Jacob spoke to [the tribe of] Judah, and the Sanhedrin is not from Judah, but rather it is collected from all Israel, whoever is wise and worthy!...

He replied: If so, then according to your words what will we do with Jacob's prophecy?

I said: The true meaning of the text is thus: The sceptre will not leave Judah forever, for in the end...

20. Harvey J. Hames, *It Takes Three to Tango*, Medieval Encounters 15 (2009)

https://www.academia.edu/277263/It_Takes_Three_to_Tango_Ramon_Llull_Solomon_Ibn_Adret_and_Alfonso_of_Valadolid_Debate_the_Trinity

21. Rabbi Solomon ibn Aderet, Responsum 4:314

Reuven brought Dina, daughter of Joshua, into his home, with her consent and the consent of her parents, to serve him. And this Reuven, ten years passed without his wife becoming pregnant, and she had no child. And when Dina was in his house, he seduced her, lay with her and impregnated her. When Reuven realized it, he betrothed her and wrote her a *ketubah*. Then Dina's parents agreed to it. You ask if the child's lineage is kosher.

Before anything else, I must say that this is prohibited and ugly. It is prohibited for he violates the prohibition of "You shall not have a *kedeishah*," and "You shall not desecrate your daughter to turn her to promiscuity," and this is a biblical prohibition. And it is ugly because before the Torah was given, a man and woman would meet in the market, and if they both wanted then he would lie with her and keep her as a wife, or pay her and leave. Once the Torah was given, new law was created. One who wishes to marry a woman must...

22. Rabbi Solomon ibn Aderet, Responsum 1:98

And if you will reply: What can we do – we have seen a *yeteret* of the foot survive twelve months, with our own eyes! This is what Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi told Rabbi Yosi ben Nehorai, "You depend on that?" Meaning: This is not possible. It is as though you testify that you have seen the impossible. Or, there is another cause. So, too, here we ask the witness how he knows that this animal had, in fact, survived that period. Perhaps you forgot or erred, or perhaps you were confused regarding the time, or perhaps you confused this animal for another, for it is not possible for him to testify that this animal was in his sights for the entire twelve months. And if he will strengthen himself in his error and say, "No, for I love these strange words, this is what I saw and this is what I will follow," then we will tell him that it is impossible to slander the words of the sages. The witness, and one thousand like him, should be cancelled, rather than cancel one point of the positions agreed upon by the holy Jewish sages, the prophets and students of prophets, and statements given to Moses at Sinai...