

ANNOTATED ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF QUESTIONS

EH 48 D 38

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QUESTION 1 — How is it proved that in God there cannot be a plurality, or three persons in one essence?

There is no doubt that if the inquirer were to proceed logically, he would not get tired of asking about what he asks us to prove, because invented novelties bring with them an express obligation for proofs and demonstrations. Still, since the truth [87v] is so long, those who possess it are not afraid to proclaim it frequently. Thus, I say that among the many that prove the very simple unity of God, I will mention a few from the Holy Scripture and others that are commonly known. It will be the first to see that His beloved people, even His beloved prophets and priests, never heard of such a doctrine. On the contrary, in explicit terms, He taught them to flee from that, saying in Deuteronomy 6, verse 4: “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone.”¹ And, as it also says in Deuteronomy 32, verse 39: “See, then, that I, I am He; There is no god beside Me.”² Through the prophet Isaiah, He also says: “My witnesses are *you*—declares the LORD—My servant, whom I have chosen. To the end that you may take thought, And believe in Me, And understand that I am He: Before Me no god was formed, And after Me none shall exist.”³

1 Deut. 6:4.

2 Deut. 32:39.

3 Isa. 43:10.

The prophet Zechariah, prophesying the confession of the entire world in the most pure unity of God, says: “there shall be one LORD with one name.”⁴ It is the same as saying, “He will be one in essence, one in name, and there will be no more distinction of persons.” In addition to this, many other passages in the Scripture demonstrate the purest [88r] and singular unity of God through conclusive arguments. Since there are many, we will only speak about three here.

First, if the divine essence involved a distinction among persons, then there would need to be a reason for distinguishing them, which would mean that the divine essence would be found in one and not in the others. The reason must be one or the other, that is, perfection or imperfection. If it is perfection, those who lack it are imperfect. And if it is imperfection, the one who possesses it is imperfect. In God, there cannot be imperfection, ergo, there cannot be any distinction.

Second, one of two things must be true about each of the persons who form the divine essence. Each is either all-powerful without the need of the others or is not all-powerful without the good grace and assistance of the others. If they proclaim the first thing, that each one can do everything by himself, then the other things are superfluous. Accordingly, two-thirds of the divine essence is superfluous. If they proclaim the second, that each one needs the backing of the others, then it follows that none by itself is infinite or omnipotent. However, it is necessary [88v] for the divine essence to be infinite and omnipotent, and not superfluous; ergo, there cannot be any distinction of persons within it.

Third, everything infinite in act cannot be given a measure to measure itself. Blessed God is infinite in act, ergo no measure can be given for Him to measure Himself. If there were different individuals in the divine essence, one could be measured against the others, and therefore none could be infinite.

QUESTION 2 — Has faith in the Saviour Messiah always been necessary for Jews to attain grace and forgiveness for their sins?

It is necessary to identify the type of faith being asked about here, because if what is understood is the faith that the faithful are obligated to have in God and the Messiah, then this is due only to God, not to the Messiah, who will be a man. And if what is understood is the faith and belief that one must have that he will come to redeem the people of Israel, the Jews are obligated to possess this as one of the articles of faith of the Law of God, so much

4 Zech. 14:9.

so that whoever does not believe that God will [89r] send the Messiah to redeem the Jews from the captivity in which they are because of their sins and gather them in their lands is banished and cut off from the people of Israel, and has no salvation.

QUESTION 3 — *Will there be only one Messiah?*

To respond to this, we must know the meaning of the word “messiah,” which derives from the verb מָשַׁח, or “massah,” which means “to anoint.” And because the great priests and kings were anointed with the anointing oil, they were called the great ones in the Holy Scripture, or the chosen of God, with the name of “messiah.” As Isaiah says, chapter 45, verse 1: “Thus said the LORD to Cyrus, His anointed one.”⁵ And David says: “Do not touch My anointed ones.”⁶ For this reason, the captain we wait for must be called “messiah,” and to the question we answer that there are many “messiahs,” but there is only one who will return to the people.

QUESTION 4 — *What evidence proves that the Messiah must be purely a man, and not both man and God?*

We have already said that whoever invents new things is the one who must present [89v] the evidence and not ask for it by proposing a doctrine that the Scripture does not teach and that is repugnant to the mind. Because it is the same to ask for evidence against the Messiah being both man and God as it is to ask for proof that the Messiah is a centaur or hermaphrodite. Rather, we can more easily present some evidence for what is asked of us. What can anyone do to test these proposed chimeras? Firstly, the prophet Ezekiel says, chapter 37, verse 24: “My servant David shall be king over them; there shall be one shepherd for all of them.”⁷ You can well see how different His servant David is, because one was a God and the other was a king. The prophet Hosea says: “Afterward, the Israelites will turn back and will seek the LORD their God and David their king” (chapter 3, verse 5), and he does not say “David, their God.”⁸ In addition to this, Isaiah, speaking of the Messiah, says in chapter 11, verse 2, that in him will be “The spirit of the LORD.”⁹ And from what we demonstrated in the first question, the pure unity of the Lord is

⁵ Isa. 45:1.

⁶ Ps. 105:15.

⁷ Ezek. 37:24.

⁸ Hos. 3:5.

⁹ Isa. 11:2.

seen.¹⁰ If the Messiah had to be man and God, it would have been necessary for him to be the only God, and in this respect, it does not make sense to say that [90r] he feared himself. And it is sufficient for the first response above that it is reason enough on its own that, if such a monstrosity were to exist in the world, the Holy Scripture would mention it in numerous places, but it does not mention it anywhere, ergo, there is no such thing.

QUESTION 5 — *Will the redemption of the Messiah be only corporeal and temporary?*

The redemption of the Messiah will only be corporeal, as was that of Moses for the captive people in Egypt, because spiritual redemption depends only on observing the law given by the Lord on Mount Sinai, which could be more easily observed then because of the tangible assets enjoyed by the people of Israel.¹¹ This will occur again by removing all the impediments that obstruct the Jews until today, except for one, which is the particular divine favour that the Lord promises to it. As Ezekiel 36:26–28 says: “And I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit into you: I will remove the heart of stone from your body and give you a heart of flesh; and I will put My spirit into you. Thus, I will cause you to follow My laws and faithfully observe My rules. Then you shall dwell in the land which I gave to your fathers, and you shall be [90v] My people and I will be your God.”¹² These are very clear words that do not need interpretation, and whoever wants to quote the passages of Scripture that manifest this truth will need to translate everything.

QUESTION 6 — *Will the law of Moses regarding ceremonies be kept in the time of the Messiah so that no other law or ceremonies need to be given?*

The verses from Ezekiel that we cite in the answer above resolve these things so clearly that we need look no further.¹³ Nevertheless, from the multitude of

10 Mortera is referring here to the first question asked by the cleric from Rouen (“How is it proved that in God there cannot be a plurality, or three persons in one essence?”).

11 The phrase “bienes corporales” (tangible assets) may refer to the Ark of the Covenant and the First Temple. Insofar as these entities have traditionally been interpreted as physical symbols of Judaism, Mortera’s assertion by Mortera that the observation by the Jews of the Law of Moses was easier during biblical times does not contradict the condemnation by Judaism of the worship of physical objects.

12 Ezek. 36:26–28.

13 Mortera is referring to Ezek. 36:26–28, to which he refers in his response to the fifth question.

texts showing that the law of Moses must be kept in the time of the Messiah without any alteration, we will choose only three, which are the ones that follow.

First, what the Lord says near the end of the law after having established the reward and punishment for those obedient to it and the transgressors: “When all these things befall you—the blessing and the curse that I have set before you [91r] and you take them to heart amidst the various nations to which the LORD your God has banished you, and you return to the LORD your God, and you and your children heed His command with all your heart and soul, just as I enjoin upon you this day, the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and take you back in love. He will bring you together again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you. Even if your outcasts are at the ends of the world, from there the LORD your God will gather you, from there He will fetch you. And the LORD your God will bring you to the land that your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will make you more prosperous and more numerous than your fathers. Then the LORD your God will open up your heart and the hearts of your offspring to love the LORD your God with all your heart and soul, in order that you may live. The LORD your God will inflict all those curses upon the enemies, and foes who persecuted you. You, however, will again heed the LORD and obey all His commandments that I enjoin upon you this day. And the LORD your God will grant you abounding prosperity in all your undertakings, in the issue of your womb, the offspring of your cattle, and the produce of your soil. For the LORD will again delight in your well-being, as He did in that of your fathers, since you will be heeding the LORD your God and keeping His commandments and laws that are recorded in this book of the Teaching—once you return to the LORD your God with all your heart and soul” (Deut. 30).¹⁴ It is here, at the conclusion of the law, where the Lord says that for us to come out of captivity it is necessary to keep the law that He entrusted to us that day. And so as not to leave any room for doubt, He not only gives us the time, saying “that I enjoin upon you this day,”¹⁵ but also [91v] He gives us the place to find it: “keeping His commandments and laws that are recorded in this book of the Teaching.”¹⁶ In light of these precise terms, what could be expected of any other law?

14 Deut. 30:1–8, 10. The text includes the reference to “Deut. 30” after the biblical quotation.

15 Deut. 30:8.

16 Deut. 30:10.

Second, through all the prophets, He repeats this truth in the same way as He does in the law. As the last prophet, Malachi, says, chapter 3, verse 22: “Be mindful of the Teaching of My servant Moses, whom I charged at Horeb with laws and rules for all Israel.”¹⁷ And that is called the law of Moses, so that it cannot be falsified.

Third, the Holy Scripture says in Deuteronomy 11, verse 1: “Love, therefore, the LORD your God, and always keep His charge, His laws, His rules, and His commandments.”¹⁸ Consequently, since there are days we are obligated to keep all the law of Moses without increasing or diminishing it, as the Lord commands in said book: “You shall not add anything to what I command you or take anything away from it, but keep the commandments of the LORD your God that I enjoin upon you.”¹⁹ These few reasons suffice for the many others that could be considered.

[92r] QUESTION 7 — *By what means do the Jews obtain forgiveness for their sins at this time, since without it they cannot be saved?*

The means by which forgiveness of sins is achieved are those proclaimed by the law and the prophets in many places. And in particular we will consider what the prophet Isaiah says, chapter 55, verse 7: “Let the wicked give up his ways, / The sinful man his plans; / Let him turn back to the LORD, / And He will pardon him; / To our God, / For he freely forgives.”²⁰ And the prophet Ezekiel 18, verses 21–23 says: “Moreover, if the wicked one repents of all the sins that he committed and keeps all My laws and does what is just and right, he shall live; he shall not die. None of the transgressions he committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness he has practiced, he shall live. Is it my desire that a wicked person shall die?—says the LORD God. It is rather that he shall turn back from his ways and live.”²¹ This reconciliation will be much easier with the special virtue and privilege that the Lord gave on the day of atonement, as Leviticus 16:29–30 says: “And this shall be to you a law for all time: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the [92v] month, you shall practice self-denial; and you shall do no manner of work, neither the citizen nor the alien who resides among you. For on this day atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you of all your sins; you

¹⁷ Mal. 3:22.

¹⁸ Deut. 11:1.

¹⁹ Deut. 4:2.

²⁰ Isa. 55:7.

²¹ Ezek. 18:21–23.

shall be clean before the LORD.”²² Even though today there are no sacrifices, which were the means of achieving this forgiveness more easily, it is still achieved through penance and by retreating from evil paths. As the psalmist says, 51:19: “True sacrifice to God is a contrite spirit; / God, You will not despise / a contrite and crushed heart.”²³ Because of this, we cannot make sacrifices today since we lack the wherewithal that would make forgiveness easier. Consequently, the psalm ends: “May it please You to make Zion prosper; / rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. / Then You will want sacrifices offered in righteousness, / burnt and whole offerings; / then bulls will be offered on Your altar.”²⁴

QUESTION 8 — How is it confirmed from Holy Scripture that the Messiah has not come?

We have already said that whoever asks in this way does not pay the respect owed to science, which requires proof about such matters. The one who asks is the one who must offer proof, and the one who is asked [93r] only needs to respond with a simple *nego* to excuse himself from the discussion. However, since the path to the truth is long, I will point out some of them. There are many signs given to us by Scripture and the prophets that foretell the coming of the Messiah, although none have been fulfilled until now, so I will choose only four for the sake of brevity.

First, we will deal with the peace that the whole world will generally enjoy with the coming of the Messiah, as Isaiah chapter 2, verses 2–4, says, and which is repeated in Micah, chapter 4, verses 1–3, where it says: “In the days to come, / The Mount of the LORD’s House shall stand / Firm above the mountains; / And it shall tower above the hills. / The peoples shall gaze on it with joy, / And the many nations shall go and shall say: / ‘Come, / Let us go up to the Mount of the LORD, / To the House of the God of Jacob; / That He may instruct us in His ways, / And that we may walk in His paths.’ / For instruction shall come forth from Zion, / The word of the LORD from Jerusalem. / Thus He will judge among the many peoples, / And arbitrate for the multitude of nations, / However distant; / And they shall beat their swords into plowshares / And their spears into pruning hooks. / Nation shall not

22 Levit. 16:29–30.

23 Ps. 51:19. EH 48 D 38 refers to Ps. 51:17, which corresponds to Ps. 51:19 in *Jewish Study Bible*.

24 Ps. 51:20–21.

take up / Sword against nation; / They shall never again know war.”²⁵ This peace is promised by the Holy Scripture in many places. However, [93v] we never see anything but wars in the world because, two hundred years ago, people invented and popularized new firearms unknown to the ancients, rather than destroying the ones they already had, which clearly establishes that the Messiah has not yet come.²⁶

Second, we will consider what the prophets say about religion and the knowledge of God. The whole world will be without division in the time of the Messiah, as the prophet Jeremiah says, chapter 31, verse 34: “No longer will they need to teach one another and say to one another, ‘Heed the LORD’; for all of them, from the least of them to the greatest, shall heed Me—declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquities, / And remember their sins no more.”²⁷ The prophet Zephaniah, chapter 3, verse 9: “For then I will make the peoples pure of speech, / So that they all invoke the LORD by name / And serve Him with one accord.”²⁸ The prophet Zechariah, chapter 14, verse 9, says: “And the LORD shall be king over all the earth; in that day there shall be one LORD with one name.”²⁹ And it is explained this way in many places, and we see that the world was never [94r] more divided into religions than today. Therefore, the Messiah has not come.

Third, we will look to the people of Israel and their condition, which the Scripture very clearly affirms that the Messiah will restore to its land and greatness. The prophet Isaiah, chapter 11:12, says: “He will hold up a signal to the nations / And assemble the banished of Israel, / And gather

25 Mic. 4:1–3. Mic. 4:1–3 closely parallels Isa. 2:2–4: “In the days to come, / The Mount of the LORD’S House / Shall stand firm above the mountains / And tower above the hills; / And all the nations / Shall gaze on it with joy. / And the many peoples shall go and say: / ‘Come, / Let us go up to the Mount of the LORD, / To the House of the God of Jacob; / That He may instruct us in His ways, / And that we may walk in His paths.’ / For instruction shall come forth from Zion, / The word of the LORD from Jerusalem. / Thus He will judge among the nations / And arbitrate for the many peoples, / And they shall beat their swords into plowshares / And their spears into pruning hooks: / Nation shall not take up / Sword against nation; / They shall never again know war.”

26 Mortera asserts here that the Messiah has not come because of the invention of modern firearms (“nuevas armas de fuego” in EH 48 D 38) during the late Middle Ages. In particular, Mortera may be referring to the invention of the musket in the late fifteenth century Ottoman Empire, which is a topic studied by David Ayalon.

27 Jer. 31:34.

28 Zeph. 3:9.

29 Zech. 14:9.

the dispersed of Judah / From the four corners of the earth.”³⁰ About this, it is necessary to quote entire chapters rather than specific verses. See the same prophet, chapters 52, 54, 60, 61, 62, 63, and 66, from beginning to end, and Jeremiah, chapters 30 and 31, and Ezekiel, chapters 36, 37, 38, and 39, until the end of his book.³¹ Many other chapters reveal that the result of the coming of the Messiah will be the prosperity and happiness of the people of Israel. Today, we see it scattered and spread all over the world. Therefore, the Messiah that the Lord promises us in so many places has not come.

Fourth, we will consider what the prophets foretell about the prosperity of Israel in the time of the Messiah. Isaiah, chapter 52, verse 1, says: “Awake,

30 Isa. 11:12.

31 The contents of the chapters mentioned by Mortera lend support to his declaration “the Scripture very clearly affirms that the Messiah will restore to its land and greatness.” The following summaries of these chapters are found in *Jewish Study Bible*: “God speaks again to Zion, telling her that her nightmare is over” (Isa. 52); “the city of Jerusalem or Zion is portrayed as a woman...She is childless (i.e., without inhabitants) and apparently forsaken by her husband (i.e., the LORD). This passage assures her, however, that God remains her husband and protector and that she will soon have abundant children. In other words, the exiles will soon return to Judah” (Isa. 54); “This lengthy poem portrays Jerusalem (Zion) as a bereaved woman. In this respect it resembles many passages encountered in the previous section of Deutero-Isaiah’s work, ch[apter]s 49–57. Its enthusiasm and optimism recall the prophecies in ch[apter]s 40–48, and like them it heralds the dawn of a new age. The restored Zion will be home for a righteous nation newly returned to its land and its God; universal recognition of the one God will lead all the nations to enrich Zion and her inhabitants” (Isa. 60–62); “A short and disturbing passage concerning divine vengeance against God’s enemies” (Isa. 63:1–6); “A communal complaint, this text is spoken by the nation and addressed to God” (Isa. 63:7–64:11); “Deutero-Isaiah takes up an old prophetic theme. Although God commanded the nation to offer sacrifices, God does not need them. Neither generous attention to the Temple nor punctilious observance of cultic ritual grants Judeans license to sin” (Isa. 66:1–4); “In highly emotional tones, the prophet [Isaiah] lashes out against those disloyal to the LORD and predicts vindication for the faithful” (Isa. 66:5–18a); “All nations will come to know the one God and will travel to the Temple in Jerusalem” (Isa. 66:18b–21); “A final description of the fates awaiting those who accept the LORD and those who reject the LORD” (Isa. 66:22–24); “Consolation prophecies are collected in these two ch[apter]s, but additional proclamations of hope are sporadically placed within the book” (Jer. 30–31); “The oracle concerning the restoration of the mountains of Israel is a deliberate contrast with that against Mount Seir” (Ezek. 36:1–15); “The purification and restoration of Israel and the sanctification of God’s name” (Ezek. 36:16–38); “Vision of the dry bones and the future of the kingdom of Israel” (Ezek. 37); “Vision of the eschatological war with Gog from the land of Magog. Ezekiel’s oracles against Gog, ruler from the land of Magog, express an apocalyptic scenario of God’s victory over the nations that threaten Israel” (Ezek. 38–39).

awake, O Zion! / Clothe yourself in splendor; / Put on your robes [94v] of majesty, / Jerusalem, holy city! / For the uncircumcised and the unclean / Shall never enter you again.”³² The prophet Jeremiah, chapter 3:17, says: “At that time, they shall call Jerusalem ‘Throne of the LORD,’ and all nations shall assemble there, in the name of the LORD, at Jerusalem. They shall no longer follow the willfulness of their evil hearts.”³³ The prophet Ezekiel, 48, verse 35, after having described the magnificence of the city of Jerusalem and its impressive dimensions, says at the end of his book: “and the name of the city from that day on shall be ‘The LORD Is There.’”³⁴ Today, we see the city of Jerusalem destroyed and controlled by barbarians. Therefore, the Messiah has not come.

QUESTION 9 — How does one respond to prophecies that Christians claimed to have been fulfilled, like those in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah and the 22nd Psalm?³⁵

To respond along these lines, it would be necessary to compose large volumes, but, as with other prophecies, the frequently mentioned chapter 53 of Isaiah explains it. Concerning Psalm 21, we will be as brief as possible.³⁶ To agree with what Christians believe about chapter 53, one must set forth different basic principles, [95r] which, since they are refuted, will be necessary

32 Isa. 52:1.

33 Jer. 3:17.

34 Ezek. 48:35.

35 According to the Christian tradition, Isa. 52 and 53 contain a prophecy of Jesus as the Messiah, who is represented by an individual called “My servant” by God in Isa. 52:13 and who is commonly referred to as the “Suffering Servant” because of the manner by which his personal suffering saves his people as depicted in verses such as Isa. 53:5 (“But he was wounded because of our sins, / Crushed because of our iniquities. / He bore the chastisement that made us whole, / And by his bruises we were healed”) and Isa. 53:12 (“Assuredly, I will give him the many as his portion, / He shall receive the multitude as his spoil. / For he exposed himself to death / And was numbered among the sinners, / Whereas he bore the guilt of the many / And made intercession for sinners”). According to the rabbinic tradition, the “Suffering Servant” symbolizes the people of Israel. EH 48 D 38 refers to Ps. 21, which appears to be an error by the copyist. According to the Christian tradition, Ps. 22 contains verses that allude to the suffering endured by Jesus during his crucifixion, such as Ps. 22:17–18 (“Dogs surround me; / a pack of evil ones closes in on me, / like lions [they maul] my hands and feet. / I take the count of all my bones / while they look on and gloat”). For an extended discussion of the “Suffering Servant,” see North.

36 EH 48 D 38 again refers to Ps. 21, rather than Ps. 22, which appears to be another error by the copyist.

to prove first before they are applied to the declaration of said chapter. The path to get there is very long, and the chapter contains things that are not discussed by Christians, such as what is meant by “Through the sin of my people, who deserved the punishment,” which are words that refer to many and not only to one.³⁷ Similarly, “That, if he made himself an offering for guilt, / He might see offspring and have long life,” are words that do not make sense except for people who begot their own children, and who lived a long time, lengthening the days, which are things so different from the true interpretation and the meaning that the Christians give to it.³⁸ The true interpretation is that the one who speaks for the people of Israel is here called God’s servant.³⁹ This is a very ordinary title in the Holy Scripture, where it says that: “Kings shall be silenced because of him, / For they shall see what has not been told them, / Shall behold what they never have heard”⁴⁰—which is explained in the preceding chapter⁴¹—“Who can believe what we have heard? / Upon whom has the arm of the LORD / been revealed? / For has grown, by His favor, like a tree-crown, / Like a tree trunk out of arid ground. / He had no form or beauty, that we should [95v] look at him: / No charm, that we should find him pleasing. / He was despised, shunned by men, / A man of suffering, familiar with disease. / As one who hid his face from us, / He was despised, we held him of no account. / Yet it was our sickness that he

37 The verse “Through the sin of my people, who deserved the punishment” is the conclusion of Isa. 53:8: “By oppressive judgment he was taken away, / Who could describe his abode? / For he was cut off from the land of the living / Through the sin of my people, who deserved the punishment.” Mortera’s wording of the conclusion in Spanish, “por rebello de mi pueblo, llaga a ellos” (whose translation in the Jewish Study Bible is “Through the sin of my people, who deserved the punishment”), indicates that his source for this verse was the *Biblia de Ferrara* (“por rebello de mi pueblo llaga a ellos” [Lazar 348]), rather than the *Biblia Reina-Valera* (“Por la rebellion de mi Pueblo plaga à el” [fol. 211]). Mortera’s use of the *Biblia de Ferrara* is significant here insofar as his interpretation of Isa. 58:8 is based specifically on the plural verb “ellos” [them], which appears in the *Biblia de Ferrara* text and which is the basis for his assertion that these “are words that refer to many and not only to one.” According to Mortera’s interpretation of Isa. 53:8, the verse should be understood to refer to the Jewish people rather than an individual. Consequently, Mortera asserts that prophecies have not been fulfilled because the exile of the Jews was ongoing in the seventeenth century.

38 Isa. 53:10.

39 Mortera is referring here to the “Suffering Servant.”

40 Isa. 52:15.

41 Mortera’s reference to a “preceding chapter” alludes to Isa. 51, in which God exhorts the Israelites not to despair and promises the future redemption of the Jews.

was bearing, / Our suffering that he endured. / We accounted him plagued,
 / Smitten and afflicted by God; / But he was wounded because of our sins, /
 Crushed because of our iniquities. / He bore the chastisement that made us
 whole, / And by his bruises we were healed. / We all went astray like sheep,
 / Each going his own way; / And the LORD visited upon him / The guilt of
 all of us.' / He was maltreated, yet he was submissive, / He did not open
 his mouth; / Like a sheep being led to slaughter, / Like a ewe, dumb before
 those who shear her, / He did not open his mouth. / By oppressive judgment
 he was taken away, / Who could describe his abode? / For he was cut off
 from the land of the living / Through the sin of my people, who deserved
 the punishment. / And his grave was set among the wicked, / And with the
 rich, in his death— / Though he had done no injustice / And had spoken no
 falsehood."⁴² All these things, says the prophet, will be uttered by the kings
 of the world on seeing the prosperity of Israel. And the same prophet con-
 cludes by saying: "But the LORD chose to crush him by disease, / That, if he
 made himself an offering for guilt, / He might see offspring and have a long
 life, / And that through him the LORD's purpose might prosper."⁴³

The psalm also speaks of the people of Israel in captivity, and says: "My
 God, my God, / why have You abandoned me?"⁴⁴ These are terms often taken
 from what the prophet Isaiah proclaims in 49:14–15: "Zion says, / 'The LORD
 has forsaken me, / My Lord has forgotten me.' / Can a woman forget her
 baby, / Or [96r] disown the child of her womb? / Though she might forget,
 / I never could forget you."⁴⁵ Similar wording is used by the psalmist in the
 name of the people and their deeds, and for this reason, the psalm is clear.⁴⁶

QUESTION 10 — Which people will receive and obey the Messiah, the Jews or the Gentiles?

All will receive and obey him, as is foretold in many prophecies, some of
 which we will consider here. Balaam says: "What I see for them is not yet, /
 What I behold will not be soon: / A star rises from Jacob, / A sceptre comes

⁴² Isa. 53:1–9.

⁴³ Isa. 53:10.

⁴⁴ Ps. 22:2.

⁴⁵ Isa. 49:14–15.

⁴⁶ Mortera may be relying here on the interpretation by Rabbi Shlomo Titzchaki (1040–1105), better known by the acronym Rashi, of Ps. 22:2 ("My God, my God, / why have You abandoned me?"). According to Rashi, King David's act of questioning God's silence in Ps. 22 in the face of his suffering is a reference to the future suffering of the Jewish people.

forth from Israel; / It smashes the brow of Moab, / The foundation of all children of Seth,” because from Seth, the son of Adam, came all mankind.⁴⁷ The prophet Isaiah, 60, verse 12, says: “For the nation or the kingdom / That does not serve you shall perish; / Such nations shall be destroyed.”⁴⁸ Psalm 72:8 says: “Let him rule from sea to sea, / from the river to the ends of the earth,” and further on, “Let all kings bow to him, / and all nations serve him.”⁴⁹ Daniel, chapter 7, verses 13–14, speaking about the Messiah, [96v] captain of the fifth monarchy after the destruction of the four beasts, says: “As I looked on, in the night vision, / One like a human being / Came with the clouds of heaven; / He reached the Ancient of Days / And was presented to Him. / Dominion, glory, and kingship were given to him; / All peoples and nations of every language must serve him. / His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, / And his kingship, one that shall not be destroyed.”⁵⁰ In the same way, many prophets show that the Messiah will be venerated and received by all the kingdoms of the world and by all its peoples.

QUESTION 11 — For what sins has God, for so many centuries, left the Jewish republic in ruins and captivity during such a long exile?

Although the Jews do not confess to man but to Blessed God, it is necessary to confess our sins to honour and uphold divine justice, and because our sins are made known by all the prophets. You can see this in Ezekiel, chapter 16, verse 48, when he points out the sins of Israel and says: “As I live—declares the Lord GOD—[97r] your sister Sodom and her daughters did not do what you and your daughters did.”⁵¹ One no longer marvels at the length of our captivity because of its cost, which is complete destruction, like what occurred in Sodom out of pure divine mercy, as the prophet Isaiah testifies: “Had not the LORD of Hosts / Left us some survivors, / We should be like Sodom, / Another Gomorrah.”⁵² It is not difficult to argue that these sins had been forgiven already by the restitution from the Babylonian captivity, and that we suffer our long captivity for other sins committed during the time of the Second Temple. This is because the redemption from Babylon was only

47 Num. 24:17.

48 Isa. 60:12.

49 Ps. 72:8 and Ps. 72:11, respectively.

50 Dan. 7:13–14.

51 Ezek. 16:48.

52 Isa. 1:9.

a test to see if they could annul their serious sins of adultery, homicide, and idolatry by living with the security of the kingdom and the Temple. However, instead of paying their old debts, they created new ones and, so that no one would imagine otherwise, the Lord made the Ten Tribes captive by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar in a foreign land around 600 years before the destruction of the Second Temple.⁵³ Even today, they have not yet returned to their land and dominion. This was decreed [97v] by special divine providence so that no one could link the cause of the previous captivity to any sin committed in the Second Temple. Since the Ten Tribes were not there, their captivity is 600 years longer than ours. Implicit in this question is the need to see clearly, and without bias, any hint or sense of the truth that the sins of the Jews reached a point by which the memory of any people would have been erased, except for the people to whom the Lord pledged His word with an undying oath. There is no reason, then, to wonder why our punishment has become a long captivity, just as a delinquent who, although deserving of death, is granted his life out of mercy and put in prison for many years.

QUESTION 12 — What are the main articles of your faith, and how many are there?

There are thirteen articles and foundations of our faith.

First: to believe that there is only one God who is the cause of all causes, [98r] and that everything depends on Him and He does not depend on anyone.

Second: that this God is one, and that His unity is most pure and most perfect, and that He is not divisible in any way.

Third: that this God is neither a body nor a form that occupies any body and is not subject to any corporeal needs.

Fourth: that this God is eternal, that He had no beginning and will not have an end, and that all other things had a beginning through Him.

Fifth: that this God alone should be honoured, served, and obeyed, and no other besides Him can be an intermediary between Him and us.

Sixth: that it is necessary to believe that this God communicates His spirit and manifests His will to wise and virtuous men favoured by His wisdom, who are the prophets.

53 Mortera is referring to King Nabucodonosor II (r. 605–562 BCE).

Seventh: that the greatest of all the prophets was Moses, by whose hand the Lord gave the Law on Mount Sinai.

Eighth: that the entire Law, from the first letter to the last, was given to Moses by the blessed God and, therefore, the traditions and their profession were preserved by the congregation of Israel.

[98v] Ninth: that the Law given by the Lord through the hand of Moses and the translation of it are eternal and cannot be increased or decreased in any way.

Tenth: that God knows the nature of human actions and thoughts, and nothing is hidden from Him.

Eleventh: that blessed God rewards those who observe His Law and He punishes transgressors, and that the essence of the reward is the glory of the soul and eternal life, while the essence of the punishment is the cutting off of the soul and hell.

Twelfth: that God will send a redeemer from the house of David and descended from Solomon who will exceed in honour all the kings of the world who came before him, and that all the prophecies of the prophets will be happily fulfilled.⁵⁴

Thirteenth: that God will raise the dead at the time determined by His divine wisdom.

These are the articles of our holy Law, which branch off in many directions, whose consideration is beyond the present scope.

[99r] QUESTION 13 — *On what do the Hebrews base their enduring hope for their Messiah?*

Well, by asking that, you are completely overlooking the Holy Scripture, in which there is not any page where the foundations of the irrefutable divine word that sustain our hope are not firm and clear. If you still wonder what such enduring hope is based on, you should consider that, no matter how many centuries pass, the divine word is never missing in those who are truly His followers. You could also remember what Isaiah says, chapter 40:8: “‘Grass withers, flowers fade— / But the word of our God is always fulfilled!’”⁵⁵ For however long this lasts, we will not be neglected because the

54 According to Jewish eschatology, the Messiah will be a descendant of the biblical King David.

55 Isa. 40:8.

Lord warned us beforehand not to wonder about it. The prophet Hosea says, chapter 3, verses 4–5: “For the Israelites shall go a long time without king and without officials, without sacrifice and without cult pillars, and without ephod and teraphim. Afterward, the Israelites will turn back and will seek the LORD their God and David their king—and they will thrill over the LORD and over His bounty in the days to come.”⁵⁶ Jeremiah, in his Lamentations, sees our captivity linger, and says: “Why have You forgotten us utterly, / Forsaken us for [99v] all time? / Take us back, O LORD, to Yourself, / And let us come back; / Renew our days as of old!”⁵⁷ Above all, it is considerate not to remind the one asking this question that Christians who inquire are told that the whole world waited for the Messiah around 400 years because that is how many years passed from the sin of Adam until the time they say their Messiah came in the hopes of saving the souls they say were lost until his arrival, except the righteous Jews, who went into limbo.⁵⁸ They denounce the Jews for waiting around 1600 years to return to their ancient lands and property.⁵⁹ Hope and time, very different from theirs, which was all was foreseen by divine wisdom when He said through the mouth of the psalmist, 89: “Remember, O LORD, the abuse flung at Your servants / that I have borne in my bosom [from] many peoples, / how Your enemies, O LORD, have flung abuse, / abuse at Your anointed at every step.”⁶⁰ In sum, the question being asked, like others that make clear our enduring hope, is similar to what is said here, “Your enemies, O LORD, have flung abuse, / abuse at Your anointed at every step,” which means that it will take a long time for him to come. Therefore, like someone who ends up [100r] sighing, the psalmist concludes

56 Hos. 3:4–5.

57 Lam. 5:20–21. Mortera’s attribution of the Book of Lamentations to the prophet Jeremiah follows rabbinic tradition.

58 The phrase “the whole world waited for the Messiah around 400 years” refers to the Intertestamental Period, which occurred during the 400 years between the composition around 430 BCE of the Book of Malachi (the last book of the Old Testament) and the composition of the New Testament.

59 The phrase “waiting around 1600 years to return to their ancient lands and property” refers to the time by which the Messiah will arrive according to the Talmud (Sanhedrin 97a–b; Avodah Zarah 9a), the Midrash (Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer 18.12), and the *Zohar* (Vayera 119a). This time will be six thousand years after the creation of the world, which corresponds approximately to the year 2240 in the Gregorian calendar. Mortera appears to arrive at his approximate calculation by adding the 400 years of the Intertestamental Period to 1600 years, which totals 2000 years and refers roughly to the year 2240.

60 Ps. 89:50–51.

by saying, “Blessed is the LORD forever; / Amen and Amen,”⁶¹ as if to say, “praise God for everything.”

QUESTION 14 — *What good do those who die before his coming expect from him in this life?*

The prophet Isaiah asked God the same question, in chapter 26:13–14, by saying: “O LORD our God! / Lords other than You possessed us, / But only Your name shall we utter. / They are dead, they can never live; / Shades, they can never rise; / Of a truth, You have dealt with them and wiped them out, / Have put an end to all mention of them.”⁶² It is as if he were saying, “Lord, we endured many evils, and because of these evils and the suffering, we withered away and died. In what way will we then enjoy in this life the good that You will bring to Your people if the dead do not rise again?”⁶³ The Lord responded to him: “Oh, let Your dead revive! / Let corpses arise! / Awake and shout for joy, / You who dwell in the dust!— / For Your dew is like the dew on fresh growth; / You make the land of the shades come to life.”⁶⁴ Look at the good things we wait for as we trust in the divine promise for those who die before the Messiah arrives. A dialogue about this is devised by the prophet Malachi, 3:14, [100v] who speaks to the people in the name of God: “You have said, ‘It is useless to serve God. What have we gained by keeping His charge and walking in abject awe of the LORD of Hosts?’”⁶⁵ The Lord responds: “And you shall come to see the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between him who has served God and him who

61 Ps. 89:53.

62 Isa. 26:13–14.

63 Insofar as the biblical quote that follows these two sentences is Isa. 26:19, they may be Mortera’s interpretation of the depiction of Isaiah’s despair in Isa. 26:16–18: “O LORD! In their distress, they sought You; / Your chastisement reduced them / To anguished whispered prayer. / Like a woman with child / Approaching childbirth, / Writhing and screaming in her pangs, / So are we become because of You, O LORD. / We were with child, we writhed— / It is as though we had given birth to wind; / We have won no victory on earth; / The inhabitants of the world have not come to life!” In the two sentences in question (“It is as if he were saying, ‘Lord, we endured many evils, and because of these evils and the suffering we withered away and died. In what way will we then enjoy in this life the good that You will bring to Your people if the dead do not rise again?’”), Mortera presents the rabbinic view that bodily resurrection will occur in the Apocalypse, which was codified by Maimonides as the thirteenth principle of his Thirteen Principles of Faith (Angel 151–72).

64 Isa. 26:19.

65 Mal. 3:14.

has not served Him,” and with many other verses that come after “And you shall come to see the difference between the righteous and the wicked.”⁶⁶ With this, another question is answered.

QUESTION 15 — *What use will your Messiah be at the final judgment and then in the afterlife, since he and everyone will die, and the world will end?*

As the one who asks what the Jews believe about their Messiah must know, what Christians believe is very problematic. However, after understanding that the salvation of the Messiah is not spiritual but corporeal, as we said in the fifth response, your question is answered since neither on the day of judgment nor in the afterlife is there any need for the Messiah. Also, what is said here presupposes that the world must end. This is not a matter that has been so proven that it does not have much evidence [101r] to the contrary, although it is not a matter of faith and only God knows what will happen.

QUESTION 16 — *Do the Jews now have the pure Hebrew text of the Holy Scripture with its ancient truth?*

To answer this question, it would be enough to point out that all the Hebrew Bibles found throughout the world do not differ from each other, not even a single syllable, which is very clear proof of their authenticity. Since the people of Israel are scattered throughout the world and subject to different nations, their Bibles are always the same. There cannot be any doubt about this, so I will refer to declarations made by the most respected Christian scholars, including Augustine, who says, on pages 15 and 13 of his book *City of God*, that it cannot be believed that the Jews have in any way contaminated the Holy Books.⁶⁷ He provides many proofs of this truth.

First, it seems impossible that they all agreed to this with the same evil intention while being scattered throughout [101v] the world with nothing better to do than the great sacrilege of adulterating holy things. In addition, the fact that all the ancient and modern Hebrew originals are consistent in every way, even though they were written at different times and places, speaks in favour of their authenticity. Also, it should not be presumed that a captive people who possess no good thing aside from the holy books would have randomly wanted to falsify them to satisfy the ill will and rancour that

66 Mal. 3:18.

67 As I discuss in my introduction, it appears that Mortera is referring to Book 18 of *City of God*.

they might have felt toward a nation, or a people. These are the words of Augustine.⁶⁸ Jerome affirms the same thing in his book *Hebrew Questions on Genesis*, as does Bede, in *Greater Chronicle*, and Thomas Aquinas exonerates Paul's *Epistle* in Chapter 9 of *Commentary on the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans*. In addition, Alexander de Tartagnis upholds the same truth in *Queries*, and Augustine calls us ancient treasurers of the Holy Books in *Expositions on the Psalms*, Psalm 40. He confirms this in Chapter 43 of Book 18 of *City of God*, in which partial confirmation is worth more than one hundred witnesses.

QUESTION 17 [102r] — *Is it permissible for Jews to interpret the Holy Scripture, and are they free to follow the meaning they prefer?*

When blessed God gave the law on Mount Sinai, after the people had heard the voice of the Lord, He told Moses the ten commandments of the Decalogue and that he should tell the people to return to their houses while he would wait there and learn the divine will to instil it in the people, as it says in Deuteronomy, Chapter 5:27–28: “Go, say to them, ‘Return to your tents.’ But you remain here with Me, and I will give you the whole Instruction—the laws and the rules—that you shall impart to them.”⁶⁹ Afterwards, Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights, during which time God revealed to him the Law that we call the Mental Law, which he taught to the senate of Israel, and in particular to Joshua.⁷⁰ Over the years, the tradition and the Mental Law mandated by God was passed from parents to children under pain of death, as it says: “If a case is too baffling for you to decide, be it a controversy over homicide, civil law, or assault—matters of dispute in your courts—you shall promptly repair to the place that the LORD your God will have chosen, and appear before the levitical priests, or the magistrate in

68 As discussed in my Introduction, Mortera's declarations that “the fact that all the ancient and modern Hebrew originals are consistent in everything, and in all ways, even though they were written at different times and places, speaks in favor of their authenticity” and “it should not be presumed that such an innumerable people, who have no other good thing in their captivity than the possession of the holy books, would have wanted to falsify them to satisfy the ill will and rancour that could have been directed toward a nation, or people” appear to allude to Chapter 42 of Augustine's *City of God*.

69 Deut. 5:27–28.

70 Mortera presents here the rabbinic tradition concerning the doctrines of Judaism, according to which the Written Law was recorded in the Five Books of Moses while the Oral Law was delivered to Moses orally by God and transmitted orally until it was recorded in the Talmud.

charge at the time, and present your problem. When they have announced to you the verdict in the case, you shall carry out the verdict that is announced to you from that place that the LORD chose, observing scrupulously all their instructions to you. You shall act in accordance with the instructions given you and the ruling handed down to you; you must not deviate from the verdict that they announce to you, either to the [102v] right or to the left. Should a man act presumptuously and disregard the priest charged with serving there the LORD your God, or the magistrate, that man shall die.”⁷¹ Today, this tradition is recorded in the Mishnah and the Talmud, according to which the only way to know it is by consulting the Holy Scripture.⁷² We see the true continuation of this tradition expressed in the exact same way, from generation to generation and by different authors whom the curious individual might consult to see where it is written. Therefore, your question has been answered.

QUESTION 18 — Who has the authority to adjudicate in matters concerning the observance of the law and the punishment of transgressors?

From the verses quoted in the previous answer, we see who had the authority to adjudicate the commandments of the Law, as it is written: “you shall promptly repair to the place that the LORD your God will have chosen.”⁷³ This verse refers to the great senate of Israel, which consisted of 71 senators in remembrance of the fact that Moses and 70 elders were present in God’s Temple.⁷⁴ For them, it says: “you must not deviate from the verdict that they announce to you either to the right or to the left.”⁷⁵ This senate, according to any prophet held to be true, had the authority [103r] to adjudicate in matters of law for a limited time, except in matters of idolatry, in which case we have the express obligation to kill anyone who is found to profess it. As is

71 Deut. 17:8–12.

72 Mortera is alluding to the Mishnah (ca. 200 CE) and the Talmud (or Babylonian Talmud, ca. 500 CE), which includes the Mishnah and a later compilation, the Gemara (ca. 500 CE). On the biblical passage in question, see, for example, in the Talmud, Sanhedrin 86b:17–21, which is a commentary on Deut. 17:8–13.

73 Mortera again quotes from Deut. 17:8.

74 Mortera is referring to the seventy elders of Israel, who are mentioned several times in the Old Testament, for example: “Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Gather for Me seventy of Israel’s elders of whom you have experience as elders and officers of the people, and bring them to the Tent of Meeting and let them take their place there with you.’” (Num. 11:16).

75 Mortera again quotes from Deut. 17:11.

written in Deuteronomy, in the cities of Judah, it was necessary to punish the delinquents and transgressors of the law according to their crimes, which is explained at length in the Talmud in the tractate of Sanhedrin.⁷⁶ Later, however, we were taken captive because of our sins from our land and dispersed throughout many places, and both prophecy and the great senate ended. Nobody had the authority to adjudicate the law in any case, except in those cases for which we had a written record by the most learned men of the Mishnah and the Talmud, who left us examples of what occurred in their time. Concerning the right to punish those who transgress the law today, except for the death penalty, which our Law prohibits outside of our land, all other cases are adjudicated by the judges elected by the people of Israel in all the places of its diaspora, according to the authority granted to them by the princes to whom they are subject.⁷⁷

[103v] **QUESTION 19 — *Will Jews who have converted to Christianity be saved or damned after abandoning the Law of Moses and living and dying as Christians?***

After deliberating to answer in respectable, innocuous terms, I will not respond at length to this question so as not to be superfluous and will only translate three verses of Holy Scripture word for word that demonstrate the eternity of God's pact with His people across the generations, as is written in Deut. 29, verses 13–14: "I make this covenant, with its sanctions, not with you alone, but both with those who are standing here with us this day before the LORD our God and with those who are not with us here this day."⁷⁸ The second one that shows the eternal punishment that God promises for whoever breaks and leaves His covenant, is revealed in Numbers 15, verse 30: "But the person, be he citizen or stranger, who acts defiantly reviles the LORD; that person shall be cut off from among his people. Because he has spurned the word of the LORD and violated His commandment, that person shall be cut off—he bears his guilt."⁷⁹ This small sample suffices for a lot more that could be said.

76 Mortera refers here to the Talmudic directive (Sanhedrin 90a) to execute any prophet who undermines the prohibition against idol worship.

77 Mortera refers here to the Talmudic prohibition on the judicial infliction of punishment by rabbinical courts in places that are not subject to the Mosaic Law (Sanhedrin 82b).

78 Deut. 29:13–14.

79 Num. 15:30–31.

QUESTION 20 — [104r] *What just cause exists for pardoning Jews who return to Judaism after having received and professed the Christian Catholic faith?*

It would be more reasonable for me to ask if there is a just cause for the great terror and intensity with which tyrants force the free minds of the Jews to receive the Christian faith, whose own cruelty is so incessant and dreadful that a lengthy book could be written about it. However, suffice it to say that Bishop Osorio, in the first of his twelve books of the prayers of Don Manuel, King of Portugal, calls what he did to the Jews violence, which indicates criminal and cruel injustice.⁸⁰ How can one rightfully ask what just cause exists for excusing those who return to Judaism when such a great effort has been made to make them believe that which they did not believe, and love that which they abhorred? For what reason would anyone ask if there is a just cause that excuses the Jews from leaving the Law of their forefathers that they received for eternity from the mouth of God Himself, the universal creator, which was delivered with such solemnity on Mount Sinai and proclaimed by all peoples and nations as a true privilege that is not enjoyed by any of the other faiths professed today [104v] in the world? Well, they are not truly professed except by the observant ones. For what reason did they leave what their forefathers believed for so many centuries without interruption? For what reason did they take upon themselves the new rites and privileges that their parents did not teach them? This was the real issue. This was the fitting question, rather than the one that has been asked. After reviewing all the aforementioned things, the answer to this question was clear, with many examples from Scripture, such as such as Jethro, Ruth, Naaman,⁸¹ who, being Gentiles who knew the truth about the God of Israel, converted to Him, as will all peoples, as the prophet Jeremiah says, chapter 16, verses 19–20: “O

80 Osorio (7) writes of the abuse of Portuguese Jews during the reign of Manuel I (r. 1469–1521).

81 For the stories of Jethro, Ruth, and Naaman, see, respectively, Exod. 18:11 (“Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods, yes, by the result of their very schemes against [the people]”), Ruth 2:11–12 (“Boaz said in reply, ‘I have been told of all that you did for your mother-in-law after the death of your husband, how you left your father and mother and the land of your birth and came to a people you had no known before. May the LORD reward your deeds. May you have a full recompense from the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have sought refuge!’”), and II Kings 5:15 (“Now I know that there is no God in the whole world except in Israel! So please accept a gift from your servant”). Although Jethro does not renounce other gods, he does convert to Judaism according to rabbinic tradition (see, for example, Sanhedrin 94a).

LORD, my strength and my stronghold, / My refuge in a day of trouble, / To You nations shall come / From the ends of the earth and say: / Our fathers inherited utter delusions, / Things that are futile and worthless. / Can a man make gods for himself? / No-gods are they!"⁸² Therefore, it is quite clear that there is no doubt whatsoever in this question.

QUESTION 21 — *Can Jews still be saved if they have not been circumcised or observed [105r] the Law in the lands where it is not permitted, after having gone against it and their consciences by practising Christianity sincerely, worshipping idols, attending mass, and denying being Jews even though they are in their hearts?*

There are two types of people to whom this question refers. The first are those who reside in the kingdoms where it is not only forbidden to observe the Law, but where the ports are also closed to prevent them from leaving.⁸³ These people are guilty before the Lord for not trying to leave for free ports, even though they risk their lives, as the Lord explicitly commands: "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."⁸⁴ Here it is revealed that we must leave all things for divine love, and the examples of Hanania, Mishael, and Azariah, in Babylon, show this truth because they were willing to jump into a fire alive rather than worship a statue.⁸⁵ He is still merciful today, and slow to anger, and takes into account human weakness and the great respect owed to the ones who are persecuted in the lands I have mentioned. He tempers His severity and [105v] favours them when He sees that their spirits are willing to serve Him, as we have seen on many occasions.

The second type of people are those who live in kingdoms where they are not prevented from leaving, and who are free to go wherever they choose. These people are an utter abomination to God and are destined for damnation because they are truly worshippers of gold. Since they act in the sheer interest of accumulating property, they deceive God, or think they can

82 Jer. 16:19–20.

83 In my Introduction, I discuss the phrases "those who reside in the kingdoms where it is not only forbidden to observe the Law" and "where they also close the ports to prevent them from leaving," which refer to anti-*converso* persecution in Spain and Portugal.

84 Deut. 6:5.

85 The story of the resistance by the three Judean courtiers to the order by King Nabucodonosor II to worship his golden statue is narrated in Dan. 3, in which they survive being thrown into a fiery furnace through divine intervention.

deceive God, for the love of worldly things. And they deceive the world for love of God. They think that because they love in their hearts, they have fulfilled their obligation, but they do not see what the Lord explicitly says in the Law, in Deut. 30:14: “No, the thing is very close to you, in your mouth and in your heart, to observe it.”⁸⁶ Here it also explicitly says that to observe the Law, it is necessary to proclaim it with one’s mouth, believe it in one’s heart, and carry it out through one’s acts. It would have been better if they had not known the truth, rather than having it and pretending the opposite. In the latter case, they would have had some excuse, which they do not have, although they do know what [106r] suits them. This is taught by the prophet Isaiah, chapter 26:10, who says: “But when the scoundrel is spared, he learns not righteousness; / In a place of integrity, he does wrong— / He ignores the majesty of the LORD.”⁸⁷ They should consider how great their ingratitude is toward their Creator, who brought them out of the fire of Sodom, and they, like Lot’s wife, instead of following the path and saving themselves, look back and remain in the middle of the road, and become statues of salt who fool themselves by their material wealth, and by not knowing the divine precepts that the psalmist proclaims, Psalm 92:8: “though the wicked sprout like grass, / though all evildoers blossom, / it is only that they may be destroyed forever.”⁸⁸ Solomon says, Prov. 1:32, that: “The tranquillity of the simple will kill them, / And the complacency of dullards will destroy them.”⁸⁹

To these we might add a third group, which resembles the first two in its pretence. They are the people of Israel who, though Christians in their hearts, for fear of torture and death, confess to being Jews although they are not. They deceive God so that they can know the truth, as if they possessed an [106v] understanding. This is a result of the moral failing of the Inquisition, which spills so much innocent blood. For they see explicitly that they were forced to confess against their conscience what they were not. About such people, the prophet Ezekiel, chapter 20:32–33, says: “And what you have in mind shall never come to pass—when you say, ‘We will be like the nations, like the families of the lands, worshipping wood and stone.’ As I live—declares the LORD God—I will reign over you with a strong hand, and

86 Deut. 30:14.

87 Isa. 26:10.

88 Ps. 92:8. EH 48 D 38 refers to Ps. 92:7, which corresponds to the quotation in the *Biblia de Ferrara* and the *Biblia Reina-Valera*, while it corresponds to Ps. 92:8 in the *Jewish Study Bible*.

89 Prov. 1:32.

with an outstretched arm, and with overflowing fury.”⁹⁰ These are the ones who, by the “strong hand” of torture, the “outstretched arm” of prisons, and with “overflowing fury” from apprehension about life, confess to being Jews and that the God of Israel is their king. If they do not deny what they said afterwards, it is because they know the punishment they deserve.

QUESTION 22 — *What happened to the Ten Tribes that the Assyrians took captive, and where are they?*

The prophet Isaiah sufficiently answers both questions in chapter 27, verse 13, by saying: “And in that day, a great ram’s horn shall be sounded; [107r] and the strayed who are in the land of Assyria and the expelled who are in the land of Egypt shall come and worship the LORD on the holy mount, in Jerusalem.”⁹¹ Calling those who were Assyrian captives “the strayed who are in the land of Assyria” means that no one can know what He did to them, because if this were known they would not be called “the strayed” ones. However, since that is what the Holy Scripture calls them, they are forced to remain hidden until divine and infinite wisdom determines that they be revealed. In the same way, Joseph was hidden for 22 years in Egypt, and there was no news of him until God revealed him to his brothers.⁹² The phrase “shall come and worship the LORD on the holy mount, in Jerusalem” responds to the second matter, which concerns what is expected of them, since the prophet clearly promises that they will once again worship the Lord in Jerusalem. The same thing was said by the prophet Hosea, chapter 2:2: “The people of Judah and the people of Israel shall assemble together and appoint one head over them; and they shall rise from the ground—for marvelous shall be the day of Jezreel!”⁹³ The prophet Ezekiel, in chapter 37, writes at length [107v] about the redemption of the Ten Tribes in Jerusalem, and that they will be again subject to the kingdom of David, whom they have not obeyed since the day they rebelled against it, as can be seen in that chapter.⁹⁴

90 Ezek. 20:32–33.

91 Isa. 27:13.

92 Mortera refers here to the twenty-two years that pass between Gen. 37, in which Joseph has a dream about his future superior status and is sold into slavery by his older brothers, and Gen. 42, in which Joseph encounters his brothers in Egypt after fulfilling his dream by being named vizier to the Pharaoh.

93 Hos. 2:2.

94 Mortera is referring to Ezek. 37:21–26, which describes an apocalyptic ingathering of the Jews and the establishment of Davidic rule in the Holy Land: “and you shall declare to them: Thus said the Lord GOD: I am going to take the Israelite

QUESTION 23 — *Do the Jews confess to the Original Sin with which we were all born, and if not, why do they deny it?*

The Jews deny Adam's Original Sin with very great reason because the heart of sin is in the soul, and souls do not proceed from Adam but from God, their Creator. Therefore, the souls of the descendants of Adam did not sin because of him since sin resides in the soul. This is clearly true because sin is a vice that comes from the soul and understanding. The Holy Scripture says, "that person shall be cut off—he bears his guilt," which shows that sin lies in the soul and that souls are servants of God, without any intervention by a mediary.⁹⁵ This is what the prophet Isaiah says, chapter 57:16: "Nay, I who make spirits flag, / Also create the breath of life."⁹⁶ This is modified by Ezekiel, 18, verse 4, [108r] who says: "all lives are Mine; the life of the parent and the life of the child are both Mine. The person who sins, only he shall die."⁹⁷ The clear consequence that remains is that the souls of the descendants of Adam could not sin because of him. The Jews confess rightly that the entire human race was subjected to the penalties of Adam's sin, which, being corporeal, affects all his descendants corporeally, since they are his children. It is just like what happens to a slave, which all of his children are because they were born to a slave father, until the time that the Lord promises that the world will return to its initial perfection. As said by the prophet Isaiah, chapter 25:8–9: "He will destroy death forever. / My Lord GOD will wipe the tears away / From all faces / And will put an end to the reproach of His people / Over all the earth— / For it is the LORD who has spoken. In that

people from among the nations they have gone to, and gather them from every quarter, and bring them to their own land. I will make them a single nation in the land, on the hills of Israel, and one king shall be king of them all, Never again shall they be two nations, and never again shall they be divided into two kingdoms. Nor shall they ever again defile themselves by their fetishes and their abhorrent things, and by their other transgressions, I will save them in all their settlements where they sinned, and I will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God. My servant David shall be king over them; there shall be one shepherd for all of them. They shall follow My rules and faithfully obey My laws. Thus they shall remain in the land which I gave to My servant Jacob and in which your fathers dwelt; they and their children and their children's children shall dwell there forever, with My servant David as their prince for all time. I will make a covenant of friendship with them—it shall be an everlasting covenant with them—I will establish them and multiply them, and I will place My Sanctuary among them forever."

95 Mortera again quotes from Num. 15:31.

96 Isa. 57:16.

97 Ezek. 18:4.

day they shall say: / This is our God; / We trusted in Him, and He delivered us. / This is the LORD, in whom we trusted; / Let us rejoice and exult in His deliverance!"⁹⁸ Amen.

[108v] Blank

98 Isa. 25:8–9.

Requies

Requies aeterna dona eis
domine. Requiescat in pace.
Requiescat in pace.
Requiescat in pace.
Requiescat in pace.
Requiescat in pace.
Requiescat in pace.
Requiescat in pace.
Requiescat in pace.

Preguntas

Que hizo vn Clerigo de Ruan de Francia alas
quales respon dio el Excelente, y Eminentissimo
Señor A: R: Saul Levy Mortera, Doctor Ce-
lebre, y Profpesor, de la Divina Theologia, y Pre-
dicador de la Nacion Judaica en la Insigne, y
opulenta Ciudad de Amsterdam ~ ~ ~

Primera pregunta.

Como se prueba, que en Dios no puede haver pluralidad, ni
ser tres personas en vna Essencia ~ ~ ~

No ay duda, que si este Señor, procediera como Lógico
no dexiera de cansarse en preguntar el sugeto, que nos pide que
provenes, por que las novedades inventadas traen consigo, obliga-
cion expressa, de pruebas, y demostraciones, toda via como la verdad

Figure 1. Ets Haim—Livraria Montezinos, MS EH 48 D 38, fol. 87r.
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22
Gla Essencia Divina no sea superflua, mas infinita, y Omnipoten-
te, ergo, no puede haver en ella, distincion de personas. ~

Tercera, Todo lo que es infinito en acto, no se le puede dar me-
dida con que medirse el Dio Bendito, es infinito en acto, ergo no
se puede dar medida, con que medirse, si se dieran diferentes
personas en la Essencia Divina, una fuera medida de la otra,
luego ninguna puede ser infinita. ~

Segunda pregunta

Si la fee, del Messias, salvador, fue siempre necessario a los Judios
para alcanzar la gracia, y perdon de sus pecados. ~

Es necesario distinguir la palabra de fee, que aqui se
pregunta, por que si es, que se entienda por la fee, que son obligados
atener todos los fieles, en Dios, y en el Messias, pues esta se deve solo
a Dios, y no al Messias, que ha de ser hombre; y si se entienda por la
fee, y credito, que se deve tener, que vendra a redimir al pueblo de Is-
rael, son obligados los Judios atenerla, como vno de los Articulos
de la fee, de la Ley de Dios, tanto que quien no creyere, que Dios ha de
embiar

Embiar el Messias para redimir a los Judios del Captiverio en q
están por sus pecados, y juntarlos en sus tierras; Es deserrado, y des-
vuido del pueblo de Israel, y no tiene salvación.

Tercera pregunta. Si el Massias es vno solo.

Para responder a esto, conviene que sepamos, la inteligencia desta
desta palabra Massiah, que deriva del verbo Massah, que signi-
fica ungir; y por que los Sacerdotes grandes, y los Reyes, eran ungidos
con el aceite de la unción, se dominaron, en la S. S. los grandes oes-
cogidos de Dios, con el nombre de Massiah, como dice Jesayas
Cap. 45. vers. 1. Assy dixo el Señor a su ungido a Ciro, y David di-
ze, no toqueis en mis ungidos, y por esto el Capitan que esperamos,
se hade llamar Massiah, y a la pregunta respondemos, que Los
Massias, son muchos, mas el que hade tornar al pueblo como solo.

Quarta pregunta

Con que testimonio se prueva que el Massiah hade ser hom-
bre pure, y no juntamente hombre y Dios.

Ya diximos, que quien inventa, cosas nuevas, es el que hade traer

Figure 2. Ets Haim—Livraria Montezinos, MS EH 48 D 38, fols. 88v–89r.
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