

Chapter 1 : Rabad of Posquieres: A Twelfth-Century Talmudist | Isadore Twersky | Biography/Memoirs

Rabad's disciples and followers are discussed, as well as his reaction to the philosophic literature of Spanish Judaism and his relation to the emerging medieval kabbalah. Characterization of his works, description of his halakic methodology, and analysis of his literary sources focus attention on basic problems of medieval Jewish history.

Abraham ben David Save Abraham ben David c. He was the father of Rabbeinu Isaac the Blind , a Neoplatonist and important Jewish mystical thinker. RABaD remained in Lunel after completing his studies, and subsequently became one of the rabbinical authorities of that city. The town is known as Vauvert today. Not only did he erect and keep in repair a large school-building, but he cared for the material welfare of the poor students as well. To this date in Vauvert a street exists with the name "Rue Ravad. Literary works The Ravad was a prolific author. Indeed, critical annotations display his powers at their best, and justify his being ranked with the Rif , Rashi , and the Rambam Maimonides. This danger was not so imminent for those Jews who lived in lands where Arabian culture ruled; for there the study of the Hebrew language and poetry, and especially of the sciences and philosophy, would always have afforded a wide field for intellectual development. It was, therefore, sufficient that the leading rabbis domiciled in Moorish countries should devote much attention to furnishing a clew to the labyrinth of the Talmud, intricate and perplexing as the latter had become by the addition of the copious post-Talmudic literature of law and custom. Some sort of guide had become imperatively necessary for the practical application of this voluminous and intricate material. But in Christian countries like France and Germany, where the largest communities of Jews existed, throughout the Middle Ages there was no such outlet for Jewish intellectuality as the culture of literature or of the sciences that existed in Moorish Spain. Their own religious law was the only field open to the intellects of the Jews of Germany and northern France. Rashi and the Ravad In his commentary, Rashi furnished a well-paved road to the Talmud; while the Ravad, by his acute criticism, pointed out the way intelligently and with discrimination. This critical tendency is characteristic of all the writings of the Ravad. Thus, in his commentary upon Torath Kohanim pp. Attitude as a critic The strength of Ravad, may be shown by his criticisms of the works of various authors. The tone he employs is also characteristic of his attitude toward the persons under criticism. Though only eighteen years old, this scholar possessed the courage and the ability to write a sharp criticism upon the Rif, and the Ravad refers to him as an immature youth who has the audacity to criticize his teacher. This was not due to personal feeling, but to radical differences of view in matters of faith between the two greatest Talmudists of the twelfth century. But in the opinion of the Ravad this very aim was the principal defect of the work. A legal code that did not state the sources and authorities from which its decisions were derived, and offered no proofs of the correctness of its statements, was, in the opinion of the Ravad, entirely unreliable, even in the practical religious life, for which purpose the Rambam designed it. Such a code, he considered, could be justified only if written by a man claiming infallibility - by one who could demand that his assertions be accepted without question. If it had been the intention of the Rambam to stem the further development of the study of the Talmud by reducing it to the form of a code, the Ravad felt it his duty to oppose such an attempt, as contrary to the free spirit of rabbinical Judaism, which refuses to surrender blindly to authority. Abraham Zacuto brings down an anecdote in his seminal work, Sefer Yuchasin, whereby he claims that Rambam, during his lifetime, eventually conceded to the correctness of his disputant, the Ravad, saying of him, "In all my life, no one has ever beaten me, except a certain artisan. Abraham ben David is particularly severe on the attempts of Maimonides to smuggle in his philosophic views under cover of Talmudic passages. To cite one example: Sorcery , according to both Biblical and rabbinical law, is, under certain conditions, an offense punishable with death. The opinions in the Talmud on the various acts coming under the category of sorcery differ widely, owing, no doubt, to the fact that it was not practicable to look upon every superstitious practise, from which Talmudic Judaism itself was not entirely free, as a heinous offense. Maimonides, who, from the point of view of his philosophy, looks upon sorcery, astrology , augury , and the like as pure absurdities, decides that even the innocent actions Scripture narrates of Eliezer Gen. Here RABaD is not content with merely correcting the statement of Maimonides, but he declares that, in his

opinion, Maimonides deserves the ban for the calumnious views he expresses concerning these Biblical personages Yad. Kabbalist and philosopher Many Kabbalists view the Ravad as one of the fathers of their system, and this is true to the extent that he was inclined to mysticism, which led him to follow an ascetic mode of life and gained for him the title of "the pious. The Ravad is widely considered to be the source of the commonly used diagram of the Sephirot of the Tree of Life that was ultimately written down by his son Isaac the Blind. The Ravad was not an enemy to science, as many deem him. This philosophic work argues strongly against the anthropomorphic conception of the Deity; and the favor with which the Ravad looked upon it is sufficient ground on which to acquit him of the charge of having held anthropomorphic views. Some of his works show acquaintance with philosophy ; for instance, his remark on "Hilchoth Teshuvah", v. Family records indicate they made their way to Spain, where they appeared in Toledo and Barcelona and were reputedly advisers in the court of Ferdinand and Isabella. Before the First World War, they emigrated to countries throughout the world, and today they live on every inhabited continent. He is said to have died on the Sabbath eve of Hanukkah in the year [4], anno mundi , a year corresponding with CE. Yosef Qafih , Mossad Harav Kook: Singer, Isidore ; et al.

Chapter 2 : Abraham ben David | Revolv

About the Book -- Rabad of Posquieres: A Twelfth-Century Talmudist Provence during the twelfth century was the scene of a remarkable renaissance in Jewish scholarship, and Rabad of Posquieres - Rabbi Abraham ben David - was one of the most creative talmudic scholars of this period.

He lived during a remarkable period of remarkable development of intellectual activity in southern France. His father-in-law, Abraham b. Isaac, who headed the rabbinical court in Narbonne, exerted considerable influence on Abraham ben David, whose brilliance he fully appreciated. Abraham studied with Moses b. Jacob of Lunel, two of the most respected and influential scholars of the time. Meshullam encouraged the methodical transmission of the philosophic, scientific, and halakhic learning of Spanish Jews to French Jewry, and his influence on Abraham in this respect was great. Assaf, Sifran shel Rishonim Jerusalem, , 198; M. Hershler, Jerusalem, on an important problem of Jewish ritual law. He founded and directed a school to which advanced students from all parts of Europe flocked and he provided for all the needs of indigent students out of his own pocket. David ha-Kohen of Lunel, Asher b. His works may be classified under the headings of codes of rabbinic law, commentaries on various types of talmudic literature, responsa, homiletic discourses, and critical annotations and glosses hassagot on standard works of rabbinic literature. His writings are characterized by precision in textual study, persistence in tracing statements back to their original source, discovery of later interpolations, and logical analysis of problems. He was one of the most skillful practitioners of the critico-conceptual method of talmudic study – probing into the inner strata of talmudic logic, defining fundamental concepts, and formulating disparities as well as similarities among various passages in the light of conceptual analysis. As a result, abstract, complex concepts, which were discussed fragmentarily in numerous, unrelated sections of the Talmud, are for the first time defined with great vigor and precision. This critical methodology was the first clean break from the geonic method of Talmud study. By doing so, Rabad approached each rabbinic subject unaided by the wisdom of the previous generations. On the one hand, he viewed each subject as part of the greater talmudic whole; yet on the other hand, he only commented on what interested him. Thus, his commentaries may be described as annotatory rather than cursory, that is, closer to the tosafistic method of textual elucidation and analysis than the method of complete, terse textual commentary associated with Rashi or R. His commentary and tosafot to the first two chapters of Kiddushin have been published by Wacholder, in: A complete and better edition was published by Y. In seven, close-knit chapters, Abraham formulated and discussed in great detail the laws relating to women. The common denominator of all his codes is their preoccupation with practical matters, unlike Maimonides, whose theoretical concept of codification necessitated the inclusion of all laws, even those of no practical value. Abraham wrote commentaries on the Mishnah, which had gradually become subservient to and assimilated in the Talmud as a unit of study, with the result that as late as the 12th century, commentaries on the Mishnah were rare and fragmentary. The commentary on Tamid, ascribed to Abraham, is not his. At the beginning of the Eduyyot commentary he himself declared: I beseech the Creator to guide me correctly in this matter. Eliakim of Greece to have written exhaustive commentaries on these texts. While his commentaries on the Mekhilta and Sifrei are quoted, only the commentary on Sifra is extant first edition Constantinople, ; scientifically edited by I. The commentary, which pays considerable attention to the nature and method of the Sifra and, therefore, to problems of talmudic hermeneutics, begins with an emphatic prologue on the necessity of tradition "in order to harass the opinions of the heretics minim who refuse to obey and believe. Isaac ha-Levi, and the Mishneh Torah of Maimonides. As the Hebrew term hassagah denotes, these glosses are both criticism and commentary, dissent and elaboration, stricture and supplement; they are not exclusively polemical, although the polemical emphasis varies in intensity and acuity from one to the other. The critique on Alfasi is mild and objective; that on Maimonides may be described as moderate, marred by occasional outbursts of intemperate invective; while that on Zerachiah ha-Levi is caustic and personal. Abraham began by reviewing Alfasi and taking exception to some of his halakhic interpretations and normative conclusions. When the Sefer ha-Maor appeared, Abraham felt that Zerachiah ha-Levi had carried the criticism of Alfasi to

unjustified lengths and that often Zerahiah was captious and carping for no good reason. He accused him, inter alia, of plagiarism, amateurishness, excessive reliance on Rashi and the French school, and general incompetence. The book, called Katuv Sham, was published in full for the first time in Jerusalem 1922. Extracts from it had been published previously in the Romm edition of the Talmud, and elsewhere. These hassagot are highly personal and unsystematic. Rabad does not comment on every aspect of each section of the entire Mishneh Torah. However, his glosses are very wide ranging, containing every conceivable form of annotation: Abraham claimed that Maimonides "intended to improve but did not improve, for he forsook the way of all authors and his cut and dried codification, without explanations and without references, approximated ex cathedra legislation too closely. Later generations did not view this statement as disagreeing with Maimonides, but as recognition of the need to think of God in anthropomorphic terms. Abraham wrote many responsa, some of them printed in Tummat Yesharim Venice, A more complete compendium was issued by Y. He wrote a few homilies, as testified by many rishonim, but only his homily on Rosh Ha-Shanah has been printed London, One type of literature, the kabbalistic, which came into prominence during his lifetime, is not represented in his writings. It is known, however, that he exerted formative influence upon it through his children, who, having learned mystical teachings from him, became literary leaders and guides in the emergent Kabbalah. Later kabbalistic writers such as Isaac of Acre, Shem Tov b. Gaon, and Menahem Recanati claimed Abraham as one of their own, worthy of receiving special revelation. Tarbiz, 36 , 1993 , 65"

Chapter 3 : Holdings : Rabad of Posquieres : | York University Libraries

Abraham ben David (c. - 27 November), also known by the abbreviation RABaD (for Rabbeinu Abraham ben David) Ravad or RABaD III, was a Provençal rabbi, a great commentator on the Talmud, Sefer Halachot of Rabbi Yitzhak Alfasi and Mishne Torah of Maimonides, and is regarded as a father of Kabbalah and one of the key and important.

It is also the second night of Chanukah. About years ago, Kabbalist Rav Berg told me that he was the Rabad in his previous incarnation. At the time I did a little research and the Rabad seemed to be a pretty boring and ultra religious person to me. Years later, after the Rav revealed secrets about the Holy Grail and other great secrets, I found out that a few scholars said it was the Rabad who was solely responsible for the opening up of the doors to Kabbalah back in the 12th century. Remember, Kabbalah and Zohar were unknown publicly since years ago. So another years had passed before the Rabad took this historic and epic step. So the Rabad was the spark plug for the emergence of the Grail and the emergence of Kabbalah to the world in the middle ages. The Rabad was visited by Elijah the Prophet in the 12th century and he was instructed to open up the doors of Kabbalah for the first time since Kabbalist Rav Shimon bar Yohai, years ago. Well, the Rav in our generation did the exact same thing. The Rav opened up the doors to Kabbalah thanks to Karen to all mankind and made the profound connection to the Holy Grail. I also learned that Rav Isaac Luria the Ari , one of the greatest Kabbalists in all of history, and his chief disciple, Rav Chaim Vital and others, all said that the Rabad was one of the greatest Kabbalists in human history. Imagine, the Ari designating someone as one of the greatest ever. As I said, now it makes perfect sense why the Rav told me that he was the Rabad. Both brought Kabbalah to the world after years of total secrecy and ignorance. Even the traditional rabbis look at the Rabad as one of the greatest medieval rabbinical scholars in history. With all of their help, we will ignite our Final Redemption and reveal the truth about the Holy Grail to all mankind, which is the end of death and the arrival of paradise and immortal existence through the universal power of Zohar, the book of Splendor. It is this Light that has powered up this holiday season throughout history. Subconsciously, the world feels the goodwill and the feeling of a perfected world, because the Light of Chanukah, the festival of Lights, the Light of Zohar, seeps into the soul of all mankind during this period. Their grand master invited me to speak and they trace their lineage back to the birth of the Templars at the same time as the Rabad in the Middle Ages. They know all about the work of the Kabbalah Centre and work behind the scenes to help spread Zohar, goodwill, wisdom and universal peace to all peoples. No one knows the real secret of that meeting except for the Rav and the ancient and modern-day Knights Templar. It will happen in our lifetime. It IS happening in our lifetime. The Zohar says, as the world gets crazier and filled with more madness, equal blessings will also appear and it means we are getting closer to the end. For updates on course info, pricing and starting date on the upcoming "Unredacting Jesus" course by Billy Phillips, please register your email Success! Now check your email to confirm your subscription. There was an error submitting your subscription. First Name Email Address We use this field to detect spam bots. If you fill this in, you will be marked as a spammer. Unsubscribe at any time. He has been instrumental in helping to make Kabbalah accessible for the masses working on both private and public projects under the guidance of Kabbalist Rav Berg. He has lectured on a variety of topics, most notably the profound connection between Kabbalah, Christianity, Islam and the world of Science. You may also like

Chapter 4 : Abraham Ben David of Posquieres

RABad (ר"ב ד"א, pronounced also Raavad, Ravad or Raivid) is a Hebrew acronym which most commonly refers to Rabbi Abraham Ben David, or the RABaD III. There are.

The town is known as Vauvert today. Not only did he erect and keep in repair a large school-building, but he cared for the material welfare of the poor students as well. To this date in Vauvert a street exists with the name "Rue Ravad. Literary works[edit] The Ravad was a prolific author. Indeed, critical annotations display his powers at their best, and justify his being ranked with the Rif , Rashi , and the Rambam Maimonides. This danger[clarification needed] was not so imminent for those Jews who lived in lands where Arabian culture ruled; for there the study of the Hebrew language and poetry, and especially of the sciences and philosophy, would always have afforded a wide field for intellectual development. It was, therefore, sufficient that the leading rabbis domiciled in Moorish countries should devote much attention to furnishing a clew to the labyrinth of the Talmud, intricate and perplexing as the latter had become by the addition of the copious post-Talmudic literature of law and custom. Some sort of guide had become imperatively necessary for the practical application of this voluminous and intricate material. But in Christian countries like France and Germany, where the largest communities of Jews existed, throughout the Middle Ages there was no such outlet for Jewish intellectuality as the culture of literature or of the sciences that existed in Moorish Spain. Their own religious law was the only field open to the intellects of the Jews of Germany and northern France. Rashi and the Ravad[edit] In his commentary, Rashi furnished a well-paved road to the Talmud; while the Ravad, by his acute criticism, pointed out the way intelligently and with discrimination. This critical tendency is characteristic of all the writings of the Ravad. Thus, in his commentary upon Torath Kohanim pp. Attitude as a critic[edit] The strength of Ravad, may be shown by his criticisms of the works of various authors. The tone he employs is also characteristic of his attitude toward the persons under criticism. Though only eighteen years old, this scholar possessed the courage and the ability to write a sharp criticism upon the Rif, and the Ravad refers to him as an immature youth who has the audacity to criticize his teacher. This was not due to personal feeling, but to radical differences of view in matters of faith between the two greatest Talmudists of the twelfth century. But in the opinion of the Ravad this very aim was the principal defect of the work. A legal code that did not state the sources and authorities from which its decisions were derived, and offered no proofs of the correctness of its statements, was, in the opinion of the Ravad, entirely unreliable, even in the practical religious life, for which purpose the Rambam designed it. Such a code, he considered, could be justified only if written by a man claiming infallibility - by one who could demand that his assertions be accepted without question. If it had been the intention of the Rambam to stem the further development of the study of the Talmud by reducing it to the form of a code, the Ravad felt it his duty to oppose such an attempt, as contrary to the free spirit of rabbinical Judaism, which refuses to surrender blindly to authority. Abraham Zacuto brings down an anecdote in his seminal work, Sefer Yuchasin, whereby he claims that Rambam, during his lifetime, eventually conceded to the correctness of his disputant, the Ravad, saying of him, "In all my life, no one has ever beaten me, except a certain artisan. Abraham ben David is particularly severe on the attempts of Maimonides to smuggle in his philosophic views under cover of Talmudic passages. To cite one example: Sorcery , according to both Biblical and rabbinical law, is, under certain conditions, an offense punishable with death. The opinions in the Talmud on the various acts coming under the category of sorcery differ widely, owing, no doubt, to the fact that it was not practicable to look upon every superstitious practise, from which Talmudic Judaism itself was not entirely free, as a heinous offense. Maimonides, who, from the point of view of his philosophy, looks upon sorcery, astrology , augury , and the like as pure absurdities, decides that even the innocent actions Scripture narrates of Eliezer Gen. Here RABaD is not content with merely correcting the statement of Maimonides, but he declares that, in his opinion, Maimonides deserves the ban for the calumnious views he expresses concerning these Biblical personages Yad. Kabbalist and philosopher[edit] Many Kabbalists view the Ravad as one of the fathers of their system, and this is true to the extent that he was inclined to mysticism, which led him to follow an ascetic mode of life and gained for him the title of "the

pious. The Ravad is widely considered to be the source of the commonly used diagram of the Sephirot of the Tree of Life that was ultimately written down by his son Isaac the Blind. The Ravad was not an enemy to science, as many deem him. This philosophic work argues strongly against the anthropomorphic conception of the Deity; and the favor with which the Ravad looked upon it is sufficient ground on which to acquit him of the charge of having held anthropomorphic views. Some of his works show acquaintance with philosophy ; for instance, his remark on "Hilchoth Teshuvah", v. Descendants[edit] The Ravad had many descendants, several hundred of whom today are named Raivid, Rayvid, Ravid, and Ravad. Family records indicate they made their way to Spain, where they appeared in Toledo and Barcelona and were reputedly advisers in the court of Ferdinand and Isabella. Before the First World War, they emigrated to countries throughout the world, and today they live on every inhabited continent. He is said[clarification needed] to have died on the Sabbath eve of Hanukkah in the year [4], anno mundi , a year corresponding with CE. Yosef Qafih , Mossad Harav Kook:

Chapter 5 : RABAD - Wikipedia

RABAD (abbreviation for Rabbi Abraham ben David) remained in Lunel after completing his studies, and subsequently became one of the rabbinical authorities of that city. He went to Montpellier, where he remained but a short time, and then removed to Nîmes, where he lived for a considerable period.

Judaism a Religion of Deed, not of Dogma. RABAD abbreviation for Rabbi Abraham ben David remained in Lunel after completing his studies, and subsequently became one of the rabbinical authorities of that city. Not only did he erect and keep in repair a large school-building, but he cared for the material welfare of the poor students as well. Neither his codifications of law nor his commentaries are true examples of his strength. The title of "Baal Hasagot" Critic, given him frequently by the rabbis, shows that they realized the direction in which his ability lay. Indeed, critical annotations display his powers at their best, and justify his being ranked with Alfasi, Rashi, and Maimonides. It may, in addition, be safely asserted that Abraham ben David did even more for the study of the Talmud which for so many centuries was for the Jews their only intellectual sphere than the celebrated Spanish scholars. This danger was not so imminent for those Jews who lived in lands where Arabian culture ruled; for there the study of the Hebrew language and poetry, and especially of the sciences and philosophy, would always have afforded a wide field for intellectual development. It was, therefore, sufficient that the leading Jewish rabbis domiciled in Moorish countries should devote much attention to furnishing a clew to the labyrinth of the Talmud, intricate and perplexing as the latter had become by the addition of the copious post-Talmudic literature of law and custom. Some sort of guide had become imperatively necessary for the practical application of this voluminous and intricate material. But in Christian countries like France and Germany, where the largest communities of Jews existed, throughout the Middle Ages there was no such outlet for Jewish intellectuality as the culture of literature or of the sciences which existed in Moorish Spain. Their own religious law was the only field open to the intellects of the Jews of Germany and northern France. That the Jewish mind remained fresh and productive, in spite of the restrictions that hampered the people during the Middle Ages, is due mainly to the efforts of such men as Rashi and Abraham ben David, who utilized the Talmud as an arena in which they could exercise their intellect. In his commentary, Rashi furnished a smooth and well-paved road to the Talmud; while RABAD, by his acute criticism, pointed out the way intelligently and with discrimination. This critical tendency is characteristic of all the writings of RABAD. Thus, in his commentary upon *Torat Kohanim* pp. Attitude as a Critic. The real strength of RABAD is shown by his criticisms of the works of various authors. The tone which he employs is also characteristic of his attitude toward the persons under criticism. His language toward Zerachiah ha-Levi is harsh, almost hostile. Though only eighteen years old, this scholar possessed the courage and the ability to write a sharp criticism upon Alfasi, and RABAD refers to him as an immature youth who has the audacity to criticize his teacher. This, however, was not due to personal feeling, but to radical differences of view in matters of faith between the two greatest Talmudists of the twelfth century. But in the opinion of RABAD this very aim was the principal defect of the work. A legal code which did not state the sources and authorities from which its decisions were derived, and offered no proofs of the correctness of its statements, was, in the opinion of Abraham ben David, entirely unreliable, even in the practical religious life, for which purpose Maimonides designed it. Such a code, he considered, could be justified only if written by a man claiming infallibility—by one who could demand that his assertions be accepted without question. If it had been the intention of Maimonides to stem the further development of the study of the Talmud by reducing it to the form of a code, RABAD felt it his duty to oppose such an attempt, as contrary to the free spirit of rabbinical Judaism, which refuses to surrender blindly to authority. RABAD was thus an opponent to the codification of the Halakah; but he was even more strongly opposed to the construction of a system of dogmas in Judaism, particularly according to the method followed by Maimonides, who often set up the concepts of the Aristotelian philosophy as Jewish theology. In the circles with which RABAD was connected, a certain mystical anthropomorphic conception of the Deity was usual; and therefore it was but natural that a statement which practically declared his best friends apostates should arouse his resentment. Men better and

worthier than he have held this view, for which they believe they have found authority in the Scriptures and in a confusing view of the Haggadah. Judaism is to Abraham ben David a religion of deed, and not one of dogmas. His attitude toward the teachings of Maimonides in regard to the future life and the eternity of the world is in harmony with this point of view. According to him the opinion of Maimonides on this question was as distinctly heretical as the corporeality of God from the standpoint of Maimonides; yet he has no word of vituperation for its author, but merely contents himself with recording his difference of opinion. Abraham ben David is particularly severe on the attempts of Maimonides to smuggle in his philosophic views under cover of Talmudic passages. To cite one example Sorcery, according to both Biblical and rabbinical law, is, under certain conditions, an offense punishable with death. The opinions in the Talmud on the various acts coming under the category of sorcery differ widely, owing, no doubt, to the fact that it was not practicable to look upon every superstitious practise, from which Talmudic Judaism itself was not entirely free, as a heinous offense. Maimonides, who, from the point of view of his philosophy, looks upon sorcery, astrology, augury, and the like as pure absurdities, decides that even the innocent actions which Scripture narrates of Eliezer Gen. Here RABAD is not content with merely correcting the statement of Maimonides, but he declares that, in his opinion, Maimonides deserves the ban for the calumnious views he expresses concerning these Biblical personages. However, his criticisms are not merely bitter, but wonderfully skilful. They are seldom more than a few lines long; yet the defenders of Maimonides have written without success page after page of laborious reasoning in support of their master. The cabalists look upon Abraham ben David as one of the fathers of their system, and this is true to the extent that he was inclined to mysticism, which led him to follow an ascetic mode of life and gained for him the title of "the pious. It may be asserted with confidence that RABAD was not an enemy to secular science, as many deem him. This philosophic work argues strongly against the anthropomorphic conception of the Deity; and the favor with which Abraham ben David looked upon it is sufficient ground on which to acquit him of the charge of having held anthropomorphic views. Moreover, his works show acquaintance with philosophy; for instance, his remark on "Hilkot Teshubah," v.

ABRAHAM BEN DAVID OF POSQUIÈRES (known as Rabad, i.e., Rabbi Abraham ben David; c. 1125-1198); talmudic authority in Provence. Abraham was born in Narbonne, and died in Posquières, a small city near Nîmes famous for the yeshivah he established there.

He had many faces and they were all one face. The Chassidic Talner Rebbe was the spiritual guide of a small but highly loyal and educated congregation, also in Brookline. The devotee and son-in-law of Rabbi Joseph B. A Twelfth-Century Talmudist and Introduction to the Code of Maimonides was arguably the leading figure in academic Jewish studies in his generation. Of each of these persona individually and all of them in their unity, it may be said, as Rabbi Jechiel J. That nobody knew who he was. He could not speak. His son helped him into the shtiebl and the rebbe, shaky but able to stand, would pray; then his son would help him out of the shtiebl. What passed between father and son were, of necessity, silences. His son-in-law took requests from other disciples who asked for a few moments with the great Talmudist; of necessity, these requests were denied and the silences reinforced. Where did they begin? Why did East European immigrant parents, a Chassidic rebbe and his pious wife, send their son to Boston Latin School, then to Harvard University, not to yeshivah? How did their son, a scion of a distinguished line of Chassidic rebbes, find favor with the daughter of the scion of the most distinguished line of opponents of the Chassidic movement, the daughter of Rabbi Soloveitchik? There are no answers to these questions and never will be, none, at least, that will turn silences into sounds that satisfy, that will reach deeper than generalities and superficialities, that will reveal the core of the man and significantly attenuate the mystery that surrounded him in life, as in death. On one level, however, there is no mystery. On one level, all is pure and clear and simple: Professor Isadore Rabbi Yitzhak Rebbe Twersky was a presence, an unmistakable presence; with this one word he may be summed up. His presence will no sooner recur than the European Jewish civilization, the humanities-centered academia, or the softly shimmering piety of his parents, from all of which he sprang, yet surely did not embody: If he was unknowable, concealed like God Himself, so to speak, he left a body of work, he revealed a philosophy of the human spirit, he sounded a voice that may be studied, understood, and profoundly absorbed. His style was both ponderous and elegant; he left no nuance unexplored, no line of thought untidied, no word unsummoned. He began in Rabad, with water, "streams," "tributaries," "offshoots," "rivulets," "eddies," and "waddies," to be exact; with metaphors for the "complex network" pouring into or alongside the mainstream. The network was the "dazzling variety of cultural disciplines: Before him, books on practitioners of Jewish law "halachists" were written by lawyers that is, other halachists or by biographers. The lawyers analyzed the legal reasoning of the halachic scholar. Professor Twersky addressed the halachic work itself, but not as a lawyer. Twersky, I was very sorry to hear of the untimely passing of the Rebbe, z"l. In , I was a twenty-year-old music student in the Yale Graduate School with no background or knowledge of Torah Judaism. I had recently begun reading an English translation of the Torah. My sister, who was working on a Ph. Inside the wrapping was a copy of a new book called, A Maimonides Reader, edited and arranged by the Rebbe. This little volume masterfully collected key writings of the Rambam on essential aspects of religious philosophy, including the existence of the Creator, freedom of the will, teshuvah, secular philosophy and halachah. I pored over my paperback copy, using the reference list as a guide for further reading. I slowly became a "chassid" of the Rambam and the Rebbe from afar. A year and a half later, I was graduated from Yale and enrolled full-time in a yeshivah. During the ensuing years, my brother, sister, first cousin and other friends and students joined the camp of bnei and bnos Torah. Today they are raising their own observant families. The Commission gathered community and lay leaders to consider needs and strategies of American Jewish education. During the conference, he exerted a profound influence upon the participants. Due to his scholarly Torah wisdom, sincere respect for his fellow man, and compassionate understanding of the assimilating American Jew, Rabbi Dr. Twersky emerged as a role model of the educated Jew the Commission sought to develop. Given the diverse backgrounds of the Commission members, this position was all the more remarkable and was mekadesh Shem Shamayim; here was a prestigious group of American Jewish community leaders looking for leadership to the

outstanding Torah scholar in its midst. Twersky was a towering figure, combining immense learning with worldly wisdom and great vision. He was awesome, yet modest, inspiring confidence. He was one of the key individuals who helped shape the blueprint for the Commission report, "A Time to Act," issued November, He made Orthodoxy understandable and relevant. I loved the man. He leaves a huge void. In , the Foundation sponsored the establishment of Aish Dos, a school for training kollel scholars to become teachers. This year, the Foundation co-sponsored a three-year fellowship for yeshivah principals. Both projects were "firsts" and important steps for Torah education in America. On the Goals of Jewish Education From "A Time to Act" "Our goal should be to make it possible for every Jewish person, child or adult, to be exposed to the mystery and romance of Jewish history, to the enthralling insights and special sensitivities of Jewish thought, to the sanctity and symbolism of Jewish existence, and to the power and profundity of Jewish faith. Education, in its broadest sense, will enable young people to confront the secret of Jewish tenacity and existence, the quality of Torah teaching which fascinates and attracts irresistibly. They will then be able, even eager, to find their place in a creative and constructive community. He wanted to know why rulings of Maimonides that cried out for critique were passed over in silence by Rabad. He wanted to dismantle the image of a scholar typographically locked into a designated square or rectangle on the mosaic which forms the many-authored, single page of standard editions of classic Hebrew works. Professor Twersky pursued these and similar goals with verve, doggedness, and conviction, not to mention mastery of both the primary literature, all that Rabad wrote, and the secondary literature, all that others wrote about Rabad and the issues he raised. The last chapter of Rabad is entitled, "Relation to Philosophy and Kabbalah. If the "dazzling variety of disciplines" could not be fully perceived without their relation to Jewish law, the reverse is also true. Jewish law existed in relation to other disciplines. What, precisely, is this relation? This question occupies 42 pages in the page work, Rabad. The increase is due not only to the different emphases of Rabad and Maimonides, but to the personal interest of Professor Twersky himself. His interest was the complexity of reality. Law was not law, he maintained; law was law and spirit, law was a coin with two sides. To be more accurate, Professor Twersky saw the major halachic scholars as seeing their own work in this twofold manner. His research uncovered halachists who took note of, responded to, reflected the concerns of, or depending on the halachic scholar even gave pride of place to mystical, philosophical, or pietistic ideals. To be sure, law had its own terms. It could not be reduced to a "value" or any other generality that exempted either scholar or adherent from its many details. Still, law reflected the spiritual dimensions of other disciplines; either that, or bodied forth a spirituality all its own. With his twofold lens, Professor Twersky did not merely create a new and subtle genre of academic or halachic analysis; he set forth a unitive vision of the human spirit. Unobtrusively tucked away in a note or long paragraph in the Introduction to the Code of Maimonides is a reference to the "hypothetical-deductive method of textual analysis"⁸ or the "covenantal community,"⁹ phrases coined by, respectively, Professor Wolfson and Rabbi Soloveitchik. Professor Twersky imbedded himself in the works of his guides, all the way down to their favored phrases; his guides were not mere predecessors but profound influences, even as he charted his own path in life and letters. No creator works in a vacuum. No creation is empty of external influence. Or is it Rabbi Soloveitchik? For example, in commenting on Rabad, Professor Twersky writes: It is as if he were following a carefully etched blueprint and as a result was never free, was never "between performances. Perceiving it in two otherwise very different halachists, it mirrors himself as much as them, if not more. This line of thought is strengthened as we turn to a still more direct impression of Professor Twersky. In one of his seminal articles, he writes of Rabbi Yair Bacharach: He is a self-conscious stylist, striving for puns, allusions, and epigrammatic constructions. For example, he strives mightily for alliterations. They are present in embryo in Rabad; 18 years later, in the Introduction to the Code of Maimonides, they are, to echo the professor, veritably ubiquitous and virtually uncountable. In a mere eight pages of the Introduction, the reader confronts "candidly and curtly," "leaps or lapses," "calculated and consistent," "import and impact," "sequence and structure," "crowning and consummate," and many more such pairs. No less than his personal mentors, he esteemed these leading halachists; so much so that he exchanged psychic places with them, so to speak, merging their persona with his own, appropriating their many sided spirituality as his own. The many faces of Professor Twersky distilled the waters of the cultural tributaries as well as the halachic mainstream, of the past

as well as the present, extending the silences further, across one unforgettable face. He is a member of the Jewish Action contributing editorial board and author of *The Fire Within*, 2 vols. Mesorah, and Yale University Press, , p. *A Twelfth-Century Talmudist* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, , p. Twersky, *Introduction to the Code of Maimonides*, p. *A Case Study in R. Twersky, Introduction to the Code of Maimonides*, pp.

Chapter 7 : Abraham ben David - Wikipedia

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Chapter 8 : Rabad of Posquières: a twelfth-century Talmudist - Isadore Twersky - Google Books

The Rabad was visited by Elijah the Prophet in the 12th century and he was instructed to open up the doors of Kabbalah for the first time since Kabbalist Rav Shimon bar Yohai, years ago. Well, the Rav in our generation did the exact same thing.

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24 The Torah u-Madda Journal (12/) Rabad - Disrupter of Tradition? A Response to Haym Soloveitchik's "Rabad of Posquieres: A Programmatic Essay" As one who had marveled at the attention showered on Rambam.