

I. **Turkey/Ottoman Empire:**

A. **A. : רב דוד הכהן שו"ת הרד"ך בית יט : (1465-1530)**

אשה אחת בשלוניקי ובעלה בספרד משומד והדבר קרוב לנמנע לבא לתת לה גט וכתב משם כתב ידו ושלחו בשלוניקי ואלו דבריו הנה אני מונה סופר ועדים לכתוב גט ולתתו לאשתי כל ב' שיכירו כתב ידי ויש שם אנשי' אם כותבין ונותנין גט לאשתנו או לא

R' David haCohen (1465-1530) Responsa 19 (Translation is my own)

A woman in Salonika (Turkey-Ottoman Empire-Muslim rule) whose husband remained in Spain as an apostate and it is virtually impossible for him to come [to Salonika] and give her a writ of divorce. He wrote a letter (in his own handwriting) from there [Spain] and sent it to Salonika and these are his words: "Behold I am appointing a scribe and witnesses to issue a divorce and give it to my wife. If there are two witnesses who recognize his handwriting, can we write and grant his wife the divorce?"

II. **Israel:**

A. ***ציון הלא תשאל* O Zion Will You Not Inquire: (Artsroll Translation)**

Author: Rabbi Yehuda haLevi (c. 1075-1141)

O Zion will you not inquire about the welfare of your imprisoned,
Who see your welfare, for they are the remnants of your flocks...

Who shall make me wings so that I might wander far away?

Amidst your shattered ruins

I would fall on my face upon your soil

And intensely cherish your stones and favor your dust.

Even as I stand by the graves of my Patriarchs,

I behold in sheer wonderment the choicest burial sites in Hebron.

Mount Abarim and Mount Hor, the resting places

Of your two great lights (Moshe and Aaron),

Your beacons and your guides.

A breath of life for [our] souls is the air of your land,

The powder of your dust is finer than flowing myrrh

And your river is like the honeycomb's drippings.

O Zion, consummation of beauty, with love and charm

Have you aroused yourself greatly, and the souls

Of your dear friends are bound up with you.

It is they who rejoice over your serenity, and who are pained

By your destruction and weep over your devastation.

From the pit of captivity, they yearn for you, and everyone

At his place prostrates himself towards your gates...

Your G-d desired you for His residence,

And fortunate is the man who chooses and draws near

And dwells in your courtyards.

Fortunate is he who waits and arrives and witnesses

The rising of your light when your dawn bursts forth over him...

C. Joseph Nasi Rebuilds Tiberias: From Joseph HaKohen (1496-1578), *The Vale of Tears עמק הבכּה*.

“Don Yosef Nasi came to Ferrara [Italy] with those who had escaped from the iron furnace, Portugal. He lived there for a short time and then went on to Turkey, where he found favor in the eyes of Sultan Sulaiman, who loved him very much. [From Portugal he had gone to Antwerp and then onto Venice, to Ferrara, and finally to Turkey, which he reached about 1553.] **The Sultan gave him the ruins of Tiberias and seven of the villages about it [1563], appointing him prince and chief over them at that time.** Don Joseph sent Rabbi Joseph be Ardut, his agent there to rebuild the walls of the city...

...there were plenty of building stone there, for Tiberias had been a very great city before it was destroyed...the inhabitants...were commanded to prepare mortar in generous quantities to carry on the work. There was also plenty of sand there, for the Sea of Galilee is nearby...

But the Arabs were envious of them, and a certain old noble arose and cried out to the inhabitants of that region: Don't allow them to rebuild this city, for there will be trouble later. I have indeed found written in a very old book that when the city, whose name is Tiberias, is rebuilt, our religion will be destroyed, and we shall be the sufferers.” They heeded him and refused to go on with the building of the walls, with the result that the work on the walls of Tiberias ceased

Joseph ben Ardut...went to the Pasha of Damascus and complained before him: “I regret, my lord, but the inhabitants of the villages absolutely refuse to obey the command of the Sultan.” Terrified, the Pasha hastened to send men there who seized two of the leaders and executed them in order that those left might see and be afraid, and not act rebelliously anymore.

Again they started to dig in order to rebuild the walls of the city...The circumference of the city of Tiberias, which they rebuilt, was fifteen hundred cubits, and the work was finished in the month of Kislev, in the year 5325 (November-December 1564). And Don Joseph rejoiced very much and gave thanks to G-d.

At his command they planted very many mulberry trees there to feed silkworms. He also ordered wool to be brought from Spain to manufacture garments just like the clothes they made in Venice, for the man Don Joseph was very great and his fame spread throughout the land.