

Beit Midrash YeshivahAI

A historical and Torah inquiry into a lasting controversy

Ma'aneh Chacham Under Source Review

The Three Oaths and their relation to faith
R. Yoel Kahn's letters and the Satmar critique

יִתְבָּרְרוּ וְיִתְלַבְּנוּ וְיִצְרְפוּ

רַבִּים

Daniel 12:10

Complete research edition · Edition 3

ו' תשרי תשפ"ז

Two Letters—and More Than Forty Years of Controversy

A historical and Torah inquiry into an enduring controversy

How do two letters become the focus of a controversy lasting more than four decades? Responses, pamphlets, articles, and critical lectures accumulated around Ma'aneh Chacham, attributed to R. Yoel Kahn. This work has a distinctive place within Beit Midrash YeshivahAI: it follows an entire controversy through its participants, successive texts, and sources. Historical research meets Torah study: to understand the arguments, we must also know who made them, to whom, and in what context.

For this purpose, we brought together hundreds of pages of source texts and criticism preserved in the research file, alongside summaries of the six audio lectures collected. We organized the arguments, compared wording, worked through difficulties, and tested each conclusion against its evidence. Our own conclusions were also corrected when they did not withstand scrutiny. The contribution of this undertaking is to bring material scattered across books, files, and lectures into a course of study readers can follow and check: from the claim to its source, and from there to the judgment and its limits.

Taking inspiration from Daniel's words, "וַיְתַבְּרֻן וַיְתַלְּכֵנוּ וַיְצַרְפוּ רַבִּים" (12:10), we seek clarification and refinement. Metzudat Zion explains the language of whitening as establishing a matter clearly; in context, Rashi and Metzudot discuss calculations of the end. Here we borrow that language for the work of study: distinguishing a source's wording from its interpretation, and a supported conclusion from a claim that needs correction.

Two Chassidic Communities, and a Question Touching the Foundations of Faith

Satmar and Chabad are two Chassidic traditions committed to Torah and mitzvot. They disagreed sharply on the questions discussed here: attitudes toward Zionism and the state it established, participation in elections, drawing Jews who do not observe the mitzvot closer to Torah, and the boundary between disagreement within Torah and denial of the faith. The dispute also concerns similar actions that carry different meanings for each side.

R. Yoel Teitelbaum, the Satmar Rebbe, set out his opposition to Zionism and the state in *Vayoel Moshe* and *Al HaGeulah VeAl HaTemurah*. Central to his approach are the Three Oaths mentioned in the Talmud: boundaries for Israel and the nations during exile. He connects them to the decree of exile and to the question of when human action becomes an attempt to take redemption into human hands. His discussion thus concerns faith, halachah, and communal conduct together.

Chabad, too, rejects replacing Torah with a secular national identity. At the same time, it emphasizes the duty to bring every Jew closer to Torah, safeguard Jewish lives, and assess each action according to its halachic significance. Does drawing a person closer require agreement with that person's worldview? Does voting to strengthen Torah mean identifying with everything the state does? Does interpreting a prohibition differently make the dissenter a heretic? The letters grow out of these questions.

Who Was R. Yoel Kahn?

R. Yoel Kahn was the Lubavitcher Rebbe's chief chozer and one of the foremost exponents of Chabad teachings. A chozer listens to the Rebbe's words, remembers them, repeats them with fellow students, and helps prepare them for writing—a particularly

important role on Shabbat and festivals. R. Yoel Kahn taught Chassidic thought and led the editing of *Sefer HaArachim*—Chabad. The letters display his method of distinguishing closely related concepts and establishing what a source says and what follows from it.¹

To avoid confusion: R. Yoel Kahn is the Chabad chozer; the author of *Vayoel Moshe* is R. Yoel Teitelbaum of Satmar. “Our Rebbe” in R. Yoel Kahn’s own words in Letter II means the Lubavitcher Rebbe, R. Menachem Mendel Schneerson. When a title is quoted from a Satmar writer, that writer’s own Rebbe must be identified from the context.

Rabbi Wechter: From the Satmar World to the Study of Chabad Chassidic Thought

R. Abraham Menachem Mendel Wechter came from the Satmar world in New York and was known as a Torah scholar and yeshivah head. Through studying Chassidic thought with R. Yoel Kahn, he became drawn to Chabad and later taught it himself. The transition provoked severe tension; in 5743 Rabbi Wechter was attacked, and the Lubavitcher Rebbe protested the assault. He later moved to the Land of Israel and headed a kollel in Nachalat Har Chabad in Kiryat Malachi. His story illustrates the place of these questions in people’s lives and relations between communities.²

A separate copy of Letter II bears a heading connecting it with R. Yoel Kahn and R. Mendel Wechter. The printed foreword describes a letter written in another person’s name and leaves the recipient unidentified. The historical connection is documented, but we cannot establish that every detail of

1. Chabad.org, biography of R. Yoel Kahn, July 15, 2021; his life documented in photographs, July 16, 2021. The description of his method of analysis in the letters is a conclusion of our study.

2. Hillel Zaltzman, “R. Mendel Wechter and My Father,” family memoirs; the biographical entry on Rabbi Wechter; report on the publication of documentation of the Rebbe’s response in 5743. The sources do not all give identical details about the yeshivah institution in New York.

transmission is identical or that both letters were written to the same recipient.³

From the Letters to Books and Lectures

Letter I mentions 5743 and the Lebanon War, answering a questioner who sought to defend the approach of Vayoel Moshe. Letter II expands on Chabad's approach, including drawing Jews closer to Torah and the Three Oaths. After years of circulation in copies, printed editions appeared in 5772–5774 with notes and additions. The two letters are the heart of the work; the book also contains editorial layers that are not R. Yoel Kahn's own words.⁴

The critical collection includes Teshuvah Berurah BeInyan Galut UGeulah UShalosh Shevuot by R. Ephraim Tzvi (Hersh) Shmilowitz, the work preserved as Teshuvah BiYesodei HaEmunah, and Ma'aneh Tzemed Sadeh by R. Yitzchak Sabransky. Alongside them, the inquiry considered summaries of six lectures by R. Yirmiyah Kahn—one of the critics, a different person from R. Yoel Kahn. Some texts overlap; the number of files is not the number of independent arguments.⁵

What Did the Study Establish?

We can hear the heart of the debate in the letter itself. After presenting the disagreement over the scope of the oath against rebelling against the nations, R. Yoel Kahn asks, “Who am I to put my head between two great mountains?” He describes this particular dispute as “two positions in halachah” (Letter II, p. 114; our translation). The inquiry asks what supports that distinction and where its limits lie.

3. Ma'aneh Chacham, foreword, printed p. 3; the separate copy entitled “Letter to Wechter” is preserved with the research sources. The heading appears within the copy; we do not have an autograph manuscript—the author's original handwritten text.

4. Ma'aneh Chacham, p. 46: the internal date 5743; p. 2: edition dates; The COL news website, publication report dated 26 Sivan 5773. An internal date does not authenticate every printed addition.

5. Source headings: Teshuvah Berurah, part I, p. 1; Ma'aneh Tzemed Sadeh, p. 1. “Tzemed” and the author's name “Ephraim Tzvi” were checked on the pages themselves. Corpus scope and audio limitations are detailed in the research edition.

The central distinction withstands examination: disagreement over a halachic definition is not an automatic test of faith. Letter II accepts the Oaths; it does not abolish them. Some criticisms of particular proofs and applications in the letters also carry weight. Establishing the strength and weakness of each argument is the fruit of the inquiry: each source has its wording, each claim its author, and each conclusion its limits.

Reading map: For a quick overview, see the summary of the inquiry and map of judgments; for the argument, chapters 2–5, 15, and 21; to examine the evidence, chapter 20, the appendix, and the source register. The PDF bookmarks provide access to every chapter.

This booklet presents the inquiry preserved in the research file and the record of its judgments. For a shorter continuous account of the essentials, see the reader edition; both editions and their translations are available in the four-booklet folder.

A map of the material brought into the inquiry

The scale of the undertaking becomes clear when the materials are brought together. The third edition of Ma’aneh Chacham comprises 172 PDF pages; the four preserved files of written criticism contain 185 PDF pages in total, with overlap between them. Alongside them are six audio files and a consolidated working summary, letters, references and foundational works. From this material came a research file, a twenty-stage journal and a decision document that developed from 22 cases into the later edition’s map of 28 conclusions. The page count describes the material collected; the references and verification statuses show what informed each judgment.

Stage	Its significance for the inquiry
5743	The year mentioned within Letter I; the background includes the Lebanon War and tensions between Satmar and Chabad.
5769	A date appearing in R. Ephraim Tzvi Shmilowitz’s response; evidence that written criticism preceded the later printed editions.

Stage	Its significance for the inquiry
5772– 5774	The three printed editions of Ma’aneh Chacham, with corrections, notes and additions that must be distinguished from the letters.
5785	An article on the critic’s website explicitly addresses Ma’aneh Chacham’s argument about the state and exile and links to lectures; the controversy continues.
5786– 5787	The later research file, the examination of its conclusions and the preparation of four accessible, corresponding editions in two languages.

For the historical background in Edition 2, fresh checks covered the prefaces, an internal date in Letter I, headings and selected pages in the critical works, the separate copy associated with R. Wechter and biographical sources. The summary of the six lectures states that it draws on automatic transcription that may misrender names and quotations; it must not be quoted as an exact transcript. Preparing Edition 2 and updating the present edition did not include listening again to all the recordings.

The background check found seven numbered “MaanehChochom” files in the public collection linked from the critic’s website. Six were preserved in our research file. The seventh has not yet been compared, so it remains undetermined whether it adds material, overlaps or continues with another subject. This is a defined task for further work; the description here does not claim to exhaust every written or recorded criticism.⁶

Ten distinctions to guide the study

1. Letter II presents the Lubavitcher Rebbe’s position, which R. Yoel Kahn follows, that the Oaths also apply to establishing the state.
2. An oath prohibition, the decree of exile and heresy are not identical concepts.

6. I Will Await Him, critical article of June 6, 2025, and its links. The public file list was checked; the contents of file 7 were not. The verification record is preserved in the source package.

3. Distinct categories can be connected; they need not be wholly separated.
4. Disagreement over an oath's scope is not an automatic test of heresy.
5. Avnei Nezer and Vayoel Moshe genuinely disagree about immigration with permission.
6. Possible success is not permission; R. Tzadok's teaching is not a ruling on war either.
7. Protecting Jews, rebellion and taking political power require separate discussions.
8. The Rebbe's letters distinguish voting from coalition responsibility.
9. A stringent interpretation of a source is not necessarily the source's explicit wording.
10. An argument's early circulation, its authorship and its exact wording are three separate inquiries.

The statement from which we begin

The matter of the Three Oaths is a matter of halachah, unlike the first two matters, which are matters of faith.

[...]

This is a halachic question—in the laws of oaths, not in the laws of redemption. Just as there are many opinions in the laws of oaths on various matters, so too with this matter.

Our translation of two passages from Letter II, under “The prohibition of the Three Oaths.” The examples of differing views between them have been omitted; this is not a continuous quotation. The complete page 113 was opened and read again when the first edition of these booklets was prepared.⁷

The “first two matters” are nationhood detached from Torah and redemption by our own power rather than through Mashiach, as defined in the letter. The continuation presents the Lubavitcher Rebbe's position that the prohibition applies “now as well (regarding the establishment of the state),” distinguishing this from the duty to

7. Ma'aneh Chacham, third edition, Letter II, printed p. 113, PDF p. 113; continued on p. 114.

protect Jews. R. Yoel Kahn acknowledges that the author of Vayoel Moshe also disputes this application. The conceptual distinction must therefore not be turned into practical agreement by all parties.

How to read the evidence levels

There are two separate axes: what was read in the source, and how strongly it supports a conclusion. The substantive chapters preserve the verification record of the later archived research. Expressions such as “opened” and “checked” describe that record; they do not claim that every source was reopened for this edition. Checks made in preparing the series and those added following external review are marked separately in the source list. Verified wording does not make every interpretation of it a proof.

Summary of the Inquiry

This booklet examines the disagreement surrounding Ma’aneh Chacham, attributed to R. Yoel Kahn, in relation to Vayoel Moshe and the Satmar critiques. Its scope is limited to the Three Oaths, Zionism, exile and redemption, sovereignty, elections, and the public responsibility associated with them. It is not a survey of all Jewish positions on the Three Oaths, nor an independent critique of the whole of Al HaGeulah VeAl HaTemurah. That book is examined here only where it directly concerns the arguments under discussion.

The first and most important finding is that Letter II prevents a mistaken reading of Letter I. R. Yoel Kahn calls the Oaths “a matter of halachah” and disputes about their scope “a halachic question.” He presents, in the name of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, the position he follows: the prohibitions on ascending “as a wall” and rebelling against the nations apply “now as well (regarding the establishment of the state).” Abolition of the Oaths therefore cannot be attributed to him. When Letter I analyzes the absence of an oath’s technical legal effect “according to Vayoel Moshe’s

position,” it is analyzing the other party’s position, not stating its own ruling.

Nevertheless, there is no justification for completely separating the Oaths from heresy within Vayoel Moshe. The Satmar position connects the decree of exile, the limits on human action in matters of redemption, and the gravity, in matters of faith, of taking redemption into human hands. R. Yoel Kahn’s strong distinction must therefore be formulated more precisely: the fact that a certain action falls, in one authority’s opinion, within the scope of an oath does not mean that someone who disagrees about the definition of that oath is disputing a principle of faith or automatically becomes a heretic.

In several applications, R. Yoel Kahn extends his argument beyond what the sources support. This is especially apparent in the argument of *למיגדר מילתא*, imposing a protective restriction; in part of the discussion of sovereignty; and in attempts to give restrictive interpretations to explicit statements in Vayoel Moshe. Conversely, some critiques attribute to him a position that Letter II rules out, or turn partial evidence into a sweeping conclusion. The final conclusion is therefore twofold: the conceptual core stands, but several applications require qualification or rejection.

Overall finding: The central core of Ma’aneh Chacham survives after substantial correction of its formulations and applications. Using *lemigdar milta* to explain all the severe prohibitions is the weakest application.

1. Method and Scope of the Inquiry

Principal sources: Ma’aneh Chacham, Letters I–II; Vayoel Moshe; the critical material; and the primary sources specified below.

The inquiry proceeded claim by claim. In each topic, it distinguished the critic’s argument; what the critic attributes to R. Yoel Kahn; the wording of Ma’aneh Chacham; the wording of

Vayoel Moshe; the external sources; and the inference the research seeks to draw. This structure was designed to examine the work. To avoid an uneven treatment, however, an affirmative account of the framework of Vayoel Moshe in its own terms was also added before the conclusions.

The assessment of evidence distinguishes two separate dimensions. The first is the status of the source: a primary source that was opened; a reliable transcription from an official source; a quotation through an intermediary; or a source not yet examined directly. The second is the strength of the interpretive conclusion: an established textual point; a strong conclusion; a reasonable one; a balanced one; an open question; or inconclusive evidence. Verifying a text does not make an interpretation “secure,” and a reasonable interpretation does not improve the status of a source that has not been opened. These descriptions record the later archived research. Checks added during booklet production and subsequent review rounds are identified separately in the source register. An “earlier research draft” does not mean Edition 1 of this booklet series.

Even an official source does not remove the need to examine the correct question. The most important example is the Knesset inquiry. The wording of Basic Law: The Knesset was verified, but the earlier inquiry had not first opened section 100 of Vayoel Moshe. Once that section was opened, it became clear that the wording concerns “that number of members.” The quorum finding in an earlier research draft was therefore withdrawn in the later research, and this edition makes no claim that Basic Law: The Knesset refutes Vayoel Moshe.

This booklet does not claim to map all the literature on the Three Oaths. Sources such as additional positions of the Rishonim, Em HaBanim Semeichah, and HaTekufah HaGedolah are important to a broader discussion. They are not, however, prerequisites for

the narrower determination of what Ma'aneh Chacham argues and what the evidence brought against it supports.

Assessment: The final method separates source verification from interpretive judgment and confines the scope to what the booklet actually examines.

2. Reconstructing Vayael Moshe's Framework in Its Own Terms and Its Relationship to R. Yoel Kahn's Position

Principal sources: Vayael Moshe, Ma'amar Shalosh Shevuot, especially sections 44, 75, 79–80, and 83; Ma'aneh Chacham, Letters I–II.

Within the framework of Vayael Moshe, three interconnected levels must be distinguished. The first concerns how the oath operates: in several places, he denies that an ordinary oath takes technical legal effect upon later generations. The second is the decree of exile: the Oaths form part of the binding framework that defines what Israel is forbidden to do before redemption. The third concerns faith: actions understood as taking redemption and freedom into human hands may constitute heresy, even when the technical legal effect of the oath itself is not the source of that gravity.

Two conclusions follow in opposite directions. It cannot be said that every violation of an oath is, by definition, heresy. Neither can it be said that the Oaths are merely an aggadic ornament with no function. In Vayael Moshe, they are integrated into the decree of exile and into the identification of actions that carry redemptive significance.

Letter II lists three grounds for opposition to Zionism: defining Jewish nationhood apart from Torah; redemption through our own power rather than through Mashiach; and the prohibitions of the Three Oaths. R. Yoel Kahn calls the first two matters of

faith and the third a matter of halachah. In the name of “our Rebbe”—the Lubavitcher Rebbe—he presents the position he follows, including the qualification “regarding the establishment of the state.” Letter I, by contrast, sometimes analyzes Vayoe Moshe’s position from within.

This gives us three questions for reading: what does the prohibition cover; does this action fall within it; and what significance for faith is attributed to the position or action, on what evidence? These are tools for examining an argument, not a procedure for determining a person’s status. Rabbinic titles likewise depend on the speaker: “our Rebbe” here means the letter writer’s Rebbe; in Satmar criticism, “the Rebbe, shlita” may designate the critic’s own Rebbe, according to author and period.

Assessment: These are not two disconnected frameworks. An oath, the decree of exile, and heresy are distinct categories, but within Vayoe Moshe they are interconnected.

3. A Principle of Faith, a Torah Truth, and Heresy

Principal sources: Responsa Chatam Sofer, Yoreh De’ah, section 356; Ma’aneh Chacham, Letter I; Vayoe Moshe.

Chatam Sofer explicitly distinguishes a “principle,” in the sense of a structural foundation upon which the religion rests, from a truth that is binding by virtue of the Torah and the Prophets. He writes that redemption and the coming of Mashiach do not necessarily have to be defined as a principle in that structural sense. In the same passage, he states that whoever denies them denies the faith of the Torah and the Prophets. The opening of the available transcription is recorded in the later research; it was reread during booklet production, with the limitations specified in the source register.

This distinction helps sharpen the discussion. The proposition that the Three Oaths are not an “independent principle of faith” does not imply that they lack binding force. Nor does the possibility that a certain action constitutes heresy imply that every halachic disagreement about whether that action falls within an oath becomes a disagreement about the principles of faith.

This is the strongest formulation of Ma’aneh Chacham’s contribution: it does not establish that “an oath and heresy are always separate”; it rejects the automatic move from disagreement about the scope of an oath to labeling the person who disagrees a heretic.

The claim has a specific historical address. At the opening of Letter II (p. 100), R. Yoel Kahn reports hearing “some Satmar adherents” label Chabad Chassidim heretics for citing authorities who disagreed with their position. This is his report about unnamed people; it must not become a ruling by the Satmar Rebbe or the position of every critic. Vayael Moshe 75 and 83 require separate examination of using interdependence of the Oaths as practical permission and of actions understood as overturning the decree of exile, in each section’s wording and context.

Assessment — strong finding: Chatam Sofer provides a clear conceptual basis for distinguishing a “principle” from an obligation of belief, without abolishing either the belief or the halachah.

4. Do the Oaths Themselves Define an Act of Redemption?

Principal sources: Ma'aneh Chacham, Letter I, paragraphs 8–9; Vayoel Moshe, sections 44, 79, and 83; the critical material.

The criticism is correct on one point: within Vayoel Moshe, the Oaths are more than an external addition to the punishment. They are connected to the framework of the decree of exile and help define actions concerning freedom and redemption.

This does not, however, establish a universal rule that everything falling within an oath is automatically heresy. Forcing the time of redemption through prayer is a useful example: it is possible to speak of a forbidden spiritual form of forcing without turning prayer itself into a human appropriation of redemption.

R. Yoel Kahn therefore sometimes separates these frameworks too sharply, while some critics merge them too thoroughly. The precise formulation is a connection without identity.

Assessment: The Oaths help define the boundaries imposed by the decree of exile. They are not an automatic test of heresy in every individual detail.

5. Avnei Nezer, Immigration with Permission, and the Real Disagreement

Principal sources: Responsa Avnei Nezer, Yoreh De'ah, section 454, paragraph 56, and section 456, paragraphs 1–2; Vayoel Moshe, sections 16–17 and 86; Ma'aneh Chacham.

Avnei Nezer regards general permission from the nations as a circumstance that can remove immigration from the category of ascending “as a wall.” He adds the possibility of pekidah (divine remembrance), stressing in a further responsum that it “may count as pekidah” (456): a possibility, not a certainty. His permission argument does not depend on establishing pekidah.

Vayoel Moshe disagrees: organized collective immigration with permission can still be ascending “as a wall,” and the nations’ permission does not by itself remove the prohibition on forcing the end.

There is a conceptual affinity: neither position describes an ordinary oath under the laws of vows, orally taking effect upon every generation. The practical disagreement, however, is real. Avnei Nezer therefore must not be used to argue that Vayoel Moshe’s position is impossible; nor must Vayoel Moshe be used to turn the very disagreement with Avnei Nezer into heresy.

The argument “on this view Avnei Nezer would be a heretic” is R. Yoel Kahn’s reasoning in Letter I, section 10 (p. 31; compare section 11, p. 36), not a statement by the author of Vayoel Moshe about Avnei Nezer. Its force is limited: disagreement about identifying pekidah or defining the prohibition does not, by itself, deny a truth of faith.

Assessment: This is a real disagreement. R. Yoel Kahn’s proof against turning the details of the definition into a principle of faith is stronger than the attempt to show that Vayoel Moshe itself agrees with Avnei Nezer.

6. Forcing the End, Intensified Prayer, and Avkat Rochel

Principal sources: Rashi, Ketubbot 111a; Vayoel Moshe; R. Hillel Lichtenstein of Kolomyia, Avkat Rochel, volume 2, principle 9 — available only through a secondary quotation at this stage of the prior research.

Rashi allows דחיית הקץ, “forcing the end”—seeking to bring redemption before its time—to be understood also in relation to multiplying supplications. This demonstrates that the term “oath” extends beyond the category of political heresy. It does

not demonstrate that the oath has ceased to apply to later generations.

The bibliographic identification of Avkat Rochel as the work of R. Hillel Lichtenstein of Kolomyia is recognized and documented. Nevertheless, an image of principle 9 itself was not opened in the checks documented here. The wording attributed to it concerning a change in the time and intensified prayer is presented here only as a tradition of secondary quotation and cannot, by itself, support any decisive conclusion.

This is Avkat Rochel by R. Hillel Lichtenstein, not the responsa collection of the same title by R. Yosef Karo.

The claim attributed to that same passage, that it explicitly states that this does not permit rebellion against the government, was likewise not verified in the primary source. It therefore remains open and is not used as evidence.

Assessment: The discussion of prayer strengthens the distinction between an oath and heresy. In this edition, Avkat Rochel does not serve as a primary textual witness.

7. Are the Oaths Interdependent?

Principal sources: Vayoel Moshe, section 75; Zera Shimshon on Esther; the sources discussed in the critical lectures.

Vayoel Moshe sharply rejects the claim that the nations' violation of their oath permits Israel to violate its own oaths. In a homily for Purim, however, Zera Shimshon draws an analogy to two parties who have sworn oaths to one another, in a way that raises the possibility of interdependence in certain circumstances.

The source is important in challenging the sweeping historical claim that “no later authority ever proposed such a connection.” It does not establish a halachic rule abolishing the Oaths, and

certainly does not establish permission to take sovereignty or redemption into human hands.

Assessment: This is a limited success against sweeping rhetoric, not proof that the Oaths are abolished after the nations violate their own.

8. Ascending “As a Wall”: A Majority of Israel, a Large Group, and Permission

Principal sources: Vayael Moshe, sections 16–17 and 80; Ma’aneh Chacham, Letter I.

R. Yoel Kahn seeks to infer from section 80 that a large group can fall within the wording of the oath without constituting an act of redemption. There, however, Vayael Moshe proposes a possible account of Rambam’s position to explain his omission of the Oaths. This is not necessarily Vayael Moshe’s own definition.

In sections 16–17, Vayael Moshe itself extends “as a wall” to immigration in large, organized numbers. There is therefore no decisive internal contradiction here.

Assessment: The criticism of R. Yoel Kahn is strong here: a suggested account of Rambam’s position is insufficient evidence for Vayael Moshe’s own position.

9. Rebellion Against the Nations, Self-Defense, and Gittin 56–57

Principal sources: Ma’aneh Chacham, Letter I; Rabbeinu Bachya and Ramban on Vayishlach; Al HaGeulah VeAl HaTemurah, introduction and section 47; Gittin 56–57; Letter II.

There is no basis for the formula that every armed resistance to a non-Jewish government during exile is inherently heresy. A distinction must be drawn between national or political

rebellion, defense against danger to life, assessment of the prospects of rescue, provocation, and endangering others.

In Letter II, R. Yoel Kahn presents, in the name of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, a distinction between establishing the state, to which the prohibitions apply “now as well,” and the duty to defend Jews once that situation exists. The letter acknowledges that Vayael Moshe also disputes this application and calls it “two positions in halachah” (p. 114). This does not automatically validate every military decision; it challenges the automatic identification of defense with taking redemption into human hands.

The passages in Gittin 56–57 are not a ruling permitting rebellion, and the silence of the aggadic narrative must not be used to establish a “leaning” toward either side. At most, these passages challenge an absolute formula according to which the armed form of an action is sufficient, on its own, to define it as a violation of the oath. Their rating in this edition is therefore inconclusive.

Assessment: There is no general permission to rebel and no halachic proof from the silence of Gittin. There is a real difficulty only for a sweeping formula that equates every armed resistance with heresy.

10. The Jews of Portugal: Sovereignty, Defense, and the Limits of Inference

Principal sources: R. Avraham Galanti, Zekhut Avot on Avot 1:10, as quoted in Vayael Moshe; Ma’aneh Chacham.

The source describes a plan involving warfare and seizing the kingdom, and a question answered in the language of the Oaths. The fact that upright people considered the possibility presents a certain difficulty for describing the mere initial consideration as

unmistakable heresy. It does not, however, prove that the action was permitted.

R. Yoel Kahn's conjecture that this necessarily concerned a "subordinate kingdom" is not supported by the source's wording. Conversely, the account must not be turned into proof that all self-defense is forbidden: seizing the kingdom is a separate and essential element of it.

The historical search concerning the Lisbon massacre of 1506, included in an earlier research draft, was removed in the later research. It was not established that this was the event, period, or location to which the account referred. The absence of historical confirmation under that assumed identification is therefore not evidence.

Assessment: Retain the textual discussion and remove the unproven historical identification. The "subordinate kingdom" explanation remains a strained conjecture.

11. R. Tzadok, Success, and Permission

Principal sources: Tzidkat HaTzaddik, paragraph 46; Ma'aneh Chacham; Vayoeel Moshe, section 83.

In a homily on the ma'apilim, R. Tzadok describes Israel drawing near through its own initiative and identifies the suitable time as his own era, the "footsteps of Mashiach." This is a homily about time and spiritual awakening, not a halachic responsum of the kind discussed in the Avnei Nezer chapter. A general reply that "success does not establish permission" does not precisely address R. Yoel Kahn's argument: the passage challenges an absolute claim that action initiated from below cannot possibly succeed before Mashiach comes.

But R. Tzadok does not issue rulings there on the conquest of the Land of Israel, nor does he say that every political success

establishes permission. His words can be read as describing pekidah (divine remembrance) and a spiritual process initiated from below, without deriving a comprehensive permission from them.

Vayoel Moshe can reply that heresy does not depend on the physical possibility of success: the problem is taking the domain of redemption into human hands. The real disagreement therefore concerns the meaning of the action, not the simple equation “possible equals permitted.”

Assessment: A sound challenge to an absolute formulation, not a refutation of the position of Vayoel Moshe.

12. The State, Sovereignty, and “Freedom from Subjugation to Foreign Kingdoms”

Principal sources: Ma’aneh Chacham, Letter I; Vayoel Moshe, sections 44 and 83.

In Letter I, R. Yoel Kahn seeks to distinguish a kingdom dependent on others from the freedom promised by the Prophets. The claim that dependence on major powers by itself negates political sovereignty is weak: sovereignty does not require complete independence from every form of aid, alliance, or external pressure.

But Vayoel Moshe itself does not need that claim. It says that the existing government is not the redemption and freedom foretold by the prophets, while also prohibiting עשיית צעדים—“taking steps”—against the decree of exile. A state can therefore be sovereign in the political sense and still not constitute redemption.

The disagreement concerns when public action acquires the meaning of assuming authority over redemption, rather than whether it passes a technical test of international sovereignty.

Assessment: The criticism of R. Yoel Kahn’s sovereignty argument is correct; it does not settle the theological question of the decree of exile.

13. Knesset Elections: Lifnei Iver, Public Responsibility, and the Chabad Approach

Principal sources: Vayoel Moshe, sections 100 and 141, and the conclusion following section 185 (p. 271); Igrot Kodesh of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, volume 11, letters 3559 and 3677; Avodah Zarah 6b; Shabbat 3a; Kiddushin 42b.

Vayoel Moshe does not base its prohibition of voting on a single ground. It discusses acknowledgment of the state’s institutional system, לפני עור—lifnei iver, placing a stumbling block before another—agency or representation, and shared responsibility for legislation. Objections drawn from the use of currency, taxes, water, or electricity therefore do not, by themselves, answer the particular causal argument concerning voting.

The two letters of the Rebbe, both from 5715, were examined in Kehot’s online transcription in the later research, during booklet production, and in the review round. Letter 3559 (Igrot Kodesh, volume 11) states that the Previous Rebbe instructed and worked to ensure participation in the first Knesset elections; the Rebbe concludes that participation is not merely permitted but obligatory. That letter already prohibits joining a coalition. Letter 3677 (volume 11; also Likkutei Sichot, volume 24, p. 399) sharpens the distinction: voting does not make the voter responsible for every law, whereas coalition participation creates responsibility for the government’s actions. These are the letters’ positions in context, not a practical ruling by this booklet.

This model does not “prove” that all the arguments of Vayoel Moshe are wrong. It does, however, supply an explicit answer from a primary Chabad source to the claim of comprehensive responsibility: responsibility depends on the form of

participation and the causal relationship, not on every use of the electoral mechanism as such.

Section 100 of Vayoe! Moshe was opened in the later research and reread during booklet production. Its wording connects Knesset members' responsibility with **אותו מנין של החברים**—"that number of members"—required by law. An earlier research draft claimed that section 24 of Basic Law: The Knesset refutes this because there is no ordinary quorum requirement for legislation. That inference has been removed: the wording may concern the prescribed number of members in the institution rather than a quorum at a sitting. No legal refutation has therefore been established.

Assessment: Letter I does not answer every argument that Vayoe! Moshe gives against voting; the Rebbe's letters provide an explicit alternative model. The earlier "quorum refutation" has been withdrawn and forms no part of the final findings.

14. The Maharal: What the Text Says and What Vayoe! Moshe Adds

Principal sources: Maharal, Netzach Yisrael, chapter 24; Vayoe! Moshe; the Machon Yerushalayim edition edited by R. Yehoshua David Hartman.

In the accessible textual tradition of Netzach Yisrael, chapter 24, examined in the later archived research, the explicit wording **כל שבועה משבועות הללו**—"each oath of these oaths"—was not found. It is Vayoe! Moshe that formulates this expansion and applies the Maharal's words to each of the oaths. The proper conclusion is that this is an interpretation by Vayoe! Moshe, not a verbatim quotation from the Maharal.

The earlier inquiry presented Daat, Wikisource, and Otzar HaSefarim as though they were several independent textual witnesses. That formulation is misleading: these are not

independent manuscripts or early printed editions. They are not counted as separate “witnesses” in this edition.

For a serious textual assessment, the Machon Yerushalayim edition edited by R. Yehoshua David Hartman was identified. It states that it is based on the first printed edition and records variant readings. However, the detailed variants in chapter 24 were not directly opened in that research. The textual finding is therefore strong at the level of the accessible texts, but is not presented as a final philological determination covering the entire textual history.

Assessment: Strong: in the accessible texts, “each oath” is an interpretive expansion by Vayael Moshe, not an explicit quotation. The claim of “three independent witnesses” is no longer made.

15. Lemigdar Milta: Erecting a Protective Fence

Principal sources: Ma’aneh Chacham, Letter I; Vayael Moshe, sections 75, 79, 83, 118, and 141, and the conclusion following section 185 (p. 271); early critical responses.

Letter I makes three uses of *lemigdar milta*, a protective restriction. The first concerns calling those who use interdependence of the Oaths as practical permission “heretics” (section 12, pp. 38–40); here, distinguishing an abstract interpretation from its practical use is relatively plausible. The second narrows the classification of majority immigration, conquest, and kingship as heresy (section 11, p. 36); this is difficult against sections 79 and 83. The third treats the entire voting prohibition as a protective restriction (section 23, pp. 65–66); this is difficult against section 141 and the conclusion of the treatise. The three arguments do not carry equal weight.

The formulations “clear as a matter of halachah,” “be killed rather than transgress,” “taking steps,” and “the very idea” must each be read in context. In particular, “clear as a matter of halachah, without any doubt or hesitation” appears in the conclusion of Ma’amar Shalosh Shevuot, following section 185, p. 271. The polemical setting alone cannot turn such legal formulations into merely educational restrictions; strong internal evidence is needed, and none was found.

Section 118 is not a direct contradiction of the protective-restriction argument. There Vayoel Moshe discusses permitting a prohibition for the sake of a corrective measure; R. Yoel Kahn proposes that, in other passages, an additional restriction was imposed. These are different operations. Yet the discussion shows that the author treats such questions as actual law; an objection to a ruling is insufficient to establish that he intended deterrence alone.

The fact that a Satmar response from 2009 already attacks the lemigdar milta argument proves that its core was circulating before the later printed editions. It does not prove who composed the argument.

Assessment: In this comprehensive use—explaining all the severe prohibitions as a protective restriction—lemigdar milta is Letter I’s weakest application. The argument’s early circulation has been established; authorship cannot be inferred from circulation alone.

16. Attribution of the Letters, Editions, and Editorial Layers

Principal sources: The prefatory material in the third edition; the independent file of the letter to R. Mendel Wechter; early publications.

Three levels must be distinguished when considering attribution. Letter II has the strongest support: it also exists in an independent file attributed to R. Yoel Kahn and addressed to R. Mendel Wechter, and its contents match the text in the book. This is the most significant independent witness supporting attribution.

The core of Letter I was circulating before the later printed editions, as early publications and responses show. This establishes earlier circulation and dissemination; it does not, by itself, establish authorship. Catalogs and wiki entries can provide bibliographical support only, rather than the main foundation for attribution.

A weaker level of certainty attaches to the fidelity of every word, transition, and note in the third edition. The editors themselves describe העתקה בתר העתקה—“copy after copy”—missing pages, blurred passages, erasures, and reconstruction. Attribution of the core letters can therefore be strong even when textual certainty about each detail in the later edition is lower.

Assessment: Attribution of Letter II is especially strong; the early circulation of Letter I is well supported; the integrity of every detail in the third edition is less certain. Circulation is not proof of authorship.

17. Ma'aneh Tzemed Sadeh: A Critique of R. Yoel Kahn or of the Editors?

Principal sources: Ma'aneh Tzemed Sadeh by R. Yitzchak Sabransky; Ma'aneh Chacham, third edition, preface and appendices.

A substantial part of the criticism targets the presentation of documents and the headings added in the third edition, rather than necessarily addressing R. Yoel Kahn's original argument. The example of the letter from R. Itzikel of Pshevorsk shows that the editorial wording can require greater precision without making the body of the letter false.

Every claim in this book must therefore first be examined against the layer it attacks: the body of the letter, a copyist's note, a preface, or a later appendix.

Assessment: Partly justified editorial criticism; it must not automatically be applied to the body of R. Yoel Kahn's letter.

18. The Overall Assessment

Principal sources: The full body of sources examined in the preceding chapters.

The surviving core of Ma'aneh Chacham is not the simple claim that “an oath is not heresy,” because Vayael Moshe, too, need not derive heresy from the violation of an oath as such. The more precise core is that the system contains distinct categories—oath, decree of exile, act of redemption, and heresy—and that a halachic disagreement about the scope of one of the oaths does not, by itself, make the dissenter a heretic.

The Satmar critique is strong where it returns the discussion to the explicit formulations of Vayael Moshe and prevents them from being artificially narrowed. It is weak where it ignores Letter II, attributes an annulment of the oaths to R. Yoel Kahn, or turns a partial source into a universal formula.

R. Yoel Kahn is strong in making distinctions and exposing logical leaps. He is weaker where he seeks to prove that the author of Vayoel Moshe did not intend the severe plain meaning of his words. Sound research holds both results together, rather than declaring a winner.

Assessment: The overall judgment remains balanced, but its formulation is now more precise: strong in its distinctions, weaker in restrictive interpretations of the intention of Vayoel Moshe.

19. The Final Map of Conclusions

The table separates the textual question from the strength of the inference. “Correct” here means that the claim is supported by the source examined; “not established” means that the available material is insufficient, not that the claim has been disproved.

Claim	Assessment
R. Yoel Kahn himself annuls the Three Oaths.	No. Letter II presents, in the Rebbe’s name, their application also to establishing the state. (Ch. 2)
Disagreement about the scope of one of the oaths automatically makes the dissenter a heretic.	No. This is precisely the automatic transition for which there is no basis. (Ch. 3)
“Oath” and “heresy” are the same category.	No. They are distinct, but connected within the framework of the decree of exile. (Ch. 2)
The Three Oaths are an independent principle of faith.	Not established. Chatam Sofer clearly illustrates the distinction between a “principle” and a truth that binds by authority of the Torah. (Ch. 3)
The oaths have no significance for later generations because an ordinary technical oath does not take effect.	Too broad. (Ch. 2)

Claim	Assessment
The oaths help define an act of redemption.	Correct, particularly in some discussions of collective ascent “as a wall” and the decree of exile. (Ch. 4)
Avnei Nezer and Vayoe! Moshe agree in practice about ascent with permission.	No. There is a substantive disagreement. (Ch. 5)
A large organized group establishes a decisive internal contradiction in Vayoe! Moshe.	No. The evidence from section 80 is not decisive. (Ch. 8)
Intensifying ordinary prayer is heresy.	No. (Ch. 6)
Rule 9 of Avkat Rochel was directly verified.	No. Bibliographical identification is available, but the specific wording has not yet been checked against a scan. (Ch. 6)
The nations’ violation of their oath necessarily annuls Israel’s oaths.	Not established. Zera Shimshon only prevents a sweeping historical claim. (Ch. 7)
Every act of armed resistance during exile is heresy.	No. (Ch. 9)
Gittin 56–57 leans toward R. Yoel Kahn’s position.	No. At most, it challenges a sweeping formulation, and the evidence is inconclusive. (Ch. 9)
The Portuguese Jews prove that all self-defense is forbidden.	No. The account also includes taking the monarchy. (Ch. 10)
The Portuguese Jews necessarily intended a subordinate monarchy.	A strained hypothesis. (Ch. 10)
R. Tzadok refutes Vayoe! Moshe.	No. He raises a sound challenge to an absolute formulation. (Ch. 11)
A state dependent on major powers is not sovereign.	A weak argument. (Ch. 12)
The existing state necessarily constitutes redemption by the mere fact of its existence.	No. Vayoe! Moshe, too, distinguishes an existing government from the prophetic redemption. (Ch. 12)

Claim	Assessment
Letter I answers every ground that Vayoel Moshe gives for prohibiting elections.	No. (Ch. 13)
The Rebbe's letters distinguish voting from coalition responsibility.	Yes. Examined in Kehot's transcription in the later research and in checks documented in the source register. (Ch. 13)
Basic Law: The Knesset refutes section 100 of Vayoel Moshe.	Not established. The earlier quorum finding has been removed. (Ch. 13)
The Maharal explicitly writes "each oath of these oaths."	Not in the accessible text. This is an interpretive expansion by Vayoel Moshe. (Ch. 14)
Three modern websites are three independent textual witnesses to the Maharal.	No. (Ch. 14)
lemigdar milta straightforwardly explains all the severe prohibitions.	No. This is the weakest application. (Ch. 15)
An early response to an argument establishes who composed it.	No. It establishes earlier circulation and dissemination. (Ch. 16)
The attribution of Letter II to R. Yoel Kahn.	Especially strong because of the independent file addressed to R. Mendel Wechter. (Ch. 16)
Every word in the third edition has the same degree of certainty.	No. The editorial layers require caution. (Ch. 16)
Ma'aneh Tzemed Sadeh refutes the body of R. Yoel Kahn's letter.	No. A substantial part of its criticism targets the editorial layer. (Ch. 17)

20. Source Status and Evidence Review

The full key is in chapter 1: source status and the strength of an inference are separate dimensions. This table preserves the later research record; production checks and review-round checks are listed separately in the source register at the end of the booklet.

Source	Later Archived Research Record
Ma'aneh Chacham, Letter II, and the file addressed to R. Mendel Wechter.	Primary source / independent witness—especially strong.
Ma'aneh Chacham, Letter I, third edition.	Examined. The body of the letter must be distinguished from editorial additions and copyist's notes.
Vayoel Moshe, the central sections.	Examined in available transcriptions or scans. Section 100 was reopened, and the earlier legal claim was removed.
Responsa Chatam Sofer, Yoreh De'ah 356.	Examined directly in an available full transcription.
Igrot Kodesh, letters 3559 and 3677.	Examined in Kehot's official transcription; both are in volume 11. Letter 3677 was also printed in Likkutei Sichot, volume 24, page 399; letter 3559 was printed in part in Likkutei Sichot, volume 21, page 417.
Maharal, Netzach Yisrael, chapter 24.	Examined in an accessible text. The Hartman edition, based on the first printed edition, was identified, but its detailed variants for this chapter were not directly opened.
Avkat Rochel, part II, rule 9.	The book and its attribution are identified. The specific wording is used only through secondary quotation pending direct examination of the source.
Gittin 56–57.	The primary source was examined; the inference drawn from it is rated inconclusive.
Al HaGeulah VeAl HaTemurah.	Examined only in passages directly relevant to the subjects in this booklet. No full audit of the book was conducted.

21. Final Conclusion

The final edition is neither a defense of every sentence in Ma'aneh Chacham nor an indictment of Vayoel Moshe. It seeks to restore the disagreement to its precise dimensions. Letter II rules out the claim that R. Yoel Kahn annulled the oaths; Vayoel Moshe rules out an attempt to detach the oaths from the decree of exile; Chatam Sofer helps distinguish a “principle” from a binding truth; and the Rebbe’s letters establish an explicit Chabad model concerning elections and responsibility.

At the same time, some of R. Yoel Kahn’s applications do not retain their full force: lemigdar milta is not a straightforward reading of the repeated legal formulations in Vayoel Moshe; political dependence does not negate sovereignty; the possibility initially considered by the Portuguese Jews does not establish permission; and the Maharal’s wording is not exactly as quoted in Vayoel Moshe.

The surviving thesis is therefore more precise than the original slogan: Letter II treats the Three Oaths as a halachic and normative system; they are connected to the decree of exile and the question of what constitutes an act of redemption; but not every disagreement about their scope may be equated with heresy, and heresy may not be attributed to a dissenter without an independent source establishing it. Where a source is decisive, it should be called decisive. Where it merely raises a difficulty, it should be said to raise a difficulty. And where the text remains open, the proper scholarly language is “open.”

The booklet distinguishes the body of R. Yoel Kahn’s letters from copyist’s notes, prefatory material, and editorial additions. A criticism directed at an editorial layer must not automatically be attributed to the author of the letter.

Al HaGeulah VeAl HaTemurah is a substantive part of the polemical background of Ma’aneh Chacham. This edition discusses it where it serves as a direct source concerning rebellion and defense. The booklet does not present itself as a comprehensive critique of the entire book.

The later archived research records checks of Chatam Sofer, Yoreh De’ah 356; Igrot Kodesh, volume 11, letters 3559 and 3677; Vayoel Moshe, section 100; and Netzach Yisrael, chapter 24, in an accessible text. In preparing this booklet series, transcriptions of Chatam Sofer, the two letters of the Rebbe, and selected sections of Vayoel Moshe were reread. The verification status of Netzach Yisrael 24 was carried forward from the later research. Checks added following the external reviews are recorded separately in the source register; they are not attributed retrospectively to earlier production. The detailed variants for chapter 24 in the Hartman edition were not directly examined.

Research appendix: the inquiry, corrections, and supplementary material

1. The status of this appendix and its documentary basis

This appendix preserves the course of the research, rejected arguments, and supplementary material not needed in full in the main booklet. Interim conclusions are not presented as final findings. The controlling text is the later Word research text and its tables: twenty-eight findings and nine principal records of source status. They supersede the Early Research Booklet, the twenty-two-case Early Decision Document, and the Initial Research File.

The documentary labels used in references are defined below. These research files predate this series of four booklets; “Edition 1,” “Edition 2,” and “Edition 3” refer to the booklets themselves. Reporting a check recorded in the earlier research does not mean that every source was reopened for this edition. Where a later document corrects an earlier account of verification, the later correction controls.

Two axes must remain separate: source status—an opened text, an official transcription, an intermediary quotation, or a source not yet opened—and the strength of the inference—established, strong, plausible, balanced, open, or inconclusive. Reading a text in full does not make every interpretation of it proven. This is the most important methodological correction emerging from the review rounds.

Key to the research documents:

- **Initial Research File** — “Full Research File on Ma’aneh Chacham.”
- **Round Two Journal** — “Round Two: Research and Methodological Review Journal on Ma’aneh Chacham,” twenty stages.
- **Early Decision Document** — “Master Decision Document: Ma’aneh Chacham, Vayael Moshe, and the Critics,” twenty-two cases.

- **Early Research Booklet** — “Ma’aneh Chacham Examined Against Its Sources: Research Booklet, Corrected Final Version,” thirteen chapters and two appendices.
- **Early Source Index** — “External Sources and References Index: Ma’aneh Chacham Research.”
- **Later Research Text** — the Word text predating this series, with twenty-eight findings and nine source records. Older records call this the “later edition.”

2. The original hypothesis and its tests

Round Two began with a limited hypothesis: in Vayael Moshe, the severity of heresy does not necessarily derive from an ordinary technical oath binding later generations. Three tests were set against it: whether such a technical obligation exists even without heresy; whether the duty to accept death rather than transgress derives from the oath itself; and whether every act covered by the oaths necessarily constitutes heresy. These were research questions, not three predetermined conclusions. [Round Two Journal, stage 1.]

The tension between “the oath remains in force for halachic purposes” in section 75 and the denial of ordinary technical applicability in sections 79–80 required correction of the claim that there is “no practical halachic consequence.” The end of section 79 also discusses Rav Yehudah’s language of violating a positive commandment rather than violating an oath. The absence of an ordinary oath mechanism is not the absence of a binding norm: a positive commandment, the decree of exile, heresy, and punishment can be distinct questions. The conclusions therefore abandoned formulations such as “without significance” and “punishment alone.”

The surviving thesis is also narrower than a slogan of complete separation. Sections 79 and 83 show that the oaths help define the boundaries of exile; prayer shows that the entire domain of the oaths is not identical with heresy. The conclusion is that disagreement over a halachic definition does not automatically

classify the dissenter as a heretic. [Later Research Text, chapters 2–4 and 18.]

3. Classical sources added—and a citation rejected

Rambam’s Epistle to Yemen was initially used one-sidedly: its description of a figurative oath was cited without sufficient weight being given to the instruction to accept that oath. The corrected reading distinguishes a technical legal mechanism from a binding directive. Megillat Esther on Ramban’s fourth positive commandment was added as a substantial normative source limiting rebellion and conquest after the exile. It does not establish that all sources employ an identical mechanism. [Round Two Journal, stage 1.]

Rashbash, responsum 2, distinguishes the individual obligation to reside in the Land from a collective obligation incumbent on all Israel during exile; the wording discussed does not resolve the separate question of permission from the nations. Pe’at HaShulchan 1:3 and Beit Yisrael, note 15, were cited as continuing this approach. At that stage, the journal records quotations and cross-checks rather than a complete primary-source scan. Their appearance in a bibliography must not upgrade that status. Rashbash 1 was considered in the broader inquiry but did not carry the main booklet’s finding. [Round Two Journal, stage 2; Early Research Booklet, appendix B.]

A review attributed to Claude proposed “Tosafot, Ketubbot 111a, s.v. shelo ya’alu.” That reference was rejected. The relevant Tosafot is on 110b, s.v. hu omer la’alot, addressing dangerous travel and the difficulty of observing commandments dependent on the Land; it does not mention the Three Oaths. It belongs to the broader discussion of settling the Land, but is not a source for the mechanism of the oaths. This is an instance in which a model’s criticism was corrected rather than simply accepted. [Round Two Journal, stage 2, subsection 5.]

4. Letter II and the limits of criticism of the audio lectures

Letter II resolved the principal confusion in the Initial Research File. Letter I discusses two grounds for classifying an ideology as heretical; Letter II discusses three grounds for opposition to Zionism, of which the Oaths are the third. There is no contradiction. Where the text says “according to Vayoel Moshe,” that qualification must not be removed and the position presented as R. Yoel Kahn’s own. In Letter II, “the position of our Rebbe” means the Lubavitcher Rebbe’s position as presented and followed by R. Yoel Kahn: the prohibitions apply “now as well (regarding the establishment of the state).” When Satmar adherents call their own leader “Admor, shlita,” they mean the Satmar Rebbe. Titles cannot be carried from one source to another without identifying the speaker and context. The letter adds “unlike Maharshak and unlike the Avnei Nezer”; in discussing the application of the prohibition on rebellion, it calls the alternatives “two positions in halachah.” [Round Two Journal, stages 4, 8, and 20; Ma’aneh Chacham, pp. 113–114.]

Textual note: the printed p. 113 abbreviates the name at its second occurrence as *המהרש"ק*, without the letter *resh*; earlier on the same page it has *המהרש"ק מבראד*. The translation identifies Maharshak, and this note discloses the correction. This was a check of print, not an autograph.

The question about heresy also has a specific address. At the beginning of Letter II, p. 100, R. Yoel Kahn reports hearing some Satmar adherents label people heretics for citing halachic authorities against their position. This is his report about unnamed individuals, not an explicit ruling by the author of Vayoel Moshe or proof of every critic’s position. Sections 75 and 83 of Vayoel Moshe are examined for their specific arguments about practical permission and action against the decree of exile.

The journal reports that the available summary of the six lectures contained no reference to Letter II or to the file addressed to R. Mendel Wechter. This is a finding about the preserved summary, not proof that the lecturer never mentioned them in the recordings. Automatic transcription sometimes distorted names and quotations. Exact wording or a categorical omission should therefore not be attributed to the lecturer without returning to the relevant audio segment. This appendix does not claim a fresh listening to all recordings. [Round Two Journal, stage 8; Early Research Booklet, appendix B.]

5. Immigration with permission: important additions to the dispute

Avnei Nezer, Yoreh De'ah 454:56, offers two lines of reasoning: permission removes immigration from the category of acting “by force,” and permission itself may constitute pekidah (divine remembrance). Earlier subsections discuss returning without pekidah. In 456:1–2, the Avnei Nezer stresses that pekidah is a possibility; that suggestion is distinct from his argument permitting immigration with permission. The reductio concerning the Avnei Nezer is R. Yoel Kahn’s argument in Letter I, section 10, p. 31, repeated in section 11, p. 36; it is not a declaration by the Satmar Rebbe about the Avnei Nezer. The formula that “if Vayoe! Moshe is correct, the Avnei Nezer is a heretic” therefore wrongly assumes that both authors define the state of exile and pekidah identically. Disagreement about when a prohibition applies is not necessarily denial of the underlying belief. Similarities in their discussion of the root of souls do not erase the practical disagreement. [Round Two Journal, stage 9; Initial Research File, case 5.]

Ahavat Yehonatan on the haftarah of Va’etchanan prohibits collective return even with the nations’ agreement. The Avnei Nezer regards this as homiletics that do not override Rashi’s

interpretation for halachic purposes. Yefeh Kol on Shir HaShirim Rabbah suggests a distinct purpose for the oath against ascending as a wall: even leaving a ruler's jurisdiction does not necessarily permit collective return before Mashiach. He then adds, "I would suggest," that even the rulers' permission may not suffice. Both this tentative language and the journal's reliance on a full mediated quotation and cross-checks must be preserved. [Round Two Journal, stage 3, subsections 4–5.]

Section 80 likewise does not establish a contradiction between a "large group" and a "majority of Israel" in the author's own position: "one may also suggest that Rambam holds" introduces a possible explanation of Rambam. A limited conceptual point remains—the domains of oath and redemption need not be perfectly coextensive—without treating the suggestion as Vayoeel Moshe's own binding ruling. [Round Two Journal, stage 9, subsection 6.]

6. Rabbi Tzadok: what remains after rejecting two overstatements

Tzidkat HaTzaddik 46 must be read with its expressions "self-initiated rule," "the approach of the congregation of Israel on its own initiative," acting prematurely, and "then it is the time for this" held together; R. Tzadok identifies the time as his own era, the "footsteps of Mashiach." The research file notes that Ma'aneh Chacham's quotation does not reproduce the entire middle of the passage. This does not establish deliberate omission, but it prevents describing the passage as an explicit military ruling. It also does not mention political Zionism or a modern state. [Round Two Journal, stage 10.]

R. Yoel Kahn himself acknowledges that conquest may be prohibited because of the oath and danger to life. "Success is not permission" is therefore not a complete answer to him. Conversely, the possibility of success does not establish that the

act is outside the domain of redemption; Rabbi Tzadok can be read as describing pekidah initiated from below. Sections 44 and 83 of Vayoel Moshe complement each other: a domain reserved for God and an attempt to take it into human hands “even if nothing is achieved.” The disagreement concerns the act’s significance and its time, not merely physical possibility. [Round Two Journal, stages 10 and 20.]

7. Portugal: separating the source, interpretation, and withdrawn search

The Zekhut Avot account on Avot 1:10, as quoted in Vayoel Moshe §75, describes adjurations, rebellion, warfare, killing, and seizure of the monarchy as a combined plan. The suggestion that they apparently had the strength to prevail and survive is Vayoel Moshe’s addition, not an explicit detail in the earlier source. Both Ma’aneh Chacham’s “subordinate kingdom” and the reconstruction that defense was permissible while only seizure of the monarchy was forbidden are interpretations; neither is stated explicitly in the story. Asking Heaven a question does not itself prove permission. [Round Two Journal, stage 11.]

An early search was organized around the Lisbon massacre of 5266. The Later Research Text withdrew that identification: the story was not shown to concern that event, place, or time. The search results must therefore not be reintroduced as evidence that no Jewish force existed or as confirmation of that particular background. What remains is the methodological record that the search was attempted and rejected because its historical identification had not been established. [Later Research Text, chapter 10.]

8. Rescue, revenge, and the limits of the Gittin passages

The Initial Research File set Rabbeinu Bachya's warning in Vayishlach against provoking war alongside Ramban's discussion of rescue through warfare and the internal discussion in Al HaGeulah VeAl HaTemurah of rescue when no alternative is available. The Later Research Text identifies the introduction and section 47 for this branch. The research should therefore not be described as ignoring that book; equally, it did not undertake a comprehensive review of it. The extension "rescue or revenge" requires restriction: revenge is not identical with rescue, and danger to the wider community remains a separate question. [Initial Research File, case 3; Later Research Text, chapter 9.]

Gittin 56 was examined for the militants' destruction of food and the sages' judgment that warfare would fail; Gittin 57 for the report of rebellion to the emperor, Bar Daroma, and the narrative explanations of the defeat. The journal initially placed excessive weight on the stories' failure to formulate an oath prohibition. The Later Research Text corrects this: silence in an aggadic narrative does not establish a halachic leaning toward either side. At most, a difficulty remains for an absolute formula; the evidence from Gittin is rated inconclusive. [Round Two Journal, stage 3; Later Research Text, chapter 9 and findings table.]

Letter II concerns danger to life and territorial concessions, comparing the defense of Jews in the Land with the defense of Jews in Crown Heights and Williamsburg. Applying its principle to the Warsaw Ghetto uprising is an inference, not a direct quotation or a ruling. The USHMM source listed in the index served only to establish historical context; it does not decide halachic questions of benefit, communal danger, or prospects of rescue. [Round Two Journal, stage 20; Early Source Index, item 8.]

9. Sovereignty, redemption, and an already existing situation

Part of Letter I's argument addresses statements in Satmar circles about temporary freedom or redemption through the forces of impurity; not every such statement should be attributed to the author of Vayoe! Moshe. Ma'aneh Chacham itself uses section 83 against identifying the state with redemption. The comparison with the Council of Four Lands is likewise not an institutional identity: a communal council under a monarchy and a modern state are different structures. [Round Two Journal, stage 12.]

An interim formulation opposed "subjective intention" to an "objective act." The later formulation instead asks when an act embodies the appropriation of authority over redemption. Changing a slogan does not settle the question, nor does an external description of the act resolve everything. Separately, a prohibition on establishing a framework does not cancel duties to protect life once that framework exists, and does not by itself answer claims about participation in present conduct. [Round Two Journal, stages 12 and 20; Later Research Text, chapter 12.]

10. Elections: arguments that cannot be answered by a single analogy

Letter I mentions lifnei iver—causing another to stumble—when it initially summarizes Vayoe! Moshe. It is therefore incorrect to say that R. Yoel Kahn did not know of this argument; the question is whether he answered it systematically later. Examples involving currency, mail, taxes, citizenship, visas, and services require limiting the claim that technical recognition constitutes heresy. They do not alone answer the arguments from causation, representation, partnership, and association in section 141 and the closing paragraphs after section 185, p. 271. [Round Two Journal, stage 13.]

The analogy to Rema's discussion of language with two possible meanings, as considered in the file, assists with the act's meaning and the voter's intention. It does not remove the fact that the vote is counted and gives a representative power. The complete citation for that analogy is not preserved in the documents reviewed here; an exact reference must not be supplied by guesswork. [Round Two Journal, stage 13, subsection 6.]

Avodah Zarah 6b requires examining whether the situation resembles two sides of a river, where the prohibited act is inaccessible without assistance. Tosafot on Shabbat 3a leaves room for prohibited assistance even without the biblical prohibition of lifnei iver. The Mishneh LaMelech discussion in the laws of lending, mentioned in the journal, prevents a simplistic answer that "others will do it" when their assistance would itself be prohibited. Elections are not identical with the interest-bearing loan in that discussion; necessity and causation require examination. The precise Mishneh LaMelech reference is not preserved in the cited file and must not be invented. [Round Two Journal, stage 14, subsections 1–3.]

The principle that there is no agency for transgression, in Kiddushin 42b, limits the formal attribution of a representative's offenses to the principal. It does not prove that Vayoe! Moshe's expression "their representatives" refers specifically to technical agency, and does not eliminate causal or public responsibility. The Rebbe's letters provide a stronger independent Chabad model: voting for a religious representative can reduce transgression, while accepting coalition responsibility is a different act. This entire supplementary argument must not be credited to Letter I as though it were already written there. [Round Two Journal, stages 14–15.]

The corrected reference is Igrot Kodesh, volume 11, for both letters 3559 and 3677. Letter 3677 also appears in Likkutei Sichot, volume 24, page 399; part of letter 3559 appears in volume 21, page 417. The early placement of letter 3559 in volume 10 and the journal's tentative "volume 1?" notation have been discarded. The Later Research Text records verification in Kehot's official transcription. [Later Research Text, chapter 13 and source table.]

11. The withdrawn quorum argument

The interim files claimed that Basic Law: The Knesset refuted section 100 because decisions could be taken without all members being present. A further check established that the rule predated the book's publication, and the claim was presented as a strong historical finding. The Later Research Text withdraws the entire refutation: after section 100 was opened, "that number of members" was recognized as potentially referring to the elected composition rather than a meeting's quorum. Checking the law's date did not repair the mismatch between the questions. [Round Two Journal, stages 14–15 and 20; Later Research Text, chapters 1 and 13.]

This also corrects the account of the research process. Interim documents said that the wording had already been verified in a scan, whereas the later correction identifies inadequate examination of the relevant context before the claim was built. That inconsistency must not be repaired by inventing a verification history. For publication, the controlling fact is that the refutation was withdrawn: an official source examined for the wrong question cannot support the conclusion. This does not mean that all arguments about shared responsibility were decided in the other direction.

12. Maharal: accessible texts are not three independent witnesses

The accessible text of Netzach Yisrael 24 reads “and the same interpretation applies to each one,” without the addition “of these oaths.” The masculine/feminine grammatical observation can raise an interpretive question, but is not a textual witness and does not prove that the phrase necessarily refers to each individual Jew. The journal also mentions the possibility, cited in the name of Rabbi Menachem Kasher, that it refers to each form of adjuration. [Round Two Journal, stages 1–2.]

Daat, Wikisource, and the collaborative Jewish Books site are not three independent manuscripts or early printed editions. Their earlier counting as separate witnesses was withdrawn. Yitzhak Kraus’s study, page 43 and notes 138 and 141, is an intermediary source for a further comparison, not a directly examined fourth witness. The Machon Yerushalayim edition edited by Rabbi Yehoshua David Hartman was identified as based on the first printing and textual variants, but its detailed variants for chapter 24 were not opened. There is therefore no final philological judgment on the entire textual history. [Later Research Text, chapter 14.]

The narrow conclusion remains: in the text examined, applying the ending to every oath is Vayoe! Moshe’s interpretation, not an explicit verbatim quotation. Equally, Maharal must not be softened: his language about not changing the condition of exile during a generation of persecution and severe torture remains stringent. The sequence of changes in editions of Vayoe! Moshe requires a separate investigation.

13. Three uses of “lemigdar milta”—and a correction concerning section 118

The journal abandoned a single assessment for the whole claim. Three uses must be distinguished: the severity of the label “heretics” for those invoking interdependence of the oaths; classifying immigration by a majority of Israel, conquest, and kingship as heresy; and claiming that the entire election prohibition is a protective restriction rather than substantive law. The first is relatively plausible where section 79 itself allows a connection in the realm of prayer. In the second, section 83 on steps against the decree of exile makes a restrictive reading of the author’s intention difficult. In the third, section 141 and the closing paragraphs after section 185 present substantive law and responsibility. The words “clear in halachah, without any doubt or hesitation” occur at the end of the treatise, after section 185, p. 271 in the 5720 edition; the page image was checked in preparing Edition 3. [Round Two Journal, stage 7.]

Section 118 was initially recruited as a direct contradiction of the lemigdar milta argument. That evidence was corrected: the section concerns permitting a prohibition for a protective purpose, whereas R. Yoel Kahn speaks of imposing an additional prohibition for that purpose. These are not the same act. The section shows the discussion’s serious halachic character, but is not the direct logical contradiction originally claimed. One may dispute Vayael Moshe’s reasoning halachically; that does not prove that he himself did not mean his rulings. [Round Two Journal, stage 7, subsections 5–6.]

Even if this explanation is rejected entirely, the distinction between defining an oath and classifying a dissenter as a heretic does not thereby collapse. This is a branch of the applications, not a condition for the surviving limited thesis. Conversely, a sound distinction does not rescue every weak application of it.

14. Interdependence, prayer, and an unverified claim

Zera Shimshon on Esther matters against the historical assertion that no later authority used an analogy of reciprocal oaths in relation to action. Its setting is homiletical, and the Jews acted with the king's permission; it does not establish general cancellation of the oaths. The Initial Research File also reports that Rabbi Yirmiyah Kahn retracted an argument attributed to Maharshak. Without the original segment, this appendix cannot supply a timestamp or verbatim wording for that retraction.

[Initial Research File, case 7; Round Two Journal, stage 3.]

Avkat Rochel, part 2, rule 9, by Rabbi Hillel Lichtenstein of Kolomyia, remains a secondary quotation for the claim about changed circumstances and increased supplication. The assertion that the same passage prohibits rebellion was not verified, but was not disproven either. An unsuccessful search must not be presented as a complete reading of the source; what was settled was the limit of knowledge, not the entire source question. [Later Research Text, chapter 6.]

Discussion of extraordinary spiritual pressure does not make ordinary prayer heretical. Even if an application in the realm of supplication changed, that would not establish permission for rebellion, sovereignty, or ingathering the exiles. The point remains categorical and limited.

15. The Rashab and Abudraham—a branch preserved from the fuller research

The journal considers a letter of the Rashab, volume 1, letter 130, as quoted by Rabbi Ephraim Tzvi (Hersh) Shmilowitz and cross-checked in Chabad sources. It explains the “coming of David” after Jerusalem is built as a stage of revelation or kingship, not necessarily Mashiach's first appearance. This preserves Rambam's order. It weakens the presentation of Abudraham as an unresolved difficulty; it does not contradict R. Yoel Kahn's

conclusion, which also accepts Rambam's order. In this file the source remains a cross-checked quotation, and should not be upgraded without reopening it. [Round Two Journal, stage 4, subsections 1–2; Early Decision Document, case 18.]

The Rashab's letter of 10 Tammuz 5659 was also considered as support for two grounds of opposition formulated in Ma'aneh Chacham: nationalism separating Israel from Torah, and redemption through our own power, even on the assumption that observant leaders might succeed. This does not prove every application in the letters. The Abudraham branch is preserved here as part of the actual inquiry, although it is not a separate chapter in the Later Research Text. [Round Two Journal, stage 4, subsection 3.]

16. Attribution, early evidence, and editorial additions

The early opposing text Natrone-1 discusses lemigdar milta, elections, the Council of Four Lands, and other distinctive arguments. It prevents assigning the entire core argument to the editors of the later printed editions. It establishes prior circulation, however, not authorship. Catalogues and publications likewise are not the foundation of attribution. The most significant independent evidence preserved in the file is Letter II addressed to R. Mendel Wechter. [Round Two Journal, stages 5–6; Later Research Text, chapters 15–16.]

No full line-by-line comparison with the early file MaeneCHacham-01 08 was completed. It is therefore not established that every word of section 11, every transition, and every copyist's note appears in it. The editions of 5772, 5773, and 5774 added corrections and notes; their prefaces describe omissions and reconstruction. The journal dates Letter I to 5743 on the basis of its explicit statement of that year, thirty-five years of the state, and reference to the Lebanon war. This internal dating must be distinguished from proof of authorship.

A forum recollection of an early title transliterated as KEYTZ SOMIM LACHOYSHECH and of assistance with typing is not a title-page image. It does not establish the exact Hebrew title. Likewise, criticism of the letter's body must be distinguished from criticism of a note, preface, or appendix. [Round Two Journal, stage 6.]

The letter of Rabbi Itzikel of Pshevorsk was recorded as mentioning an unexpected telephone call, lack of knowledge that the matter opposed Belz's position, and regret. According to the file's examination, the explicit request for forgiveness addresses the recipient and his distress; it does not establish a comprehensive halachic retraction of the election prohibition. Ma'aneh Tzemed Sadeh by Rabbi Yitzchak Sabransky challenges part of the editorial use of this letter without thereby refuting the letters themselves. The old index locates the Pshevorsk letter on printed pages 150–151 of the third edition; PDF page numbers require a separate check. [Initial Research File, case 12; Early Decision Document, case 22.]

17. What is documented about model review—and what is not

The journal explicitly mentions Claude's criticism at several stages: adding classical sources, attribution and textual reliability, the Tosafot reference, and later the need for evidence status, marking the Warsaw application as inference, and reading sections 44 and 83 together. Some criticism was accepted, some corrected, and some rejected. This does not establish that every original model response was preserved or that each finding originated with that model. [Round Two Journal, stages 1–2, 5, and 20.]

The documents used for this appendix do not contain a complete set of original messages, timestamps, model versions, and revision history that would support comparative scores for

ChatGPT, Claude, Grok, or other models. No scores are therefore assigned, no model consensus is claimed, and no undocumented achievements are attributed. The book's author, the human critic, the assisting model, and the researcher judging the evidence are distinct roles. Disclosure of missing documentation is part of the audit, not permission to reconstruct an imagined history.

The journal's twenty stages are not twenty independent verifications. A stage may repeat or reformulate an earlier one; a summary document may also claim verification that the Later Research Text corrects. Research quality is judged by sources, the limits of inference, and the ability to withdraw an erroneous finding—not by the number of rounds or a model's name.

For Edition 3, three additional review reports were checked against the booklet files, research records, and selected source passages. Accepted corrections include attribution, qualifications, translation, and verification stages; production claims or source readings that did not match the files were rejected. This was not a fresh examination of the entire archive or all recordings. The source register identifies the new checks.

18. What remains for further examination

Further textual work could obtain the early file or a contemporary copy, compare the central sections and copyist's notes, and examine Hartman's textual apparatus for chapter 24. Without this material there is no autograph and no complete collation. Opening Avkat Rochel, rule 9, could establish what the passage actually says; until then, both parts of the claim retain their present status.

For the supplementary sources, further work should obtain scans and full references for Rashbash, Pe'at HaShulchan, Yefeh Kol, Zekhut Avot, and the Rashab's letters; identify the exact Rema and Mishneh LaMelech citations; and check against the audio

any claim depending on the lecturer's wording or retraction. Presenting the existing limited conclusions does not require pretending that these gaps have already been closed.

The research was not intended as a survey of every Jewish position on the Three Oaths. Em HaBanim Semechah, HaTekufah HaGedolah, and additional sources may belong in a broader project; their relevance does not justify retroactively enlarging the scope of the work actually done here. Al HaGeulah VeAl HaTemurah was likewise examined only in branches relevant to this dispute. [Later Research Text, chapter 1 and conclusion.]

19. Source links preserved in the research file

These source links were preserved in the Early Source Index, with specific links added during review. Listing them does not claim fresh verification of a site or all its contents; the register below identifies the checks made at each stage. References and the extent of each source's use are described in the main text and appendix. A website's title does not establish an independent textual witness.

- Research package and editions — historical documents cited by title
- Ma'aneh Chacham — complete book
- Vayoe Moshe — scan at Daat
- Vayoe Moshe, Treatise on the Three Oaths — online text
- Al HaGeulah VeAl HaTemurah — online text
- Avnei Nezer, Yoreh De'ah 454 · 456 — the qualification “possibly”
- Vayoe Moshe — closing paragraphs, printed p. 271
- Tzidkat HaTzaddik 46
- USHMM — Warsaw Ghetto uprising, historical background

Sources and verification status

This register separates three stages: **Later Research Text**—the Word text predating the series; **series preparation**—checks made for Editions 1–2; and **review for Edition 3**—additional documented checks following the external reports. A transcription is not a scan, and reproduction

sites are not independent textual witnesses. References in the chapters and appendix supplement these twenty records.

Sources for the motto: Daniel 12:10 and Rashi and Metzudot were examined for Edition 3 in the context of the vision of the end. The opening and cover borrow the verse's language for examining opinions; they do not claim that this research fulfills the prophecy.

1 • Ma'aneh Chacham — Letters I-II

Third expanded edition, 5774. Letter II: opening on p. 100 and the Oaths discussion on pp. 113–114; Letter I and the prefaces supply the context and textual limitations.

For Edition 3, printed pp. 100, 31, and 113–114 were viewed: reported accusations, the Avnei Nezer reductio, attribution to the Rebbe, and the abbreviation missing resh. No autograph verification.

2 • Vayoe Moshe — Three Oaths, §75

Rejects reciprocity between the oaths and cites the Portugal episode. A work quoted here has not thereby been read directly.

Transcription checked during series preparation and again for Edition 3; Galanti's own work was not opened.

3 • Vayoe Moshe — Three Oaths, §§79–80

Distinguishes excessive supplication from heresy and considers Rambam's position. A proposed reading of Rambam is not automatically the author's own definition.

During series preparation, §§79–80 were read in context; §79 was reread in transcription for Edition 3.

4 • Vayoe Moshe — Three Oaths, §83

Steps against the decree of exile even without achieved sovereignty or liberty. The restriction and election discussions also use §118, §141, and the closing paragraphs after §185, printed p. 271.

§83 read during preparation and review; for Edition 3, §§118, 141, 183–185 were opened in transcription and the image of p. 271 was viewed.

5 • Vayoe Moshe — Three Oaths, §100

Responsibility of Knesset members and the specified number of members. The old sitting-quorum disproof was withdrawn and supplies no evidence.

Transcription read during series preparation; withdrawal of the quorum argument retained.

6 • Igrot Kodesh XI — Letter 3559

16 Sivan 5715. Voting as a duty in the circumstances addressed, prevention of public harm and the distinction from coalition entry.

Official Kehot transcription on Chabad.org, read during series preparation and again in the review for Edition 3.

7 • Igrot Kodesh XI — Letter 3677

28 Tammuz 5715; also Likkutei Sichot XXIV, p. 399. Explicitly distinguishes voting, a technical electoral alliance and coalition responsibility.

Official Kehot transcription on Chabad.org, read during series preparation and again in the review for Edition 3.

8 • Chatam Sofer — Yoreh De'ah 356

Distinguishes an independent foundation from a truth binding through Torah and prophecy. It does not decide the Three Oaths issue.

Transcription read during series preparation; the host labels it unchecked. No new check for Edition 3.

9 • Ketubbot 111a and Rashi

The oath passages and Rashi on excessive supplication. The Talmudic foundation; practical application requires further analysis.

Prior-research reference; not freshly verified for this release.

10 • Avnei Nezer — Yoreh De'ah 454, 456

454:56 — the nations' permission; 456:1–2 — possible pekidah. Compared with Vayoe Moshe §17 and §86; permission and possible pekidah are distinct arguments.

These transcriptions were opened during the review for Edition 3; no fresh comparison with printed scans.

11 • Maharal — Netzach Yisrael 24

Scope of the oath language. Online reproductions are not independent textual witnesses. The Hartman edition was identified, but this chapter's apparatus was not directly examined.

Status carried forward from the Later Research Text. Grok's reported transcription check is an external review; no new Hartman verification is claimed.

12 • Zera Shimshon — Esther

The analogy of mutual oaths is discussed as homiletics. Ma'aneh Chacham p. 113 cites folio 174, column 4; this is not a general practical permission.

Carried forward; the citation was checked in Ma'aneh Chacham, not the Zera Shimshon page.

13 • Zekhut Avot — Avot 1:10

Rabbi Avraham Galanti; the Portugal episode, warfare and seizure of rule. Identification with the Lisbon massacre of 1506 was removed for lack of evidence.

The quotation in Vayoe Moshe §75 was also read for Edition 3; Galanti's original work was not independently opened.

14 • Ramban and Rabbeinu Bachya — Vayishlach

Prayer, gifts, warfare and rescue. The prior study distinguishes provocation from necessary rescue; no general license for revolt follows.

References from the earlier study; no fresh verification.

15 • Al HaGeulah VeAl HaTemurah

Introduction and §47 insofar as they concern rescue through warfare. This booklet does not claim a complete audit of the work.

Link and scope carried forward from the earlier index; not reopened.

16 • Tzidkat HaTzaddik — §46

R. Tzadok HaKohen of Lublin: the ma’apilim, his own era as the “footsteps of Mashiach,” and possible success. A homiletic passage on time and initiative, not a blanket ruling permitting political action.

Transcription opened during review for Edition 3; no fresh comparison with a printed scan.

17 • Avkat Rochel — II, rule 9

R. Hillel Lichtenstein of Kolomyia; distinct from R. Yosef Karo’s responsa of the same title. The claim about changed times and abundant prayer remains a mediated quotation and cannot carry the conclusion.

The relevant page has not been opened; not directly verified.

18 • Talmudic passages on defense and responsibility

Gittin 56–57; Avodah Zarah 6b; Shabbat 3a; Kiddushin 42b. Discussed in the study. Narrative silence in Gittin is not a ruling permitting revolt.

Prior-research references; no fresh check.

The research files and editions are available in the edition dossier and source package.

19 • Reb Itzikel’s letter and layers of criticism

Ma’aneh Chacham, appendices, pp. 150–151, compared with Ma’aneh Tzemed Sadeh by Rabbi Yitzchak Sabransky. Distinguish the letter itself from editorial headings and explanations.

Criticism dossier retained; appendix pages not freshly checked for this release.

20 • Historical context — Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Background link retained in the dossier; not a halachic source and not evidence identifying the Zekhut Avot episode.

Earlier source-index record only; not reopened.