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Author(s): Martin A. Cohen

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The Autobiography of Luis De Carvajal, the Younger

Translated by MARTIN A. COHEN*

INTRODUCTION

The autobiography of Luis de Carvajal, the younger, which is here translated from its original Spanish for the first time, is one of the most interesting and valuable documents written by any Judaizer of colonial Mexico. Its author, who met an untimely death at the stake when he was only thirty years old, had been for a decade the leader of the community, or rather, the communities of Judaizers in New Spain. Born in Benavente, Spain, in the year 1566, Luis emigrated to the New World, or, as he calls it, Occidental India, fourteen years later. He came in the company of his parents, his siblings and his famous uncle and namesake, Don Luis de Carvajal, called the older. For the older Luis de Carvajal this was the second trip. He had first come around 1569 and had achieved fame as a conquistador and pacifier of Indians. Shortly before his 1580 trip, he had been designated governor of an expansive province, impressively named the New Kingdom of Leon.

The Governor was Luis' maternal uncle. Luis had not been born a Carvajal, but a Rodríguez, though in proper Spanish style he could combine patronymic and metronymic and call himself Rodríguez Carvajal. The fact that not only he but other members of his family stressed their mother's name to the frequent exclusion of their father's may well manifest the Governor's influence. The Governor was indeed solicitous for his family's welfare. He persuaded his sister and brother-in-law to emigrate to New Spain and seems to have made them attractive promises for the improvement of their material well-being.

In bringing his relatives over to the New World the Governor, however, may well have been motivated by more than fraternal love. A staunch Catholic, he had heard that his sister's family was secretly practicing Judaism. This, to be sure, could not have failed

* Dr. Cohen is Associate Professor of Jewish History at the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion (New York).

to jar his religious sensibilities. Nor could it have failed to open his mind to the realization that if knowledge of his family's Judaizing reached the wrong people, the taint of suspicion might be attached to him and his soaring career jeopardized.

The Governor had never told anyone that he and his family were descended from Jews in Spain and Portugal who, during the previous two centuries, had converted to Christianity under pressure or force, and who in large numbers continued clandestinely to practice the Jewish religion. He told everyone that he was an Old Christian. Even if they were devout Catholics, New Christians could easily become suspect of practicing Judaism and as such could be subject to social disabilities and even to prosecution by the Inquisition.

Under these circumstances it would have been folly for Don Luis to leave his family in Spain right under the Inquisitors' noses. It would have been equally prejudicial to allow his brother-in-law to go through with his plans to escape to one of the Jewish communities in France or in Italy. Mexico, that is New Spain, was not exactly the safest place to bring them. Since 1570 it had an Inquisition of its own. But New Spain was a huge and virgin land. The Inquisition had a vast territory to cover. Its sights so far had been trained on Protestants and the usual assortment of comparatively petty offenders such as bigamists, blasphemers and clerics who abused the confessional. Besides, in the New World the Governor could keep an eye on his errant family and at least contain them if he failed to convert them.

If the Governor entertained such dreams, they soon turned to nightmares. In the New World his family Judaized even more than before. Young Luis, whom the Governor at one time loved so much that he designated him his heir and successor, and whom he thought to be an exemplary Catholic, disillusioned him when he openly came out as a Judaizer and set as his life's task the leading of others to the truth of the God whom he knew as Adonay.

Luis was arrested by the Inquisition in April, 1589. In his cell he began to reflect on the meaning and purpose of his life and, he tells us, to receive messages from on high that gave him courage and determination to continue as a leader of the Judaizers. He was tried by the Inquisition and found guilty, but feigned repentance and was reconciled to the Church. As part of his penance he was sent to serve as an orderly at the Convalescent Hospital of Mexico City. Soon, by a stroke of good fortune, which he narrates in his Autobiography,¹ he was transferred to a school for Indians, where

¹ See *infra*, pp. 300-301.

he became teacher of grammar to the students and private secretary to the rector. Here he not only had leisure time to reflect on his Judaism and to plan future activities, but he also had at his disposal the rector's well-stocked library, where he increased his knowledge of his ancestral heritage.

When he was reconciled to the Church, Luis knew that if he were rearrested, he would be indicted as an impenitent heretic. This meant that he would be burned at the stake. If he begged for reconciliation, he would attain the mercy of being garroted before the burning, but this would be as much as he could hope for. Yet Luis had determined to continue Judaizing and to encourage others to follow his example. He began to regard himself as another Joseph of the Bible, destined to sustain his people during the darkness of their enslavement that was certain to be followed by a miraculous deliverance. He felt that this was the mission for which his entire life had prepared him. He even adopted the name Joseph and later the surname "Lumbroso," meaning "enlightened" or "illuminated." As he looked back on the varied and often terrifying experiences that had been his, he saw in each of them the hand of God, now rewarding, now punishing, but always dealing with mercy and always guiding him toward what Luis was convinced was his mission and goal. Aureoled with this faith, the events of Luis-Joseph's life, often drab and commonplace, often unfortunate and damaging, began to form themselves into a skein of miracles.

It was these miracles which Luis-Joseph wished to record in his autobiography, written in the third person with occasional lapses into the first. He may well have been interested in preserving them for posterity, but we must accept at face value his word that he wished that through them other New Christian Judaizers would take heart and remain steadfast in their faith. He began the autobiography in 1591 or early in 1592. Its final entry, dealing with events that occurred on the last day of October, 1594, was made three months or less before he was rearrested and charged with impenitent heresy. The Inquisition sequestered the document, had it transcribed, and, thanks to its obsession for conserving all in-

² The original document is not available. We have used the Inquisition's transcript, published at the end of the *Procesos de Luis de Carvajal (El Mozo)*, in the *Publicaciones del Archivo General de la Nación*, Vol. XXVIII (Mexico, 1935), pp. 463-496. The publication was under the directorship of Rafael López. The documents were collated by Rodolfo Gómez and arranged and selected by Luis González Obregón.

It should be noted that all citations from the Spanish text, including page numbers in brackets, appearing below in the footnotes, refer to the aforementioned Spanish edition of the transcript.

criminating evidence, appended its text to the transcript of the proceedings of Luis-Joseph's two trials.

The autobiography reveals better than a thousand pieces of circumstantial evidence the spirit of this leader of Mexican Judaism. It gives proof of his ability to lead men, his linguistic power and the sensitivity and imagination with which he confronted life. It reveals his hopes, his frustrations, his fears, his dreams, his predilections and his prejudices. Luis-Joseph tells his story with consummate skill. Few will forget the vividness of his descriptions — the tropical storm, his brother's close call with the Inquisition, his sister's madness, and many others. They will provide a reservoir of emotion to be tapped whenever a book dealing with the New Christian Judaizers is read.

The autobiography is the first and by far the most important of the three literary bequests which young Luis-Joseph, with the assistance of the Inquisition, unwittingly made to posterity. During his second confinement, he used his genius to compose a series of letters to his mother and sisters which are more striking for their history than for their content. As a prisoner, Luis-Joseph was permitted no contact with the outside and none with other prisoners. His mother and his sisters were in the Inquisitional jail and Luis was determined to communicate with them. He wanted to send them words of encouragement and cheer and finally found a way to do it. He inscribed a message on the core of an alligator pear, hid it in a melon and asked the jailer to bring the fruit to one of his sisters for her solace. The jailer suspected a message, found the one Luis-Joseph had written and immediately informed his superiors. They told him to say nothing but to continue to supply Luis-Joseph with alligator pears, other fruits and even paper that he might continue what he thought were secret messages and perhaps thereby reveal incriminating information to the Inquisitors. The jailer did as he was told, and Luis-Joseph, considering as miraculous every opportunity to send a letter, continued to pen them. The Inquisitors, however, obtained nothing for their efforts. All that Luis-Joseph revealed was his ability to write beautiful and inspiring epistles.

Finally, in the last months of his second trial, Luis-Joseph prepared his Last Will and Testament, which turns out to be a learned statement of his beliefs. There is little originality in this composition, except perhaps the idea of calling it a will; yet as a formal expression of the theology of the Judaizers, its historical value is not slight.³

³ The reader may also wish to consult my study entitled, "The Religion of Luis

Regrettably, the text of the autobiography as it appears in the trial records of Luis de Carvajal, the younger, is corrupt. Words are misspelled, omitted or exchanged for others similarly spelled, perhaps carelessly copied from Luis' manuscript, but making no sense in their present context. Occasionally parts of sentences are omitted and sentences and even paragraphs are not to be found in their logical sequence. It is likely that the sad state of our present text is wholly due to a hurried and careless transcription of Luis-Joseph's manuscript by an indifferent and doubtless far from learned Inquisitional scribe. Fortunately, in most cases it is not difficult conservatively to reconstruct the text, and this has been done in the translation. In the cases where entire sections are omitted, the loss is irretrievable and the hiatus is accordingly marked.

The translation seeks faithfully to impart the concepts and tone of Luis de Carvajal's writing across the barriers of time and culture. The criteria of readability and precision of thought have not resulted, it is hoped, in loose, or, as it is often called, free translation. Syntactical and connotational changes have been made when necessitated by the English idiom, but these have been kept to a minimum. Brackets in the translation call attention to words added for clarity, and the notes include transcriptions of portions of the text containing many of the salient problems with which the translator must cope. The text as it appears in these notes faithfully preserves the orthography, punctuation, word divisions and, of course, errors found in the text that was used.

The other notes have been limited to biblical references, elucidations of unusual statements and identifications of individuals whose identity Luis, in his desire not to implicate others, tries to conceal in his text. The translator urges the reader interested in fuller material on Luis de Carvajal, the younger, to look for his book on this subject which will be forthcoming in the not too distant future, and which he hopes will be worthy of the reader's patience.

Rodríguez Carvajal: *Glimpses into the Passion of a Mexican Judaizer*," to be published in the near future in the *American Jewish Archives*.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LUIS DE CARVAJAL, THE YOUNGER

[Written in]¹ Mexico City, New Spain, [by] Joseph Lumbroso, of the Hebrew nation, a pilgrim in Occidental India,² in devoted recognition³ of the favors and boons received from the hand of the Most High, who freed him from the gravest perils, in order that they may be known to all who believe in the Most Holy One and await the great mercies that He employs with sinners.⁴

Awakened by the Spirit Divine, Joseph committed these to writing, along with [the story of] his life until the twenty-fifth year of his wandering, in the form of a brief history.

Before beginning he kneels on the ground before the universal God, the Lord of all mercy, and promises, with the God of truth always before him,⁵ to portray accurately everything that he writes below.

In the name of God, Adonay Sevaoth,⁶ the Lord of Hosts:

Joseph begins his life at the beginning. It should be mentioned that he was born and raised at Benavente, a city in Spain⁷ where he lived until the age of twelve or thirteen. There he began to receive instruction in the rudiments of Christianity from a relative,⁸ and he completed these studies in Medina del Campo [to which his family moved from Benavente]. There it pleased God's mercy to shed upon him the light by which he recognized His holiness. [It happened] on a special day, which we call the Day of Pardon, a holy and solemn occasion for us, [which falls] on the tenth day of the seventh month.⁹ Since God's truth is so clear and pleasant,

¹ Text: *De Mexico*, etc. An introductory note in the text indicates that the material beginning here was originally written in the margin of the copy. The autobiography proper begins below. The Inquisition's transcript commences with the words, "In the name of God, Adonay Sevaoth," etc., which belong before the autobiography proper and are accordingly so placed in the translation.

² That is, the New World, the "India" of the West.

³ Text: *y de los captivos en reconocimiento* . . . [p. 463].

⁴ Text: *para que sean notorias a todos los que en el santo de los santos creen y esperan sus grandes misericordias* . . . [p. 463].

⁵ Text: *trayendo por to. al sr. de las verdades* . . . [p. 463].

⁶ The Hebrew *Adonay Sevaoth* [for *Adonay Tsev[b]aath* (the Lord of Hosts)], or, more simply and frequently *Adonay* [the Lord] was the name which the New Christians, following biblical tradition, called God.

⁷ The text reads "*villa de la europa*." [p. 463].

⁸ This was his brother Baltasar [Balthasar], who was several years Luis' senior.

⁹ The day, better known as the Yom Ha-Kippurim, or the Day of Atonement, falls on the tenth day of the seventh month [Tishri] in the traditional Jewish calendar. On the holidays celebrated by Luis and his group in New Spain and on the calendar which they had to follow, see my article, "The Religion of Luis Rodríguez Carvajal: Glimpses into the Passion of a Mexican Judaizer," referred to *supra*, p. 280, note 3.

all that his mother, his older brother, his older sister, and his cousin from that city had to do was to make mention of it to him [and he understood].

Joseph's father and his entire family emigrated to this land of New Spain, though they first planned¹⁰ to cross over into Italy, where all could better serve, worship and love the true God.¹¹ But God's judgments are incomprehensible and just, and the change of plans bringing them to this land must have been God's punishment for one of [his father's] sins, a punishment meted out to his children by God's justice, though not without great compassion,¹² as we shall presently see.

Joseph [who had become] very ill [aboard ship] was removed [when the ship docked] at the port of Tampico. At the same time [another passenger] disembarked, who was best known for his fear of the Lord, our God. He was [also] a famous doctor, and, with God's guidance,¹³ he treated Joseph in Tampico until he was cured.¹⁴

One night, while Joseph and his older brother were sleeping in a small shed, housing certain wares that they had brought from Castile, the Lord lashed the port with a hurricane. Its strong and terrible winds uprooted trees and razed most of the buildings to the ground. The building in which Joseph and his brother were sleeping began to shake. The violent wind ripped some of the beams from the roof with such terrible fury that Joseph and his brother instinctively huddled in fear under the delusive protection of their bedclothes.¹⁵ At length, realizing that the collapse of the building was imminent, they arose, drenched and windlashed,¹⁶ [and groped their way to the door]. But the wind blew so strongly against the door that, try as they might, they could not open it until God permitted them to pry it partially open by pulling it in the opposite direction. They opened it enough to leave the building before it tumbled to the ground. [In this way] the Holy One came forth in the sight of men to free

¹⁰ Text: *intentado y deseado* . . . [p. 463].

¹¹ Text: *conocido* . . . [p. 463].

¹² Luis is aware of the rabbinic ideas (including those of the mystical schools, as represented for example in the *Zohar*) regarding the tension between God's justice and mercy, the *middath ha-din* and the *middath ha-rahimim*. In this tension, the rabbis felt, and the mystics among them stressed, God's justice was regularly tempered if not overcome by His mercy.

¹³ Text: *el qual y D. primero* . . . [p. 464].

¹⁴ This was the renowned Licentiate Manuel de Morales, who had taught Judaism to Luis' father.

¹⁵ Text: *que caian con toda que les hazia meter debajo de la ropa engañosa defensa del gran miedo* . . . [p. 464].

¹⁶ Text: *llobiendo y ventando horriblemente* . . . [p. 464].

them from death. Blessed be His most holy name. They went to recuperate in the home of their parents [who] feared that they were dead. On hearing their voices, their loving father received them with tears, thanking and praising the Lord a thousand times.

Shortly thereafter Joseph accompanied his father to Mexico City, leaving his mother, five sisters and two brothers domiciled — or rather disconsolately exiled — in Panuco, for they lived in penury in this mosquito-infested and heat-plagued town. When God took his father from this life, Joseph returned to Panuco.

Here God provided him with a holy Bible, which a priest sold him for six pesos. He read it assiduously in that forsaken land and came to learn many divine mysteries.

One day he came to the seventeenth chapter of [the *Book of*] *Genesis*, where the Lord commands¹⁷ our holy father, Abraham, to circumcise himself. The words which say “The soul which is uncircumcised shall be blotted out from the Book of the Living”¹⁸ caught Joseph’s eye and struck his heart with terror. Without delay and with the inspiration of the Most High and His good angel, he got up, put the Bible down without even stopping to close it, left the hall in his house where he had been reading, took a pair of blunted and worn shears and went to the ravine at the Panuco River. Burning with desire to fulfill this holy sacrament,¹⁹ without which one cannot be inscribed in the Book of Life, he placed its seal upon his flesh. The shears worked so well²⁰ that he cut off nearly the entire prepuce and left only a little flesh. Yet, despite this imperfection, Joseph had no reason to doubt that our Lord would accept his intention. This can be inferred from the *Second Book of Chronicles*, in the chapter where [Solomon] the wise king of Israel, speaks of his saintly father David’s worthy desire, fulfilled by Solomon, to build a temple to the Lord.²¹ On the day of its holy dedication, Solomon praised the excellence²² of the Lord and said that though His supreme Majesty had, through revelation and Nathan’s message, forbidden David to build the holy Temple, He accepted David’s good intention in place of the deed.

¹⁷ Text: *mando* . . . [p. 464].

¹⁸ The quotation, from *Genesis* XVII:14 is not quite accurate. The verse reads, “And the uncircumcised male, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that soul shall be cut off from his people.” (Translation: Jewish Publication Society of America [1917]).

¹⁹ As will be seen in my article on the religion of Luis Rodríguez Carvajal, the New Christians, influenced by the theology and concepts of their Catholic environment, found within Judaism sacraments, saints, salvation and other elements of Catholic faith and worship.

²⁰ Text: *por so tambien las tijeras* . . . [p. 465].

²¹ *II Chronicles* VI:8.

²² Text: *las verdades* . . . [p. 465].

It is worth noting that once Joseph received the seal of this holy sacrament upon his flesh, it served as a bulwark against lust and an aid to chastity. Prior to this he had been a weak sinner, who often merited the stroke of death, which the Lord God sent upon a son²³ of our patriarch Judah and his consort Tamar,²⁴ for committing the same sin.²⁵ [Now] God's mercy was upon him, and, with the holy sacrament of circumcision, he was henceforth delivered from [the perversity of] this sin. The Lord helped him so much that, though he kept looking [for trouble,] like a sick man who always longs for the forbidden, and occasions were not lacking in which he could offend God, it seems that God's hand removed the dangers, because of His boundless mercy. Let us therefore give our thanks to God, for He is good, for His mercy endures forever.²⁶

A year after his circumcision [Joseph had a strange adventure]. He [had] accompanied a wretched, blind uncle of his,²⁷ who was governor, in the name of the King of Spain, of the province called the New Kingdom of Leon, to some mines recently discovered within that province. He carried with him a small book, containing a transcription of the *Fourth Book of Ezra*,²⁸ the holy and pure priest and prophet. Joseph's devoted reading of this book had been one of the chief inspirations for his conversion. [And now,] since he did not have the Holy Bible with him in that land of savage Chichimecs,²⁹ the reading of this book absorbed his leisure hours.

One [September] day — it was the seventh month [according to the Jewish calendar] — his pack horse broke away. Joseph, carrying only harquebus, sword and dagger, took a brawny horse and pursued it. Two leagues out of town, the horse tired. It was in the midst of a dangerous area; several soldiers had been killed by the Chichimecs there, even near [Spaniards'] houses. When the horse tired and refused to budge, Joseph left its saddle at the foot of a tree, [put fresh priming in the pan,] slid the cover forward, shouldered the gun³⁰ and started to town on foot.

Night fell on the hilly and pathless terrain before he could determine where he was. He was not a little afraid that some barbarous Indian might chance by and with a single arrow take his life. He

²³ Text: *a una hija* . . . [p. 465].

²⁴ Text: *marido de tomar* . . . [p. 465].

²⁵ *Genesis XXXVIII:10*.

²⁶ *Psalms CXVIII:1*.

²⁷ This was Don Luis de Carvajal, the older.

²⁸ *Fourth Ezra, Second Ezra [Esdras]* of the official *Apocrypha*, was considered canonical by Luis, for whom the Bible was the Vulgate.

²⁹ Technically, the Chichimecs were Indians of the Nahuatlán or Piman tribes. The term Chichimecs, however, was used to describe any of the groups of hostile Indians in the northern regions of New Spain.

³⁰ Text: *puesto el freno e la coz del arcabuz que llebaba, sobre el hombro* . . . [p. 466].

was a defenseless target, though he clung for defense to the hope of God's mercy.

Joseph had not breakfasted that day, and though he was not bothered by hunger, he had become terribly thirsty from traveling on foot in the heat of the day without a drop of water. Frenzied with thirst, he had taken his dagger, and cut some leaves of the prickly pear, called *nopal* in the Indian language. Since they are naturally moist, they soothed him for a while, but he was so insatiably thirsty that [he took too many] and his mouth and tongue were sore for a week.

Night thus enveloped him. Lost, hungry, thirsty and defenseless in the land of the hostile Chichimecs, he not unnaturally³¹ began to fear a horrible death.

By this time he was missed in the town, and his uncle had sent a soldier to a small settlement a half league away to see if he had gone there. When the soldier returned and said no, everyone, especially his uncle, was alarmed, for they feared that he had been killed by [their] enemies. They immediately sent out a search party, composed of a captain and ten men, divided into two groups, each with a trumpet and each moving in a different direction. Those who remained in the town, where Joseph was greatly loved, tried to be of help to him in every possible way. One man, who went to string a lantern on a tall tree in the town, fell and broke his legs. It was a gratuitous gesture of affection, for the terrain was so mountainous that the lantern could not be seen [where Joseph was].

Since, as has been said, Joseph was so terrified and anguished, he committed himself to God with heart and soul. As the darkness thickened, his despair and his cries increased. [Then] he heard the blasts of a trumpet echoing loudly through that entire craggy valley. When he realized by this signal that they were looking for him, he fell to the ground and worshiped and thanked the Lord God. Then he got up buoyantly, listened for the sounds and began to walk in their direction. Soon he heard the trumpet of the second group, but he continued toward the sound of the first trumpet until he could hear his friends talking.³² Joyously he called to them and they answered. They halted their horses and dismounted, surrounding him and embracing him repeatedly. They put him on a sprightly horse and shot their guns to signal their success. Not long thereafter the entire party assembled and returned to town to an equally joyous reception from the men who had remained behind with Joseph's uncle. Let us give thanks to the Lord of the

³¹ Text: *como es adveno. al hoe.* . . . [p. 466].

³² Text: *ollo hablar a los compañeros* . . . [p. 467].

universe, for He is good, for His mercy with men endures forever. As Saint David said, He is the one who restores to the right path those who have gone astray. He says that when [the children of Israel] lost their way in the wilderness and could not find the road to their dwelling place, and were in addition afflicted with hunger and thirst to the point of death, they cried to the Lord in their distress, and He heard them: He showed them the road and led them to safety.³³ Let us give thanks to Adonay for His goodness and for the miracles He performs for the children of men.

Joseph remained in that region for two years, after leaving his family in the exile of Panuco. His mother and sisters were clad in mourning and [his brothers were] garbed in sadness at the death of their father, who, as has already been said, had died a short while before.

During their father's lifetime,³⁴ their blind uncle had been introducing his sisters to refined soldiers and officers in an attempt to help them marry well. But their father, who greatly feared the Lord, had opposed such matches and heeded the Lord's most holy commandment prohibiting them. [Now their uncle,] recognizing that as orphans their marital prospects were diminished, [tried all the harder even] before they had removed their mourning garb. The girls endured such poverty that they³⁵ went about shabby and barefoot a good part of the time. [Yet] they led a chaste and secluded life and virtuously helped their mother.

One day when their minds were far from marriage,³⁶ they suddenly heard clarions and trumpets at their door. The reason was that the two men whom the Lord had designated as husbands for the orphans,³⁷ both fearers of the Lord and part of His people, were now arriving. They were rich and prosperous, well-dressed and wearing golden chains around their necks. Spurred to come for this good deed by the Lord of heaven, they had come the seventy leagues separating Panuco from Mexico City expressly to marry the girls and to bring clothes and other gifts to them and their mother. They returned to Mexico City after the wedding, which was celebrated with delight by family and friends. As they congratulated

³³ *Psalms* CVII:4 ff.

³⁴ This paragraph in the original provides a good example of clauses illogically arranged, with the obvious omission of connecting ideas.

³⁵ Text: *algunas dellas* . . . [p. 468].

³⁶ Text: *estando* . . . *bien descuidadas* . . . [p. 468].

³⁷ These were Jorge de Almeyda, who was to marry Leonor, and Antonio Díaz de Cáceres, who was to marry Catalina (Catherine). Cf. Cyrus Adler, "Trial of Jorge del Almeida by the Inquisition in Mexico," *Publication of the American Jewish Historical Society*, vol. IV (1896), pp. 29–77.

the fortunate mother, many Gentile women, marveling at what had happened, said to her, "What good prayer did you utter [to bring all of this about]?" Like the saintly Sarah, she [answered humbly and] said, "God's mercy is hardly proportional to man's merits, which are always few or none." To the grooms they gave a similar compliment, declaring³⁸ that they had come to pluck roses from amidst the thorns—roses, indeed, not so much for their beauty, which was slight, as for the virtue and chastity which the Lord had given them. A few days later they all left for Mexico City together, praising the Lord with much joy and gladness: "*Orphano tu eris adiutor*" ["You have been the helper of the fatherless"], says [David to God in a Psalm] and in another "*Pupillum et viduam suscipiet*" ["He upholds the fatherless and the widow"]. Blessed be the Protector of orphans forever.³⁹

The news of all this reached Joseph in the battle[-scarred] land he spoke of, [where] his life [was] in great danger because the savage and hostile Chichimecs around him⁴⁰ were many and the soldiers with him few. His eyes welled with tears of joy as he thanked the Most High for the good news. As soon as he heard it, he resolved to go to Mexico City at the first opportunity. When the soldiers and the mayor of the town heard of his intentions, they were greatly disturbed and said that if he went away the whole area would be depopulated.⁴¹

But since His strength surpasses human power, God provided miraculous circumstances for Joseph to leave. The inhabitants of the region, as is usual for battle zones, relied on imports of provisions. [They now] found themselves in dire need of supplies⁴² and [were happy that there was] a lull in the fighting and that they had silver to trade.⁴³ Relying first on God's help [they entrusted Joseph with the mission].

It seemed on the day that Joseph left that the Most High had extricated him from the confinement of [hopeless] chains. And so it was, for in a few short days the Chichimecs flayed and then killed the mayor, in whose house he stayed. Doubtless Joseph would have

³⁸ Text: *y a ellos menos les dezian* . . . [p. 468].

³⁹ *Psalms* X:14 and CXLVI:9. The text reads: . . . *orphanotueris adiutos dize el sr. cantos pa. que y en otro pupillum et viduam suscipi et* . . . [p. 468].

⁴⁰ Text: *en aquella villa* . . . [p. 468].

⁴¹ Text: *y dezian que avian* [los chichimecos?] *de despoblar la tierra* . . . [p. 469].

⁴² This section is especially corrupt. The text reads: *alegaban aquellos vezinos y gle. [urgente] falta de sentimientos* [mantenimientos] *porque se sustentaban de los traídos de otras partes* . . . [p. 469].

⁴³ Text: *apaziguados con dexarles una plancha de plata con que ymbiasen a comprarlos* . . . [p. 469].

met a [similar] end had the Lord, in His lovingkindness, not freed him and removed him from that town. Exalted be His holy name forever.

Joseph arrived safely in Mexico City with God's help. He received his mother's blessing and saw his orphaned sisters protected by God. When he had seen them last, they were wearing tattered skirts; now, in their husband's homes, he saw them clad in silk and velvet and bedecked with golden jewels. [And his sisters' husbands] divided the rest of the family⁴⁴ between them and gave them shelter. May they be sheltered by the Lord, and may His most holy name be extolled alone forever and ever.

But because of their heavy expenditures for the weddings and their subsequent support of so many people, Joseph's brothers-in-law were at the brink of ruin in less than a year. But they never rejected their in-laws. [Yet] as was proper, Joseph and his older brother wished to earn a living for their poor mother and unmarried sisters. The realization that they were poor and without resources grieved them greatly. Despite their outwardly respectable appearance their necessities were so great that when his brothers-in-law and their wives left for Tasco, Joseph had to take a job as a merchant's book-keeper in order to make both ends meet. With God's kindness things soon improved a little.

When Joseph and his older brother⁴⁵ were in Mexico City they heard of an old Hebrew cripple who had been bed-ridden for thirteen years with suffering and its attendant problems. [They went to visit him.] To demonstrate that everyone should love works of charity, God abundantly rewarded their visit, for the cripple presented them with a book which the good Licentiate Morales, who was mentioned earlier, had left for his consolation. Licentiate Morales had kept this cripple in his house for many days and tried to cure him, but when he saw the impossibility of a physical cure, he prepared a book to serve as a salve for his spiritual health. In it, he included a Spanish translation for the holy [Book of] Deuteronomy in the Law of the Most High and also an anthology of a thousand beautiful selections in verse, culled [and translated] from the rich garden of Sacred Writ. [Joseph and his brother proceeded] to make a copy.⁴⁶

One day Joseph and his brother were reading together the chapter containing the curses of the most holy Law when they saw how those

⁴⁴ Text: *las demas viudas y huerfanos* . . . [p. 469]. The widows referred to are Luis' mother and older sister, Isabel (for whom see *infra*, p. 294, note 73).

⁴⁵ This was Baltasar.

⁴⁶ Text: *el qual trasladaron* . . . [p. 470].

true and holy prophecies had been carried out to the letter [among their people] and realized that their way of life was removed from the true path. As they clutched the book of the Law of the Lord they began to lament like a compassionate mother over the dead body of her beloved son.

A few days later, after leaving their mother and sisters with their in-laws in Tasco, Joseph and his brother returned to Mexico City, yearning for the Lord like earth for water.⁴⁷ Joseph's brother, who had ardently desired for some time to circumcise himself, carried out his wish during the solemn Passover season. Inspired by God, the brothers went to a barber on one Passover day and rented a razor. Joseph's brother took it, fell on his knees and began to cut off his foreskin, but wounded himself severely. At first the wound did not bleed. The brothers consecrated the act to the Lord their God, sang praises to Him and recited Psalms of His servant, David. A short while later, Joseph's brother sensed the flow of blood. The brothers therefore went to a house which they had rented from an uncle of theirs⁴⁸ in a sparsely inhabited area outside the city and there very cautiously completed the circumcision, all the while fearing that they might be discovered by their hapless uncle, who was blind [in matters of faith].

The house of their refuge was solitary⁴⁹ and it contained nothing with which they could stop the [flow of] blood. Without knowing what he was doing, Joseph [decided to] treat it with wine and salt.

When he went to a neighbor and asked for salt to cure a wounded man he got into another serious predicament, because the neighbor said that out of love for God, he wanted to administer it personally to the patient. [Finally he let Joseph have it,] but it did not stop the poor patient's bleeding. It only increased his pain.⁵⁰

Seeing the danger that confronted them, they went to the nearby house of a young man who feared the Lord. When they explained their plight — the situation of the patient with the dripping wound — he graciously welcomed them. Soon, with God's pleasure, the bleeding stopped, but since the wound was large and the cure not administered by a physician, the patient suffered greatly before he recovered, though this furnished him with no small merit to counterweigh his past sins.

⁴⁷ Text: *que en el sor. se amaban como el agua y la tierra* [sic!] . . . [p. 470].

⁴⁸ Text: *de la de un tío suyo* . . . [p. 470].

⁴⁹ The next section of the text is found below in the translation, in its logical sequence, in the paragraphs beginning respectively "When their uncle" and "When a sister of their uncle."

⁵⁰ Note that this sentence, appearing earlier in the original text, is out of place there.

When their uncle came to take them to his house and discovered blood-stained cloths, the brothers were terrified. But since it was the Lenten season,⁵¹ they distracted him by saying that they had scourged themselves in penitence and this had brought forth the blood.

When a sister of their uncle,⁵² who knew and loved the Lord,⁵³ learned of this circumcision, she spoke tenderly to Joseph and remonstrated with him because in the time of their need, when they had to cure the wound,⁵⁴ they had gone elsewhere [and not come to her].

After removing them from the solitude and mosquitos of Panuco, the Lord showed them further kindness by providing them with many of the holy and devout prayers by which the wise and chosen people of the Lord's ecclesia⁵⁵ invoke and praise Him in Jewish synagogues.

This was the way in which the Lord in His holiness took this blessing that is found in the lands where our brothers freely and unobstructedly practice their faith⁵⁶ and brought it to the lands of Jewish captivity:

In the Diaspora, in Italy, there lived a servant of the Lord who was extremely poor. Having no trade or occupation by which to support himself⁵⁷ or his family, he engaged himself in spiritual affairs and translated the holy prayers I mentioned into the Spanish and Portuguese tongues. He emigrated alone to the New World. An Israelite brother of ours, who at the time was a merchant in Mexico City, told us that this newcomer greatly revered the Lord and abhorred idolatry. He often saw the immigrant running toward his store so fast that he thought something terrible had happened to him.⁵⁸ And when he looked for a hiding-place, he thought surely he was fleeing from the police. But the reason for these flights was that he had perceived the most abominable idolatry ever heard of or imagined in the world. When he heard the bell that is sounded as [the image of] the crucified one is carried through the streets, he ran to his hiding-place to avoid having to kneel down before it.

When this good man returned to Italy he left behind [the book] containing the holy prayers which Joseph and his brother obtained.⁵⁹

⁵¹ Text: *como el tiempo era desso* . . . [p. 470].

⁵² This was Joseph's mother, Francisca de Carvajal.

⁵³ Text: *al que sor.* [for *q. (u)ien*] *al sor. (señor)* *conozia y amaba* . . . [p. 471].

⁵⁴ Text: *al herido*, "the wounded man" [p. 471].

⁵⁵ Text: *iglesia* . . . [p. 471] in its sense of "congregation."

⁵⁶ Text: *la ley del muy alto D.* [p. 471].

⁵⁷ Text: *que no tenía rmo. pa. sustentarse* . . . [p. 471].

⁵⁸ Text: *pensaba verles sucedido alguna desgra.* . . . [p. 471].

⁵⁹ Text: *de quien el y su mayor hermano las* [correct form] *obieron* . . . [p. 472].

After the Lord's boundless mercy had satisfied their most essential need, the spiritual need, His divine providence did not fail to repair the material deprivations they suffered. Though they had neither funds nor business knowledge nor acumen, within a year the Lord had given them property worth more than seven thousand pesos. Blessed be He forever and ever who thus provides for the hungry.

In this dilemma the brothers determined to go in the first fleet to Italy in order there to serve the Lord. But it seemed a pity to leave behind a blind brother of theirs who was a Dominican, a preaching friar,⁶⁰ and already a master in his order. Wherefore, with determination and concern for him, the two brothers paid him a visit in his monastery, located near the Inquisition's jail, and where at the time he was a teacher of novitiates, to see if they could bring him to the recognition of God's truth and His holy Law.

After the three had sat down in the friar's cell and conversed for a while, Joseph asked, as if randomly: "Is it really true, as it seems to me I have sometimes heard,⁶¹ that when Saint Moses was holding the tablets of the Law, the Lord God wrote His most holy commandments upon them?" The monk replied. "It is as you say." As he said this, he took the Holy Bible from his bookshelf,⁶² found the exact chapter in Exodus and gave it to Joseph to read. After he had read it, Joseph exclaimed, "As I live, this is — this is really the Law that must be kept."

At this point the hapless friar got up and uttered a great blasphemy. He said that it was good to read the Law but not to keep it, and that although it had been the Law of God, it was superseded. He supported his folly and lie with the very frivolous simile of a king donning a cloak, and then, as it wore out, casting it away and giving it to a page.

He was answered by Joseph's brother, who was older than Joseph but younger than the monk. It should be mentioned here that the three brothers were looking out of a window in the cell that faced the orchard and through it they could see the sky and the sunset with its brilliant rays.

Said Joseph's brother, "This cloak of the heavens, and this shining sun which God created, have they changed, have they perchance grown old?"⁶³

"No," replied the monk.

⁶⁰ His name was Gaspar (Jasper). His blindness, according to Luis, was a blindness in matters of faith.

⁶¹ Text: *lo que algas. vezes me parece que a [sic!], oido . . .* [p. 472].

⁶² Text: *tomo la biblia sacra que tenia entre sus libros . . .* [p. 472].

⁶³ Text: *ase por ventura envejecido? . . .* [p. 473].

"So," he retorted, "much less change has there been in God's incorruptible and holy Law and His word, and even less will there be. We hear this affirmed by your own preachers and scholars and in the Gospel itself you declare that your crucified one said, 'Do not think that I am come⁶⁴ to remove the Law or the Prophets, for their prophecies are holy and true.' Rather he said this: 'It is certainly easier for heaven and earth to be lacking than for one jot or tittle of this holy Law to be lacking or change.'"

Realizing he must acknowledge the truth of their claim, the benighted priest retreated,⁶⁵ saying, "Let's not talk about this any more," and adding "Blessed be God, who took me out from among you." To which his brothers on either side responded, "Be Thou glorified, our God and Lord,⁶⁶ who hast not left us in blindness and perdition like this wretch." The monk said that he deemed his lot happier than theirs and concluded by quoting the Psalms,⁶⁷ "*Non fecit taliter omni nationi*"⁶⁸ etc. ["He had not dealt in such a way with any other nation"].⁶⁹ Thus, seeing the truth and unable to deny or contradict it, the miserable, sightless friar was frustrated. And with this the brothers parted.

On another occasion, at Joseph's suggestion,⁷⁰ his two older brothers agreed to study for several days and then meet for a discussion of their respective faiths with the condition that whoever was defeated by the truth of the other's religion must accept it. Though he had said yes, the monk refused to go through with the discussion because he was a cleric, giving the excuse that his law forbade him to investigate or discuss matters of faith. Those wretches think that by shielding their eyes from the light, they can keep from falling into the pits of hell. Rightly did Saint Isaiah marvel at them when he said [in the name of God], "They are not inclined to stop and say, 'Maybe what I believe is a lie,' I make all men alike,⁷¹ but their sin keeps some blinded."⁷²

The fleet was scheduled to depart shortly and the brothers began to look to their affairs. But for the good of the entire family, God

⁶⁴ Text: *no penseis que viene . . .* [p. 473]. Cf. *Matthew* V:17.

⁶⁵ Text: *a esto cayo el triste ciego, y dixoles viendose convencido . . .* [p. 473].

⁶⁶ Text: *glorificado sea ntro. D. y Sr. . . .* [p. 473].

⁶⁷ Text: *concluyo yo con lo del po. s. [sic!] . . .* [p. 473].

⁶⁸ Text: *non fecit talliter omni nationi, ety. . . .* [p. 473].

⁶⁹ *Psalms* CXLVII:20. The monk seems to have been referring to the fact of the stupendous success of Christianity.

⁷⁰ Text: *en sus — [sic!] de joseph . . .* [p. 473].

⁷¹ Text: *y hago tambien a todos . . .* [p. 473].

⁷² This is not a direct quotation from *Isaiah*, but a paraphrase, possibly of *Isaiah* XXVII:9 ff.

in His infinite and divine wisdom and mercy ordained that the Inquisition should now arrest a widowed sister of theirs.⁷³ She had been accused [of practicing Judaism] by a heretic who was one of our own people and whom a year before she had tried to indoctrinate into the truth of God. On learning of this, the brothers, struck with fright, decided to flee with their mother and [remaining] sisters, but some God-fearing [Israelite] friends, with whom they discussed the matter, convinced them that it was impossible for them [to take the women along]. After a painful separation which is beyond the power of my words to describe, the brothers therefore went off alone leaving their family exposed to danger, and wending their way to the cadence of their bitter cries and howls. [But] when they reached port, loaded their ship and were ready to embark, the thought of their mother and sisters exposed to mounting dangers overwhelmed them and made them change their plans. Joseph decided to return home and see what was going on, while his brother would remain behind and await word from him.

Two or three days after arriving home, Joseph went to visit his mother in the evening hours. By day they did not dare to be together, because of what they feared might happen. They were about to sit down to dinner when the constables and notaries of the Inquisition knocked on the door. When they opened it the Inquisitional officials set guards there, raised ladders, mounted them and came into the house to arrest Joseph's mother. Though wounded with this cruel enemy's fierce stroke, she donned the garb of modesty,⁷⁴ bemoaning her troubles, yet praising the Lord who had sent them. She was then brought to the pitch-black prison by those ministers of malediction and executioners of our lives.

When her two maiden daughters saw their beloved mother sighing with such pain and sadness that she even moved to compassion the cruel and beastly enemies who were taking her away, they anxiously rushed toward her and cried, "Where are they taking you?"⁷⁵ We leave to the prudent reader's imagination the feelings of their lamenting mother as she heard these words.

After she was taken away her son Joseph was arrested. They found him behind a door, where he had run for refuge out of fear of the atrocious tyrants. They pounced on him, seized him and carried him to the gloomy, black prison. Joseph uttered nothing except the words, "O God, reveal the truth."

⁷³ This was Isabel. Her husband, Gabriel de Herrera, had died in Astorga, Spain, where he had been a merchant. Cf. *Procesos de Luis de Carvajal (El Mozo)*, p. 14.

⁷⁴ Text: *cubrio su manto con mansedumbre* . . . [p. 474].

⁷⁵ Text: *a donde nos la [correct form] lleban?* [p. 474].

The next day one of his maiden sisters got word to their mother that Joseph had been arrested. A prisoner of the Inquisition was permitted to receive neither visitors nor letters from outside. What his sister did was to put some of Joseph's shirts among the clothes she sent her mother; and as soon as she saw them, she understood. This doubled her affliction, but also her merit.

The night that Joseph was arrested, his older brother returned to Mexico City and sent for him that the two might get together with a younger brother.⁷⁶ Then he learned that Joseph had been arrested.⁷⁷ This was a severe blow to Joseph's older brother, but he took it like a [true] servant of the Lord God: He prostrated himself on the ground and accepted the divine decree.

With half his family arrested, he was advised to flee the storm. He thought it over and decided to stay. He found a room [which became] his voluntary jail, and remained in it for a full year, waiting to see what the Lord would decree for his family. His companions were the Holy Bible and other sacred tomes which the Lord provided for him, and their assiduous reading absorbed his time.

Nor was Joseph in his prison forgotten by the Lord, his God. Exemplary gifts and favors did he receive from God's most merciful hand.

The Lord is witness that many times in that lonely and dark prison cell, Joseph would think longingly, "Would that in this solitude I were given the companionship of the Psalms of the saintly prophet David. If I read them, I would feel better." He believed that this desire was impossible of fulfillment by human means.

But since for the omnipotent God nothing is impossible, it was fulfilled by His holy decree. At the very time Joseph entertained these thoughts, a Franciscan friar was arrested [by the Inquisition] and brought to his jail. On a Saturday afternoon, when the savage judges of the Inquisition generally visit the prisoners to comfort them and to minister to their needs (not that this benevolence originates within them, for they are cruel and inhuman, but rather because the Lord our God and Father is pleased to bring the prisoners the solace that comes from sweeping and cleaning⁷⁸ their cells for the visit), they came first to the monk. They asked him if he needed anything, and he answered that he would like only a breviary to find consolation in his cell by reciting his customary Divine Office. Then they visited Joseph, and finding him emaciated and depressed, they assigned the monk to him as his cellmate. They brought the

⁷⁶ This was Miguel [Michael].

⁷⁷ Text: *que ya los abian llebado presos* . . . [p. 475].

⁷⁸ Text: *es servido de dar aquel solaz el rato que tardan en barrer* . . . [p. 475].

monk to Joseph's cell on that very Sabbath afternoon and enjoined him not to reveal that he was a monk.

The two prisoners talked for a while, rejoicing that they had met and would now be together. At dusk the jailer came, opened the cell door and presented Joseph's companion with a breviary. Joseph was overcome with joy and gladness, for he recognized that this was the way in which the Lord his God satisfied his longing, which was to give him a book from which to recite⁷⁹ the Psalms as he used to do. He, therefore, gave thanks to God most High for this signal kindness. Let us [all] give thanks to the Lord Adonay, for He is good and supreme and His mercy endures forever. For with one hand He punishes yet [with the other] shows us lovingkindness a thousandfold.

Indeed, through one event we can clearly see what Saint⁸⁰ David realized from his learning⁸¹ and travels: "*Secundum multitudinem dolorum meorum in corde meo consolationes tuae laetificaverunt animam meam*"⁸² ["When many cares are within me, Your comforts delight my soul"].⁸³

It happened in the following way:

When Joseph's long confinement in his cell of agony had made him anxious and depressed, he began to receive special consolations from the eternal God, which for the most part were communicated to him in dreams at night. Once, after a day of fasting and prayer, he no sooner lay down and fell asleep when he heard a voice in his dreams saying, "Be strong and take comfort, for saints Job and Jeremiah are most effectively interceding for you." For a few days he felt better. Then he had another dream, which, judging from what later happened, seems to have been a true and divine revelation. He saw a glass vial, tightly stopped and wrapped outside. It was filled with the sweetest liquid, divine wisdom itself, which is dispensed only in small quantities. Then he heard the Lord commanding Saint Solomon. He said, "Take a spoon, fill it with this liquid and give it to this boy to drink." The wise king began to execute the command. He took a spoonful of that sweet liquid and put it to Joseph's mouth; and as Joseph drank it, he felt greatly

⁷⁹ Text: *por donde rezar* . . . [p. 476].

⁸⁰ Text: *sor* [señor], a probable error for *so.*, or more likely *sto.* [santo] [p. 476].

⁸¹ Text: *conimtos* . . . [p. 476].

⁸² Text: *secundum multitudinendo loxmeox consolationes tuaelaetificaueuoni animan meam* . . . (p. 476). Here is an excellent example of the scribe's ignorance or carelessness or both. It should be recalled that Luis was considered sufficiently learned in Latin to teach it and, in his capacity as secretary to the monk who was the rector of the school for Indians where he taught, to use it for official purposes. See *infra*, pp. 301–303 and 310–313.

⁸³ *Psalms* XCIV:19.

consoled. Later, as the reader will be able to observe, this consolation was to come to him again in the world of reality.⁸⁴

Since the imprisonment of Joseph and his mother dragged on and they remained in the hands of such cruel beasts, their fear made them hide their true identity, and they refrained from confessing publicly that they were keepers of the Lord God's most holy Law. For our affliction and travail has reached such a state that if anyone confesses and affirms [this fact] he is subjected by these heretics to exquisite torture and is [then] burned alive. And fear of this is responsible for their denial of their true identity.

One Friday morning, the Inquisitors, in order to determine whether Joseph and his family were practicing Judaism,⁸⁵ summoned Joseph's mother for a hearing, as they had done on many previous occasions. Through a small hole which he and his companion had carved with two sheep bones at the threshold of his cell door, Joseph could watch his mother being led to the court of audience.

When the tyrants saw that she continued to deny [that her family practiced Judaism], they decided to subject her to torture. Preceded by the judges, notary, jailer and constable, she was therefore led to the torture chamber, where the torturer was standing, covered from head to toe with a shroud and white hood.

They immediately ordered the patient sheep to disrobe. They stretched her chaste flesh on the instrument of torture known as the donkey and tied her arms and legs. Then they cruelly twisted the ropes in its iron rings. As the ropes grated her flesh, she heaved the most pitiful sighs, which could be heard by all [the prisoners].

Joseph, on his knees in his cell, heard it all, and that day brought him⁸⁶ greater affliction and bitterness than any that had gone before. But he was not without the divine consolation that comes from the hand of the Lord. Blessed be His holy name forever. In the midst of that day of affliction, the Lord permitted him to doze off by the door of his cell. On other days, if he fell asleep for a moment, he awoke melancholy and faint, but not that day.

As soon as he fell asleep, he saw the Lord sending him a man who was a paragon of virtue and patience. He was a fearer of God, one of his own people.⁸⁷ In his hands he carried a large and beautiful yam. He showed it to Joseph and said, "Look! What a handsome and beautiful fruit!"

⁸⁴ This doubtless refers to the events narrated *infra.*, pp. 301–303.

⁸⁵ Text: *y pa. averiguar esto . . .* [p. 477].

⁸⁶ Text: *que [fue] para el el día . . .* [p. 477].

⁸⁷ It is difficult to determine who is meant. It may be Luis' own father, Francisco Rodríguez [or Rodrigues] de Mattos, or the Licentiate Morales, or perhaps someone else.

To this Joseph replied, "Indeed."

He gave it to Joseph to smell. Joseph blessed the Lord, creator of all, and said to the man, "Indeed, it smells good, indeed." The man then cut the yam in two and said to him, "Now it smells better."

The man then gave Joseph the interpretation. He said, "Before being imprisoned and racked with torture, your mother was whole and she smelled sweet; she was a fruit of sweet savor before the Lord. But now, when she is cut with torture, she exudes the superior fragrance of patience before the Lord."

With this Joseph awoke and was consoled. May the Most High God, who brings consolation to the afflicted, likewise be adored and extolled.

Joseph suffered even more in his cell because his companion's presence prevented him from praying and fasting as he used to. But in that very cell his companion, with the help of the Lord God,⁸⁸ was enlightened and converted to the truth of His holy Law.⁸⁹

This was the way in which, for Joseph's benefit and consolation, the Lord brought healing to his companion:

In their cell stood a wooden cross, before which the poor wretch would kneel and offer his prayers. Once, as the two of them were sitting near their candle, the monk took up the cross or gallows, approached it to the flame and said, "By God, if I should put the cross in the fire, it would burn like any other stick." To which Joseph replied, "Now you see in what you place your trust."

Then they began to converse at length [about matters of religion]. They spoke continually for a week and more, until Joseph's hapless companion came to the recognition of God's truth. Then he rejoiced and sang hymns and praises to the Lord, especially the *Magnus Dominus et laudabilis nimis*⁹⁰ which means in Spanish "Great is the Lord and worthy to be praised."⁹¹ [The monk went on to say:] "Because He deigned to enlighten a sinner like me." And the monk danced and thanked the Creator for having shown him such signal kindness in permitting him to recognize His sacred truth.⁹²

All this was ordained by God not only for the salvation of that poor soul but also for Joseph's consolation and relief, because [henceforth] they both kept the Law of Almighty God insofar as they could and they commended themselves to His divine majesty.

⁸⁸ Text: *del Sr. D. suyo* . . . [p. 478].

⁸⁹ Text: *alumbrado y convertido al verdadero D. y a su sta. ley* . . . [p. 478].

⁹⁰ Text: *mas nus Dns. ey laudabilis nimis* . . . [p. 478].

⁹¹ *Psalms* XCVI:4. Cf. *I Chronicles* XVI:25.

⁹² Text: *de darle su smo. conozimiento* . . . [p. 478].

One day, when his companion was eagerly and devoutly listening to Joseph tell some of the stories of the Bible, he said, "I wish I had had the opportunity to be enlightened by God's truth before I came to this cell. I wish I had chanced upon it in one of the monasteries where I lived, where they have open libraries with Bibles and many good books."

Joseph's reply was, "Do they keep their libraries open for everyone?"

The monk said, "Yes, and they keep the books out so that anyone may consult them and read them."

Joseph said, "I wish I were put in one of them." Let this be noted in advance for the praise of the Most High and His sacred mercy, for the Lord fulfilled this wish with an extraordinary miracle, as will be seen below.

Once the Most High had enlightened his companion, Joseph lived contentedly in his confinement. He spent his time telling Bible stories to his companion, who listened with rapt attention and devotion. Soon God's truth⁹³ became so impressed upon this good Gentile's soul that it seemed as if he had been nurtured on it all his life and taught by believing parents. Though he had but so recently been converted, he loathed bacon and lard and the other foods forbidden by the Most High's holy Law. [He and Joseph adhered] so faithfully [to the dietary commands] that when bacon or sausage or any other forbidden food was served them they agreed to bury it. They would say, "Let us offer the sacrifice," which meant to bury such food and abstain from eating it. As a result they not infrequently suffered hunger in their harsh cell, but when they did they commended it to the Lord and uttered the Psalmist's prayer, "*Miserere mei*" ["Have mercy upon me"].⁹⁴

This happened most often at midday on Friday, for at that time the heretics' entire meal was contaminated.

In short, Joseph's companion comported himself in such a way that he earned the right to be a witness of the true God and his most holy Law and received the crown of martyrdom [in public when he was burned at the stake], as I shall narrate below.⁹⁵

When Joseph and his family left their prison [duly] penanced and cloaked in the distinctive garb which the enemies of the Law of God require for those who have been convicted of keeping it, the

⁹³ Text: *la verdad del a la diuina* . . . [p. 479].

⁹⁴ *Psalms* LI:3.

⁹⁵ See *infra*, pp. 307–308. It does not, however describe the death of this monk, whose name was Francisco Ruiz de Luna. See *Procesos de Luis de Carvajal (el Mozo)*, pp. 136 and 352.

Inquisitors wished to separate the family. They wanted to put each of the women in a different room of a convent that in the company of its idolators they might suffer twice as much as before. But the Lord in His infinite mercy frustrated this plan. He moved the Inquisitor himself to mention it to Jorge de Almeyda, one of Joseph's brothers-in-law, in whose mouth the Lord put the following reply:⁹⁶

"Sir, the action you are contemplating should be well considered⁹⁷ before you put it into effect. Do not forget that women are extremely curious and impressionable. The [damaging] influence [of these women] upon the nuns might be very difficult to counteract."⁹⁸

This made quite an impression on the enemy. At the Lord's prompting the Inquisitor changed his mind, and instead of such confinement for life, which is the standard punishment for penitents, he arranged for the women to be given a house where they could all live together — for the sake of the Lord.

Joseph was separated from them and assigned to a hospital, where he was made keeper of the idols — which afflicted him not a little — and employed in other tasks, such as sweeping the floors, which he did after he had moistened them with his tears. But the Lord his God came to his rescue again as He had in all his previous difficulties.

When Joseph despaired of returning to the company of his mother and sisters — he did not even know how he could ask for such a thing — God on High, who was even more grieved, provided a remedy. He ordained that one of Joseph's brothers-in-law find it necessary to take a trip to Tasco and leave Joseph's mother and sisters alone.⁹⁹ He [therefore] went to ask the Inquisitor the favor of allowing Joseph to stay with them while he traveled. This was the first step taken by the Most High to remove Joseph from [what he regarded as] his second captivity, where he sat and wept disconsolately¹⁰⁰ because he was forced to eat forbidden foods. Highly exalted be the Most High, who thus came to Joseph's aid in all his difficulties.

When he returned to his mother and sisters, Joseph found that their enemies' threats and some friends' evil counsel had persuaded them to buy and eat Gentile foods,¹⁰¹ forbidden by the Law of God.

⁹⁶ Text: *en cuya boca el sr. se puso para que le dixese . . .* [p. 479].

⁹⁷ Text: *mírese bien esso* [p. 479].

⁹⁸ Text: *que podría venir un daño notable a todas las monjas . . .* [pp. 479–480].

⁹⁹ Text: *y quedar solas su me. y hermanas . . .* [p. 480].

¹⁰⁰ The allusion is to *Psalms CXXXVII:1*. Text: *que . . . vivia muy lloroso y desconsolado . . .* [p. 480].

¹⁰¹ Text: *que las gres. [de las gentes?] . . .* [p. 480].

With divine inspiration Joseph changed this. He set before them the example of the saints who preferred to be torn to shreds by cruel tortures rather than eat forbidden foods or even pretend to eat them. But since their hearts were steadfast with their God and Lord¹⁰² — the family had been acting out of fright — little was needed to convince them of their wrongdoing.¹⁰³ With many tears and affirmations of their reverence of heaven, they turned again to their God and Lord and added to their merit by rejecting all filthy foods.

As the time drew near for Joseph to return to the hospital where he served, an old monk, a man of great virtue, came to see his mother. The Inquisitor had asked him to be the family's confessor and guardian.

Joseph's mother importuned the monk to secure permission for Joseph to remain on with her and the family. And Joseph received this permission with the requirement that he spend his daytime hours working in a school for Indians which the monk directed. Joseph was given the responsibility of teaching grammar to some of the Indians and helping the monk with his letters and sermons. The Lord his God gave Joseph such favor [in the eyes of] this man that he loved him dearly and cherished him, and not only he, but all his staff as well.

Since the carnivorous wolves had confiscated the family's property and left them destitute, the Lord maintained them in their affliction¹⁰⁴ for four and a half years by having the monk support them from his own pocket and from charities of the Church that was so hostile to them.¹⁰⁵ The Lord's performing a miracle for such sinful and wretched people [as Joseph and his family] is even more striking than His performance of a miracle with the innocent and saintly Daniel.¹⁰⁶

Let us now observe how the Lord in His mercy fulfilled the desire which Joseph expressed to his cellmate when he said, "I wish I were put into one of those libraries." The Lord induced the monk to give Joseph a key to his [private] room in the school,¹⁰⁷ where he kept all his books, a privilege he extended to none of his fellow monks at the school. This kindness from the Lord was soon sur-

¹⁰² See the examples of the saintly scribe Eleazar in *II Maccabees* VI:18 ff. and Hannah's seven sons, *ibid.* VII:1 ff.

¹⁰³ Text: *para estorbarles* . . . [p. 480].

¹⁰⁴ Text: *en el lago* . . . [p. 481].

¹⁰⁵ Text: *y así por su mano como por la de los enemigos los sustentó el sr.* . . . [p. 481].

¹⁰⁶ See *infra*, pp. 317–318. The reference to Daniel derives from the story of Bel and the Dragon in the *Apocrypha*.

¹⁰⁷ The text adds *quedandose el con la otra*, which is omitted in the translation.

passed by another from His munificent hand. Joseph had been in the school for less than four months when God ordained that the same monk should purchase [Nicholas] de Lyra's *Glosses*, a commentary to the Holy Bible, in four large tomes,¹⁰⁸ from the estate of a great preacher of his order who had [recently] passed away. When they were delivered, he went to Joseph, as if looking for compliments and said, "What precious things we are bringing to our school."

With great caution Joseph availed himself of these gifts of God on high. When the monk and all the collegians would go to their quarters to eat, Joseph would remain behind within the [classroom] compound [and steal into the library]. There, by reading the Holy Bible and translating many of its sections into Spanish, he would nourish his spirit, troubled as it was by the thought of [a repetition of the] imprisonment and affliction from which the Lord had so miraculously extricated him.¹⁰⁹

In his hours of duty, whatever time Joseph had left after teaching his students was consigned by the monk to the arrangement of Oleaster's moralities on the Pentateuch¹¹⁰ into alphabetical order. This work was so suited to Joseph's temperament and interests that [he realized that] were it not for God's help he could not have

¹⁰⁸ Nicholas of Lyra (1270–1340), rumored in the fifteenth century to have been of Jewish descent, was a master of Hebrew and utilized Hebrew sources, especially Rashi's commentary, for his own great commentary, the *Postillae*. Nicholas de Lyra's commentary was the first Bible commentary to be printed. On this, see Herman Hailperin, *Rashi and the Christian Scholars* (Pittsburgh, 1963), pp. 137 ff.

¹⁰⁹ Such study was forbidden to a non-cleric, not to speak of a person suspect in matters of faith.

¹¹⁰ Jerome Oleaster [Oleastro] (d. 1563) was a Portuguese Dominican scholar and biblical commentator who likewise utilized Hebrew sources and may well have obtained the Thirteen Articles of the Faith directly from Maimonides [*Commentary to the Mishnah, Sanhedrin X:1 (Perek Helek)*]. His commentary on the Pentateuch, originally published in parts between 1556 and 1558, was first published in its entirety in Antwerp, 1569, with the title *Reverendi Patris Fratris Hieronymi ab Oleastro [sic!] Lusitani, Praedicatorij Ordinis . . . Commentaria in Mōsi Pentateuchum . . .* The Thirteen Articles, from which Carvajal quotes almost verbatim, are found on f. 251 v. col. b., as part of the comment of *Deut. VI:4 [Audi Israel Dominus noster. Deus vnus]*. They read as follows:

Habent Iehudaei. 13. articulos fidei; quos tredecim vocant fundamenta: quorum primus est creatorem esse absolutae & perfectae essentiae, causam omnium: a quo pendet & deriuatur omnium rerum virtus. Secundus Deum esse vnum. Tertius non esse corporeum. Quartus quod sit primus inter omnia. Quintus omni laude sit dignus, & nihil aliud. Sextus esse affluentiam diuinam in aliquot hominibus, & fuisse prophetiam. Septimo vt credas Moseh patrem omniū prophetarū & quod fuerit omnibus excellentior. Octauo quod lex è coelis data est Moseh à deo. Nono quod lex nō abolebitur neq; mutabitur, neq; alia proficiscetur à creatore, neq; addetur aut minuetur. Decimo quod deus cognoscit opera hominū & curat ea. Vndecimo quod benefacit servātibus legē & frangētes punit. Duodecimo credas tēpus Messie etia si tardet. Tertiodecimo est credere mortuorum resurrectionē.

obtained it even if he were willing to pay for it with all his blood. Blessed and extolled be the Lord, who satisfies worthy desires.

In this book [of Oleaster's] the Lord revealed to Joseph the holy Thirteen Articles which are the principles of our faith and religion and which are unknown in the lands of our captivity.

One day as Joseph was about to open the door of the monk's room with his key as he had so often done, in order to continue with his translation of the Bible's holy prophecies, he had a presentiment that the monk was coming. The Lord seems to have been warning him. With this premonition he closed the door [and hid himself nearby], thinking, "If the monk comes now, it is a certain sign that the Lord has warned me and is with me." No sooner had this thought crossed his mind when he saw the monk entering his room. Blessed and praised be the Lord!

Joseph longed to find a spring or fountain of water in which to bathe. He thought, "If I had such a privilege in this school, I would lack none other." And the blessed Lord in His infinite mercy satisfied this desire. He ordained that a lay-friar who worked as a gardener in the orchard of that convent, and who was more scrupulous [about his cleanliness] than the rest, should also feel the need of such water for bathing. At this very time the Lord moved him to approach his superior and ask him for permission [— which was granted —] to bring a conduit into the school compound — and to the area where Joseph wanted it! Blessed be the Lord, who alone is good, for His mercy endures forever.

When Joseph, his mother and his sisters left prison, his older brother, who had been carefully following their fortunes, decided [that it was time for him] to be on his way. Before he left the house which served as his voluntary jail¹¹¹ the Lord performed an extraordinary miracle for him.

In that house lived an Israelite friend who could move about freely. He had the key to the door where Joseph's brother was hiding and he brought him food and drink.

One day the Inquisition sent out an alarm for a concubinary, and when it heard that he might be living next door to the Israelite, it sent to the area a bailiff, whom the Israelite knew well, to arrest the suspect. [The bailiff looked for the suspect in the house next door], and when he could not find him, he thought that he might have jumped over the wall to the house where Joseph's brother was hiding. The bailiff therefore asked the Israelite to open his

¹¹¹ Text: *antes que saliese de la casa donde estaban [sic!]* . . . The words *carzel voluntaria* are translated from the following clause [p. 482].

door that he might come in and look for the fugitive. The Israelite tried to dissuade him from entering, swearing again and again that the suspect was not there, but to no avail. Fortunately, because it usually took some time to open the door and it was night, the Israelite could stop in Joseph's brother's room and tell him¹¹² to get out and hide under a staircase. This he did. The bailiff then entered¹¹³ the house to look for his suspect.

After looking all over for him, the bailiff and his party were about to leave when the Lord God worked another of his miracles to demonstrate that a man protected by God is really protected. As the bailiff approached the staircase under which Joseph's brother was hiding, one of his deputies said to him, "Sir, let us look underneath this staircase." But, moved by the Lord [the bailiff answered], "Forget it, that fellow wouldn't be hiding there." And with this they left, and Joseph's brother came out from under the staircase and went to hide in a room which had already been searched.

He had no sooner done this when the bailiff, who had reached the gate of the house, had a change of heart. He came back and said, "I'll wager that our man is underneath the staircase where I wouldn't look before. I have come back to inspect it." He came in, looked [under the staircase] and was satisfied [that no one was there], and the man protected and freed by the Lord of the world remained free, thanks to His great lovingkindness. May the Lord be extolled forever and ever.¹¹⁴

So Joseph's older brother left Mexico City one night. He was accompanied by a younger brother.¹¹⁵ [Both were] frightened at the prospect of being apprehended by the Inquisition, and determined to die for the Lord if they were. The [Israelite] friend whom we mentioned [above] went with them.

Shortly after they left, word reached Joseph that they had been arrested. He broke into bitter tears and a pall of sadness and melancholy fell over him, his mother and his sisters. But the report was false: Their good God and Lord was preserving and guiding the fugitives. They traveled about four hundred leagues overland in peace and safety until they reached the so-called Port of Horses.^{115a}

¹¹² Text: *mas que por el sr. que no fue tan brebe que primo. no tubiese lugar de entrar el compañero por ser de noche a avisar al hermo. mayor . . .* [p. 483].

¹¹³ Text: *puesto alli, entro el alguazil . . .* [p. 483].

¹¹⁴ Text: *se a su sma. me. pa. siempre de siempre ensalsado . . .* [p. 483].

¹¹⁵ This, of course, was Miguel [Michael].

^{115a} Text: *puerto de los caballos*. This appears to be identical with the modern Puerto Cortés in northwestern Honduras. See the *Columbia Lippincott Gazetteer of the World* (New York, 1962), p. 1528.

Here by no small miracle they came upon an anchored ship, whose captain was also a Hebrew and a cousin of the Israelite who accompanied Joseph's brothers. He took them aboard, showered them with presents, and transported them to Spain.

After Joseph had spent several days in tearful sorrow, the Lord sent him the happy news that his brothers had not been arrested and that their precious cargo had arrived at a safe port. Let us again give praise to Adonay, for He is good and supreme. Let us give glory to His holy name, for His mercy endures forever.

When the family was imprisoned, one of Joseph's brothers-in-law left for China but the other remained in Mexico City.¹¹⁶ After the family had left prison, this brother-in-law¹¹⁷ continued to help them as he had when they were in jail,¹¹⁸ and he was always a very obedient son to Joseph's mother. Because God is good and leaves no good work unrewarded, He performed an exemplary miracle for Joseph's brother-in-law, not only to help him but even more [to help] Joseph's mother and sisters.

It seems that after the family had left prison, the Inquisition began to look for Joseph's brother-in-law. The Inquisition's constable called on him, but he refused to go with him and ran away [to Tasco]. Incensed, the Inquisitors sent a warrant for his arrest to a constable in Tasco, who very arrogantly went out to search for him. At this moment the Lord God sent one of the [wild] bulls that roamed in the area against the constable. The bull savagely attacked him, gored him to death, and dragged his body back to his own doorstep.

In this manner, the Lord, God of Israel, permitted Joseph's brother-in-law to remain free. He then stirred his heart to go to Spain to seek liberty for Joseph and his family. He accepted God's mandate with such strong resolve that he spent three and a half years in Spain in quest of this liberty. Finally, with God's help, he attained the necessary document and sent it on [to New Spain], again inspired and aided by the Lord.

I understand now that when Joseph and his family were imprisoned his other brother-in-law left for China, from whence the Lord brought him back miraculously, for the sake of his wife and infant daughter.

In the Orient, Joseph's brother-in-law was often in prison or in danger. The governor of China, moved by personal hatred but even

¹¹⁶ Antonio Díaz de Cáceres left for China; Jorge de Almeyda remained behind in New Spain, as is seen from the record of Luis' second trial, *passim*.

¹¹⁷ Text: *el cura [el cuña.]* . . . [p. 484].

¹¹⁸ Text: *les hizo no menos regalos que a ella les embiado que fueron muchos* . . . [p. 484].

more so by God's design, sent him in his ship to Macao. Since trade there was controlled by the Spanish crown, which had circulated a warrant for the arrest of Joseph's brother-in-law in New Spain, he was apprehended. His ship and all his merchandise were sequestered, and he was bound in chains and sent toward India by ship.^{118a}

It seems impossible that anyone in such straits could be seen by his wife again. But for the Lord nothing is impossible. One night, in His holy kindness,¹¹⁹ He suggested to Joseph's brother-in-law that he file away his chains and take refuge in the ship. Here a friend of his hid him under the deck and brought him food until the day when the departing fleet set sail. And though Joseph's brother-in-law was later arrested and harassed, God soon extricated him from this difficulty and even from the greater ones that he experienced in Manila.

These were occasioned by the enmity which the governor of that Island conceived for him. I cannot now go into the reasons for this hatred, because I want to make this story short, since my purpose is to confine myself to the signal benefits and favors which the Lord God of Israel did for Joseph and his entire family.

In order that Joseph's brother-in-law might come back to care for his wife and daughter, the Lord freed him from the governor, who in his capacity as judge, would have unjustly taken his life. And He brought him and his ship to a safe port [in New Spain] at the time when Joseph and his family were still in prison. The news of this unexpected arrival brought great consolation, coming from God's hand, to the entire family, particularly to the man's wife and daughter. For this and for all other consolations may the Lord God of Israel be greatly blessed and adored.

As has been stated above, Joseph's fears that his unmarried sisters would yet be arrested by the Inquisition [proved well-founded] . . .¹²⁰ and they put the younger one in a building of maximum confinement, where for His glory, the Lord so instructed her that nothing, not even threats of torture, could extract from her any information that would benefit the Inquisitors and hurt her family. From the mouths of sucklings the Lord brings forth praises to confound the enemy and avenger!¹²¹

^{118a} Portugal at the time (1580–1640) was united with Spain; hence its Indian territories in Asia were part of the Hispanic empire.

¹¹⁹ Text: *cuya sanctissima mde.* [sic!] . . . [p. 485]. See also *supra*, p. 304, note 114.

¹²⁰ Our text makes no mention of Joseph's fears [see *supra*, p. 294], and omits an explanation of what was done to Joseph's older unmarried sister.

¹²¹ *Psalms* VIII:3.

Joseph's sister spent more than two years in that building, removed from the companionship of her mother and sisters, who grieved with heavy hearts. Pitiful indeed was the dejection felt by her sisters and especially her loving mother on the occasions when the female warden would bring her to see them and would then take her away. They fervently prayed to the Lord their God to deign to free her and restore her to them.

Adored be His most holy name. He heard them at an auspicious moment with His infinite mercy. At the end of two years, when the sentences of Joseph's married sister and the older unmarried one were completed and they were permitted to remove their penitential garb, the God of heaven gave them favor in the eyes of the Inquisitors; they delivered his younger, unmarried sister¹²² into their custody, at the moment when the girl, as her mother told her to, was about to kneel and pray for this very thing. Thus, God the most liberal Provider returned all three in freedom and joy to their mother. As their home rang with the happiness of all, so may there ring blessings and praises of the Lord of the heavens, whom the entire family thanked again and again for such favors.

A year after Joseph's captivity, the jailer of the Inquisition told him that the monk who was his cellmate had been rearrested and arraigned on the charge of shattering an idol in the galleys where he was serving his sentence. Joseph was terrified. He was afraid that the monk would try to hurt him — though he had great confidence that with the Lord's help he would be left unscathed. And God, our Lord, immediately performed such a miracle for Joseph that it cannot in all fairness be passed over in silence. Nor can one keep from uttering the praises due to the lofty and sovereign God who protected him.

One night His exalted Majesty revealed to Joseph's mother in a dream what was later to come to pass in reality!

She saw the Inquisitor thrusting a sword at Joseph, but the sword was sheathed. It had been sheathed by the Lord, exalted be His most holy name. And this is exactly what happened. When the monk, Joseph's former cellmate, was asked who had taught him, he told the Inquisitors that it was someone who had been his companion in that jail several years before, making it clear by such testimony that he had no intention of letting Joseph get away unharmed. But Joseph's blessed God and Lord saved him. He put the sword in a sheath: When the monk was asked whether he had been taught [Judaism] by his companion before or after the latter's

¹²² Text: *la hermana mayor [menor] donzella . . .* [p. 486].

confession, the Lord ordained that the monk should say before.¹²³ And with this the Lord saved Joseph from the harsh and dark prison. May His most Holy name be eternally exalted. Amen.

At the same time, Joseph's former cellmate, in the presence of those tryants, so valiantly professed a belief in the God of heaven that the like of it has not been seen with any other Gentile in our time. He told them of the mighty acts of the Lord God and [the greatness] of His most holy Law, and then he said, "The Law which I believe¹²⁴ and accept is the true faith and the others are frauds and deceptions of the devil. The king understands this well and so do the filthy Inquisitors, but the Lord hardens their hearts as he did Pharaoh's for He is determined to take full vengeance upon them when the day of His most holy judgment comes." Though because of this he was subjected to severe trials and afflictions, our God permitted him to pass through them with exemplary patience and faith. Blessed be His most holy name forever. Amen.

Three and a half years after Joseph, his mother and his sisters entered into captivity, an unfortunate event took place, involving one of Joseph's unmarried sisters, who was particularly hostile to the idols and idolatries of her hapless, blind neighbors. On a Sabbath of the Lord when they celebrated a festival, she asked her brother Joseph, for the love of God, to take her to the home of a God-fearing Israelite sister. She did this that they might spend the day in the service of the Lord God and might avoid the offense [to God] that would come [by their remaining home, where they did not dare to observe the holy day properly].

She took along a book containing an anthology of passages from Sacred Scripture, which Joseph and his older brother had carefully culled and translated, and other writings attesting to the truth of the Lord our God and His holy Law. It also included a translation of the Psalms and other holy prayers. This treasure was highly prized by Joseph and his sisters.

On that holy day Joseph's sister put the book in her bosom and took it along for prayer. They left at dawn, happy and singing praises to the Lord God. As evidence of His holy Majesty's loving-kindness, God permitted the book to slip down unnoticed from her bosom and fall on a well traveled public thoroughfare. When the young girl discovered that the book was missing she was shocked and dispirited and her grief was uncontrollable. She retraced her

¹²³ This was the truth. Luis might have regarded as a miracle the fact that Francisco Ruiz de Luna did not lie in order to get Luis into trouble.

¹²⁴ Text: *estas que yo creo* . . . [p. 486].

steps in search of the lost gem, but no trace of it was to be found. Joseph and his two sisters returned home and the rest of the family shared their consternation. Their pain and fright were understandable, since at stake for all of them was nothing less than their lives and what they treasured most in life.¹²⁵ They began to regard themselves as arrested and even dead. So great was their fright that were it not for the danger of damning their souls they would have taken their own lives rather than risk falling into the cruel hands of their terrible enemies.¹²⁶ In short, every hour they fearfully and bitterly expected the moment of their imprisonment. But, blessed and exalted be the infinite and true Lord God, for He helped them in this difficulty with His accustomed kindness.

Whenever anyone knocked, they thought that the Inquisition's nefarious ministers were at the door to arrest them, and as a result they were in a continuous state of anxiety and trepidation. They purchased only half their usual amounts of oil and other necessities, thinking they would not even be able to finish these.

At the time of these anxieties their Father on high deigned to show His greatness. The mayor of the city was making an inspection tour of bakers and bakeries, when, in one of the bakeries he discovered bread that lacked the required weight [and proceeded to confiscate all the loaves]. Since he knew that Joseph's mother and sisters lived in need, he sent an inspector, staff in hand, to bring them two baskets of bread. Joseph's family lived in such terror that when the Indian maid, who served them,¹²⁷ announced that the authorities were at the door, they were stunned and shaken beyond description. No one¹²⁸ dared go down to open the door, for they all feared the blow — a blow which the Lord God turned into mercy.

In short, when they did go down, not a little afraid and expecting imminent imprisonment, they discovered that the mayor, or rather the Lord God Almighty, had sent them his deputy with two baskets full of bread as alms. In this way the Lord filled their houses with His blessing, for they had bread for more than a week. And all their other fears were to be dispelled in a similar manner as the Lord is witness.

In this state of constant anxiety, Joseph used to bore holes in the walls of his house in the middle of the night, and planned to slip

¹²⁵ This most probably refers to their practice of Judaism.

¹²⁶ Text: *por no venir a tan crueles manos como las de los enemigos* . . . [p. 487].

¹²⁷ Text: *la yndia que los sabia* . . . [p. 488]!

¹²⁸ Text: *ninguna* . . . [p. 488].

out through them¹²⁹ and escape when they came to arrest him. But here we can see how vain are the plans of man, if the Lord God does not confirm them; and if His divine majesty does not protect a city, in vain does he labor who would protect it.¹³⁰

At the same time Joseph had another terrifying experience. By the will of God most high the officers of the Crown and the chief constable of the Inquisition happened to clash in the port of Ulua¹³¹ over the question of institutional priorities. In connection with this the commissary of the Inquisition for that region came to Mexico City. The commissary at the time was a Franciscan friar and, when he came to Mexico, he naturally went to lodge in the monastery of Santiago, belonging to his order, while he awaited the start of the discussions.

This Inquisitor had a brother [a Dominican monk] who knew that Joseph used to write and transcribe sermons and other ordinary materials for the Franciscan friars. He asked his brother to get the old monk of the school, in whose care Joseph had been entrusted, to have Joseph copy over a notebook which had been lent him by a fellow monk of his Dominican order.¹³² The commissary said he would look into the matter. The Inquisitor agreed to send his brother a note written in Joseph's hand in order to see whether Joseph's handwriting was to his liking.

Joseph [of course], was unaware of what was going on. One day, when Joseph's fears were at their height, the Inquisitor sent for Joseph with one of the monks of the monastery, with whom Joseph was not particularly familiar, though he was loved and esteemed by all the monks and all were very friendly toward him. Not without fear and great misgiving Joseph asked the young man, "Who is that with Brother Christopher, our superior?"

He answered, "Brother Christopher is now with the commissary of the Inquisition, on whose errand I have come."¹³³

When Joseph heard this, his heart skipped a beat. He suspected that through the commissary the Inquisition was sending for him. You can imagine the fright and panic he was in when he finally resigned himself to going.¹³⁴

He found Brother Christopher and the commissary standing at

¹²⁹ Text: *imaginando escapar por ellos o salirse . . .* [p. 488].

¹³⁰ *Psalms CXXXVII:1*. Cf. *infra*, p. 311, note 141, related text.

¹³¹ This refers to San Juan de Ulúa, an island fortress, a mile from Vera Cruz, Mexico.

¹³² Text: *un carlapacio de un fraile dado de su orden dominico . . .* [p. 489].

¹³³ Text: *que es mi sr. . . .* [p. 489].

¹³⁴ Text: *en fin hubo de yr y sabe el sr. D. como y cuan cercado de temores . . .* [p. 489].

the convent door. When Brother Christopher saw Joseph he said to the commissary, "Here he is," and even this seemed to confirm Joseph's fears.¹³⁵

The commissary then said, "Let us go up to [my] room." They did, and Joseph's fears received further confirmation when the commissary told him to take pen and paper and write a personal note. Joseph, who knew how well he could write, was terrified, for he not unnaturally suspected that they wanted the note to compare his handwriting with that of the book which his sister had lost.¹³⁶ As a result he was plummeted into indescribable distress and anxiety.

Having written this note,¹³⁷ Joseph was dismissed. He went home in trepidation—for which the Lord [later] repaid him—¹³⁸ and began to think of fleeing for safety. But on this occasion as on others, he experienced the truth of the prophet David's statement¹³⁹ that if the Lord does not protect a city,¹⁴⁰ in vain does he wake who would protect it, and if the Lord does not build a city, in vain does he labor who would build it.¹⁴¹

A short while later Joseph learned why the commissary of the Inquisition had had him write the note which had induced the anxiety. It was because the monk, who was the Inquisitor's brother, had learned that Joseph was copying papers and sermons for the Franciscan friars. A great preacher in his order had lent the monk a notebook and the latter eagerly wished to have it copied. In order to determine whether Joseph should do the copying for him,¹⁴² he asked the commissary to have Joseph write a note so that he could see his handwriting. When he saw it, he asked his brother the Inquisitor to have Joseph proceed; and the notebook accordingly was forwarded to the old monk who supervised Joseph.¹⁴³

When Joseph realized that his suspicions were groundless, he gave thanks to the Lord. Yet he was perturbed by the fact that the time involved in copying that book reduced the time he could devote to prayer and the service of the Lord his God. But this unbearable situation was turned by the Lord into a means for

¹³⁵ Text: *sus temores y ymaginacion* . . . [p. 489].

¹³⁶ Text: *con la del libro que se les habia perdido* . . . [p. 489].

¹³⁷ Text: *al fin despues del billete escrito* . . . [p. 489].

¹³⁸ Text: *que el sr. D. remedio* . . . [p. 489].

¹³⁹ Text: *el dicho verdadero del propheta David* . . . [p. 489].

¹⁴⁰ Text: *si el Senor no guarda la cifra* [*cibda.*, for *cibdad* (= *ciudad*)] . . . [p. 489].

¹⁴¹ *Psalms* CXXVII:1, with part b of the verse somewhat altered. See *supra*, p. 310, note 130.

¹⁴² Text: *para hazer que se lo trasladase* . . . [p. 490].

¹⁴³ Text: *el fraile viejo con quien estaba* . . . [p. 490].

Joseph's consolation and eventual freedom. For in the very midst of Joseph's anxieties, when he did not even know how to go about seeking his freedom, the Lord was pleased to begin to give it to him. But before I explain how, I shall relate a miracle which the Lord most high performed concerning the notebook [Joseph was copying].

During this time Joseph received word in letters from his brother-in-law [in Spain], informing him that his liberty, mentioned above, had been attained, but for lack of funds,¹⁴⁴ which had to be paid in Madrid, the documents could not yet be [released and] forwarded.

Rather to be freed from a situation that brought anxiety upon him than to obtain these documents [of liberty for himself and his family], Joseph asked the Inquisitor's brother, for whom he was copying the notebook to help him get permission to move about freely in order to obtain alms [to pay] for his liberty. By command of the omnipotent Lord God, Joseph was given six months' leave.

When Joseph was about to take advantage of this [freedom] he was prevented from so doing by the fact that he had not finished copying the book.¹⁴⁵ He had already arranged with the old monk, his confessor and the school's rector,¹⁴⁶ to pay four Indian scribes to finish it.¹⁴⁷ However — if you want more evidence of the mercies of the Most High, God permitted the old monk to change his mind and for the first time to harden his heart against Joseph. The day after making these arrangements, the rector said to him, with agitation and annoyance, "You must not go. It is unfair for you to leave before finishing the Inquisitor's notebook. A fine thing it is that now that they have given you liberty you scorn them and abandon your work."

Now if Joseph were to finish the notebook by himself, he would need more than his six months' leave which had been given to him. But since he was a captive, he said nothing. He humbly bemoaned his troubles and the fact that they delayed his going into hiding.

On the very day and at the very hour when the monk displayed such hostility and Joseph found himself in that plight, the Lord God sent two of the pages of the Inquisitor on behalf of his brother to pick up the notebook, unfinished though it was, because the preacher who had let the Inquisitor's brother examine it,¹⁴⁸ was

¹⁴⁴ Text: *por falta de qntos*. . . [p. 490].

¹⁴⁵ Text: *estorbabásele el libro que trasladaba* . . . [p. 490].

¹⁴⁶ Text: *redor del colegio* . . . [p. 490].

¹⁴⁷ Omitted from the translation is the additional clause *el qual le prometio el lo haria así* [p. 490].

¹⁴⁸ Text: *se yba el predicador que se lo avia prestado para la puebla* . . . [p. 491].

going away.¹⁴⁹ When the [monk who was the] rector of the school saw this he was astonished [at Joseph's good fortune], and, inspired by the Lord God, he again favored Joseph as before.

When the Provincial of the Franciscan friars learned that Joseph had been granted permission to seek alms, the Lord God touched his heart, and without a word from Joseph, he told his monks to inform Joseph that if he wished he would give him a very favorable letter-patent for the entire province, which would facilitate his being accorded a friendly reception in all the monasteries. Joseph said yes and received the letter as promised.

Then the Lord God moved the heart of the Vicar General, and by God's decree, he gave Joseph fifty favorable letters [of introduction]. The Lord God also gave Joseph favor in the sight of the Governor of the Archbishopric, who granted an indefinite extension of Joseph's leave. And since everything was being decreed by God's hand, He moved the Provincial of the Augustinian friars to give Joseph yet another letter that would serve him well in all the monasteries of his order.

Joseph also applied for a letter from the Viceroy, but believed that it would be impossible to obtain. Since nothing is impossible for the Almighty God who was guiding him, no sooner did Joseph's confessor ask it on behalf of Joseph, his mother and his sisters, than he was given not one letter, but twenty-five.

Taking these letters and the favor of the Lord his God with him, Joseph left his confinement in Mexico City after four years of anguish and affliction. Yet in the midst of it, he was abundantly aided by the Most High. [Now] wherever he went, God's divine majesty gave him grace. It was no small miracle that he moved his very enemies to shower him with their gifts of money, hens, cheese, corn and other items. Laden with these, he would return to the house of his penance, where his mother and sisters still lived.

Whenever Joseph came to a monastery, he was provided with lodging and offered food; but ever mindful of the Law and commandment of his Lord God, he refused the food to avoid defiling himself, saying that he had already eaten. It often happened, when he left the company and board of these men whom he loathed, that he went to eat his bread among the beasts, thinking it better to eat among horses in cleanliness than in uncleanness at the tables of his well-bred enemies.

Two months after he first left, Joseph returned to the home of

¹⁴⁹ Omitted from the translation is the additional clause *al fin lo llebaron . . .* [p. 491].

his mother and sisters sound [but not secure], for his heart was still agitated by the fear that his lost book would turn up and lead to an [Inquisitional] warrant for his arrest. He, therefore, first decided to find out whether it was safe for him to return to his mother's house. He first went to the older of his married sisters, who lived in a separate house with her husband and daughter, and asked her if there was anything new. Since the mercy of the Most High was guiding Joseph along this road of [his] fears, He permitted an occasion to come up in which Joseph would experience fears for his greater good. At his sister's [home] he learned that shortly after he had left, a man had come to his mother's house asking for him and saying that he was a page of the Inquisition's high constable. This had greatly alarmed his mother and sisters and now caused him not a little fright. He debated with himself whether or not he should go into hiding, but the Lord gave him courage to face anything, even death, and he went to his mother's house. It was soon evident that all this had been the prompting of fear, permitted and decreed, like everything else, by God on high, that Joseph might recall all His mercies and be able the better to appreciate the gift of liberty that the Lord was about to grant him.

Joseph collected more than eight hundred and fifty pesos in alms from the hands of the barbarous Gentiles. May the Lord God of Israel enlighten them and bring them to a recognition of His holiness, that He may be adored and served by all His creatures. His mighty hand moved them to give Joseph these alms so willingly in most places that it was clear that the alms were coming from the Lord. Then Joseph and his mother received word that the brother-in-law who miraculously escaped from [Mexico City] for this purpose — with God's help — as I have already narrated,¹⁵⁰ had succeeded, with the favor of the Most High, in obtaining the family's restoration to liberty.¹⁵¹ Again, this news arrived in time to serve as celestial medicine for Joseph's mother, for with its joy the Lord revived her from an illness that had her at the brink of death.

The decrees of liberty came in the first fleet, the one that arrived in this [land of] New Spain around September, 1594. When they came the Lord had already provided Joseph with sufficient alms to pay for them. But before I tell how, by the Lord's hand and kind-

¹⁵⁰ Text: *que ya dire* . . . [p. 493].

¹⁵¹ Almeyda in the meantime had apparently collected the funds required to release the document. See *supra*, p. 312. When the documents reached the New World more payments were necessary. See *infra*, pp. 316–317. This was part of the process piously called “the redemption of the penitential garb.”

ness, their penitential garb was removed, it is only proper that I mention two remarkable illnesses that the Lord God inflicted upon Joseph's two unmarried sisters as a most merciful atonement for the entire family, for, like sinning monks, we always need in this life bread and the rod. This is what our holy prophet gave thanks to God for when he said, "*Virga tua et baculus tuus ipsa me consolata sunt*"¹⁵² ["Your rod and your staff, they comfort me"].¹⁵³

The Lord gave the younger girl¹⁵⁴ a throat ailment like quinsy, which lasted more than eight months. The Lord [finally] freed her from that illness by having her throat lanced in several places, but left her with another malady. She was left crippled, and as a result of her treatment, her speech was so impaired that for a few months she could barely make herself understood. But even then the patient girl did not lack divine aid and consolation, because it pleased the Lord to open the understanding of his sister, the one who married Jorge de Almeyda, to everything that the sick girl said. The physician and the surgeon and everyone else, therefore, relied on her to interpret the speech of the sick girl. May the infinite mercy of the Lord God heal her, for she is still an invalid.¹⁵⁵

To the older unmarried sister,¹⁵⁶ our God, the Lord on High, then gave another very serious and equally perilous illness. Following severe depressions, the girl became mad, and as a result would have endangered not only her own life,¹⁵⁷ but the lives of all the rest of the family were it not for the providence of the One who has never abandoned them in their straits and hopefully never will. For in her madness, she has taken the idols in the homes of her heathen neighbors and before their very eyes thrown them out of their windows to be shattered down below. And on top of this she has done things and said things which have brought upon us such fright and danger that only our God and Lord can deliver us, for the glory of His sweet name.

The madness of this poor maiden is such that she babbles ceaselessly, day and night; yet in the course of her occasional gibberish, she utters many bald and lucid truths to the monks and idolatrous nuns who visit her in an attempt to cure her of her sickness.

Two doctors gave her ten stomach cauteries which brought on such pain and fury that she threw things at her mother and sisters

¹⁵² Text: *Virgo tua et bacubustus ipsame consolata sunt* . . . [p. 493].

¹⁵³ *Psalms* XXIII:4.

¹⁵⁴ This was Anica [or Ana].

¹⁵⁵ Text: *a quien sano la infinita mya. del sr. D. pues todavia lo esta.* . . . [p. 493].

¹⁵⁶ This was Mariana.

¹⁵⁷ Text: *y esta sy en muy temido peligro su vida* . . . [p. 493].

and would have killed them, were it not for the grace of God. They have had such a difficult time with the girl that even strangers are moved to pity and compassion and they cry over the family's misfortune as if they were their kith and kin. But they [the members of the family] hope that God on high will extricate them in peace from these crises and bring them to the place where, in recognition of all His kindness and mercy, they may offer a sacrifice of praise in the midst of his servants,¹⁵⁸ for the honor and glory of His most holy name.

The documents freeing Joseph, his mother and sisters had arrived with the fleet that entered the port of New Spain around September, 1594. Since God our Lord has always led them on the road reserved for His special servants, He ordained that on a Thursday afternoon, on the sixth of October of that year, four days before the news of their liberty reached them, the constable of the Inquisition should come to summon them.¹⁵⁹ This plunged them into the worst predicament imaginable. They bemoaned their lot as if they were already arrested and delivered over to the cruel enemy. But the Lord God, in His great mercy, had decreed that the purpose of the summons was to have them ratify¹⁶⁰ their previous testimony before the Inquisition to the effect that Jacob Lumbroso, Joseph's younger brother¹⁶¹ [who had escaped from New Spain and] whom the Inquisitors were planning to burn in effigy, studied and kept the holy Law of the Most High.¹⁶² When they had done so, they were sent home, where they joyously celebrated God's merciful deliverance with sacred hymns and songs.

Four days later, which was Monday, October 10th, they received the writ of liberty. This was one of the greatest mercies and blessings that [our] wandering and sinning people have ever received from the Lord. So great was the joy it brought that even their non-Jewish acquaintances rejoiced at their cheer, praising God and saying, "Blessed be the Lord God, who [has] had compassion upon you and [has] delivered you from such great travail and affliction."

And because this best suited [God's purpose] they could not [afford

¹⁵⁸ Text: *a donde . . . le offrescan entre sus ciervos sacrificio de alabanzas . . .* [p. 494].

¹⁵⁹ Text: *de mandado de los inquisidores . . .* [p. 494].

¹⁶⁰ Text: *redificarlas . . .* [p. 494].

¹⁶¹ As Luis changed his name to Joseph Lumbroso, so Miguel changed his to Jacob Lumbroso.

¹⁶² Miguel had escaped from New Spain and was at the time in Salonika, safely out of the reach of the Inquisition. The family did not mind at all giving evidence that could in no way hurt him.

immediately to] redeem their penitential garb.¹⁶³ Soon God moved a wealthy neighbor of theirs to bond them for eight hundred and fifty pesos.¹⁶⁴ They immediately paid four hundred and twenty of these from the alms that Joseph had collected and took eight months to accumulate the balance. On Monday, October 24, 1594, on the command of God Most High, their penitential garb was removed.

On the same day the Lord performed a great miracle for Joseph. It happened that, at the very moment Joseph went to have his penitential garb removed, a heretic of our own people went before the Inquisitors to accuse one of his [Israelite] brothers [of Judaizing] and also to accuse Manuel de Lucena for having tried to enlighten him and direct him to the knowledge of the Lord God. At that time Joseph was in Lucena's house, though he was not together with him.

Joseph next went to Pachuca to gather some more alms. A week went by after the [heretic's] accusation when the Lord ordained that the Inquisition arrest the men he had accused. Though the heretic had stated that Joseph was in the same house as Lucena, the Inquisition did not arrest him, because God on High, God Almighty had decided to deliver him with an extraordinary miracle. . . .¹⁶⁵ May His holy name¹⁶⁶ be eternally glorified and praised. Amen.

And because the road along which the Lord God has been leading them has been full of mercies, and His rod has been only the soft scourge of fear, He decreed that on the following Monday, a week after [they had taken off their penitential garb], they should suffer a new blow, one of the most severe yet — though they never suffered any from which the Lord God, in His infinite mercy, did not deliver them in two hours. What this blow was and how it came about are not being recorded for the time being, because the writer is still in lands of captivity, though with the help and favor of the Omnipotent¹⁶⁷ and Almighty Adonay, the God of Israel, he is on the verge of leaving one of the greatest and most dangerous captivities which members of our nation have suffered.¹⁶⁸ Here by the singular kind-

¹⁶³ Text: *no se les quitaron luego los hábitos* . . . [p. 495].

¹⁶⁴ See *supra*, p. 314. There Joseph is said to have collected more than eight hundred and fifty pesos. What happened to the balance we are not told.

¹⁶⁵ The miracle is not narrated here.

¹⁶⁶ Text: *a su santísima madre [sic] sea dada eterna gloria y alabanza amen* . . . [p. 495]. See *supra*, p. 306, note 119.

¹⁶⁷ Text: *altísimo* . . . [p. 495].

¹⁶⁸ Luis may have been referring to his escape to the Old World through a miracle; more likely he was alluding to the escape of his soul from New Spain, by way of the stake, to the Paradise he was awaiting.

ness of the Lord our God he and his family have been living in a danger no less great than the one which confronted Saint Daniel when he was thrown into the lions' den. The Almighty very miraculously shut the cruel mouths of the [enemies] surrounding him,¹⁶⁹ for had not the Lord our God intervened, he would have immediately been torn to pieces.

Wherefore I humble my heart, worship and glorify God's most holy name and declare that He is good and very great and His mercy is eternal. May it help us¹⁷⁰ and all Israel. Amen.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ Text: *a estos que los cercan* . . . [p. 496].

¹⁷⁰ Text: *la qual no valga* . . . [p. 496].

¹⁷¹ Supplementing Carvajal's autobiography, the next issue of the *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* will contain Carvajal's last will and testament and his letters to his mother and sisters during their second incarceration by the Inquisition.