

1. The epitaph written by Rabbi Yehudah HaLevi, *Korei haDorot* Chapter 3
Mountains on the day of Sinai quaked for you, for the angels of G-d encountered you
And they wrote the Torah on the walls (tablets) of your heart, and the most desirable of crowns they set upon you
The wise could not marshal the strength to stand, if not for the wisdoms they learned from you

2. Map from <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/north-africa-cultural-crossroads-faces-future>



Rabbi Yitzchak Alfasi

3. Zeev Yaavetz, The Era of Rabbi Yitzchak Alfasi and Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki

As much as he placed the son of his rival as his own son because he was a lover of righteousness and a man of generosity, so he overpowered his love for his own son, his flesh and blood, because of his love for truth and justice. He had a wise son named Rabbi Yaakov, who was great in Torah, and yet he placed first, before his son Rabbi Yaakov, his student Rabbi Yosef ben Migash, because he saw that his student was very great, greater than his own son. And when his death neared, he placed his hands upon his student Rabbi Yosef and placed him on his seat, and he set him in his own place as the head of the communities of Lucena and all of Hispania.

4. "Giants Of" <https://www.yutorah.org/search/?teacher=81072&collection=12276>

5. Rabbi Yitzchak Alfast, Halachot, Rosh HaShanah, 8a

Rav Huna said: And [they blow shofar even on Shabbat] with the rabbinical court. What is "with the rabbinical court"? In front of the rabbinical court, as opposed to when it is not in front of the rabbinical court, when they would not [blow shofar]. It was also taught: Rabbi Chiya bar Gamda cited Rabbi Yosi ben Shaul, citing Rebbe: We only blow shofar when the rabbinical court is in session.

6. Rabbeinu Asher, Rosh HaShanah 4:1

They said of Rav Alfas z"l that he blew shofar on Rosh HaShanah which was on Shabbat. And so is indicated in his *Halachot*, where he brought Rav Huna's statement, "and with the rabbinical court", and he only brings that which is practiced today. He explained "wherever there is a rabbinical court" to mean not only the Sanhedrin, but any superlative rabbinical court, the greatest in its generation. And his students did not do this after him.

7. Talmud, Avodah Zarah 19b

What does Proverbs 7:26 mean when it says, "For she has killed many corpses?" This is a student who has not reached the level of issuing halachic rulings, and he issues halachic rulings. "And mighty are all she has killed?" This is a student who has reached the level of issuing halachic rulings, and he does not issue halachic rulings. Until what age? 40 years. But Rava issued halachic rulings [before he turned 40]! That is where he is more worthy than anyone else.

8. Rabbi Yitzchak Alfasi, Halachot, Avodah Zarah, 5b

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9. Rabbi Yitzchak Alfasi, Halachot, Eruvin, 35b

We don't follow this. Since the passage in our Talmud permits, we are not concerned that the Western Talmud prohibits. We rely on our Talmud, which was later; its sages were more expert in the Western Talmud than we are, and if they didn't know that this passage in the Western Talmud was not authoritative, they would not have permitted.

10. Zeev Yaavetz, The Era of Rabbi Yitzchak Alfasi and Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki

When he came to Lucena, the hearts of Ibn Albalya and Ibn Ghayyat turned from him. This was bad in the eyes of Rav Alfasi, to the point where he expressed his harsh spirit verbally and in writing.

And when Rav Yitzchak ben Albalya neared death, and he saw that with his death his son Baruch – a very bright 17-year old youth – would be taken from upon his head... He called his son Baruch and told him softly that his spirit was weak and dying, "I am dying, and now, my son, rise and go to Rabbeinu Yitzchak Alfasi, and tell him that I have forgiven him for all of the harsh things he said of me, verbally and in writing. Stand before him and learn Torah from his mouth, for I know he will be generous to you." And after the youth returned from burying his father, he went to Rav Alfasi and told him all that his father had said. And the elderly rabbi wept powerfully, and he spoke to the heart of the youth, good and comforting words, and he told him, "Since your father has died, I will be a father to you." And Rav Alfasi took him to his home and loved him greatly and taught him the entire Talmud, and made him a leader in Israel.

11. Rambam (Maimonides, 12th c. Spain/Morocco/Egypt), Introduction to his Commentary to the Mishnah, Chapter 9

The Gaonim composed many commentaries, but to the best of our knowledge none completed a commentary to the entire Talmud. Some were prevented by brevity of life, some by the needs of people with their litigation. Some composed legal works, in Arabic or Hebrew, like *Halachot Gedolot*, *Halachot Ketuot*, *Halachot Pesukot*, *Hilchot Rabbi AchamiShabcha*, and others. The *Halachot* composed by our great master Rabbeinu Yitzchak, of blessed memory, sufficed in place of all of those, including all of the benefits of rulings and laws needed for our day, meaning this time of exile, and he already sifted from there all of the errors which had fallen into the rulings of his predecessors. We only have difficulty with a few of his rulings, not even ten by any measure.

12. Rabbi Chaim Yosef David Azulai (17th century Italy, Israel), Shem haGedolim רפ"ז

And the R"i, author of Tosafot, would say that the Rif certainly experienced *ruach hakodesh* when he composed his Halachot. And I have seen notes from Rabbeinu Yaakov of Marvege, who would ask questions of Heaven regarding laws of which he was uncertain, and they would answer him. Once he asked about a law, as to whether it followed the Rif or those who disagreed with him, and they replied from Heaven that the law definitely follows the Rif, for he is greater. They said of him the verse, "And Yitzchak planted... And the man became great, and he grew increasingly until he was very great."

13. Rabbi Yosef Karo (16th century Turkey, Israel), Introduction to Beit Yosef

I decided regarding the three pillars of halachic rulings on which the House of Israel depends for halachic rulings - the Rif, Rambam and Rosh – that where two of them agree, I would follow them, other than in certain cases where all of the Sages of Israel, or most, disagree with that view and so a different practice was spread.