Historians have traditionally considered Jacob Judah Leon’s *Retrato* (1643) to be a polemical work designed to promote the Talmudic model of the Jerusalem Temple among early-modern Christian scholars. However, a closer examination of the various editions of the *Retrato* reveals that Leon’s discourse on the Temple is not a mere rehashing of prior rabbinic descriptions of the Talmudic model. Rather, Leon’s description is innovative in that he roots the Talmudic model in scripture by creatively reinterpreting the Temple descriptions of I Kings, II Chronicles, and Ezekiel as conforming to that of Tractate Middoth. By rooting the Talmudic model of the Temple in scripture, Leon likely addresses the frustrations of Spanish and Portuguese Jews such as Uriel da Costa, who, having been reared as Catholics, were greatly disturbed by the apparent dissonance between rabbinic tradition and the Bible. In this respect, Leon’s *Retrato* belongs to a broader literary movement among Western European rabbis designed to legitimize the rabbinic tradition to a biblicocentric Spanish and Portuguese audience. In this regard, Leon’s *Retrato* is an unmitigated success. Not only was the *Retrato* popular among Spanish and Portuguese Jews (even Baruch Spinoza owned a copy), but it was also widely disseminated throughout Christian Europe. The fact the *Retrato* received two royal approbations and merited no less than six translations meant that, by 1675, Jacob Judah Leon was possibly the most famous Jew in Western Europe.