



Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch

Torah Leadership for Our Times

This year—2008—marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch. In this tribute, Professor Levi explores Rabbi Hirsch's unique leadership during an especially challenging period in Jewish history.

*Artist's rendering of Rabbi Hirsch's synagogue in Frankfurt, 1853.
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Sketch courtesy of Rabbi Shimon Hirsch of Monsey, New York

The reader may be amazed to find the term “our times” applied to a personality born two centuries ago. However, today’s Torah leadership is indeed facing almost exactly the same challenges that confronted Western European Jewry 200 years ago. Until then, Jews had essentially lived in ghettos; hence they were ill prepared to face the real world. The crumbling of the ghetto walls confronted the Torah leadership with two options—to attempt to create a “virtual” wall or to beef up the stunted “immune system.” Many adopted the first approach. On the other hand, there were those who saw the removal of the ghetto as a God-given opportunity to restore Jewish life to its original vigor. Among these, Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch was probably the most creative and successful. He reminded the Jewish public of their real purpose in life.

Unfortunately, the intense efforts made by some in the Torah world to insulate themselves caused many to forget the centrality of this-worldliness in the Torah. In the opening section of the Midrash Rabbah, our Sages tell us that the Torah served as the blueprint for the world—that the Torah and this world are components of one system. Adam was, after all, put into the Garden of Eden “to work it and guard it” (Genesis 2:15). When he worked the land, “thereby the purpose of creation was attained” (*Ha’amek Davar*, Genesis 2:4). Finally, “Not study, but rather action is the main object of [Torah]” (*Pirkei Avot* 1:17).

Torah *im Derech Eretz*” (Torah Combined with Worldly Endeavor) is the motto usually associated with Rabbi Hirsch, but it is, in reality, a fundamental Torah concept. Rabbi Hirsch only reawakened the Jewish public to its importance.

While Rabbi Hirsch was universally admired throughout the Torah world, there were those who claimed that his approach was meant to be followed only in the era in which he lived due to the unique circumstances of his time. But Rabbi Hirsch’s own writings on the subject make such claims untenable. (See, for example, his “standard” biography¹ and Rabbi Yechiel Weinberg’s responsa *Seridei Eish* [4:368-9].) Here is one representative quote from Rabbi Hirsch’s writings:

It would be most perverse and criminal of us to seek to instill in our children a contempt, based on ignorance and untruth, for everything that is not specifically Jewish, for all other human arts and sciences, in the belief that by inculcating our children with such a negative attitude we could safeguard them from contacts with the

Professor Levi is past rector and professor of electro-optics at the Jerusalem College of Technology, where he also gave courses in Torah thought. In addition to 150-odd articles published in scientific, technical and Judaica journals, Professor Levi has published a number of books in optics, halachah and Jewish ideology.

scholarly and scientific endeavors of the rest of mankind ... You will then see that your simple-minded calculations were just as criminal as they were perverse. Criminal, because they enlisted the help of untruth supposedly in order to protect the truth, and because you have thus departed from the path upon which your own Sages have preceded you and beckoned you to follow them. Perverse, because by so doing you have achieved precisely the opposite of what you wanted to accomplish... Your child will consequently begin to doubt all of Judaism which (so, at least, it must seem to him from your behavior) can exist only in the night and darkness of ignorance and which must close its eyes and the minds of its adherents to the light of all knowledge if it is not to perish (Collected Writings 7: 415-6).

By calling the contempt for all science “criminal,” Rabbi Hirsch clearly shows how important science is to Torah. Even Rabbi Shimon Schwab, who as a young student in Lithuanian yeshivot was convinced that Rabbi Hirsch considered the *Torah im Derech Eretz* principle a compromise, eventually came to realize that the approach was, in fact, an ideal.² He once told me that, as a young man, he thought the Sages frowned upon secular knowledge, but later realized that they endorsed it.

Coexistence, Symbiosis or Synthesis?

Just how does *Torah im Derech Eretz* view Torah and worldly science? Are

they seen as being in a state of synthesis, where each complements the other? Or in symbiosis, where each is distinct but beneficial to the other’s existence? Or in mere coexistence, with neither having any special relationship to the other? Once we have grasped the fundamental meaning of *Torah im Derech Eretz*, the answer is self-evident. If Torah and this world are components of a single system, their correct synthesis is the very essence of Torah life. Both must be studied before we are able to translate the Torah’s instructions into reality.

Rabbi Hirsch makes it clear that this is his position. Whenever he discusses secular studies, in *Horeb* as well as in his commentary to the Torah,³ he stresses that such studies must be undertaken from the viewpoint of Torah. They must serve Torah goals and must be tested by comparison with Torah principles. In the words of Rabbi Hirsch’s great-grandson: “*Torah im Derech Eretz* is not to be compared to a physical mixture of two separate components, but rather to a chemical compound.”⁴

Rabbi Hirsch never tired of pointing out that the study of science and history is necessary for a deeper understanding of the ways of God and the Torah’s message.⁵ His *Commentary on the Torah* is interspersed with references to scientific and historical facts to aid in the interpretation of Scripture. Here he adhered to the principle of accepting the truth from whomever presents it. (This in con-

trast to the humanities, where there are no human-based means to test for truth.) In one annual report of the high school he founded (perhaps the first yeshiva high school in history), he demonstrates in considerable detail—including tens of examples—how the study of natural science and world history contributes to the student’s understanding of the Torah and its message.⁶ In the previous year’s report, he discussed the impact that Torah study has on our understanding of general secular concepts: “These two elements [general and special Jewish education] are in truth nothing but the two complementary and closely related parts of a complete and homogeneous education.”⁷

Unadulterated Judaism

Jewish thinkers throughout our history have attempted to synthesize the ideas of Gentile philosophers with



Lithograph by E. Schier, 1847. Courtesy of Agudath Israel of America Archives

Jewish thought. Often this was accomplished by bending Torah ideas a bit or by inserting foreign elements into them, as long as it didn’t result in an obvious contradiction to Torah. In contrast to these approaches, Rabbi Hirsch demands that Judaism be understood “from within itself.”⁸ This demand is a central theme in his writing, and he does not hesitate to criticize those who fail to follow it, however great they may be as halachic authorities.⁹

In his steadfast adherence to this principle, Rabbi Hirsch never turns to outside sources for ideological inspiration. He encourages the study, from Gentile sources, of nature, psychology, anthropology and history, but not the study of humanities, which deals with the meaning of the world and man in it, and with his aspirations, values, goals and ideas.¹⁰ Even when, on one occasion, dictates of good manners compelled him to eulogize a Gentile poet, he praised that poet for having absorbed many lofty Jewish teachings, and for having enriched the Gentile world by clothing those teachings in an inspiring form. Nowhere, however, in an address of fourteen pages, did he imply that we, as Jews, should—or need to—absorb ideas from the Gentile.¹¹

Did Rabbi Hirsch himself absorb such ideas? In view of the above, that would seem surprising. I, for one, have not found a single foreign idea in Rabbi Hirsch’s writings. Granted, Gentile thinkers often independently rediscover certain of the Torah’s truths, and these ideas are then found in non-Jewish literature. However, when a Torah authority employs one of these concepts in his writings, it is surely poor scholarship to claim that he took it from the Gentile source when the Jewish one was there all along. The sad fact is, though, that in a generation like ours, a generation that has originated anti-hero worship and turned the dwarfing of spiritual giants into a popular sport, the requirements of good scholarship will inevitably fall victim to the desire for sensationalism. Thus it is that some scholars feign to discover foreign influences in the works of even such a purist as Rabbi Hirsch, despite the fact that the Jewish sources he draws upon are quite obvious.¹²

Others have not hesitated to accuse Rabbi Hirsch of being a believer in secular humanism, of adoring Western European culture and of trying to adopt two cultures that he himself was unable to reconcile. These totally unsupported claims fly in the face of Rabbi Hirsch’s repeated assertion (an assertion which he acted upon consistently) that every aspect of secular culture could be measured against the criteria of Torah before it may be accepted into our thought-world as true.¹³ The essence of secular

humanism is the belief that man is self-sufficient, that on his own he will inexorably ascend the ladder to perfection. This should be contrasted with, for example, Rabbi Hirsch’s comment that even scientific knowledge is dependent on belief in God’s creation for its validation¹⁴—that even modern scientific progress was not possible until the Jewish people spread the knowledge of God’s unity among the nations.¹⁵

Rabbi Hirsch lived in a time of great upheaval, when Jews were being granted progressively greater rights. It was easy to become intoxicated with the feeling of freedom, and such indeed was the spirit of the time. Reading Rabbi Hirsch’s works, one is impressed by the low-key terms in which he refers to the emancipation. Far from being swept up in the fervor, Rabbi Hirsch repeatedly warns his fellow Jews not to be deceived by the unprecedented liberality they were experiencing. Renewed anti-Semitism could well be lurking around the corner. “Who knows?” he wrote. “Perhaps it is just those who are blinded by their exaggerated vision, idolizing emancipation and equality, who will be the cause of reviving the danger of renewed enslavement [of the Jews].”¹⁶

With almost prophetic insight he writes:

*Perhaps the day will come when all the things bestowed upon mankind for its benefit and liberation will become corrupted into their very antithesis. Mankind, instead of assuring its members their legitimate rights of development ... will serve them the tear-drenched bread of slaves and the worm-wood of bitterness.... At such time, science, too, will become solely destructive ... will frantically blind itself with its own brightness Mankind will vainly exhaust its strength in a blind upsurge of uncurbed desires*¹⁷

In addition to their amazing timeliness, these clear, unequivocal statements give lie to the above claim that Rabbi Hirsch favored Gentile philosophies, in general, and secular humanism, in particular.

Jewish Nationalism and Eretz Yisrael

Rabbi Hirsch views Judaism as primarily nationalistic in nature, not “religious” per se. He stresses that Jewry is a people and not merely a religious

community. In his *Commentary on the Torah*, he demonstrates this contention clearly and ascribes any effort to classify Judaism as a religion to “thoughtlessness.”¹⁸ He defines Torah

plicit. He writes that whereas the Torah is meant to accompany us wherever we must wander, a full Jewish life—materially and spiritually full—is limited to Eretz Yisrael, and

one that would enable those who live on it according to God’s will to reach the highest levels of spirit and morality. That land is Eretz Yisrael. Elsewhere he suggests that because Eretz Yisrael was spared the ravages of the Deluge, it retained the pristine quality of the earth.²⁵

Rabbi Hirsch expressed his love for Eretz Yisrael not only in word but also in deed. He warmly supported the nineteenth-century efforts to develop self-supporting agricultural settlements in Eretz Yisrael; he raised money for them,²⁶ and in 1883 issued an urgent appeal to support the pioneering community of Petach Tikva.²⁷

In view of all this, how can we explain occasional claims that Rabbi Hirsch was an anti-nationalist? These claims seem to be based on two facts: Rabbi Hirsch, with all the importance he attached to Jewish nationalism, always emphasized that only Torah imbued it with significance. A second source of misunderstanding on this score was his refusal to assist Rabbi Tzvi Hirsch Kalischer with his efforts to resettle Eretz Yisrael. Rabbi Kalischer worked within the framework of

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literature as “Jewish national literature” and Torah education as “Jewish national education.”¹⁹ Concerning the exile, while not denying the positive contribution the Talmud assigns to it,²⁰ Rabbi Hirsch declares: “As long as the Jewish national organism is in exile, it is sick.”²¹ No wonder the author of *Seridei Eish* writes that Rabbi Hirsch “must be deemed a whole-hearted extreme nationalist.”²²

Concerning the central role played by Eretz Yisrael in Torah thought, Rabbi Hirsch is just as ex-

that God Himself established an especially tight bond between the people and the Land of Israel.²³ Indeed, when discussing Eretz Yisrael, his comments uncharacteristically border on the mystical. He points out that before Abraham went to Eretz Yisrael, God merely *spoke* to him; only in Eretz Yisrael did God *appear* to him.²⁴ Developing the idea, Rabbi Hirsch explains that when God wanted to rejuvenate mankind and return His presence to earth, He chose a land that was suitable for that purpose,

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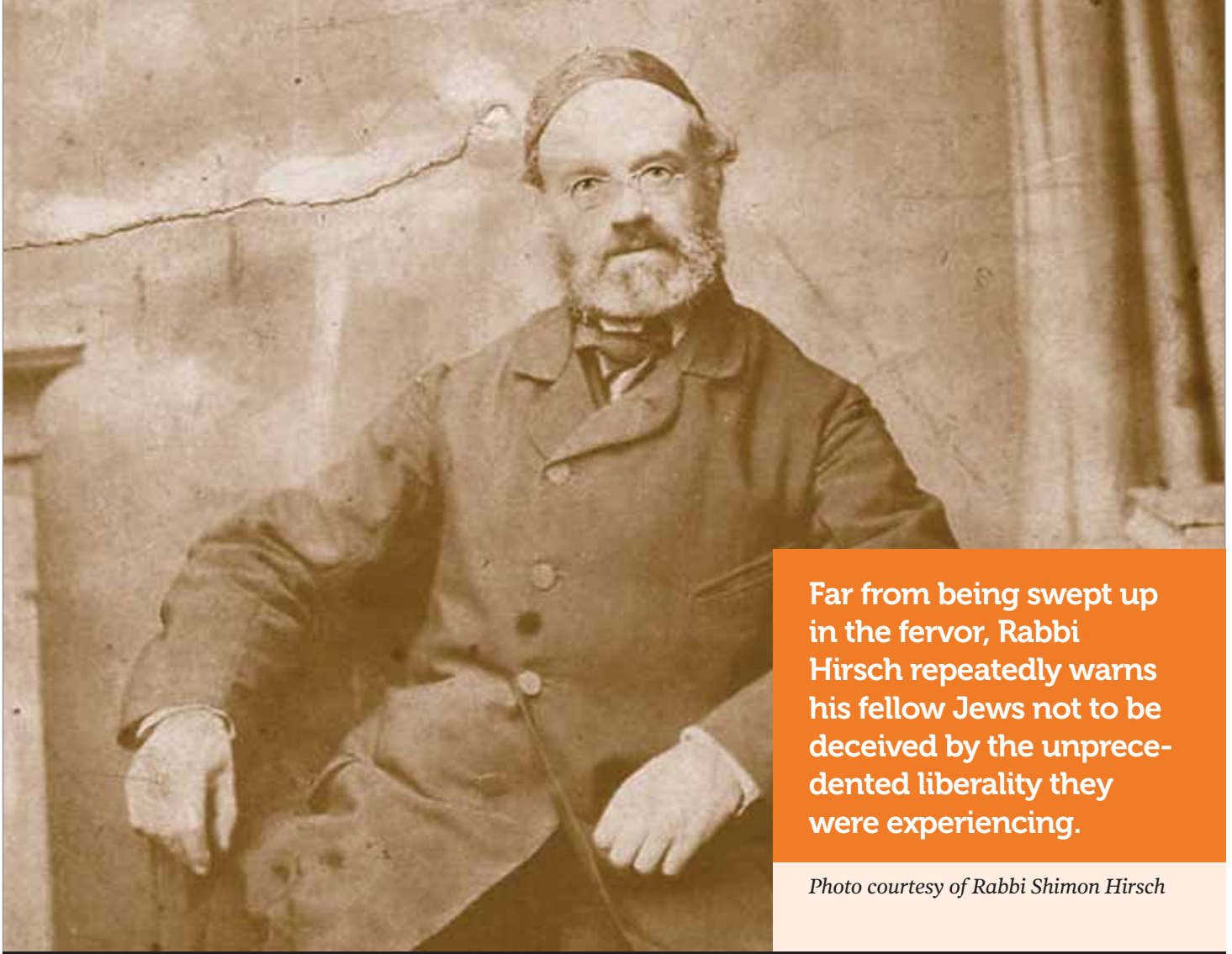
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Far from being swept up in the fervor, Rabbi Hirsch repeatedly warns his fellow Jews not to be deceived by the unprecedented liberality they were experiencing.

Photo courtesy of Rabbi Shimon Hirsch

Chovevei Tzion, which advocated establishing a Jewish homeland in Eretz Yisrael. Rabbi Hirsch refused to cooperate because he saw these endeavors as violating “the three oaths,”²⁸ which prohibit all effort to end the exile by force as well as to rebel against “the nations.” According to the Talmud, these prohibitions would remain in effect as long as the nations of the world opposed such settlement. Rabbi Hirsch did not regard the political efforts of the fledgling Zionist movement as voiding the Torah’s restrictions.²⁹

What, we may well ask, would have been Rabbi Hirsch’s attitude toward the present State of Israel? Answering such a hypothetical question is always speculative. Let us first see how the last century’s Torah authorities viewed the historical developments they witnessed. Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk, better known as

the “Ohr Somayach,” declared that when the League of Nations decided to establish a Jewish homeland in Eretz Yisrael (at the San Remo Conference of 1920), that decision removed the restrictions of “the three oaths.”³⁰ Another outstanding halachic authority, “the Avnei Nezer,” also made the restrictions conditional on the attitude of the nations of the world.³¹ Even Rabbi Velvel of Brisk, known for his uncompromising anti-Zionist stand, declared that the United Nations resolution approving the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine “was a smile from Divine providence; but the ones in charge ruined it.”³²

Many other great Torah authorities evidently were following the same line of reasoning when they saw, in these events, both an opportunity and a challenge. Among them were Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, rabbi

of the “Old Yishuv” in the early twentieth century; his successor, Rabbi Yosef Tzvi Dushinsky; Rabbi Tzvi Pesach Frank, author of *Har Tzvi*; Rabbi Yosef Kahaneman, the *rosh yeshivah* of Ponevezh; Rabbi Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler, author of *Michtav MeEliyahu* and Rabbi Eliezer Bloch, *rosh yeshivah* of Telz.³³ Since their position on this issue is eminently reasonable, as evidenced by its near-universal acceptance among the greatest Torah authorities, there is no basis to assume that Rabbi Hirsch would disagree with them. Presumably he, too, would concur that under the present circumstances *aliyah* and any effort to improve the State of Israel, materially and spiritually, should be most welcome.

The Unity of the Jewish People

Rabbi Hirsch had an exceptional sense of responsibility toward the

Jewish people. As is well known, he devoted his whole adult life to their advancement. When Rabbi Simcha Zissel of Kelm, the renowned disciple of Rabbi Yisrael Salanter, wrote his famous letter extolling the intense involvement of German Jewish Orthodoxy with Jewish suffering abroad, he mentioned by name only Rabbi Hirsch for his share in the efforts to help persecuted Russian Jewry. Rabbi Hirsch may well have been the moving force behind this major relief and rescue campaign.³⁴

Faced with the unbelieving Jews of his time, including Reform rabbis and their followers, Rabbi Hirsch applied Rambam's ruling concerning the descendants of the Karaite heretics. Rambam declared that because of their upbringing, Karaites were to be considered as acting under duress and were therefore blameless; they were to be brought back to the national fold and the Torah "by words of peace."³⁵ This, declared Rabbi Hirsch, was also the way to approach our wayward brothers today.³⁶

But while he demanded peaceful and friendly intercourse with individuals who had strayed, this was not to be at the expense of any of the Torah's principles. Regarding these he was absolutely firm and, significantly, this led to his rejecting any cooperation with organizations that challenged the Torah's authority. In his opinion, an organization was defined not by its members but by its program. Thus an organization might be heretical, and so would have to be ostracized, even though all its members and leaders might be blameless and should be drawn close as private individuals.

Rabbi Hirsch ruled that a Jew is not permitted to join a Reform congregation, since such voluntary joining is tantamount to legitimizing the movement. This principle was called "Austritt" (secession, i.e., establishing an independent organization), and it stands whether or not the Reform congregation provides for the religious needs of Orthodox members, for it is based on the prohibition of endorsing heresy, not on the likelihood of eventual interference with the member's practice of Torah law.³⁷ (Rabbi Hirsch was the guiding force in the creation of Frankfurt's *Israelische Religionsgesellschaft*, an independent religious organization that seceded from the overall community, which had been taken over by Reform Jews. Rabbi Hirsch served as the spiritual leader of this *kehillah* for almost four decades, from 1851 to 1888.) Rabbi Moshe Feinstein takes a similar position,³⁸ going so far as to prohibit joining a charitable organization that desecrates Shabbat, since such membership would constitute a tacit endorsement.³⁹

Greatness in Torah

On reading Rabbi Hirsch's *Commentary on the Torah*, one cannot help but be impressed by his thorough command of the Talmud. His scholarship is evident in his commentary on *parashat Mishpatim*, which is an excellent summary of the Talmudic conclusions in *Bava Kama* and *Bava Metzia*. His commentary on Leviticus demonstrates a total grasp of the conclusions in the Order of *Kodashim*, where the text is notoriously corrupt and the student is often left confused as to the final outcome of the Talmudic discussion. Furthermore, throughout his commentary he repeatedly cites dozens of Acharonim.⁴⁰

Rabbi Hirsch's halachic response to Rabbi Seligmann Baer Bamberger's challenge on the issue of secession cov-

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ers sixty-six printed pages and, most amazingly, is dated a mere six days after Rabbi Bamberger's letter was written. In his response, Rabbi Hirsch rebuts Rabbi Bamberger's criticisms, point by point, with an impressive display of erudition based extensively on Talmud, *Tosefta*, Rishonim and Acharonim.⁴¹ Rabbis from all over Europe, and even from America, turned to Rabbi Hirsch with their halachic queries; see a recently published collection of about 100 of his responsa covering the four parts of the *Shulchan Aruch*.⁴²

What Rabbi Hirsch practiced, he also saw as the ideal and as the goal for the general public:

*Our task in life has no greater enemy, and there is no greater cancer on our present state, than ignorance. Study Torah thoroughly—Torah, the Prophets, Ketuvim (Hagiographia), Talmud and decisors. And do not study out of a desire to be a rabbi. Study Torah as a businessman, a tradesman, an artist, a doctor, or a scientist.*⁴³

This was Rabbi Hirsch's ideal. What happened to Torah scholarship under *Torah im Derech Eretz* in practice?

We have already pointed out that since Torah is meant to guide our life in this world, it stands to reason that knowledge of this world is an aid to understanding Torah. Indeed many Torah authorities support this idea explicitly. And in fact Rabbeinu Bachya, and following him the Maharal, declares: "It is a known fact that all the seven [secular] wisdoms are a ladder by which one ascends to the Divine wisdom."⁴⁴ Rambam, too, sees scientific knowledge as a prerequisite to understanding Torah wisdom, and the Vilna Gaon makes an even stronger statement.⁴⁵ A community endorsing *Torah im Derech Eretz* should then be expected to produce greater Torah authorities than a community that does not. Yet in fact the reverse has been observed. During the eighty years that Western European Orthodoxy was under the influence of the *Torah im Derech Eretz* principle—from the time Rabbi Hirsch arrived in Frankfurt in 1851 until the rise of the Nazi regime in the 1930s—it produced very few outstanding Torah authorities.

The puzzle, however, vanishes when we look at the historical background. In considering the number of Torah authorities from Western as compared to Eastern Europe, the relative sizes of the two Jewish populations must be taken into account—Western Jewry comprised only a few percent of European Jewry as a whole.

But there is an even more important factor to consider. That worldly knowledge was flourishing in nineteenth-century Western Europe is well known. But what of Torah? For at least eighty years before the *Torah im Derech Eretz* principle was revived by Rabbi Hirsch,⁴⁶ governmentally imposed emancipation without Torah guidance, and later on the misguided Reform movement, had been eradicating Torah knowledge in Western Europe, so much so that when Rabbi Hirsch arrived in Frankfurt, he found a spiritual desert. (Emanuel Schwarzschild, who served at one point as president of Rabbi Hirsch's congregation, reports that even in Frankfurt, known for centuries as a bastion of Torah learning, he was the only one of his generation who still put on tefillin.⁴⁷) Large populations do not change quickly, and they certainly do

not become learned quickly; it is surely reasonable to allow eighty years to repair the destruction wrought during a previous eighty years. Thus Rabbi Hirsch set up a religious educational system, though it extended no further than high school. His son-in-law and successor, Rabbi Solomon Breuer, established a yeshiva; gradually it became fashionable for parents to send their sons there to study for a year or two before going to university. The result of this exposure was that these students continued learning Torah even as they pursued their academic studies. By the following generation, we find gifted young men traveling to the Eastern European yeshivot to deepen their Torah knowledge. In the end a few of them became outstanding Torah authorities and returned "home" as spiritual leaders. But that was indeed the end. It is not difficult to guess, however, how the community would have progressed had Hitler and his hordes not reduced European Jewry to a mere shadow of its former self.

A Spiritual Leader

A vital condition for successful leadership is that of character. A spiritual leader must model integrity, dedication and all the qualities he would like to instill in his community. Here, again, Rabbi Hirsch was outstanding.

He had many opponents, some of them quite virulent; but no one ever challenged his absolute integrity. On the first day of each quarter, his congregation paid his salary for that quarter. When he started feeling weak in his old age, he instructed his family that when he died they should return the overpayment for the remainder of the quarter. Perhaps it is more than a coincidence that Rabbi Hirsch passed away on December 31, 1888, the last day of the quarter.

Similarly, his famous motto: "Glatt kosher? Glatt *yoshor*!" teaches that absolute probity in the interpersonal domain is even more important than in the ritual domain.⁴⁸ (Note that the Targum renders the term "*yoshor*" as kosher.)

Rabbi Hirsch's position required him to assert his authority, which he did. But this did not prevent him from acting like a loving friend to the children of his community. One of these

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“children” recorded in his memoirs that the children of the Frankfurt congregation were afraid of the shul’s officers—with the exception of Rabbi Hirsch. When they came to his office to show off their “precious” finds (such as dead beetles, et cetera), they were always received with a friendly smile.⁴⁹

When asked by a young, newly appointed rabbi for advice and guidelines, Rabbi Hirsch responded with a lengthy letter.

[I suggest] to be totally devoted to God’s will and to see your wisdom in avoiding all shrewdness ... your primary efforts be directed to align your thoughts, words, and actions with the will of your Creator and [thereby] to guide your people along the path they should walk; like a person looks into a bright mirror, thus your congregation will look at you to know what to do, and from what to refrain.⁵⁰

Surely there are many in the Jewish community who hope and pray for such a leader; let us try to merit one.

Notes

1. Rabbi Eliyahu Meir Klugman, *Rabbi*

Samson Raphael Hirsch (New York, 1996), 200-217, esp. 215

2. Rabbi Shimon Schwab, brochure, *Elu Ve’elu—These and Those*, 16

3. Some examples: Rabbi Hirsch, *Horeb: A Philosophy of Jewish Laws and Observances*, trans. Isidore Grunfeld (London, 1962), sec. 551; Rabbi Hirsch, *Commentary on the Torah*, Leviticus 18:4, Deuteronomy 6:7.

4. Mordechai Breuer, *HaMayan* 9 (1) (Tishrei 5729): 15

5. *Nineteen Letters of Ben Uziel*, Letter 18 (p. 273 in the J. Elias translation, New York, 1995): “To contemplate nature with the perception of David, to listen to history with the ear of Isaiah.” Cf. also *Commentary*, Deuteronomy 4:32, 6:4, 16:1.

6. “The Relation of General to Specifically Jewish Education,” in *Judaism Eternal*, Dayan I. Grunfeld, ed., vol. 1 (London, 1956), 203-220; *Collected Writings*, vol. 7 (New York, 1996), 81-100

7. “On Hebrew Instruction as Part of a General Education,” *Judaism*, pp. 188-202; *Collected Writings*, vol. 7, pp. 63-80

8. *Nineteen Letters*, Letter 18 (p. 273 in the Elias translation)

9. Cf. Rabbi Hirsch’s criticism of Rambam, *ibid.*, Letter 18, pp. 264-5

10. Consider, for example, the curriculum for his school (op. cit., n. 3, *Horeb*). There he includes, in addition to the sub-

jects listed, also the language of the host country but not its literature.

11. “Worte gesprochen bei der Schillerfeier 1859,” *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 6, pp. 308-321

12. E.g., *Horeb*, p. xli

13. *Commentary*, Leviticus 18:4, Deuteronomy 6:7

14. *Ibid.*, Genesis 2:19

15. *Collected Writings*, vol. 2, p. 204 [*Ges. Schrift*, vol. 2, p. 32]

16. In passages where the ultimately anticipated improvement of human morality is discussed—a context which virtually begs for a reference to the rising level of morality among the nations at his time—there is no such reference. (Cf. *Nineteen Letters*, Letter 7; *Collected Writings*, vol. 6, pp. 240-255; *Commentary*, Leviticus 26:42. The quote is from *Harav S. R. Hirsch: Mishnato VeShitato*, Yonah Emanuel, ed. [Jerusalem, 5722], 300, “On Anti-Semitism”)

17. *Collected Writings*, vol. 1, p. 80, [*Ges. Schrift.*, vol. 4. p. 105]

18. *Nineteen Letters*, Letter 7; *Commentary*, Exodus 10:7

19. “The Relation of General to Specifically Jewish Education,” *Judaism*, 203; “On Hebrew Instruction,” *Judaism*, 188

20. Cf. *Pesachim* 87b

21. *The Hirsch Siddur*, Shemoneh Esrei, “Birkat Hashivah”

22. Rabbi Yechiel Yaakov Weinberg,

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Deot 40 (1959). Quoted by Rabbi J. Elias in his edition of *The Nineteen Letters*

23. *Commentary*, Exodus 25:12, Leviticus 18:2

24. *Ibid.*, Genesis 12:6

25. *Ibid.*, Numbers 13:33

26. *Mishnato VeShitato*, 285-7; *Shemesh Marpei*, Rabbi Eliyahu Meir Klugman, ed., "Letters," no. 35 (Brooklyn, 1992)

27. Cf. *Shemesh Marpei*, "Letters," no. 17

28. *Ketubot* 111a. The text in part runs: "God adjured the Jewish people not to enter Eretz Yisrael en masse and not to rebel against the nations...and the nations...that they not oppress Israel too much."

In *Horeb* (par. 608), Rabbi Hirsch cites these oaths specifically as obligating us; he alludes to them frequently: *Nineteen Letters* 16; *Horeb*, par. 237; *Commentary*, Deuteronomy 2:10; *The Hirsch Siddur*, "Birkat Teka Beshofar Gadol," "Birkat Hatov Vehamativ"

29. Cf. *Shemesh Marpei*, pp. 354-357

30. *HaTor* (5682). Quoted at the end of *Shivat Zion*, (Jerusalem, 5745)

31. Rabbi Avraham Bornstein, *Avnei Nezer, Yoreh Deah* 454:56

32. Quoted by Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe in *Bein Sheshet Leasor*, p. 145

33. For detailed citations, see my article "Rabbi Hirsch: Myth and Fact," *Tradition* 31 (spring 1997): 5-22. The conclusion is inevitable that they too believed that under the circumstances now prevailing, "the three oaths" no longer apply. (I intentionally cite only non-Zionist authorities, with whom Rabbi Hirsch would presumably have identified.)

The only outstanding authority disputing this position that I have found is Rabbi Yoel Teitelbaum, the Satmar Rebbe, who held that "the three oaths" (op. cit. n. 28) prohibit the establishment of a Jewish state even today.

34. Cf. Klugman, *Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch*, pp. 192-198

35. Rambam, *Hilchot Mamrim* 3:3

36. *Collected Writings*, vol. 6, pp. 206-7. Also cf. my article, "The Relation of the Orthodox to the Heterodox Organizations," *Tradition* 9 (fall 1967): 95-102

37. Rabbi Hirsch cited in this context Rabbi Tarfon's statement: "Even if a man is chasing after one to kill him, or a snake to bite him, he may enter a house of idolatry [to save himself], but not a house of [heretics]" (*Collected Writings*, vol. 6, pp. 203, quoting *Shabbat* 116a).

38. *Iggerot Moshe, OC II*, no. 40

39. *Ibid.*, no. 61

40. Rabbi Yonah Emanuel, *Parshanim Uposekim Befeirusho shel HaRav S.R. Hirsch al HaTorah* (Jerusalem, 5722)

41. *Collected Writings*, vol. 6, pp. 254-317 [*Ges. Schrift.*, vol. 4, pp. 361-426]

42. *Shemesh Marpei*

43. *Collected Writings*, vol. 7, pp. 157 [*Ges. Schrift.*, vol. 5, p. 225]

44. Rabbeinu Bachya, *Avot*, end of chap. 3; Maharal, *Netivot Olam, Netiv HaTorah* 14

45. *Guide for the Perplexed* 1:34. "According to how much a person lacks in knowledge of the other wisdoms, he will lack a hundredfold more in Torah knowledge." (Vilna Gaon, quoted by Rabbi Baruch Schick of Shklov in the introduction to his translation of *Euclid*.)

46. Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786) is generally considered the major pioneer of Jewish emancipation in Western Europe. From when Mendelssohn turned forty years old until Rabbi Hirsch arrived in Frankfurt is just over eighty years.

47. Hermann Schwab, *History of Orthodox Jewry in Germany* (London, 1950), 39; *Mishnato VeShitato*, 26

48. Oral communication, Rabbi Joseph Breuer

49. Cf. e.g., Hermann Schwab, *Memories of Frankfurt* (London, 1958), 7

50. See *Mishnato VeShitato*, pp. 336-7



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