

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch: Ish al Ha'edah

The Collected Writings of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch Volume VIII

Philipp Feldheim, Inc., 1995, 325 pages

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch: Architect of Torah Judaism for the Modern World

Rabbi Eliyahu Meir Klugman

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REVIEWED BY DR. JUDITH BLEICH

"Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation (*ish al ha'edah*), who shall go out before them, and who shall take them out, and who shall bring them in; that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep that have no shepherd."

(Numbers 27:15-17)

Jewish history has been subject to recurrent periods of spiritual deprivation and religious apathy. Rabbeinu Bachya, *Chovot Halevavot*, *Sha'ar Hateshuvah*, chapter 6, offers optimistic assurance that at no time will the people of Israel be bereft of leadership in declaring: "Thus has it been in all periods and in all countries. There has never been lacking a *koreh el haElokim ve'el avodato umoreh et Torato* — a person who calls [his coreligionists] to God and to His service and teaches His Law."

The crumbling of the walls of the ghetto in the years following the Emancipation created new economic, social and political opportunities but also brought in its wake novel and unprecedented problems. Tides of assimilation and reform eroded the religious spirit that had successfully withstood centuries of persecution and direct onslaught. It was in that milieu that Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808-1888) emerged in Germany as an articulate, energetic and inspired religious leader who set himself the task of charting a new path designed to revitalize a beleaguered, depressed and dwindling Orthodox community.

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Rav Hirsch was a towering personality, the first rabbi to respond to the challenge of modernity by embarking on an imaginative and all-encompassing affirmative program of communal activities, while at the same time advancing a philosophical system to render those programs meaningful. Rabbi Hirsch sought to elucidate Torah teachings in a manner that would evoke receptivity among members of a community whose cultural frame of reference had undergone a profound change. Utilizing both the spoken and written word, he sought to infuse religious practices with new levels of meaning and to interpret the foundations of the law in an original manner designed to make its fundamental concepts relevant and appealing. In doing so Rav Hirsch wrought a revolution in the Jewish community and reversed the cataclysmic landslide that had previously swept countless numbers to Reform Judaism.

In responding to the social transformations that characterized his times, Rav Hirsch's method was unique in its espousal of what appeared to be a total contradiction: fidelity to the old and embrace of the new. In point of fact, the path that he blazed involved a subtle intertwining of tradition and innovation, the restatement of truths in terms that couched age-old ideas in a reasoned idiom and attractive garb without yielding an iota in religious observance and without compromising the integrity of either Jewish thought or law. At first, that path annoyed and displeased adherents of all camps, innovators and conservatives alike, until it proved itself, not merely tenable, but also successful, in the crucible of life.

Ultimately, Rav Hirsch's accomplishments were lauded by Torah luminaries as diverse as *Ketav Sofer*, Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grodzinski and Rabbi Abraham I. Kook. With the passing of time the philosophy of *Torah im Derech Eretz* epitomized by Rabbi Hirsch received widespread approbation.

Unfortunately, in the century since his passing, the writings and ideology of Rav Hirsch have become the subject of conflicting interpretation within an increasingly fractious and polarized community. Some have taken them at face value as an expression of a religious orthodoxy coupled with a modern *Weltanschauung* characterized by openness to the mores and cultural expressions of the modern age to the extent that they are not in conflict with Torah teachings and values. Others regard that openness as not even a hesitant embrace, but simply an accommodation, a con-

cession to the needs of the time, and a compromise without which countless numbers would have been lost to Judaism. In particular, it has been claimed by some that Rabbi Hirsch's championship of secular studies in nineteenth-century Germany was an outgrowth of his recognition of the economic exigencies that made pursuit of such studies essential for those who found it necessary to seek their livelihood in the world of commerce or in the practice of a profession. Alternatively, they maintain that he introduced such studies in the school he founded simply because of the need to comply with regulations promulgated by the secular state.

Many have laid claim to being the spiritual heirs of Rav Hirsch's teachings and to have founded institutions that continue to foster his ideals. In *The Promise*, a fictionalized account of a rabbinical seminary that offers university courses as part of its curriculum, Chaim Potok named that school Hirsch University. But that fictional institution certainly did not reflect the vision of Rabbi Hirsch with accuracy or fidelity.

The appearance of the eighth and final volume of the English translation of R. Samson Raphael Hirsch's *The Collected Writings*, a volume subtitled *Mensch-Yisroel: Perspectives on Judaism*, completes the presentation of the literary legacy of Rav Hirsch to the English-speaking public. This significant event affords an opportunity for a much wider audience to assess Rav Hirsch's seminal contributions objectively. The reader can now peruse the translation of the original writings in seeking confirmation or refutation of any ideological position ascribed to Rav Hirsch.

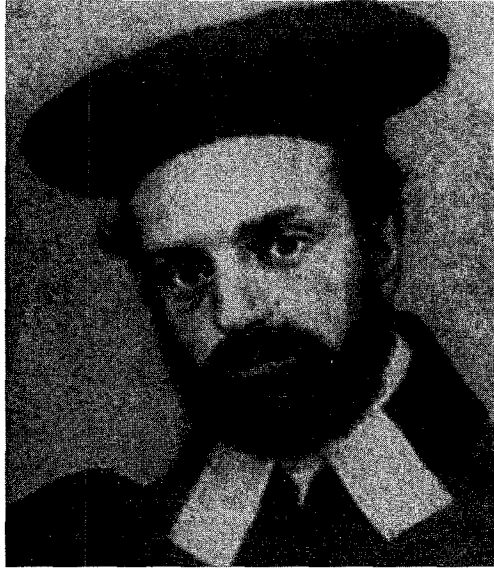
From the pages of *The Collected Writings* Rav Hirsch emerges as a person possessed of deep and unswerving faith, committed to the eternal verity of the Torah and, above all, as a champion of the authenticity of traditional Judaism as the embodiment of the revealed word of God:

Let us be clear about one thing: To me Scriptures are the Word of God; Judaism and the Jewish Law represent the revealed will of God. Is it then conceivable that I should place myself at the crossroads of history and inquire of every passerby as to his views and opinions, illusory and otherwise and seek his endorsement of the living Word of God? Or should I, perhaps, alter the living Word of God to accommodate his shrug of the shoulders and then say: Look, here now is Judaism brought up-to-date, the living Word of God authenticated and revised by man! (p. 3)

Rav Hirsch wrote of a compulsion "to find a fertile ground for the Torah Judaism to which my whole soul belongs" (p. 282) and bemoaned the "hurdles

which the present age has placed into the path of serious students of Torah, an age in which there are so few opportunities for 'learning' with acknowledged masters of the subject" (p. 318). He was convinced that only a Judaism devoted to the study of Torah at the feet of "true masters of this scholarship" (p. 319) can sustain itself and flourish. Accordingly, he believed that it was imperative to create "proper opportunities for learning Torah" (p. 320) for children, youth and adults.² In particular, he emphasized that "young men who devote themselves to their Jewish studies at Talmudical academies or yeshivoh," who could so easily be deterred from their objective, merit unflagging encouragement for they "need all the ... strengths of a God-oriented philosophy of life...in order that they may succeed..." (p. 320).

No serious student of Rav Hirsch's writings can regard him as an uncritical champion of the pursuit of secular knowledge. The last volume of *The Collected Writings* contains passages delineating with crystal clarity the parameters within which Rav Hirsch was prepared to advocate secular study. It is abundantly evident that he was receptive to secular wisdom only if it passed



his litmus test:

Hence the Jew will not be opposed to any science, any art form, any culture that is truly ethical, truly moral... He will measure everything by the eternally inviolable yardstick of the teachings of his God. Nothing will exist for him that cannot stand up before the Divine Will....

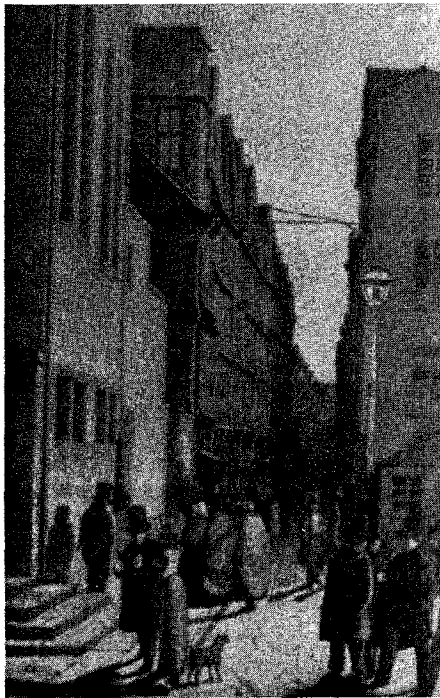
Never at any time will the Jew sacrifice one iota of his Judaism, at no time will he bring his Judaism in conformity with the times. But he will gladly accept all values that his time will have to offer as long as they conform with the spirit of Judaism. In every age he will regard it as his task to evaluate the time and its conditions from the Jewish viewpoint. (pp. 9-10)

At the same time, other statements demonstrably establish that Rabbi Hirsch's receptivity to worldly culture was not merely an accommodation. If repeated passages in his writings underscore the primacy and centrality of Talmudic studies and the priority to be accorded to fostering such study it is equally undeniable that Rav Hirsch was emphatic in his espousal of a non-ghettoized Jewish community and his encouragement of a rabbinate committed to active participation in civic life. It was Rav Hirsch's belief that rabbinic scholars, subsequent to acquiring proficiency in traditional Jewish studies, must broaden their horizons and participate in the aspirations of society at large:

Do not shirk the social obligations of pulsating modern life, do not regret that today's nations, in their

struggle for enlightenment, have invited also the sons of Jewish Law to participate in their social aspirations and that they have opened for the sons of Israel the gates to scientific and civic endeavors and achievements. The more you will saturate yourself with the spirit and...purpose of the Law of your God, ...the greater will be your understanding of the nature of your mission: To wed yourself, with all your energies...to all the good and genuine achievements of the age in which you live.... (p. 325)

Rav Hirsch did not content himself with a theoretical formulation of Jewish teachings for his age but sought to implement those teachings in a concrete manner. His genius lay in an unparalleled ability to translate theory into practice. He was imbued with a sense of mission; passionate commitment pervades his writings. Rav Hirsch was a crusader, but a crusader on behalf of all of his coreligionists rather than one satisfied with inspiring only a segment of Jewry. No minimalist, he set his sights on the stratosphere: Nothing less than transformation of the entire Jewish community and, ultimately, the molding of society at large in its moral image (*tikkun olam*). He envisioned the resurgence of a proud and self-sufficient observant Jewish community that would recognize its duty to reach out to and influence all sectors of Jewry and that would also



Judengasse in Frankfurt

strive to exert positive influence upon the general society in which Jews found themselves. Recognizing that such an agenda would not be furthered “by sighing and grieving” (p. 270), Rav Hirsch sought to arouse his fellow Jews from their apathy and to motivate them to engage in practical measures to rejuvenate their *kehillot*: to establish kosher restaurants and hotels (“in my estimation a religious deed,” i.e., a *mitzvah*, p. 271), and to found Jewish polytechnical and trade schools as well as Jewish associations for the furtherance of craftsmanship and professions (p. 268).

In striving for the fulfillment of these mandates, Rav Hirsch experienced frustration because of the attitude and conduct of fellow Jews on the right no less so than because of the behavior of those on the left. He was disappointed not only by the exponents of Reform whom he perceived as diluting the standards of

Judaism, but also by the pious and the “old” upright *fromm* faithful men” who permitted themselves to be governed by “petty considerations” (p. 270). He was convinced that it was because traditionalists had retreated from society that members of the Orthodox community were crushed and weighted down by feelings of loneliness and impotence:

The purest ones have fled onto the rock of the past, which the surging waves of the present cannot reach...With their isolation they impress the ultimate stamp of approval on the passport of the generation of the day, that for their voyage through life they must seek a different log book. Many [profess] the belief: “Life does not live in Torah Judaism.” (p. 283)

The abject state of Jewish learning and the widespread ignorance and disaffection of the Jewish masses was the subject of Rav Hirsch’s harshest censure. Again, he placed the blame for this situation upon factions of the right as well as of the left. He bemoaned the ascendancy of those who promoted a form of dry academic scholarship divorced from observance, derided “the doctorate diplomas of Jewish preachers and rabbis,...the odor of decay wafting over the knives of dissecting and embalming scholars” (p. 282) and was saddened by students of “Oriental philosophy” and “Biblical archaeology” who do not “consider the unique character of God’s law” (p. 320). But Rav Hirsch was also distressed by *the other extreme whose advocates, frightened... would like to isolate their disciples by limiting their studies to the sacred writings of Judaism. Only under duress do they consider it justifiable to permit their students a fleeting glance at the achievements of the human mind that lie outside the limits of our sacred literature. They fail to see that such complete isolation is not possible and that allowing their students to remain in ignorance of other subjects will only serve to make their fears come true.*

Only to those not initiated in them will the alien influences that seek to ensnare the Torah students appear as gigantic, revolutionary discoveries. Only students familiar with those influences will be able to see them in proper perspective and with all their limitations, so that they will no longer stand in awe of them. Conversely, any knowledge that is deliberately kept from the students during their years of study will confront them all the more powerfully in their later lives... (pp. 321-322).

One of the most insightful analysts of the *oeuvre* of Rav Hirsch was the late Rabbi Yecheiel Yaakov Weinberg, author of *Responsa Seridei Esh* and one-time head of Berlin’s Orthodox *Rabbinerseminar*. As an exponent of the singularity of Rav Hirsch’s ideology and the revolutionary aspects of his contribution, Rabbi Weinberg was sharp in his critique of revisionist writers whose categorization of Rav Hirsch’s educational policy he viewed as a perversion of the historical truth. Rabbi Weinberg asserted that Rav Hirsch sincerely favored a “synthesis of Torah and worldly studies (*derech erez*) in the broadest sense of that term.”

Nevertheless, Rabbi Weinberg recognized that Rav Hirsch did not espouse the view that secular studies were necessary in order to achieve intellectual perfection or even a well-rounded personality; rather, Rav Hirsch stressed that Torah was the repository of supreme wisdom and contained within itself all significant teachings and values. Secular studies might be of assistance to a person in explicating the truths of Torah, but the Torah, in and of itself, is self-sufficient. Indeed, wrote Rabbi Weinberg, "No religious Jew can be comfortable with the notion that if he has learned only a great deal of Torah he cannot be deemed to have attained a high cultural standard or that he must seek culture beyond Torah for the enrichment of his personality. Thus, in the writings of Rav Hirsch no word can be found that might lead to the conclusion that he understood Judaism and general culture as constituting complementary values."⁴ Rabbi Hirsch did not endeavor to make the Torah *salonfähig*; quite to the contrary, he sought to bring the *salon* to Torah. He did not wish to introduce Jews to drawing-room society, but to entice *salon* society to enter the *beit midrash*.⁵

In his own day, under somewhat altered circumstances but for similar reasons, Rabbi Yechiel Yaakov Weinberg advocated emulation of the pioneering strategies of Rav Hirsch in adapting to changing conditions and in formulating pedagogic modalities designed to promote more intensive Jewish education. Aware of the extent to which most Western Jews are acculturated and recognizing that denial born of ostrich-like burial of one's head in the sand will not change the sociological reality, Rabbi Weinberg wrote:

Truly, the Jew of our times already stands head and shoulders in another world. A world rich in spiritual creativity, with an agenda for scientific advancement and an enhanced standard of living, with poetry and music, literature and philosophy. All these visions entice, attract and captivate Jews whose religious consciousness is not deep and is not even properly founded.

The Jew of our times is bound by thousands of ties to this new world in both commercial and industrial pursuits as well as in communal affairs and in matters of education and professional training in schools and halls of academe. This is a fact that cannot be denied or negated with pursing of lips, with sighs and tears. The solutions proposed by those of small mind and narrow perspective will not serve to build a bridge and a passage to safety for a confused and bewildered generation. My counsel is to heed and accept instruction from a great teacher in Israel who underwent the test and was greatly successful. Certainly his approach and educational methodology require a new formulation that is more suited to the values of the time and the needs of the Jewish soul [that is] thirsty for complete mastery and deep knowledge of the sources of Torah. However, the direction and the goal charted by the great teacher retain their full force.

Thirty years later, Rabbi Weinberg's advice is

even more apt. Our own times have witnessed an ever increasing polarization of the Orthodox community and widespread confusion with regard to many of the issues addressed by Rav Hirsch. Accordingly, the various essays in *The Collected Writings* warrant our keenest scrutiny.

Rabbi Weinberg, himself a devotee of the *mussar* movement and also an admirer of the thinking of Rav Hirsch, developed a most intriguing comparison of these two philosophical approaches. Rabbi Weinberg maintained that both Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch and Rabbi Israel Salanter, founder of the *mussar* movement had, each in his own unique manner, sought to foster the development of a deep and conscious spirituality (a "religious enlightenment — *haskalah datit*") and to teach the way in which Torah, which is co-extensive with life, could be the source for fulfillment of all personal, social and cultural aspirations. In this manner both Rabbi Hirsch and Rabbi Salanter sought to present a viable alternative to the intellectual currents of the Enlightenment. Both were critical of the religious society of their time in which superficial and mechanical performance of *mitzvot* had replaced spirituality. Living in a society permeated with Western culture, Rav Hirsch endeavored to demonstrate that all culture can be viewed through the prism of Torah values since Torah is the wellspring of all spiritual creativity. Of the two, claimed Rabbi Weinberg, Rabbi Salanter's formulation was closer to the spirit of the sources; yet Rav Hirsch's methodology and approach were more suited to those raised in the West.

Other writers have pointed to the many parallels between Rav Hirsch's thought and the themes addressed by exponents of the *mussar* movement. Paradoxically, however, there is, as well, something of the passionate *chassid* in the persona of Rav Hirsch. In stark contrast to the stereotypical image of a dry and pallid German Jew, Rabbi Hirsch presents a vivid description of the need for ardor in order to engender vitality in Jewish religious life. He elucidates the concept of *simchah shel mitzvah* — the joy a person experiences in performing a *mitzvah*:

Indeed, the totality of the Jew's existence is one of great service to God....that is what makes Jewish life such a joyous experience... The very "law" that the unenlightened labels as a "burden, a yoke and impediment" — it is this law, with all its "minutiae," that is the most precious jewel in the possession of the Jew....

Judaism is not a religion solely for holidays and feast days; it embraces all aspects of life... Judaism, the most "religious" of all religions has no word for "religion," has no word for this concept: everything, without exception, is "religion."...And since for the Jew everything is "religion" — and consequently "religion" is everything — the happy moments in his life do not distance the Jew from his God. (pp. 252-253)

Rav Hirsch has been castigated for what has been characterized as slavish and unquestioning patriotism toward the Germany of his time.⁸ In contrast, anti-

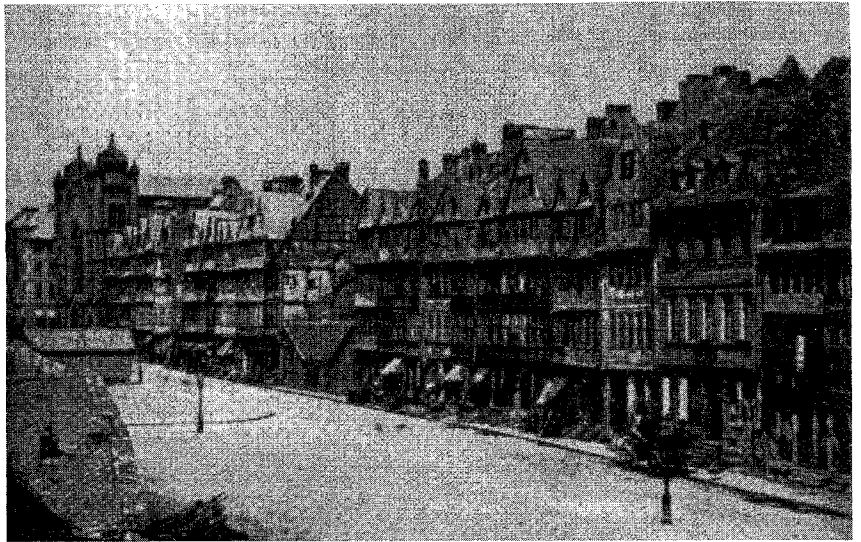
assimilationists are wont to cite the almost prophetic comments of Rabbi Meir Simchah HaKohen of Dvinsk, *Meshech Chochmah, Parashat Bechukotai* (26:44), concerning the fate of those who equate Berlin with Jerusalem. It is therefore intriguing to read Rabbi Hirsch's equally prescient comments, written in the heyday of nineteenth-century Germany optimism:

O, you deluded ones! Look at the society which is now freely open to you... Has the race of Hamans died out completely with him and his ten sons? Could you not find someone from the Rhine to the Oder, from the Volga to the Danube who is capable of being his successor? Be sober and observe. Indeed the horizon of the Jew may well become somber; sultry clouds hang in the German sky... No one is secure.

Read the Megillah and read it also to the still living sons of Haman. (p. 247)

Rav Hirsch was unique in his alertness to the issues of his time. He certainly did not turn a deaf ear or a blind eye to the emerging concerns that exercised his flock. A prime example of those concerns newly expressed in his day is the awakening consciousness of women and their sensitivity to a perceived religious bias relegating them to second class status in Jewish society. Rabbi Hirsch's "The Jewish Woman" (pp. 83-135), although dated and apologetic in tone, represents a pioneering effort at a serious and comprehensive study of an issue of major import.

At the very outset of his attempt to galvanize the Orthodox community, Rav Hirsch recognized what contemporary outreach professionals have rediscovered in our own generation, namely, that "turning Friday night into Shabbos" is an extremely effective pedagogical tool. Precisely in an age when the masses were casting aside meticulous Sabbath observance as a difficult burden emblematic of an anachronistic lifestyle, Rav Hirsch turned to a literary discussion of "the old Jewish Sabbath." Regarding himself as successful if he would succeed in awakening "but one family, one home, one Jewish soul" (p. 197) to appreciation of the Sabbath, his descriptions capture the love of *Shabbat* that animates Jews, the atmosphere that pervades the Sabbath home and the role of the Sabbath as "the most faithful companion" of the Jew. One by one, as if opening the petals of a sealed flower bud, Rav Hirsch unravels layers of meaning and significance (the Sabbath of Rest, the Sabbath of Creation, the Sabbath of the Wilderness, the Sabbath of the Ten Commandments, the Sabbath of the Temple) to reveal the innermost spirit of the Sabbath. He presents an intriguing exposition of fundamental halachic concepts of *issurei melachah* (prohibitions of work), the social implications of *hotza'ah me'reshut hayachid le'reshut harabbim* (carrying



Remains of the Frankfurt ghetto

from the private domain to the public domain), as well as the symbolism of the *havdalah* ceremony and a forceful explanation of prohibitions of "labor" even for purposes of relaxation, entertainment or spirituality. The masterful essay, "The Jewish Sabbath: The Glorious Pearl," should be required reading for every Jewish educator.

Unfortunately, however, the riches contained in *The Collected Writings* may remain undiscovered by many readers because of the heaviness of the language and style. It should be recognized that the literary embellishments that contributed to the popularity of Rav Hirsch's writings in his own day, when his style, idiom and tone were in consonance with the regnant literary mode, may alienate today's reader. Unedited and unabridged writings of Rav Hirsch, even when rendered into English, remain remarkably and unmistakably Germanic in texture. Verbosity and sermonics do not aid in sustaining the reader's attention. The humor and whimsy of some of Rav Hirsch's satiric sketches become overshadowed and lost in the frequently ponderous text. Moreover, a large portion of the work is characterized by strained etymological interpretations (see pp. 30-60). Those comments include a number of incisive suggestions (as e.g., comments on *peru urevu*, p. 58, Gog, Magog and *sukkah*, p. 244, and *erev and boker*, p. 260) but, in general, this mode of exegetical interpretation does not strike a receptive chord in the contemporary student.

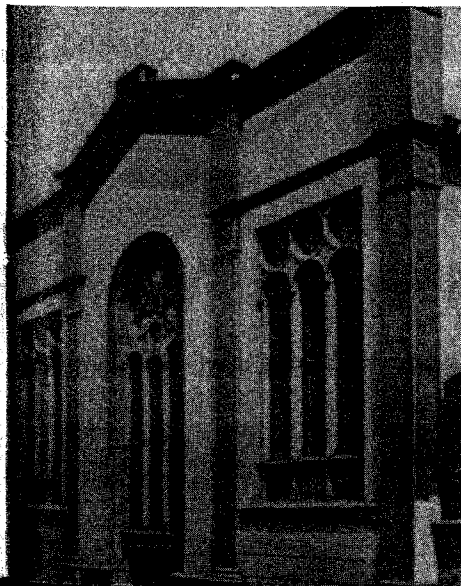
It is therefore fortuitous that the conclusion of the rendering of *The Collected Writings* into English is accompanied by another major publication celebrating the lifework of Rav Hirsch, *Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch: Architect of Torah Judaism for the Modern World* by Rabbi Eliyahu Meir Klugman. Rabbi Klugman, who previously edited *Shemesh Marpeh* (Brooklyn: ArtScroll Mesorah Publications, 1992), an invaluable Hebrew collection of responsa, novellae and letters of Rav Hirsch, in which he included a useful biography, "Veyehi BeYeshurun Melech," has now

expanded and enlarged that biographical essay into a full-length English work.

Rabbi Klugman's biography of Rav Hirsch constitutes a major contribution and service. This study is striking in its attempt at comprehensiveness and in the avoidance of subterfuge. Rabbi Klugman tackles subjects that are rarely touched upon in the generally superficial writings describing Rav Hirsch's life. In this volume one finds forthright discussions of his views on exile and redemption, the science of Judaism, his changing relationship with Heinrich Graetz and his polemics against Abraham Geiger and Zechariah Frankel, as well as a carefully nuanced discussion of the Frankfurt secession struggle. Although overly colloquial in style, the book is easily readable and flowing throughout. At times, the presentation of complex ideas in a somewhat one-dimensional manner results in oversimplification. But, overall, Rabbi Klugman presents a well-researched and compelling narrative, broad in scope and conveying a wealth of data without the dryness of many an academic tome.

Bnei Torah will take keen delight in this work for a variety of reasons. Rabbinic contemporaries of Rav Hirsch and their writings are carefully identified and the now little-known world of nineteenth-century German Orthodoxy is recaptured. Rabbi Klugman's voluminous and apt citations of Rav Hirsch's own writings are augmented by telling comments on incidents in Rav Hirsch's life based on family reminiscences as recorded by the author on the basis of personal communications of the late Rabbi Joseph Breuer, Professor Mordechai Breuer and others who were personally acquainted with the protagonists. (See, for example, the account of Rav Hirsch's inauguration as Rabbi of Nikolsburg as retold by A. Schischa of London, pp. 93-94.) Rabbi Klugman's work is characterized by meticulousness and accuracy in discussion of halachic topics¹⁰ with attention to relevant details that are of particular interest to students of Torah. Finally, this account is singular in its depiction of the personal piety of Rav Hirsch.

Main shul on the Schutzenstrasse



In general, hagiographic works depicting the lives of *gedolim* of the past are deficient as histories even if they do serve the purpose of illustrating the degree to which certain religious personalities were revered and beloved that, in turn, provides us with an understanding of the commensurate influence those individuals

exerted upon their followers. Rabbi Klugman's biography, with its more objective tone and exhaustive research, avoids the former flaw while achieving the latter result.

In assessing the impact of Rabbi Hirsch on the Orthodox community of his own time and his lasting contribution, it is essential that the reader appreciate that Rav Hirsch himself was viewed by the *gedolei hador* as a *tzaddik*. It was his unquestionable *yir'at shamayim* and principled rabbinic posture that gained acceptability for his *Weltanschauung* among all streams of Orthodoxy.

It is related that when Rabbi Meir Schapiro became Rabbi of Pietrkow he was asked teasingly by a congregant what would transpire at the time of the resurrection. What would be the role of Rabbi Schapiro when all of the previous illustrious leaders of Pietrkow would rise from the dead? No problem would ensue, Rabbi Schapiro replied, since the various congregations would return to life together with their respective rabbis. What, persisted the congregant, will happen, however, if it will come to pass that a saintly learned rabbi of a past generation will rise from the dead but his community will not similarly merit resurrection? Rabbi Schapiro replied, succinctly and decisively: A rabbi who does not "raise up" his community with himself is not to be deemed a rabbi at all!

Pained by the spiritual and intellectual deterioration of the Jewish community of his day, Rabbi Hirsch envisioned the metamorphosis that could be wrought by a dynamic leader whose influence would be felt even beyond the confines of his locale. Like *Moshe Rabbeinu* of yore, he gave voice to a supplication:

O that God may awaken among you a leader who does not look to the right or to the left, who does not want to please the old or the young. He would be the savior of your community, for it can still be saved. That leader would come to your poor and bring them education and prosperity with Jewish spirit and Jewish hands. He would come to your rich and educated and would proffer them Judaism even in the bright canopy of education and science.... How your great community would light the way for all sister communities. (C.W., p. 220)

In the fullness of time, Rav Hirsch merited to "raise up" not only the Jewry of Frankfurt, his own illustrious *kehillah*, but to serve as a mentor whose teachings contributed to elevating the standards of all Orthodox Jews in Western countries.

The appearance of the new biography of Rav Hirsch and *The Collected Writings* prompt feelings of gratitude, hope and prayer: gratitude to ArtScroll Mesorah Publications and Rabbi Klugman for a valuable biography and gratitude to the Rabbi Dr. Joseph Breuer Foundation and the Samson Raphael Hirsch Publications Society and to their translators, in particular the late Gertrude Hirschler who translated the bulk of the material, for making these volumes available in the English language; hope that these writings will

enrich a new cadre of readers who will find in them guidance, direction and inspiration; and prayer that among these new readers there will be those also who will be moved by the example of a great master to aspire to the challenge and burden of rabbinic leadership — the leadership for which our own bereft generation yearns. §

Notes

1. Failure to appreciate leadership was a phenomenon Rav Hirsch understood well. See his commentary on the Torah, Exodus 2:14.
 2. In a eulogy delivered following the demise of Rabbi Salomon Wolf Klein of Colmar, a leader of French Orthodoxy who fought a staunch, but often losing battle against encroachments of the Reform movement in France, Rav Hirsch expressed himself in a manner that is self-revealing. He said of Rabbi Klein that he "understood the calling of a Rabbi. Others see in this office the privilege of leisure and comfort, prestige and honor. Salomon Wolf Klein had a different concept of his role. He did not know quiet, he did not know sleep in his pursuit of teaching and guiding his people. ...Did he not go indefatigably from house to house...to collect the means to establish a school where Torah and general education would be taught?...
 3. ... With the establishment of his school,...he had hoped that his lifework would be crowned with success. He was therefore totally devastated when the civil authorities closed his school on the prodding of those disloyal Jews who knew all too well what its effect could be.
 4. I know how he felt. All other disappointments he could bear. This defeat he bore into his grave." (Collected Writings, VIII, 76-77)
 5. She'elot uTeshuvot Seridei Esh (Jerusalem, 1969), IV, 366.
- These remarks were included in the Hebrew edition of Rav Hirsch's

writings published by Netzach, BeMa'aglei Shanah, Vol. III (Bnei Brak, 1966). An unsigned editorial note appended to these comments (*ibid.*, p. 16) advances contradictory analyses. See also Rabbi Weinberg's very trenchant remarks on this topic in his *Das Volk der Religion: Gedanken uber Judentum* (Geneva, 1949), pp. 69-70.

4. *Das Volk der Religion*, p. 73. Cf., Seridei Esh, IV, 368.
5. *Das Volk der Religion*, p. 67.
6. Seridei Esh, IV, 373. *Toward the end of his life, Rabbi Weinberg was sorely troubled by the opposition to general studies increasingly prevalent in Orthodox circles. A characteristic expression of his concern is reflected in a personal communication, dated 1964, published in "Sarid ha-Esh," Ha-Ma'ayan, Vol. VI, no. 3 (Nisan, 1966), p. 66.*
7. Seridei Esh, IV, 372. Cf., *Das Volk der Religion*, p. 76.
8. See, for example, Rabbi Howard I. Levine, "Enduring and Transitory Elements in the Philosophy of Samson Raphael Hirsch," *Tradition*, Vol. V, no. 2 (Spring, 1963), pp. 291-292.
9. This reviewer has already pointed out (*Jewish Action*, Winter, 1991-1992, pp. 26-27 and p.52, notes 36 and 37) that the exchange of correspondence between Rabbi Hirsch and Rabbi Bamberger concerning the secession controversy testifies to the fact that Rabbi Hirsch was hardly lacking in rabbinic scholarship as has been charged in some quarters. The content and scope of the responsa collected by Rabbi Klugman and published in *Shemesh Marpeh* conclusively establish Rav Hirsch's credentials as a rabbinic scholar.
10. In contrast, the author's reliance on secondary sources with regard to purely historical background material has led to occasional inaccuracies (see, e.g., the description of responses to the reforms of the Westphalian Consistory, p. 21). Considering the scope of the work, these lapses are few in number and it is to be hoped that they will be rectified in a future edition.
11. A. Schapiro, *Zichron Meir* (New York, 1954), p. 52.

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