*Dedicated to My Children*
*Noam and Michal, Nitzan and Tehilah, Itay-Jacob and Vered, Liad*

# Table of Contents

# Translator's Note

Dr. Chamiel's book is a study of past and present—an exploration of how the echoes of nineteenth-century Jewish philosophy continued to reverberate in the minds and thoughts of Jewish thinkers in the twentieth century and today. Translating a study with such an ambitious scope—covering a wide spectrum of thinkers, speaking different languages in different time periods, from nineteenth-century Germany, Italy and Poland to modern-day Israel and the United States—was not always simple. Perhaps the greatest challenge was translating excerpts from nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Hebrew writers such as Samuel David Luzzatto, Rav Kook, and Jehiel Jacob Weinberg, who wrote in forms of Hebrew that are far from the expressions and norms of modern Hebrew. More than modern Hebrew, their vocabularies are filled with the ancient terminology of the Bible and rabbinic literature which they skillfully—and sometimes subtly—use to discuss the issues of the modern world; I can only hope that my translation did their prose justice.

Excerpts from Rabbi Hirsch, Hermann Cohen and Franz Rosenzweig were taken from existing English translations (with our emphasis) and excerpts from Eliezer Berkovits were taken from the English originals.

My gratitude to Dr. Jeffrey Green whose translation of Dr. Chamiel's previous book served as a model for imitation and inspiration; my thanks to Avi Staiman, CEO of Academic Language Experts, and Professor Marc Shapiro, who reviewed and corrected the translation as I proceeded; and of course, my many thanks to Dr. Chamiel, who took an active part in the translation process, offering insightful comments throughout.

**Avi Kallenbach**
*Academic Language Experts*

# Foreword to the English Edition

This book, *The Dual Truth*, was originally published by Carmel Publishing House in Hebrew in 2016. Ever since then, I have aspired to translate it into English. With the founding of the translation company Academic Language Experts, the idea of translating the book began to take shape. The translation was carried out in partnership with the CEO of the company, Avi Staiman, and its chief academic translator Avi Kallenbach who did the actual, wonderful work. We began working on the project more than a year ago, and we have now completed it in the best possible way. It was proofread by Academic Studies Press, but any remaining errors are, of course, my responsibility; any feedback is much appreciated. The book was produced by ASP which served also as the publisher of my previous translated work *The Middle Way*, providing an edition of the work for those wishing to read and study it in English. Both productions were carefully reviewed by Professor Marc Shapiro, the series editor for *Studies in Orthodox Judaism*, who provided me with important comments on the translation and also saved me from duplicating some mistakes I made in the Hebrew original. I would like to thank all the aforementioned people for their contribution. I hope that presenting this book to the English-speaking scholars and public will help increase its circulation and serve to promote the study of Jewish thought in the modern era.

**Ephraim Chamiel**
*October 2017, Jerusalem*

# Introduction

It is best that you grasp the one
Without letting go of the other
For one who fears God will do his duty by both
(Ecclesiastes 7:18 according to Ibn Ezra and Sforno)

Science without religion is lame,
Religion without science is blind.
(*The Expanded Quotable Einstein*, 213)

Since the publication of my first book on modern religious Jewish thought in the nineteenth century,[1] in which I discussed in depth the philosophies of Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808–1888), Samuel David Luzzatto (1800–1865) and Tsvi Hirsch Chajes (*Maharats*, 1805–1855), I have had the opportunity to delve deeper into the worldviews of these three figures and to examine whether their legacy left any lasting mark on the landscape of modern, religious Jewish thought. During my research, it became clear to me that none of these men bequeathed their philosophies to any notable protégés. While it is often said that Hirsch founded Jewish neo-Orthodoxy, his neo-Orthodox successors expressed views very different than his own. Although R. Jacob Reines (1839–1915),

1 E. Chamiel, *The Middle Way* (Brighton, MA, 2014). My first book was largely a reworking of my doctorate at Hebrew University from 2006, on the subject of "Life in Two Worlds—the 'Middle Way': Religious Responses to Modernity in the Philosophy of Z.H. Chajes, S. R. Hirsch, and S. D. Luzzatto" (Hebrew). It can be read for free, in Hebrew, on my website www.echamiel.com. I discuss the "dual truth" in the English translation of the aforementioned book on pages 482–490. This current research relies on conclusions and insights from my last book, and most of its chapters appeared as articles in various academic journals from 2010 to 2014, or were prepared for the purpose of lectures and conferences (see the list at the end of the book). Therefore, there may occasionally be short repetitions and duplications.

R. Avraham Yitshak Kook (1865–1935) and R. Joseph B. Soloveitchik (1903–1993) all integrated both tradition and modernity into their worldviews—out of a belief in the Sinaitic origins of both the Written and Oral Torah, never foregoing even one *halakhah*—their systems were very different from that of Hirsch. Reines's point of view was one of a Zionist realist, Rav Kook's that of a Zionist-mystical-Messianist and Soloveitchik's that of a dialectical-Zionist-existentialist. Hirsch's immediate disciples and descendants failed to preserve his complex system. Some veered towards Haredism, repudiating the fundamental importance of European culture and secular studies, while others turned to a form of modern, realistic religion, separating religious and secular studies, and assigning them to different spheres of life. Thus Hirsch's original Romanticist system of *Torah im Derekh Erets* ("Torah with the 'way of the world'") vanished, replaced by the educational system of nationalist, religious Zionism. It was actually religious, non-Orthodox thinkers such as Hermann Cohen (1842–1918) Franz Rosenzweig (1886–1929) and Yeshayahu Leibowitz who while refusing to adopt the alienating views of the Reform movement, espoused important parts of Hirsch's thought and bequeathed them, albeit in a different garb, to succeeding generations. There were however also a few important halakhists and rabbis such as David Tsvi Hoffman (1843–1921), Yehiel Yaakov Weinberg (1884–1966), and his disciple Rabbi Professor Eliezer Berkovits (1908–1992) who considered themselves Orthodox, were active for many years in Germany, and who also adopted important Hirschian ideas. Luzzatto did have students but none of them could compare to their teacher's unique stature and none were capable of emulating his impressive personality, or of sustaining his complex system which was exceedingly difficult to implement on a larger, public scale. A few of his followers joined the American Conservative movement (Sabato Morais [1823–1897]) implementing certain aspects of his system. Moshe David Cassuto (1883–1951) was one of the most prominent of all Italian scholars who adopted parts of Luzzatto's teachings, especially in biblical scholarship. Chajes left no successors and mentored no students. In this book I will present before the reader three schools of exciting, outstanding, and virtuous scholars who held the distinction of being both modern and observant of Halakhah: two schools in Germany, the third in Italy, all of them absorbing the Jewish and non-Jewish cultures of their homelands. One school includes rabbis—biblical interpreters and halakhists—beginning with Jacob Ettlinger (1798–1871) and ending with Berkowitz. The second includes Jewish philosophers and thinkers beginning with Ḥakham Isaac Bernays (1793–1850) and ending with Leibowitz. Both schools revolve around the thought of Hirsch.

The third school was one of biblical interpreters beginning with Luzzatto and ending with Cassuto. These three systems of study prevailed until the establishment of the State of Israel.

In the first chapter of this book I will once again present the main principles of Hirsch's philosophy based on the discussions in my first book. In the second chapter, I will deal with different interpretations of Hirsch's thought, by his students and by scholars, to the left and to the right. From chapter three to seven, I will present the main points of Luzzatto's views on philosophy, biblical exegesis (especially his treatment of Maimonides's and Ibn Ezra's methods of interpretation), rabbinic literature and Kabbalah, also based on discussions in my first book. The eighth chapter will be dedicated to Maharats Chajes and the philosophical connection between him and Naḥman Krokhmal (1785–1840). In the ninth chapter, I will discuss the influence of Hirsch's thought on non-Orthodox thinkers in the twentieth century, and in the tenth and eleventh chapters, I will trace the influence of Hirsch's thought on rabbis and halakhists in the twentieth century. In the twelfth chapter, I will show the surprising influence of Hirsch and his successors on a young Rav Kook. In the thirteenth chapter, I will discuss the influence of Luzzatto's system of biblical interpretation on the twentieth-century Cassuto. In the final chapter, I will briefly deal with modern religiosity in the post-modern age, beginning with the second half of the twentieth century, showing how its roots lie in the dialectical Jewish thought of the preceding century, especially that of Luzzatto.

My research has led me to the conclusion that two critical issues occupied the middle trend of Jewish thought in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The first is the difficulty in harmonizing the statements of the Torah, which was considered divine revelation, with the statements of modern science, which sometimes reach conclusions that contradict the biblical text. Because these thinkers believed that these two realms were extremely important for the modern Jew, they offered solutions to this problem hoping to establish religion on reliable foundations. I discussed this issue in detail in my first book, and will continue to do so in the current one.

The attempt to deal with difficulties encountered by those who believe in God and revelation, but who at the same time wish to maintain a connection with western culture and its philosophy and accept the conclusions of scientific research, is a common theme running through the philosophies discussed in this book. Its title "The Dual Truth" reflects the centrality of this dilemma. The figures described in this book deal with this issue on a variety of different levels ranging from fundamentalism to liberalism, from apologetics to head-on

confrontation. They juggle two sources of knowledge, each one claiming exclusive sovereignty over the truth, forcing them to determine the relationship between the two.

I have used the model of Shalom Rosenberg in his book *Torah Umada* who says that two extreme points of views should be excluded from discussion—the view that denies revelation entirely, that believes nothing exists except the material world, and that only science can serve as a source of knowledge, and the opposite view that claims that reason is misleading, leaving us to rely entirely upon revelation. If we look at other views along the spectrum, we can say that Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786) held the compartmental approach (religion and science) arguing that each area deals with different issues and that there is no contradiction between them. Naḥman Krochmal adopted the resolvable dialectical approach (based on Friedrich Hegel 1770–1831). Tsvi Hirsch Chajes essentially adopted Judah Halevi's approach (identicality of science/philosophy with religion), which curbs the claims of science when it contradicts revelation. Samson Rafael Hirsch adopted an inconsistent form of neo-fundamentalism, oscillating between the view of Judah Halevi and that of Maimonides—identicality of science with religion and interpreting the Torah in-line with science. R. Avraham Kook and Joseph B. Soloveitchik advanced the dialectical approach which can be resolved rarely. Luzzatto advocated the approach of the "dual truth" (based on Eliyahu Delmedigo, 1458–1493) also known as the irresolvable dialectical approach. In my opinion, this is the preferred option because it is rooted in tradition but not delusional, even if it is exceedingly difficult. According to this view one should maintain, *simultaneously*, the validity of both human intellect and the religious tradition of Scripture and Rabbinic literature, both suitable means of arriving at the truth and the virtue, even if at times these truths directly contradict each other, at least in the world of man. The contradiction is both challenging and painful; however, making peace with it allows one to continue studying and experiencing the world without delusions, and allows the thinking religious person to subsist in this world.

The second issue is the reliability of the chain of tradition emanating from Sinai, which at the beginning of the modern period began to be challenged. I have used the models of Moshe Halbertal and Shalom Rosenberg to argue that Jewish positions on this issue are spread across a spectrum extending from right to left: on the right edge of the spectrum lie those who radically adopt the traditional approach, opposing any suggestion that the Sages innovated *halakhot* at all. This is the view of kabbalists and mystics such as

Nachmanides and his disciples—Rabbi Yom Tov Ishbili (the *Ritba*) and Rabbenu Nissim (the *Ran*). They believe that at Sinai Moses received the entire Torah—that is the Written Torah as well as the entire range of differing opinions contained in the Oral Torah. The role of the Sages was to uncover, select and establish the relevant Halakhah for us, based on these preexisting traditions, but without creating anything themselves. To the left of this, one can find the Ge'onim, Ibn Daud and other fundamentalists—the Haredim, Orthodox, and neo-Orthodox such as Hirsch—who believe that the Written Torah and rulings in the Oral Torah were all given to Moses at Sinai. The role of the Sages was to use the methods of halakhic *midrash* to retrieve certain *halakhot* that were lost or forgotten due to the travails and persecutions of exile, which are also the cause of Rabbinic dispute. This recovery is accomplished using the thirteen hermeneutic principles which were also revealed at Sinai. Over the course of the twentieth century, there was a leftward shift among some Neo-Orthodox thinkers, in the direction of more liberal views. They borrowed from classic Conservative thinkers arguing for a historical conception of halakhic development. To the left of the Orthodox is the position of Judah Halevi. He believes that the Written Torah and only some laws of the Oral Torah were revealed at Sinai. The remaining *halakhot* comprising the Oral Torah, were transmitted gradually to the Sages in subsequent acts of revelation—a sort of continuous theophany of Sinai. To the left of him are R. Yosef Albo, Krochmal, and Tsvi Hirsh Chajes. They too believe that both the Written Torah and some laws of the Oral Torah were transmitted to Moses at Sinai. However, other aspects of the Oral Torah while transmitted to Moses, were only revealed in potential. The role of the Sages was to use their intellect (aided by the thirteen hermeneutical principles) to enact these other *halakhot*, actualizing them with majority rulings based on *Midrash Halakhah*. To the left of this position is the concept of an accumulative halakhic codex, the view of Maimonides, according to which the 613 commandments enumerated in the Written Torah were revealed to Moses at Sinai. Other laws, however, were created by the Sages who were aided by their own reasoning, the methods of *Midrash Halakhah* and the thirteen hermeneutical principles which were revealed at Sinai. To the left of Maimonides lies Luzzatto and classic Conservative thinkers. They believe that the Written Torah was originally revealed at Sinai. However, the Oral Torah constitutes a series of enactments and rulings made by the Sages aided by the thirteen principles which they themselves invented in order to anchor their own laws in the text of Torah as scriptural reference (*asmakhta)* but not as a primary reading.

The Sages were men of gigantic spiritual stature, and used their own reasoning and objective vision to understand the needs of their time and the place of their generation, tailoring new laws which sometimes contradict the biblical commandments and sometimes add to them. In the middle of the twentieth century most Conservative Jewish thinkers shifted even further to the left towards a belief that the Written Torah is also a human creation, severely weakening their dedication to Halakhah as a result. At the far left of the spectrum, which completely denies the traditional view, is the view of Reform Judaism. The Reform argue that divine revelation to man is not, nor ever was, possible. The Written Torah is a human creation, the invention of men. The Oral Torah likewise is the human legislation of the Sages. The Reform went even further in their treatment of the Sages and their laws, arguing that while the Sages sometimes established laws with wisdom, at other times they did so with guile, in order to consolidate their complete control over the people by encumbering them with oppressive laws. Consequently, we, today, must abolish significant parts of this extraneous burden.

This book deals with the views of Hermann Cohen, Franz Rosenzweig, Yeshayahu Leibowitz, David Tsvi Hoffman, Yehiel Yaakov Weinberg, Rav Kook, Eliezer Berkowitz and Moshe David Cassuto regarding these issues. Similarly it will present my claim that these thinkers, who differ regarding these two issues, shared a common influence, the thought of Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch, which left an imprint on important elements of their philosophies.

In the wake of the variety of new Neo-Orthodox, Conservatives—classic and new—and Reform positions in the last few decades, a new stance has developed to the right of the Reform, primarily in academic circles, a position I designate Orthoprax, "Conservadox," or post-Orthodox, a position held by Cassuto (influenced by Luzzatto) as well as myself. This is the "dual truth," a position maintained by traditional academic scholars. It is the position of those who do not believe in the possibility of a real, historical revelation of God to man, and who as men of science and reason, think that any text, by definition, is a human work. However, as believing, sentimental intellectuals, they aspire to observe all the laws dictated in the *Shulḥan Arukh* as well as later Halakhah developing after it up until this day, and hope that it will continue to develop, shaping itself to fit to changing times as well as to the renewed Jewish sovereignty in the State of Israel following the spirit of the Torah. This is all out of an understanding that the narrative of "The Jewish People," constructed by the Sages and the spiritual giants of the nation over the centuries, is extremely important to their lives as ethical, thinking people in need of a sacred, supernatural, spiritual space which anchors them to their past and tradition, a foundation

upon which an experiential and real future can be built. I discussed this issue in my first book and will continue to do so in the current book.

I will conclude with a methodological note. I know that cataloguing and pigeonholing people in a simplistic fashion following a set of criteria is imprecise and even daunting. Humans are complex creatures with complicated minds and intricate reasoning; no system of classification can encapsulate their views in their entirety. Nevertheless, I think that in order to undertake any comparative scholarship of worth, it is difficult to avoid simplistic definitions and categories, which so effectively highlight the differences and similarities between different figures for the reader's benefit. At the same time, it is important to cautiously note the fact that reality, at times, can be complex and far from simple.

CHAPTER ONE

# Samson Raphael Hirsch: The Neo-Orthodox, Neo-Romantic Educator, and his Approach of Neo-Fundamentalist Identicality

Rabbi Samson (the son of) Raphael Hirsch[1] lived and was active in the midst of the polemical turmoil of the mid-nineteenth century, situated in the eye of the storm. He was born during Romanticism's rise in Germany, following the decline of Rationalism and metaphysics. From his youth, he experienced the ongoing Orthodox struggle with the Reform movement—afterwards with the positivist-historical school (which would later become the Conservative movement)—as well as the weakening of Jewish community autonomy. In his youth in Hamburg, during which he experienced the powerless Orthodox struggle against the Reform temple, he decided to devote himself to the protection of Torah and tradition using modern methods. His education was structured according to the curriculum of Naftali Hirz

1 Information about the time period and biography of Hirsch can be found in the introduction to my book *The Middle Way*. In this book the reader will also find his responses to Bible criticism (and his Neo-Fundamentalism), to religious reformation movements (and his polemics surrounding the divinity of the Torah) to the Haskalah and secular studies (and his Neo-Romanticism), to the return to the Land of Israel (and his humanist universalism), to progress towards the improvement of the status of women and to modern Jewish life in Christian neighborhoods.

Wessely (1725–1805), which integrated religious and secular studies. Jewish philosophy from Isaac Bernays based on the teachings of Judah Halevi and Talmud studies from Rabbi Ya'akov Ettlinger molded his conception of a middle way with which he hoped to rejuvenate the Torah. He called this method "Torah im Derekh Erets" ("Torah with the way of the world"), and it became the basis of the movement known as Modern Orthodoxy, or Neo-Orthodoxy. To Hirsch's left were religious reformers and Bible critics, deniers of the Torah's divinity, to his right Orthodox zealots eschewing anything new or innovative. He believed that his new system, the middle way, was not a compromise but Judaism's true path, the way of its golden era. He writes about the pious:

> The richer the minority's cause, the more will the minority treasure it. But then it may easily come to regard all other knowledge in "outside" domains as unnecessary, or even as utterly worthless. It may reject all intellectual activity in any field outside its own as an offense against its own cause, as an inroad upon the devotion properly due to that cause and an infringement on its prerogatives. Such a one-sided attitude does not stop at mere disregard for other intellectual endeavors. Once this attitude has taken hold in a Jewish minority, that minority will be unable to form a proper judgment and a true image of those intellectual pursuits which are not cultivated in its own ranks but pursued mainly by its opponents. Then, as a result of simple ignorance, the minority will begin to fear that which at first it merely neglected out of disdain. Consequently, the minority will begin to suspect the existence of an intrinsic close relationship between these "outside" intellectual pursuits and those principles to which the Jewish minority stands in opposition. . . Rather, it has cause to regard all truth, wherever it may be found on the outside, as a firm ally of its own cause, since all truth stems from the same Master of truth.[2]

Hirsch devoted himself to the community rabbinate, emphasizing his ideological struggles and his educational system. He also briefly familiarized himself with the academic world and, on his own, experienced and studied the speculative philosophy of his time.

---

2 *Writings*, 2:247–248. The "Writings" originally appeared in German in Hirsch's journal *Jeschurun* from 1855 onwards in Frankfurt, and were subsequently collected in his *Gesammelte Schriften*. My quotations are from the English translation entitled *The Collected Writings*. See there also 387–388. See E. Stern, *Ishim Vekivunim* (Ramat Gan, 1987), 52–53; see also Hirsch, *Writings*, 1:322–325; 4:176–177; 5:312, 326–327; Hirsch, Num. 25:12.

## BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF HIRSCH'S THOUGHT

This chapter is dedicated to some basic characteristics of Hirsch's thought. It is commonly known that Hirsch was the central pillar of the Neo-Orthodox movement. For our purposes, Orthodoxy refers to the worldview which maintains that God—a being possessing personality, choice and will—created the world and man in a process lasting six days, occurring approximately six thousand years ago. God appeared to the Children of Israel at Mount Sinai after bringing them out of Egypt, and through Moses, gave them the Written Torah and the laws of the Oral Torah. Hirsch's innovation lies in his attempt to integrate the truth, beauty and good of modernity—its culture, science and philosophy—into Jewish tradition, without abandoning even one commandment. He affirms that revelation and reason, science and religion, are actually identical, because they both stem from the same source—God. Being Orthodox, he completely disavows Bible criticism. He assesses well the danger to Orthodoxy posed by the Reform position that denies the Torah's divinity, and therefore, opposes on principle the use of the academy's philological-historical method to analyze the Holy Scripture. Hirsch categorically maintains that the Torah is nothing less than the word of God, authentic and uniform, and it should only be studied from within and as it presents itself—as the word of God. The Torah is immaculate and inerrant and it encapsulates truths that were unknown and incomprehensible to the generation of its recipients. One's duty is to ascend towards the Torah, not to lower it to one's level as demanded by religious reformers. Therefore, all criticism—higher source criticism and lower textual criticism—is impossible. Hirsch acquired his Neo-Orthodox views after he had already assimilated important ideas from the Jewish *Haskalah* movement of Moses Mendelssohn and Naftali Hirz Wessely. Consequently, universalism, humaneness, human rights, the centrality of the individual, and freedom and equality for all mankind—were absorbed into his doctrine, especially his ethics. These Neo-Orthodox views led to the two revolutions he initiated.

## EDUCATIONAL REVOLUTION

**His first revolution** was the implementation of a "Torah im Derekh Erets" curriculum in the school he founded in Frankfurt, inspired by the "Science of Man" (*Torat Ha-Adam*) and the "Divine Teaching" (*Torat ha-Elohim*) of Wessely's *Divrei Shalom Ve-Emet*. In this school both boys and girls were instructed from a young age using a curriculum which combined religious

and secular studies. Internalizing the educational revolution of the Haskalah in its entirety, Hirsch believed that one should teach secular studies to young children in formal educational institutions, albeit using an integrative method which teaches from the Torah's perspective. This integration was not successful even in the school he himself founded. Nevertheless, the principle of demanding secular education for all young students was firmly established for generations to come as a result of his efforts. Hirsch maintained that the integration of religious and secular studies was not a concession to circumstance; Judaism has always believed in accepting external truths, and always accorded these truths inherent value. Loyal to tradition, Hirsch defended this method of education, arguing that it had always occupied a place in Judaism, and it was only exile which had damaged it, erasing it from Jewish memory. Hirsch boldly asserted that this integrative combination of Torah studies with secular education would produce a result which would be dialectically greater than the sum of its parts. He says about this combination:

> In keeping with its educational program, our school accords the same serious and devoted attention to subjects of general studies as it does to what is commonly regarded as specifically Jewish education. From the very beginning, our school has been aware that, in carrying out the task it has set for itself, it has combined two distinct elements that are considered mutually exclusive by prejudiced outsiders with a superficial point of view. One, they claim, must of necessity limit the other by virtue of the time and energy required to do justice to both. Our school, by contrast, has been of the opinion from the outset that these two elements, although commonly viewed as mutually limiting antitheses (and even considered by some as nullifying one another), are, in fact, two closely related, mutually complementary part of one greater, integrated educational unity. In practical life, this unity produces a Jew with moral and spiritual training in the general culture of the mankind, a man and citizen with a moral and spiritual education in the values of Judaism. As a consequence, the school, which should be the nursery for practical life, should promote both these elements in such a manner that they will complement and support one another to form one harmonious whole.[3]

3 Hirsch, *Writings*, 7:63, in the essay "The Role of Hebrew Study in General Education," from 1866.

I regard it important to dispute the view of some who consider themselves Hirsch's successors (including scholars)—that the decision to combine secular education with religious studies was a compromise, designed to meet the needs of Germany's Jewry at the time, or that Hirsch never accorded inherent value to secular studies, and never affirmed that they could contribute valuably to Jewish education. In respect to compromise, Hirsch says explicitly in his essay "The Relevance of Secular Studies to Jewish Education":

> There are proponents of Jewish studies who view any attempt to give our youth a secular education as a sacrifice of time and energy that should be devoted to things Jewish. They may sanction this sacrifice as a concession to the demands of the present day, but they will deplore it and will feel deeply concerned about the influence that an educational element they consider alien to Judaism will have on the future Jewish attitude and lifestyle of our youth. In view of the fact that our institution gives the same earnest and devoted attention to general education as it does to Jewish studies. . . It would be important to demonstrate to the Jewish friends of our institution the close connection between these two fields of education and the significant benefits which secular studies have to offer to the future philosophy and lifestyle of our Jewish youth. . . The question whether a school embraces all fields of study with equal enthusiasm out of a deep inner conviction, or because it is forced to do so by circumstances beyond its control, certainly cannot be a matter of indifference to those whose trust the school hopes to obtain for its endeavors. Only ideas rooted in genuine conviction will be received with enthusiasm. Products of compromise can expect no more than grudging acceptance forced by considerations of expediency.[4]

I will return to this topic in the following chapter.

## REVOLUTION IN THE STATUS OF WOMEN

**Hirsch's second revolution** is the position that in Judaism the woman is always considered superior to the man intellectually and ethically. Hirsch argues that the reason that women are exempt from positive time bound commandments is because they have no need for them. Although the commandments are meant

4 Hirsch, *Writings*, 7:81–82.

to rescue the observant from the sensuality of the flesh and the deception of impulse, women, by their very nature, are secure from such threats. Women fulfill their role in the home. They are tasked with ensuring that their husbands and children will study and observe the Torah, which will guarantee them ethical purity and sanctity safeguarded from the desires of flesh, and the desires for wealth and fame. Loyal to tradition, Hirsch claims, in contrast to most biblical and rabbinic sources, that this was Judaism's position from ancient times, an approach kept in all generations.

Hirsch writes about the exemption of women from positive time-bound commandments:

> The most likely reason the Torah does not obligate women in these *mitsvos* is that *women do not need them.* For the whole purpose of מצוות עשה שהזמן גרמא [positive time-bound commandments] is to represent—through symbolic actions—certain truths, ideas, principles, and resolutions, and to bring these values afresh to our minds, from time to time, so that we take them to heart and put them into practice. The Torah takes it for granted that woman has great fervor and faithful enthusiasm for her calling, and that the temptations awaiting her in the sphere of her calling pose but little danger to her. Hence, it was not necessary to impose on her all the *mitzvos* that are imposed on man. For man requires repeated exhortation to remain true to his calling, and it is necessary to repeatedly caution him against any weakness in the fulfillment of his mission. . . Women's exemption from ראייה and from חגיגה [*reiya* and *hagiga*—different types of sacrifices at the Temple during the pilgrimage festivals], however, is apparently to be explained differently: The public national representation of the Torah—which is what summons the nation to the Sanctuary—belonged primarily to the calling of the men.[5]

Hirsch writes about female superiority in the last essay of his series about the woman in Judaism, appearing in *Jeschurun* and dedicated to the subject of "the Jewish Woman in the Talmud":

> Even though the Sages of Judaism fully appreciate that women, because of their nature, are basically different from men, they regard women as full intellectual equals of the male sex. . . Our Sages consider *women*

5 Hirsch on Lev. 23:43.