

One Nation, Dispersed: Diaspora in the Megillah and in Jewish Thought, Drisha Institute  
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R. Hile Wechsler (1843-1894): "A Word of Warning to Israel to take Heed of Jew-baiting with Reference to Some Extraordinary Dreams" (1881)

1. Dream 1 (1873)

"I saw myself in a dream standing on a high mountain in Romania, persuading the Jews there, that they should not nourish any false hopes, that by the aid of Alliance Israelite, or by the help of big European powers, they would achieve equality. They should rather go to Eretz Israel, settle there and take up agriculture. A large number of my listeners wanted to accept my proposals."

2. Dream 2 (1873)

"I saw in the East - in the proximity of Romania - a terrible thunderstorm, and from there a mass of dark threatening clouds moving around to most of the European states. But it came to Germany earlier than to Austria-Hungary. I was very struck by this. Continuing dreaming, I thought: this means that the Romanian spirit of hostility will make its rounds to other states, but will first strike root in Germany, before gripping other countries."

R. Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808-1888)

3. Response to R. Wechsler

"I believe that reliance on dreams is a dangerous weapon which may shatter both Judaism and common sense... A person who nowadays prides himself with prophetic revelation could and must be considered almost certainly either mentally sick, or simply a cheater or a person who wishes for selfish reasons to take advantage of other people's superstitions".

4. *Nineteen Letters on Judaism* (1836)

"Israel's bond of unity was never land and soil but only the collective task of the Torah... It is the purely spiritual nature of Israel's nationhood that makes it possible for Jews everywhere to tie themselves fully to the various states in which they live, with the distinction, perhaps, that while others consider as highest the goods that the state aims to secure namely possessions and pleasures, Israel can always only regard these as means to fulfilling humanity's mission. Imagine Israel dwelling in freedom amidst the nations, striving to attain its ideals. Picture every son of Israel a respected, influential model of righteousness and love, spreading not Judaism among the nations, this is prohibited, but pure humanitarianism. What an impetus for the education of humankind, what a source of light and strength! .... In the midst of people pursuing and idolizing violence, possessions, and pleasures, picture living there quietly and in full view, a people who regards possessions and pleasure only as the means to practicing justice and love to the whole world, a people whose minds are filled with the truth and wisdom of the Torah, who maintain only truly human, rational views and who perpetuate them for themselves and others through living, symbolic actions."