

To Live as a Minority

There are different ways of behaving when you're a minority living among a foreign nation. Different approaches that Jews have taken to demonstrating their Judaism over the course of history are presented below.

Draw a red circle around the approach you most admire and a blue circle around the approach that most closely matches your own. You can draw both circles around the same figure.

1. Queen Esther



I hide the fact that I am Jewish. Revealing that I'm Jewish could put me in danger.

But Esther had kept secret her family background and nationality just as Mordecai had told her to do, for she continued to follow Mordecai's instructions as she had done when he was bringing her up.

Megillat Esther, Chapter 2:20

2. Mordecai the Jew

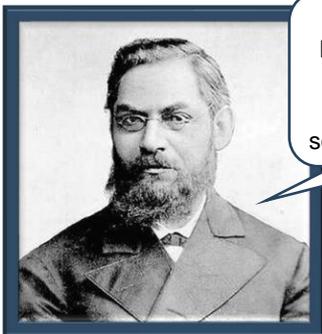


I present my Judaism for all to see, even though it's dangerous.

All the royal officials at the king's gate knelt down to Haman, for the king had commanded this concerning him. But Mordecai would not kneel down or bow low.

Megillat Esther, Chapter 3:2

3. Judah Leib Gordon



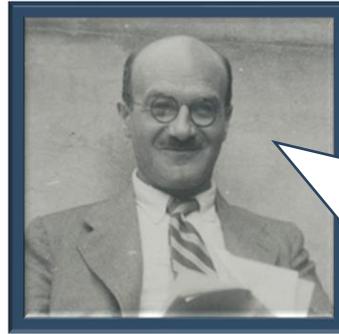
I hide my Judaism because I think that it's appropriate to integrate into the society in which I live.

Awake, my people! How long will you sleep?
The night has passed, the sun shines through.
Awake, cast your eyes hither and yon
Recognize your time and place.
[...]

To the treasury of the state bring your wealth
Bear your share of its riches and bounty
Be a person in the streets and a Jew at home
A brother to your countrymen and a servant to your king.

Judah Leib Gordon, *Hakarmel*, 1866

4. Robert Weltsch



The Jews around me hide their Judaism because they're embarrassed. There is nothing to be embarrassed about; our Judaism should be visible to everyone.

"Wear the Yellow Badge with Pride"

The Jews, under attack, must learn to acknowledge themselves [...]. It is not true that the Jews betrayed Germany. If they betrayed anyone, it was themselves, the Jews. Because the Jew did not display his Judaism with pride, because he tried to avoid the Jewish issue, he must bear part of the blame for the degradation of the Jews [...]. The Jew who denies his Judaism is no better a citizen than his fellow who avows it openly. It is shameful to be a renegade, but as long as the world around us rewarded it, it appeared an advantage. Now even that is no longer an advantage. The Jew is marked as a Jew. He gets the yellow badge. [...] It was intended as dishonor. Jews, take it up, the Shield of David, and wear it with pride ...!

Robert Weltsch, *Jüdische Rundschau*, April 4, 1933