

ABSTRACT OF HEBREW ARTICLE

**NEGATION OF POLITICAL SUCCESS IN THE THOUGHT OF
RABBI ISAAC PULGAR**
Shalom Sadik

Christian polemicists of the Middle Ages claimed that the exile of the Jewish people proved that God had abandoned the Jews because of their sins, and that the political success of the Christians proved that God had chosen them instead. Jews sought to respond to the Christian claims by explaining the reason for their long exile. Rabbi Isaac Pulgar (a Castilian rabbi of the early fourteenth century) provided an original response to the Christian argument. In his 'Ezer ha-dat, he claimed that political success is a function of two negative causes. The first is an inferior mode of persuasion, using miracle tales, instead of philosophical proofs. The second reason is that a state can survive only through amoral action. The Jewish exile is not a consequence of sin but of a higher level of morality. Pulgar concludes by rejecting future political success for the Jewish people.

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