

Chapter Three

Under the patronage of the “Father of the Jews”

A. The Pole’s Prophecy

When and where did the first warning of the impending doom come from? Jeszajahu Landau tells us that the industrial centre in Częstochowa was well-known, and even during the occupation, German merchants, *Volksdeutsche* and Poles came here. Once, a *Volksdeutsche* came to Landau’s house (who was involved in the metal industry before the War), presenting himself as a Polish refugee from the city of Posen. After several transactions, the two formed a talking relationship. It was in September-October 1940, when the Pole turned to Landau:

“I know that you and your family are Jews and, as such, you have no chance of staying alive. But as a young man, you have a way out of this situation - volunteer to work in Germany as a labourer in industry or on an agricultural farm... Do as I advise.”

When the astonished Landau asked where he got such an idea, he received the surprising answer:

“I know the Germans. They have always done and acted as they were allowed to do, without hesitation. Now they have an opportunity to settle all scores with their opponents... and they have no greater enemy than the Jews, and that tells you everything.”

Were the Jews capable of taking such warnings seriously in the autumn of 1940?

Perhaps only the same Icze Katz, mentioned earlier, who constantly warned against giving aid to the enemy. Although the fall of Paris in the summer of 1940 caused severe dismay among the Jews, but recovery came with the outbreak of the war against the Soviet Union, but the hope of Germany’s quick defeat quickly faded - in the autumn of 1941, the Germans began to march-past Russian prisoners-of-war through the ghetto streets, starved to death, exhausted, and lice-eaten.¹

The Jewish workers, who worked near the place where the bodies of prisoners were brought for burial, told of the horrors. Among the captives were also Jews, and one of them secretly told a Jewish worker that he must not despair, because Russia would win.

But when?!

¹ Rybicki, Pod znakiem lwa i kruka... p. 86