

***Dayonim* [Rabbinical Judges]**

Rabbi Nachum Asz, Rabbi Josse'le "*Kirer*"¹ (Prokosz), Reb Nachman Grinfeld, Reb Josse'le Klajnplac, and in the last days, Reb Josef Rubin (a son-in-law of Reb Awigdor'l [Szapiro]) belonged to the rabbinical court in Częstochowa. All members of the rabbinical court were men with wisdom, sharp-mindedness and objectivity.

Rabbi Nachum Asz inspired the greatest deference and became famous for the complicated *Halachic* trials that he conducted. There were cases when Poles, who had a material conflict with Jews, came to him for a ruling. The parties always put the fullest trust in Rabbi Nachum Asz's verdicts.

Following his death, the *de facto* [religious] exponent was the *dayan* Reb Josse'le "*Kirer*" (Prokosz). He delivered public sermons, participating in and leading the whole religious life. He was distinguished for his phenomenal memory and great Talmudic knowledge. When someone asked him where this or that *Halachic* ruling was to be found, he immediately replied - even providing the number of the page.

In the morning, he would not eat breakfast before first having given the young lads a lesson [in Talmud]. At the same time, he was [also] versed in worldly studies and kept up with progress. His children learned both general [viz. secular] studies and professional trades.

Even though he was the city's *de facto* rabbi, Reb Josse'le "*Kirer*" did not permit any elections [for Chief Rabbi] to be held, declaring that, after such a prodigy as Rabbi Nachum Asz z"l, no one could pretend to take over the rabbinical throne.

For many years, Reb Nachman Grinfeld and Reb Josse'le Klajnplac were active in the rabbinical court as *dayonim*, earning the fullest trust and recognition and standing out for their piousness and scholarship.

The *dayan* Reb Josef Rubin was a very interesting person. Comparatively young, tall and with a noteworthy beard, he stood out for his cleverness, expertise in arbitration and oratorical talent. He delivered public sermons rich in content, interwoven with discourses of the Sages, gave Jews a lesson every Shabbes at the Study-Hall and also devoted himself to communal activity.

During the Nazi period, when a large number of prominent Jewish personalities were taken as hostages, the *dayan* Reb Josef Rubin was among them. They were held at the old Polish cemetery on the corner of ul. Fabryczna and Ogrodowa. The gendarme, guarding them, was a sadist and made all kinds of trouble for the hostages. One morning, he made them dance, submitting them to public mockery. The *dayan* Reb Josef Rubin was forced to dance with Mrs Goldsztajn. He was two metres tall - a gaunt, gangly Jew - and she was short and stout, about one metre fifty-five in height. When the Jewish population found out about this story, they quickly gathered the "contribution" in order to ransom the hostages.

¹ [TN: Aka "*Kira*", Yiddish nickname for a person from Austria - in this case Galicia, which was in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.]