

***Shochtim* [Ritual Slaughterers]**

The most respected *shochtim* in town were Aba'le Kaufman, Chaim Faktor, Nechemie Gotlib, Chaskiel Bergman, Zajnwel¹ Borzykowski, Mojsze Dzialowski and Josl Szancer, a son-in-law of Zajnwel *Shoichet* [Borzykowski]. During the High Holidays, they had a *chazokeh*² of leading the *Shacharis* [morning] prayer service.

All of the *shochtim* had large families with numerous children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Reb Aba'le *Shoichet* [Kaufman] was even blessed with great-great-grandchildren, and almost a quarter of the city's Jewish population were part of his family by marriage.

The children of the *shochtim* played a correspondingly [important] role in economic and communal life. Chaim Faktor's son had a large tannery. Nechemie Gotlib's son was a gifted journalist. The son of [Zajnwel *Shoichet*,] Dawid[-Lajzer] Borzykowski, was for many years a committee of management member of the Merchants' and Industrialists' Union. Also, all the other children of the *shochtim* distinguished themselves in various fields.

The family of Reb Aba'le *Shoichet* grew particularly large, as the result of the matches [that they made]. The Frydrych family and their son-in-law Borensztajn are currently building a weaving factory in the Land of Israel - they are one of the offshoot families of Reb Aba'le *Shoichet*³.

Reb Aba'le was a great enthusiast of Kremiski's Turkish bath. He was one of the select few who, for long hours, would climb up to the top bench of the sauna with a whisk⁴ and sweat. As an elderly Jew, when he was ninety, he did not let a single week pass by without being in the sauna. This made him feel well and people wondered at his strength. From where he had such strength, in his older years, remains a secret.

The butchers treated Reb Aba'le *Shoichet* with the utmost deference. He was their arbitrator in different *Halachic* trials. The butchers wanted only Reb Aba'le to be the one who slaughtered their animals⁵. Reb Aba'le lived to a ripe old age and was the oldest *shoichet* in the city of Częstochowa.

¹ [TN: His full name was Nuchem-Zajnwel, as may be seen from the official Częstochowa records.]

² [TN: Heb., "holding", from the word "chazak", meaning strong or solid; Halachic status of permanence that is established when an event repeats itself three times.]

³ [TN: According to the official records, Lewek the son of Jankiel Frydrych from Pilica married Blima-Szajndla the daughter of Aba Kaufman (Reb Aba'le *Shoichet*) in Częstochowa in 1895.]

⁴ [TN: Bundle of twigs, usually willow or birch, with which one beats oneself or is beaten by others to promote circulation and skin cleansing.]

⁵ [TN: The laws of ritual slaughter are extremely complicated and detailed, and failure to observe even the smallest requisite may result in the slaughtered animal being rendered non-kosher, wherefore it cannot be sold as kosher meat, resulting in a large financial loss for the owner.]