

The Family of Reb Józef Dziubas z"l



Reb Józef Dziubas z"l

Reb Józef Dziubas was one of Częstochowa's most magnificent figures. He was a man of exemplary gentleness and his home was a true Jewish one, in which purity and warmth, generosity and nobleness always reigned.

He was born in the small town of Żarki¹. About one-hundred years ago [i.e., c. 1870], a Jew named Izrael Dziubas appeared in this *shtetl*, together with his two sons, Józef and Dawid Majer, and they gained renown as experts in the manufacture of soap.

One of the *shtetl's* wealthy men, a Torah scholar, a *chassid* with a generous heart, Reb [Abram] Aba Szybel, became their partner in the soap business. Through this partnership, the associates became good friends and, one day, Reb Aba made a match between his partner Józef and his sister Estera [Fajgla], who was a widow, and thus the associates became brothers-in-law as well.

The partnership in the soap business reaped success and the small town's borders became too narrow to contain their ambitions. This small business had become famous in the surrounding area. Reb Izrael and his sons decided to move the factory to Częstochowa. Reb Izrael Dziubas had meanwhile aged and the task of re-establishing the factory in Częstochowa fell to Reb Józef. He became partners with Reb Chaskel Fiszel. They purchased a lot in town at ulica Nadrzeczna 36-38, on the banks of the Warta River, where they erected their homes, as well as a modern factory with innovative equipment, and their business progressed from day to day. The "Dziubas & Fiszel" Company's products gained a good reputation throughout the entire country and they became rich.

Reb Józef was not only famous as the greatest expert in his profession, but also as an honest and guileless man. His treatment of the workers at his factory, the merchants, and his kindness towards all people were notorious. His house was famed for its magnificence and, as head of the household, he was admired both by Jews and Gentiles. His wife also gained fame as a righteous woman with a warm heart and an open hand, who managed her household gracefully and sensibly.



Mrs Estera Dziubas z"l

They had two sons and four daughters, who all built splendid houses in town. Both the sons and the sons-in-law all managed well in Częstochowa, and each and every family attained success for itself in all fields of life, as public figures, as masters of industry and as great merchants.

Reb Józef and his wife Estera were bound, heart and soul, to all matters pertaining to the aid of the wretched, the miserable and all sufferers. The *shtiebel's* paupers were to be found at his house, where they felt like household members in his company.

Reb Józef and his wife were actually able to emigrate to Palestine in their

¹ [TN: In the records he appears as having been born in Zloczew, on Mar.2, 1856. From the subsequent text it is also apparent that he was not born in Żarki.]

old age (in 5685 - 1925), together with their son Symcha and his household, and they lived there for about two years in Tel-Aviv and Bnei-Brak. Living conditions in Palestine were very difficult for them, where a severe financial crisis prevailed at the time. The sons and daughters demanded that the parents and the whole entourage return to them in Częstochowa. Reb Józef regretted having to relinquish the Land of Israel, a fact he grieved for, silently, to the end of his days.

(Reb Józef and his wife had the privilege of departing to their afterlives at the onset of the horrifying Holocaust that was cast down on Polish Jewry. Reb Józef passed away in 5698 - 1938 [sic.] [1937], on the second weekday of the *Sukkos* festival. About one-and-a-half years later, in 5699 [1939], as the Holocaust began, his wife Estera also died. Thousands attended both their funerals.)

The Dziubas Family Branches in Częstochowa



Reb Symcha and Rywka Dziubas z"l

The eldest son, **Reb Symcha**, was a Torah scholar and a humble man. He married Rywka, the daughter of his uncle Reb [Abram] Aba Szybel from Żarki. He was his father's living image, loved by the people, agreeable to man and God. [He was] one of the city's prominent figures. A *Kehilla* Council member, he was popular with all the community's circles and the first for all charitable activities. He made *Aliyah* twice - the first time was in 5685 [1925], together with his parents, and he returned after about two years. The second time was in 5698 [1938] - he emigrated with his family (except for one son, Reb Leibel, who remained in the inferno) and settled permanently. He lived in Jerusalem, where he died on 8th Nisan 5718 [29th March 1958], at the age of 78. His wife Rywka died two years before, on 28th Nisan 5716 [26th April 1956]. They left four daughters and two sons, who all live with their families in Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv.

The second son, **Reb Icyk Majer**, was wed to Sura, the daughter of Reb Henschel Rotblatt from Łódź and the granddaughter of the *Rebbe* of Pilica. Like his father, he was a *chassid* who pursued acts of charity. (He perished in the Holocaust, together with his wife, two sons, and the eldest daughter, Henschel Laja *hy"l*.) A son and a daughter who live in America and two daughters who live in Israel have survived. They were rescued from the camps in Germany.

Their daughter **Sura** married Reb Jakub Hersz Fajerman, owner of the "Fajerman" company in the Stary Rynek. He was very wealthy, a generous and charitable man, modest in his ways, a *chassid* and an important activist for the "*Machzikei Hadas*" *cheder* in town. Very few were actually aware of Reb Jakub Hersz Fajerman's acts of charity and generosity. (When Hitler's troops rounded up the city's worthies at "Metalurgia" on ulica Krótka and brutally abused them, he too was hit by the enemy's bullets and was killed there.) Of the entire Fajerman family, only his son Mojżesz and his wife Adela (née Adler), who live in Paris, and Nina, the daughter of Reb Alter Kestenberg², who lives in Australia, have survived.

Sura's twin sister, **Majtla**, was wed to Reb Abram Henschel Finkelsztajn from Łódź, about whom we have published a special article in our book.

Mania was a sensitive type. She married Reb Abram Luzor [sic.] [Lejzer] Szajnfeld, about whom we have published a special article in our book.

² [TN: He was married to Hena Fajerman, the daughter of Reb Jakub Hersz.]

The fourth and youngest daughter, **Pessa**, married Reb Abram Naftuli [Herc] Horowicz, about whom we have also published a special article in our book.

The son of Estera Dziubas from her first marriage with Reb Herszel Kestenberg, was brought up in her second husband Reb Józef's house. Following his marriage, he moved to Warsaw, where he opened a soap factory. He did well in business and his family also grew. (The entire Kestenberg family was also annihilated. Only few have survived and they are dispersed across the globe.) His sister Rywka (owner of the large tailoring goods and fabrics shop on ulica Ogrodowa) was also brought up in Reb Józef's house. She married Reb Zvi [Herszlik] Koplewicz, who was a Torah scholar and a *chassid*. He died in his prime, leaving a widow and six children. She took the management of the business upon herself and, with her great capability and diligence, was able to turn it into a successful enterprise. Her three sons, [Rachmiel] Alter, Icyk and Izrael were known in town as handsome and talented lads. Of her three daughters, only one, Zusza³, survived the camps in Germany. She was able to emigrate to Israel, where she died following a fatal illness.



To the magnificent Dziubas family, we must add another outstanding figure, Reb Abram Icyk Dziubas z"l. He was a prolific writer of extraordinary talents. This is what his brother Reb Izrael Dziubas from Jerusalem writes of him:

Reb Abram Icyk Dziubas z"l

Reb Abram Icyk Dziubas, the son of Reb Dawid Majer (the famous Reb Józef Dziubas' younger brother) and his wife Fajgla [Hinda, *née* Rozencwajg], was born in 5645 [1885]. When he was just ten, he was already studying Talmud with *Toisfes* and it was predicted that he would become a young prodigy. He wrote his first book "*Milin Chadtin*" [Aramaic; "New Words"] when he was about fifteen. After about a year, a second appeared – "*Milin Yakirin*" [Arc.; "Treasured Words"]. When he was eighteen, he published "*Dgan Bochurim*" ["Grain of Youth"] and, after a year, another – "*Zichron Avruhom*" ["Memory of Abraham"]. In 5665 [1905], following the death of the *Gerer Rebbe*, the "*Sfas Emes*", he published a eulogy to him in the form of a book entitled "*Hesped Mar*" ["Bitter Mourning"], and another book that same year - "*Pnei Yitzchok*" ["Face of Isaac"]. In 5680 [1920], he published a Passover *Haggadah* with his own commentaries, entitled "*Gvuras Yitzchok*" ["The Might of Isaac"] and, after two years, in 5682 [1922], he compiled the book "*Shileshim Drushim*" ["Threefold Sermons"].

It should be noted that all his books received the approbation of great Torah authorities in his generation, who valued his writings highly. His Torah study and book-writing were not "a spade with which to dig⁴" for him. During this time, he was also involved in commerce and manufacturing, from which he eked out a living. In 5685 [1925], he emigrated to Palestine, but did not manage well there. In his book "*Meyakirei Yerushalaim*" ["From Jerusalem's Cherished Ones"], which contains legends and discourses from the Jerusalem Talmud etc., which he gathered and also interpreted, the author writes in his preface: *This is already the tenth book that I've published in thirty years*" (the book was printed in Piotrków, at the J. Cederbaum press), and he recounts that in the year *HFRT*⁵ (5685) [1925]:

³ [TN: Zlota in the records.]

⁴ [TN: See Avot, Ch.4, mishna 5: "Rabbi Zadok said: do not make them (i.e., words of Torah) a crown for self-exaltation, nor a spade with which to dig."]

⁵ [TN: In Judaism, all numbers are represented with letters (the gematria system), as in the Roman numerical system. Thus, the order of the letters comprising the intended number is habitually intentionally changed to lend significance to a specific date etc. In this case, the letters

Many people ascended to the Land of Israel, lost their property and returned and I, too, was one of them. I had come and lost my money, and so descended into Netherland⁶. There, I came to Rotterdam, where I was pleased to settle. And God gave me bread to eat (and there is no bread but Torah) and during my stay there, I completed several works I had started in Poland, and also [wrote] a second volume to my book "Dgan Bochurim", and my commentaries "Be'er Yitzchok" ["Well of Isaac"] on "Igeres Raban Yochanan Ben Zakai"⁷ and, with the aid of Mr S. Hirszel, the manager of the library at the University of Amsterdam, I was able to print this current book, as well as the book "Meyakirei Yerushalaim", in three volumes, six years afterwards.

In Holland, too, he found no satisfaction, for lack of world-class libraries in which to search for treasures. He therefore moved to England in 5695 [1935] and settled in Ramsgate, next to Montefiore College. He spent day and night in the college's library. He deciphered old manuscripts and published them, among them being the book "Ha'Mabit" ["The Gazer"], by one of the ancient authors. There, he compiled his work "Milin DeRabonon MeTalmud Yerushalmi" ["Words of the Rabbis from the Jerusalem Talmud"]. Eight years later, in 5703 [1942], he published in London the "Sefer Ho'Asufos" ["Book of Collections"], which was composed by Rabbi Elijah ben Isaac of Carcassonne, a disciple of Rabbi Eleazar of Worms (author of "Sefer Ha'Rokeach" ["Book of the Perfumer"]), at the end of the fifth millennium from the creation of the world [viz. first half of the 13th century]. The book contains Halachic rulings of all kinds, document templates, precious segments from ancient books, good words from the *Rishonim*⁸, [Hebrew] vowels, cantillation and grammar, and a long poem by Rabeinu Tam [French Tosafist, 1100-1171].

[In the title page, he writes:]

This book has been transcribed for the first time from a very old manuscript, the only remaining copy in the world, which is now kept at the Ohel Moshe Ve-Yehudit Montefiore⁹ yeshivah in Ramsgate, and is hereby published with annotations and comments entitled "Beis Avrohom Yitzchok" (Beis Av'i) ["House of Abraham Isaac"; "House of my Father" (acronym)], by the humble Avrohom Yitzchok son of Our Teacher, Rabbi Dawid Majer z"l Dziubas. Printed by J. Grodsky, 129-131 Cavell St., East London.

Reb Abram Icyk Dziubas z"l died in England in 5707 [1947].

for the year 5685 were manipulated to spell הפרת, which may be read in Hebrew to mean "you have been violated", instead of תרפה, which, incidentally, means "you shall be weakened" ...]

⁶ [TN: I've rendered this phrase verbatim, due to the obvious pun intended.]

⁷ [TN: "The Epistle of Our Teacher Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakai", an anonymous work attributed to the 1st century CE rabbi.]

⁸ [TN: Leading rabbinical scholars who lived between the 11th and 15th centuries.]

⁹ [TN: Lit. "Tent of Moses and Judith"; the English name is "Judith Lady Montefiore College".]