

E. Ben-Moshe (Jakubowicz)

The Gerer Shtiebel at ul. Nadrzeczna 36

There were several *Gerer shtieblech* in Częstochowa, but their *shtiebel* on ul. Nadrzeczna had a special character - even if only due to the fact that it was located in the poorest area of the Jewish masses.

This *shtiebel* was, for many years, at Reb Chaskel Fiszel's house (from the Fiszel & Dziubas company), not far from the Old Synagogue and, after the house was bought by the *Zhuriker Rebbe*, the *shtiebel* was moved to Kupfer's house, on the same street.

The crowd of *Chassidim* who prayed there – I mean in the last period – came from the poorer religious strata of the population, precisely the most pious Jews, honest folk, but the majority of them were extremely poor - beggars - petty townsmen and craftsmen, who unwaveringly believed in God and their *Rebbe*! They were true *Chassidim*, with particular passion and selflessness. Despite their difficult financial situation and their daily struggle to survive, they were committed with might and main to the Chassidic cause and were always content and joyful with their difficult fate. They sang and danced [and] conducted "*Third Meals*" and "*Melave Malkes*" [see earlier article], even if with just a bit of dry *challah* and herring, but with a constant mystical, spiritual joy and unblemished belief!



Reb Mojsze (Chussid) Jakubowicz
z"l

I spent many years at this *shtiebel* with my blessed father. Although my father was just a craftsman - a gaiter-maker - he was one of the most devoted *Gerer Chassidim*, and was crowned with the title "*Mojsze Chussid*¹".

I used to accompany my father z"l to the *shtiebel* even when I was already far indeed from Chassidism. I did this in order to fulfil the precept of respecting one's parents, and, to this day, I carry with me the Chassidic enthusiasm that my soul lapped up there.

¹ [TN: Chassidic-Polish pronunciation of "chassid", i.e., follower.]