

## The Book Committee

# Reb Juda Leib [Lewek] Kantor

He was one of our city's notable figures. Of noble features, he also inspired respect with his external appearance, with his well-groomed beard, his tidy apparel and keen eyes.

Already in his youth, he emerged as a young studious prodigy and he studied the Torah all his life. He inherited from his mother, the renowned philanthropist, Kajla Kantor, much wisdom of life and, like her, he also excelled as a philanthropist, one who took in guests and who gave generously to charity.

Although he was ultra-orthodox himself (he was affiliated with the Radomsko *Chassidim*), he had a modern outer appearance, a pleasant demeanour and was tolerant towards all factions, including those distanced from religious or Chassidic life - unless they were uncouth or "spiteful, modern apostates". His many friends and seekers of his advice were from all circles of the population and, among them, also many Christians.

Although in the mid-1930's he fell from his former glory, all the townspeople continued to show him great respect. Even in the days of hardship and want, he did not relinquish from taking in guests and giving to charity. He shared his bread with the poor and the needy.

His first wife, Laja z''l, was the daughter of Reb Herszel, son of Reb Szyja Zeligman. She died at a young age, leaving him with eight children. He then married her sister's daughter [Chaja] Sura, the daughter of Reb Szlojme "*Shoichet*" [Fuks], with whom he had another three children. (His son Yechezkel [Chaskel], who was born in 1917, as well as his second son Józef, wrote a brilliant page in the annals of the fight against the accursed Nazis. Yechezkel was a commander in the Polish Underground State [resistance movement]. He organised groups of partisans and was among the plotters of the Częstochowa Ghetto insurrection.

When all the youth groups united around the underground organisation "*ŻOB*" (*Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa*) [The Jewish Fighting Organisation], Yechezkel Kantor was one of the most active in organising the resistance and he died a hero's death in combat. (May God avenge his blood!)