

Chaim Ben Shlomo

The *Shtiebel* of Kromołów *Chassidim*



The *shtiebel* of Kromołów *Chassidim* was at ul. Warszawska 22. At first, a group who were called “Kruk’s *minyán*” prayed there.

The *Rebbe* of Kromołów, *Rebbe* Nusen-Chaim Rabinowicz, was one of the four sons of the “*Chessed Le’Avruhom*¹” of Radomsko. After his death (on 13th Elul 5651 [16th September 1921]), his followers travelled to *Rebbe* Yechezkel Halberstam of Sieniawa. He ordained the “*Knesses Yechezkel*²” as Rabbi of Novipola [?], from where he went on to become *Rebbe*, in his father’s place.

About two years after the “*Knesses Yechezkel*” became *Rebbe* in Radomsko, his brother, *Rebbe* Nusen-Nuchem also became *Rebbe*, and settled in Kromołów. The *Rebbe* of Kromołów succeeded in pulling many followers to him and opened his own *shtieblech* in many towns in Poland and Galicia, among them in Częstochowa also.

A small part of the congregation at the Kromołów *shtiebel* was already then considered progressive in the way they dressed. They wore ironed shirt collars and neckties, did not wear caftans and some even wore short suits.

There were excellent prayer-leaders at the Kromołów *shtiebel*, who prayed according to the rite of the *Rebbe* of Kromołów, who was also an excellent cantor, like his father the “*Chessed Le’Avruhom*”. The most notable among them were especially Reb Zvi Hersz Klajman and his son Reb Awrum Mojsze, who served as prayer-leaders on the High Holidays. Reb Fiszel Wajdenfeld, whose reading was particularly pleasant and accurate, read the Torah scroll. Reb Szlojme Zlotnik, who was also nicknamed Reb Szlojme *Shoichet*, blew the *shoifar*.

One of the prominent members was Reb Majer Ber Kartuz. When he led the prayer, he was aided by his son Reb Duwid’l. In the last years, the well-known *chassid* Reb Srukke Częstochowski also prayed there. He and Reb Majer Ber brought the congregation much pleasure with their tales of Chassidic life.

On joyous occasions, and especially on Purim and other festivities, Reb Mojsze Borzykowski used to particularly delight the crowd with jokes and songs and, on Purim, with his [mock] “*Purim Torah*” speech. And when the *Chassidim*’s hearts were merry with wine, Reb Zajnwel Glazer would stand up, put a glass full of water on his forehead, and dance his Land of Israel dances. And how did Reb Zajnwel come to know how they danced in the Land of Israel? Reb Zajnwel recounted that his father had travelled to the Land of Israel together with Reb Mojsze’le, the son of the *tzadik* Reb Duwid’l of Lelów, when Reb Mojsze’le moved there. And when his father returned, he brought the dance home with him and taught it to him.

Reb Szlojme Józef Fajnsztadt was the *shtiebel*’s *gabay* for many years.

¹ [TN: “*Mercy to Abraham*”, by *Rebbe* Awrum Yissuchor Dov HaCohen Rabinowicz (1843-1892).]

² [TN: “*Ezequiel’s Gathering*”, by *Rebbe* Yechezkel, the son of the “*Chessed Le’Avruhom*”.]

The same love for the Land of Israel that beat in the hearts of the *Rebbes* of Radomsko and their followers, beat no less strongly in those of the Kromotów *Chassidim*, and many among them emigrated to the Land of Israel during the *Aliyah* years. Two of the *Rebbe's* sons-in-law settled in Jerusalem: Rabbi Szaja Szapira, one of the founders of "*Ha'Poel Ha'Mizrachi*" in the Land of Israel, and the *Rebbe* Reb Chanoch Henech Borensztajn, the son of the *Rebbe* of Sochaczew.



(With the onset of the last World War, the *Rebbe* Reb Nusen-Nuchem, already an old man, was forced to seek shelter in the Warsaw ghetto and, together with other *Rebbes*, was murdered with his family by the Nazis when the ghetto was liquidated. May God avenge his blood.)