

In Memoriam of the *Rebbe*, Reb Pinches Menachem Eluzor Justman ztz"l



In Pilica, the rabbi of the city was Rabbi Pinches Menachem Eluzor Justman, the son of the daughter of *Rebbe* Icchok Majer of Ger¹. His predecessor, as the city rabbi, was his relative, Reb Pinches Elio Rotenberg, the "*Chidushei Ha'Rim's*" brother's son and one of the great disciples of the "*Sfas Emes*"². Reb Pinches Menachem Justman, the grandson of the *Rim* of Ger, grew up on his grandfather's lap and heard words of Torah from him.

Following the death of the *Rim* of Ger, he became a disciple of Reb Chanoch-Henech Lewin, the *Rebbe* of Aleksander and, after he too passed away, Reb Pinches Menachem became a follower of the "*Sfas Emes*" and eventually also became his brother-in-law. He chose dealing in books as his source of income. He continued sitting and studying the Torah as well as working and had many disciples. He gained renown for his favourable personal traits. Following the death of his brother-in-law the "*Sfas Emes*", he acquiesced to the entreaties of his friends that he should accept the post of City Rabbi in Pilica. However, after a few years, when many followers were coming to visit him, he passed the position of City Rabbi to his youngest son Reb Chanoch God and contented himself with being a Chassidic *Rebbe*, to which he dedicated all his time.

Pilica Chassidism consolidated quickly and encompassed many thousands. From towns all over Poland, they thronged to it in order to become infused with *Rebbe* Pinches Menachem's Torah and Chassidism. The *tzadik* himself was of a sensitive character and, in his book "*Sifsei Tzadik*" [Lips of the Tz.], he attempted to also express his musical emotions. Among the *Chassidim* who came to Pilica to visit him on *Shabbes* and holidays were renowned singers-composers, who brought with them the musical atmosphere, as well as a new "crop" of melodies. The new melody for "*Akdumes*"³, which was a tradition in the *Gerer* dynasty, was inaugurated each year in both places.

The main singer-composer in Pilica was Reb Mendel Fruman, whose heart burned with true passion and dedication to music. He directed the singing at the *Rebbe's* court together with his two sons/helpers. When the *Rebbe* moved to Częstochowa, Reb Mendel would come there for the High Holidays and [the other] holidays and would lead the prayer services, animating the prayers with his sweet melodies and pleasant voice.

Rebbe Pinches Menachem Justman moved to Wieruszów in 5675 [1915] and, from there, to Częstochowa in 5678 [1918], where he lived until his death. He made his will five times, each time adding something new. His will is filled with Torah and the fear of God and served as a guide for his household and followers.

¹ [TN: The first *Gerer Rebbe*, also known as the "*Chidushei HaRim*", i.e., The Innovations of "*Ri*"*m*", an acronym for his name Rabbi Icchok Majer]

² [TN: Heb. "*The Language of Truth*" is the name of the book whereby its author is known, *Rebbe* Juda Aryeh Leib of Ger, the son of the "*Chidushei HaRim*," and his successor as second *Gerer Rebbe*.]

³ [TN: "*Introductions*"; a liturgical poem in Aramaic which is recited in public on the holiday of *Shvies* (*Shavuot*).]

Rebbe Pinches Menachem passed away on *Shabbes*, the week of [the portion] *Vayishlach*⁴ [And He Sent; Genesis 32:4–36:43], 10th Kislev 5681 [21st November 1920] and was brought to eternal rest in the Częstochowa cemetery, in the presence of tens of thousands of people. (He was succeeded by his son, *Rebbe* Chanoch Gad, who died in the Holocaust, together with all the House of Israel, may God avenge their blood).

⁴ [TN: The section read on that *Shabbes* was the preceding one, "*Vayetzei*" ("And He Left", Genesis 28:10–32:3). After sundown the week of "*Vayishlach*" began.]