

## Abram Luzor Szajnfeld *hy*"d



A young married *chassid*, he was the son of the wealthy *chassid* Reb Jechiel Szajnfeld from Kielce - brother-in-law of the *Gerer Rebbe*, the "*Sfas Emes*".

Abram Luzor Szajnfeld was a popular man in town. In his youth, he was known as a quick-witted young man, as sharp as a seraph [a fiery angel]. He wore a black velvet Chassidic hat even on weekdays<sup>1</sup>. He was an ebullient type who invigorated others, the living spirit among the young married *Chassidim* at the *shtiebel*.

A deep emotional crisis struck Abram Luzor, when the Zionist movement arose and the *Gerer Rebbe* opposed it. He abandoned the Chassidic "court" during this crisis. Unlike his brother-in-law Reb Abram Henech Finkelsztajn, who [despite leaving] remained with both feet entrenched in Chassidism, in his essence, attire and way of life, for Reb Abram Luzor the crisis triggered a paradigm shift and caused him to gradually distance himself from the ways of Chassidism and *Chassidim*. This was also expressed in him changing his attire and way of life.

The lively character's stormy nature made this change drastic and revolutionary. All at once, he embraced the secular world and became a fervent Zionist. When the Zionist Organisation was established in Częstochowa, he became one of its leaders and most prominent activists. Over the course of time, he was elected Chairman of the organisation and, in this position, became a confidante of Izaak Grünbaum and of the other Zionist leaders in Poland. He stood out as one of the most talented figures amongst the city's Zionist activists. He was among the founders of the Hebrew high school. He headed the "*Ha'Chalutz-Craftsmen*" and many other public institutions in town. He was chosen to represent the Zionists at the *Kehilla* Council and was rightly considered the leader of the Zionist Organisation in Częstochowa.

His wife, the sensitive Mania, the daughter of Reb Józef Dziubas z"l, died in her prime, leaving him with three daughters. Rywka, who inherited all her mother's fine qualities, was able to emigrate to the Land [of Israel] with her husband Szmul Gordon and their son Abram, after years of torture and suffering in the forced-labour camps. She passed away in Israel, in 1961. The second daughter, Dr Hadasa Birencwajg, was shot by the Nazis in Częstochowa. The third daughter, Sulamita Kagan, lives in Australia [She died in Melbourne in December 2011]. Reb Abram Luzor remarried and had two more daughters, Judith and Ruth, who are both in Israel.

(In the tempestuous years of the Holocaust, Abram Luzor was put in charge of the "*Chevra Kadisha*", on behalf of the *Judenrat*. He remained in the city to the last days before the Liberation and was then transported, together with thousands of other Jews, to Buchenwald, where he survived as a *muselmann*<sup>2</sup> until the American army liberated the camp. However, the Angel of Death then claimed

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<sup>1</sup> [TN: Doubtlessly due to his lineage. The close relatives of a Rebbe are usually differentiated themselves from "commoners" by their special garb.]

<sup>2</sup> [TN: Yid.; used to describe a near-death prisoner in Nazi concentration camp.]

him and he died of exhaustion, just days after Liberation. He was buried in the cemetery in Buchenwald at the beginning of Iyyar 5708 - April 1945.)