



R' Yissachar Shlomo Teichtal

1885-1945

Yahrzeit – 10<sup>th</sup> of Shevat

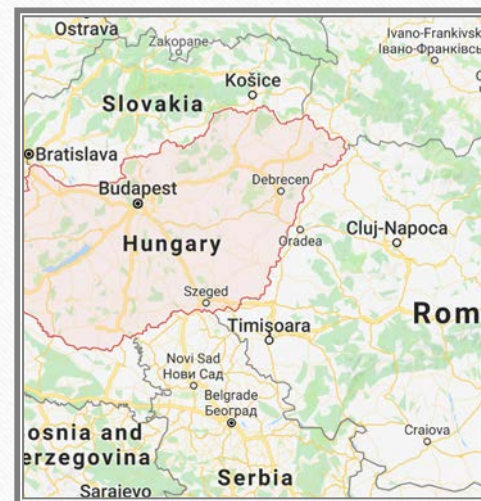
Rabbi Efrem Goldberg

Boca Raton Synagogue

# Biography

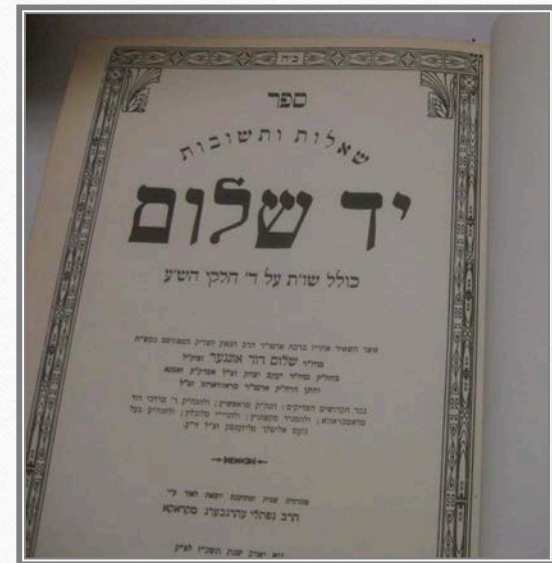
- Born in Hungary in 1885
- His father Yitzchak was a great scholar, teacher and chassid.
- His grandfather, after whom he was named, R' Yissachar Shlomo was a Rosh Yeshiva and close follower of the Sanzer Rebbe.
- His mother, Gittel was a learned and pious woman. In this introduction to his responsa, he writes about her:

“She walked truthfully and perfectly before God. She despised worldly pleasures, caring only about Torah and fear of God. Her only goal was to instill in her children a burning love for these very ideals.”



# Biography

- Until his Bar Mitzvah, he was educated by his father, about whom he writes:  
“My father ushered me into the inner chambers of the Torah. He provided me with a path through the sea of the Talmud, a course through the mighty waters of the Torah. He brought me through its width and breadth...from age three until thirteen.”
- After his Bar Mitzvah, he went to learn in Byrdhaza, Hungary and a year later when to Tarnow, Galicia to learn at the yeshiva of the Sanzer Chassidim.
- At 15, he moved to Gavne, Poland and became a talmid of R' Shalom Unger, author of Yad Shalom and one of the biggest Talmidei Chachamim of the time.
- R' Yissachar Shlomo became very close with him and even edited his sefer Yad Shalom.



# Biography

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- At 19, R' Yissachar Shlomo married Freidel, the daughter of R' Ya'akov Yosef Ginz, the Rav of Hoida-Busermin in Hungary and author of Harei Besamim, and a descendant of Rav Akiva Eiger.
- R' Yissachar Shlomo was then appointed as a dayan and teacher in his father in law's community. His shiurim grew in popularity and he was admired for his learning and teaching.
- Tragically, his wife Freidel passed away at a young age.
- R' Yissachar Shlomo married again, this time to Nechamah, daughter of R' Dovid Freidman, Av Beis Din of Tzahlim.

# Biography

- In 1905, after returning to Hungary, R' Yissachar Shlomo went to learn under the Chuster Rav, author of the Arugas Ha'Bosem, R' Moshe Greenwald.
- A year later, at 21 years old, he received semicha from the Yad Yitzchak, the Rebbe of Talisheva. A year later he received another semicha from R' Shmuel Rosenberg, the Be'er Shmuel of Unsdorf. Additionally, he got semicha from the Av Beis Din of Maad, R' Mordechai Leib Winkler, the Levushei Mordechai.



# Seforim



- R' Teichtal was a prolific writer. He corresponded on issues of halacha with gedolim across Poland, Hungary and Lithuania. He is mentioned in many of their teshuvos.
- He also published many articles in Torah journals and periodicals.
- His first major work was Mishneh Sachir, a collection of his teshuvos. He began working on it at 24 yrs. Old and published the first volume fifteen years later. It appeared with haskamos, approbations from gedolim of the time, giving him instant credibility.

# Seforim

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- The second volume of his teshuvos appeared in 1926 and the third was printed in 1940, just after the war began. The Nazis destroyed all the copies while they were still at the printing house. Only R' Teichtal's personal copy was saved with his other writings, like Eim Ha'Banim Semeichah and his personal journal. R' Yissachar Shlomo deposited his manuscripts with a Non Jewish acquaintance and instructed his family that if any of them survive to go retrieve them.
- After the war, his daughter Hindel fulfilled the request and got the manuscripts back. They include, commentary on Talmud, derashos, insights into the parsha, and more. His son who survived subsequently published some of his writings including 3 more volumes of Mishne Sachir and Mishneh Sachir on Parsha and Moadim.
- Additionally, Emunah Tzerufah B'Kor HaShoah, which is a diary of events from the Holocaust was published. The diary represents a unique dimension to the events from the Holocaust and what preceded them. It was discovered fifty years after it was written – in the attic of Rabbi Teichtel's house.

# Pishtian, Slovakia



- R' Yissachar Shlomo was close with many Chassidishe rebbe, including the Belzer Rebbe, Shinover, and he was very close with the Munkatcher, R' Chaim Eliezer Shapira.
- In 1921, he became the Rav and Av Beis Din of Pishtian, Slovakia, a very comfortable town, known as "Little America."
- The city was famous for its mineral baths which was use therapeutically. It was visited by gedolim who came for healing and on their visits they would always spend time with its rav. On their visits, R' Teichtal developed close relationships with R Meir Shapiro of Lublin, R' Menachem Zamba of Warsaw, R' Eliezer Kahana Shapira of Kovno and others.



## Pishtian, Slovakia

- R' Teichtal was the Rav of Pishtian for 20 years. During that time he fulfilled his life ambition, to found a Yeshiva. Moriah was an elite yeshiva for exceptional students. Each year only 50 new students were admitted. The yeshiva's mission was to train the future rabbonim who would lead communities across Europe. R' Teichtal was more than a Rosh Yeshiva, he was a father figure to his students both when they were in yeshiva and after they graduated.



# Bruckstein Yichus

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5625/1864

## Harav Chaim Yosef Brukstein of Pistin, Zt"l

Harav Chaim Yosef Brukstein was born in Bohislov, in the Kiev region, in 5555/1795. His father was Harav Yehoshua Yitzchak.

In his younger years, until the age of 15, he grew up in the home of Harav Leib, the Shpola Zeide, zy"l, who was like a father to him.

Rav Chaim Yosef then attached himself to some of the generation's leading Rebbes, among them Harav Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the Baal HaTanya; Harav Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev; and Harav Aharon of Zhitimor, zechusam yagein aleinu.

When Rav Chaim Yosef left Russia and moved to Poland, he

was chosen as Rav in Prustien, in the Kossov region, in Galicia. Living in that region, Rav Chaim Yosef became close to the Koss-over Rebbe, Harav Menachem Mendel, zy"l, and later to his son Harav Chaim, zy"l.

He suffered all his life from many troubles, including health problems and financial difficulties.

Rav Chaim Yosef authored numerous sefarim, including *Tosafos Chaim* on the Torah and *Nishmas Chaim* on *Tehillim*.

He was niftar on 24 Cheshvan 5625/1864, in Kleinwardein. His sons whose names we know were Harav Yisrael Nossan Alter and Harav Pinchas.

*Zechuso yagen aleinu.*

כ"ז קס"א צ"ב

מגילת יוחסין

מרת מרים ע"ה (בעלה מוה זיים יוסף ז"ל) עק"ל  
 מוה ישרא' נתן ז"ל (אשת מ' דחל ע"ה) נהרג עק"ל  
 מרת שרה ע"ה (בעלה מוה יעקב פייג ז"ל) " "  
 מרת יוכבד ע"ה (בעלה מוה עבי דאטה ז"ל) " "  
 מוה אליעזר ליפא ז"ל (אשת מ' מלכה טולפא ע"ה) " "  
 מוה חיים יוסף נ"י (אשתו הדאשונה מ' דחל ע"ה נפ' עק"ל) אשת  
 מ' ח' תח'

מוה חנוך זינדל ז"ל (אשת מ' שבע אראק ע"ה) נה' עק"ל  
 מוה מרדכי ז"ל (אשת מ' דחל ע"ה) " "  
 מוה אהרן ז"ל (אשת מ' זיסל ע"ה) " "

בני מוה ד' משה ברוקשטין ז"ל תלמיד חכם וחסיד וענין מאד בפני  
 כל אדם ודרך זו הודה לבניו, ובמושב וסדינתו נודע לכל  
 בדוב גמילות חסדיו והכנסת אורחים והיה למלויץ יושך  
 בעדינו, זכותו תגן עלינו אמן. נפט ביום הניפורים. אשתו הצדקת  
 סירקא בת שמעון, נפטרה י"ד אב  
 בן תדה"ג מוה ישרא' נתן אשת ז"ל אבדק"ק פוסטין. מחבר התפילות  
 "מנחת ישראל" ו"אמונת ישראל".  
 בן הגאון מוה חיים יוסף ז"ל אבדק"ק פוסטין. בעל "טעמות חיים" והג'ת  
 ו"נשמת חיים" על תהלים.

# Eim Ha'Banim Semeicha

- In 1938, Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia while R' Teichtal was rav of Pishtian. Shortly after, the Nazis began their campaign to demoralize the Jews by restricting their movement and instituting discriminatory laws against them. During that time, as a community leader, R' Teichtal worked tirelessly organizing relief efforts.
- In the spring of 1942 deportations began. R' Teichtal and his family hid in the attic of the local Beis Medrash. Through the cracks in the wall, he watched and witnessed the mass deportations of his friends and neighbors.
- In response, he took a neder that if he would survive he would write a sefer in honor of the Land of Israel with the goal to inspire Jews to move to Israel and rebuild it. He began to fulfill that promise immediately and with no access to seforim, he began writing his magnum opus, Eim Ha'Banim Semeichah.



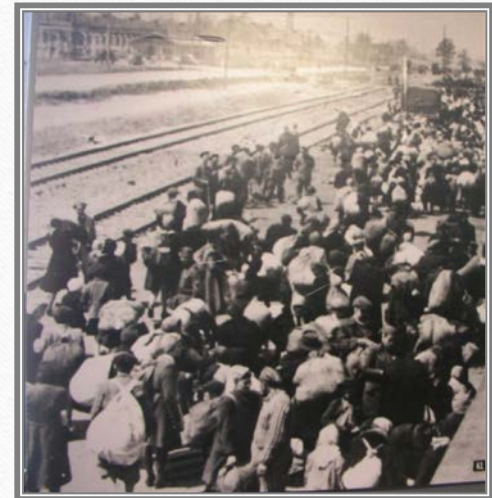
# Budapest

- In Elul of 1942, at the arrangement of the Chief Rabbi of Slovakia, R' Teichtal and his family escaped of Nitra. However, a few months later, the Nazis deported Jews from Nitra and so R' Yissachar Shlomo and his family fled across the border to Hungary.
- They wandered around Hungary until they found refuge in Budapest where they remained for 2 years. He taught Torah and gave derashos whenever he could. He urged the people not to lose faith, to strengthen themselves in Torah and mitzvos and called upon them to return to Eretz Yisrael.
- On the 15<sup>th</sup> of Cheshvan in 1943, he completed his great work, Eim Ha'Banim Semeichah, a year after beginning it.



# Hashem Yikom Damo

- In 1944 the Nazis invaded Hungary and immediately began their persecution. The Teichtals fled to Pressburg but they were found there and sent to Auschwitz.
- In January 1945 as the Soviets advanced through Poland, the Nazis moved prisoners from Auschwitz into Germany. R' Yissachar Shlomo Teichtal died on the train to Mathausen on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Shevat, January 24, 1945.



# Hashem Yikom Damo

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His son R' Chaim Menachem Teichtal wrote the following about his father's death:

We know the details of the passing of this sacred soul from the testimony of one of his students, who was present at the time and now lives in Eretz Yisrael. During the month of Shevat 1945, the allied forces advanced on all fronts and the Russians reached the gates of Auschwitz. Still, even with the sword poised at their throats, the Nazis begrudged their tortured victims any chance of life. They used every means at their disposal to keep them from falling into the liberator's hands alive. The Nazis loaded the Jews onto locked freight cars together with Ukrainian prisoners – who harassed the Jews mercilessly – to transport them to an unknown destination, far from the front.

After starving their victims for a number of days, the oppressors tossed each of them a meager crust of bread, with the evil intent of having them fight pathetically for their paltry allotment. Indeed, one of the Ukrainians grabbed the portion of a Jew – my father's neighbor – who was desperate for this crust of bread. This angered my father, who demanded the return of the theft. The other travelers begged my father not to get involved since it might cost him his life. But, he said, 'How can I stand by when the wronged man's life depends on this food?' Indeed, he insisted on taking a stand, and the Ukrainians with the cooperation of the Nazi soldiers, rose against him and killed him after torturing him mercilessly.

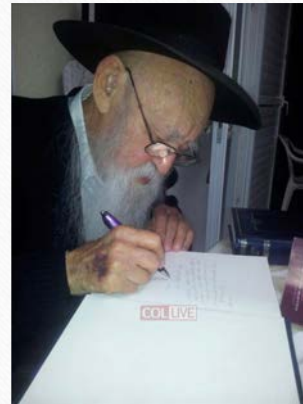
# Children

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- Frumet Bransdorfer
- R' Chaim Menachem Teichtel
- Gitel Halberstam

# R' Chaim Menachem Teichtal

- April 22, 1922- April 22, 2014
- Noted educator and author of seforim.
- He is survived by his children R' Shlomo (Crown Heights), R' Dovid (Natzaret Ilit), R' Meir (France), Mrs. Esther Bistrizky (Tzfas), Mrs. Gita Volpo (Netanya), and Mrs. Bracha (France).





# Historical Context

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Few theological works were written during the Holocaust itself. Most attempt to understand the Holocaust in hindsight.

Eim Ha'Banim Semeicha was written as the atrocities were still unfolding.

Unlike Eish Kodesh of the Piacetzner that seeks to provide strength and comfort, Rav Teichtal's sefer is a call to action.

# Historical Context



- Anti Zionist Perspective:

- Halachic based on the shalosh shevuos, the three oaths taken including not to take back Eretz Yisroel with force.
- Historical context based on the proliferation of false Messiahs that took advantage of the yearning for redemption and to return to our homeland. Shabtai Tzvi, Jacob Frank, David Ha'Reuveni.
- Enlightenment and the suspicion Zionism was rooted in a yearning for Jewish nationalism like other forms of nationalism. Suspicion supported by break with religion and even anti-religious sentiment and attitude.

# Historical Context

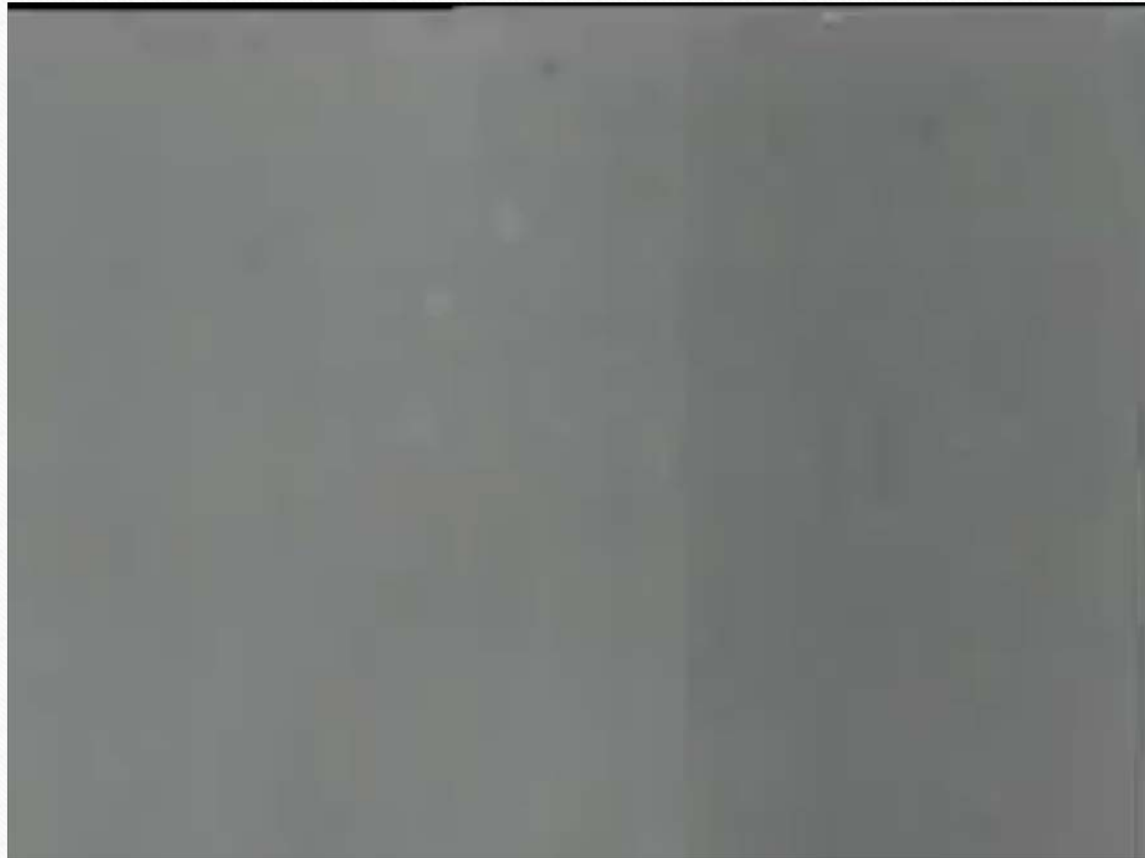
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- Orthodox Jews reacted to the birth of secular Zionism by continuing to love and long for Eretz Yisroel but apart from a yearning to return Jewish sovereignty before Moshiach would come. The best way to bring him would be through intensifying Torah and Mitzvos, the very practices and values Zionism was neglecting and breaking away from.
- Religious Zionists, like Mizrachi were condemned by both the Zionist camp for not being loyal enough to the nationalistic cause, and by the religious for associating with anti-religious.

## R' Teichtal – Anti Zionist

- In that context that R' Teichtal was born, raised and educated. He was taught a strong opposition to Zionism and identified within the courts of great chassidishe rebbes, including the Munkatcher who was very outspoken against Zionism.
- During his most influential period, Jews of Europe enjoyed comfort and acceptance. They were citizens with equal rights and opportunities. This fueled the anti Zionists who felt they were safe and accepted and there was no reason they couldn't wait for Moshiach to come while still in the exile.
- In 1936 R' Teichtal published a letter in the Yiddishe Zeitung newspaper (published in Munkacz) supporting the Rebbe's view that the building up of Eretz Yisrael was a desecration of sanctity and would lead to the land being defiled. He wrote, "Zionism is a desecration of holiness and a defilement of the supernal and Holy Land."





A massive crowd gathering before the wedding of the daughter of the Munkaczer Rebbe, Rabbi Chaim Elazar Shapira, to Rabbi Baruch Rabinowitz. Rabbi Shapira delivers a speech to the crowd and then the wedding is shown.

# Eim Ha'Banim Semeicha

- As he fled, hid and witnessed unprecedented persecution, R' Teichtal reexamined his world view. He now saw the nationalistic movement and a call to return to the Land of Israel as revelations of Divine Providence.
- He maintained a loyalty and devotion to his teachers and rebbes and throughout the sefer tries to reconcile his new views with theirs, arguing they would agree with him given all that was going on.
- He wrote the sefer, virtually from memory, with the hope it would awaken those around him and help save them from the blindness and denial that once plagued him.
- Whenever he spoke and wherever he went he preached this message and offered a strong call for Aliyah and the rebuilding of the Land.



# Eim Ha'Banim Semeicha

- I must confess the truth and declare my sin. I, too, despised the rebuilding of the Land, because I heard unqualified statements made by many Orthodox Jews, which became firmly implanted in my heart. I did not concern myself with this matter at all, because I was preoccupied with learning, teaching, and writing volumes on the Talmud and its commentaries, as well as responses to questions regarding the word of HaShem. I only delved into this *halachah* after we suffered afflictions in this bitter exile. HaShem enlightened me, and I saw that I and all those who opposed this movement were mistaken. I admit and say, "That which I previously told you was mistaken," just like Rava and other great Talmudic Sages did. [See *Mesoret HaShas* on [Shabbat 63b](#).] When rabbis admit their mistakes, they are praiseworthy.
- Thank God, I have no qualms about publicly expressing the truth that is in my heart. I am not afraid of any man, for I studied under great and righteous *gedolim* and was raised among the genuinely holy wise men of the generation. Thank God, I also studied Torah early on and was married young. At the age of nineteen, I was united with the daughter of the foremost Torah scholar of the generation. Since then, Torah has never ceased from my table. I will not revoke my Torah opinion because of any *gadol* or *rebbe* or our generation, unless he debates the issues with me in the manner of Torah dialogue, using proofs from the words of *Chazal*. I will then concede to his words, if they are correct, but not if they are unfounded.



# Was R' Teichtal a Religious Zionist?

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- See his son's introduction
- Was he more like Rav Kook or the Gerrer Rebbe or neither?