

## זצלה"ה Biography of Rav Shimon Schwab

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**R**av Shimon Schwab was born in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, on the 7th of Teves, 5669, December 30, 1908, the eldest of the five sons of Leopold and Hanna Schwab (nee Erlanger). There were no daughters. The Schwab family had lived in Frankfurt since the early part of the 19th century, when Rav Schwab's great-grandfather, Loeb Schwab, moved to Frankfurt from Uhlfeld, Bavaria. Leopold Schwab was a highly respected member of the Frankfurt community, active in all aspects of *kehillah* life. Of the five sons, three became *rabbanim* and *roshei yeshivah*, and two became model *baalei battim* and lay leaders.

Rav Schwab received his early education at the famed "Hirsch-realschule" in Frankfurt — as had his father and grandfather before him — which was founded by Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch. Among his teachers was Rav Joseph Breuer, with whom he would later share the Rabbinate of K'hal Adath Jeshurun in New York. Rav Schwab's grandfather, Moses Loeb Schwab, was one of the early students of Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch in Frankfurt, and he would record his lectures in the then newly developed method called shorthand. Many of these notes were later used by Rav Hirsch in his compilation of his monumental work on *Chumash*.

At age 15, Shimon Schwab entered the Yeshivah of Frankfurt, headed by Rabbi Salamon Breuer, Rav of K'hal Adath Jeshurun of Frankfurt, where he studied for two years.

In 1926, the young Shimon Schwab entered the Telshe Yeshivah, one of the first German *bachurim* to study in Lithuanian yeshivos. There he remained, absorbed in his learning under such great masters as Rav Joseph Leib Bloch and Rav Chaim Rabinowitz (Telzer) for approximately three years. Rav Schwab would refer to these years as the happiest of his youth.

During the summer months of 1929, Rav Schwab accepted his first educational position as an instructor at the Yeshivah "Eitz Chaim" in Montreux, Switzerland. It was during this period that he came into close daily contact with the great *Gaon* and *poseik hador*, HaRav Chaim Ozer Grodzenski זצ"ל, of Vilna, who was spending some time in Montreux. In his association with the great *poseik hador*, albeit for a short while, Shimon Schwab gained a great deal of practical wisdom in the application of Torah and *mitzvos* in keeping with the Talmudic dictum: גדולה שמושה של תורה יותר: מלמודה (*Berachos 7b*).

The Rav entered the Mirrer Yeshivah in the fall of 1929 and studied under such great Torah luminaries as Rav Eliezer Yehudah Finkel, the *Rosh Yeshivah* and Rav Yerucham Levovitz, the famed Mirrer *Mashgiach*, whose *mussar* and wisdom he would often quote in his *shiurim* and lectures. While still a *bachur* in the Mirrer Yeshivah, the Rav would give *shiurim* for *baalei battim* in a local *beis hamidrash*. His personal papers show the text of a *derashah* which he delivered in the main *shul* of Mir on the occasion of the 42nd *yahrtzeit* of Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch, 27th of Teves, 1930.

The Rav remained in the Mirrer Yeshivah until 1931. During this period, he came into contact with many of the greatest *gedolim* of the day, including the *Chafetz Chaim*, of whom he would speak and lecture throughout his rabbinical career. In a postcard to his parents, bearing the postmark of Radin, dated 3/30/30, which he sent immediately after meeting this world-famous *gaon* and *tzaddik*, Rav Schwab described him as having the “radiance of the *Shechinah* on his face.”

These *gedolim* were highly influential in the Rav’s development, in which he synthesized the best of Eastern European Jewish Torah learning with the teachings of Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch and Rav Salamon Breuer.

Before leaving the Mirrer Yeshivah, the Rav received *semichah*, his rabbinical ordination, from the Mirrer *Rosh Yeshivah*, Rav Eliezer Yehudah Finkel, and from Rav Zvi Hirsch Kamai, the Rav of Mir, and an approbation from Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzenski. In May 1931, the young, newly ordained Rav took his first rabbinical position, that of “*Rabbinatsassessor*” (Rabbinical Assistant) to Rav Yonah Mertzbach, in Darmstadt, Germany. It would be some fifty years later that Rav Schwab would deliver a *hesped* for Rav Mertzbach — in Hebrew — when Rav Schwab chanced to be on a trip to Eretz Yisrael at the time of Rav Mertzbach’s passing.

On the 11th of Cheshvan 5691, October 22, 1931, the Rav married Recha Froehlich of Gelsenkirchen, Germany, the daughter of Abraham and Gutel Froehlich (nee Seewald of Babenhausen).

The Rebbetzin was born on December 21, 1908, in Michelstadt, in Odenwald, Hessen, Germany, where her father was the “Jewish School” teacher, which position included the task of being the local *shochet* and *chazzan*. In 1914, the Froehlich family moved from Michelstadt to Gelsenkirchen, where Abraham Froehlich was an upstanding member of the Jewish community. He was regularly *kovei’a ittim l’Torah* by learning a daily private *shiur* with Rabbi Gans, a *talmid chacham* for whom he provided a livelihood and a beautiful apartment. The local *chassidische shtiebel* also benefited from Mr. Froehlich’s generosity. He provided the *shtiebel* with the use of a house at the rear of his property for a *minyán* and *mikveh* for men. Abraham Froehlich went out of his way to be friendly and helpful to the newcomers to the Jewish community in Gelsenkirchen.

Rebbetzin Schwab received her secular education at the Lyceum and Hohere Tochterschule in Gelsenkirchen. Her Jewish education was received from Rabbi Herman Klein of Gelsenkirchen, who later became a Rav in Berlin and Buenos Aires. The Rebbetzin also attended Pensionat Markus in Montreux, Switzerland.

The young couple, Rav and Rebbetzin Schwab, lived in Darmstadt for two years, where the Rav received his early experience in the field of *kashrus* supervision, as part of his duties as Rabbinical Assistant. It was there that two of their five children were born: Moses L. in 1932, and Judith in 1933.

In September 1933, the Rav accepted his first full rabbinical position, that of “*Bezirksrabbiner*,” or District Rabbi, of Ichenhausen, Bavaria, which was an ancient *kehillah* in Southern Germany. This position included responsibility for the religious and educational needs not only of Ichenhausen, an old market town with a Jewish population of about 350, but also of several old, small *kehillas* in the hamlets and villages which dotted the countryside surrounding Ichenhausen. These communities were Nordlingen, Fischach, Krumbach, Buttenwiesen, Oettingen, Harburg, Wallerstein, and others, many of which no longer could maintain a regular *minyán*.

The young, energetic Rav, fresh from his own yeshivah experience, planned to start a yeshivah and dormitory for German *bachurim* in Ichenhausen, in conjunction with the Frankfurt Yeshivah. This would have been the first such institution in all of Bavaria. In fact, in the spring of 1934, after a year’s planning and preparation — including gaining the permission of the Gestapo — the doors of the yeshivah opened but, sadly, stayed open for one day only! On the second morning, all the streets in town were plastered with anti-Semitic posters by the local “Hitler Youth” thugs against this new Jewish “provocation” in their midst, and urged violence against it. The local police chief, who was not a Nazi, warned Rav Schwab that the “Hitler Youth” were preparing a “pogrom” against the yeshivah and its students that very night. Despite the *Bezirksrabbiner*’s personal plea to the Gestapo chief in Ichenhausen — who was seated between two snarling dogs — he was told that he had already notified his superiors in Munich that “he could not guarantee the safety” of the yeshivah students — unless they left town before nightfall, *that night*.

The Rav would sadly recall how, after his meeting with the Gestapo, he proceeded immediately to the *beis hamidrash*, which was vibrant with the *kol Torah* of his unsuspecting *talmidim*, and told them to close their Gemaras, pack their belongings, and head immediately for the train station to make the last train out that day. The Rav accompanied his *bachurim* down the hill to the train station — amid jeers and catcalls from the local thugs — paid all of their travel expenses, and saw them safely aboard the train. Other than suffering verbal abuse, none of the *bachurim*, nor the Rav, was injured in this

incident. Rav Schwab could not risk the possibility of any harm coming to his *bachurim*.

Much later, the Rav would discover that the renowned Rav Yehudah HaChassid predicted in his will, written some 800 years earlier, that “a man in the Land of Schwaben (the area where Ichenhausen is located) would not be successful in educating young boys as yeshivah students.” (See *Sefer Chassidim*, Margaliyos ed., last item of the צוואה, §56.) The Rav was deeply moved by the holiness of this *tzaddik*, whose ancient will became a reality in the Rav’s lifetime.

While the clouds of the forthcoming calamity were gathering, the Rav’s heart was burning to reach out to German Jewry with a call to *teshuvah*. He wrote a series of articles on this subject which were printed in the German-Jewish publication, “Israelit,” in Frankfurt. He later incorporated them into his literary masterpiece, *Heimkehr Ins Judentum*, which was published in Frankfurt in late 1934. This book became an immediate sensation and a springboard for discussion throughout Jewish Germany. The Rav records that about 850 copies of this book were purchased.

During the Ichenhausen period, in June, 1935, the third of the Rav and Rebbetzin’s children, Joseph Chaim, was born. Now with a wife and three children, the Rav was actively seeking a rabbinical position outside of Germany. A month-long trip to Eretz Yisrael in the fall of 1935 for this purpose proved unsuccessful. Nevertheless, the constant taunts and threats by the local Nazi thugs kept emigration from Germany a primary consideration in the Rav’s mind.

On Shushan Purim 1936, the Rav was the subject of a libelous accusation that he had, in one of his sermons, publicly maligned Hitler, *yemach shemo*, and was brought before the Gestapo to explain himself. Making direct eye contact with the Nazi official, he forcefully explained that this was an outright lie. He had used the German word “*vermittler*” in his disparagement of the sin of the Golden Calf, which a spy had misunderstood as “Hitler.” After this explanation, he was told that his case would be reviewed and that he would be advised of the outcome.

Needless to say, the Rav feared for his life after that meeting. The Rav records in his diary that he was advised in the middle of Iyar that the matter had been dropped. During this period of some two months, the Rav slept only fitfully, with his clothes on, for fear that he would be arrested in the middle of the night, taken to jail, or out in the woods to be beaten and left to die — as had already occurred to several others. If this was to be his fate, he would face it with dignity — and with his clothes on — as would befit that of a Jewish leader. This incident speaks volumes of the Rav’s concept of *kavod habriyos* — and especially that of members of the Rabbinat, whom he conceived of as *sheluchei d’Rachmana*, God’s emissaries.

In the summer of 1936, the Rav met Rabbi Leo Jung, of New York, who was in Zurich for a visit with his wife's family. Rabbi Jung recommended a vacant rabbinical position in the German-oriented Congregation Shearith Israel in Baltimore, and told the Rav to contact Mr. Nathan Adler, a prominent board member, regarding this position. Unbeknown to the Rav, Mr. Adler happened to be a distant relative. After an exchange of letters, arrangements were made for a trial Shabbos in Baltimore, on *Parashas Ki Seitzei*, August 29, 1936. The language of the congregation was English, and the Rav, after a great deal of effort and preparation, delivered his first sermon in English at Shearith Israel on that Shabbos, and also gave *shiurim* in Yiddish for the older *baalei battim*. On the following Sunday evening, he addressed the congregation again in English. He was told that the board of directors would be meeting to decide on his candidacy right after Rosh Hashanah, and he would be advised of their decision immediately.

After a two-week stay in America, the Rav returned to Ichenhausen in time for the beginning of *Selichos*, as he had promised his congregants, and anxiously awaited the outcome of the board meeting. Mr. Nathan Adler strongly encouraged the board to elect Rabbi Schwab as their Rav. On the 8th of Tishrei, September 24, 1936, the Rav received a telegram from Mr. Samuel Rauneker, the acting president of the congregation, containing two words: "Unanimously Elected." The Rav's English was so rudimentary at that time, that while he knew what "elected" meant, he had no idea what "unanimously" meant. It was only after consulting his well-thumbed dictionary that he rejoiced and recited the *berachah* of *hatov v'hametiv*. The Rav immediately began to make preparations for the family's departure for America, to begin the next chapter in their lives.

An entire book could be written about the events which occurred between the American congregation's acceptance of their new 27-year-old rabbi from Germany, whose English left much to be desired, and the actual arrival in New York of Rabbi and Mrs. Shimon Schwab, accompanied by their three small children, and a young "mother's helper," Gretel Spanier, on the 10th of Teves, December 24, 1936. Suffice it to say, this three-month period was full of events which can only be explained as outright miracles.

Congregation Shearith Israel was a venerable institution in Baltimore, and was a unique *shul*, with its ancient time-hallowed German *minhagim*. For five years the congregation had been without a rabbi. The Board of Directors, under the influence of Mr. Nathan Adler, had energetically kept the mission and purpose of the congregation in line with its original charter, that of uncompromising adherence to the *Shulchan Aruch*, despite strong pressure from many of its congregants, who were more "liberal minded." An old but as yet unwritten statute of the congregation limited membership to *shomrei Shabbos* — everyone else could be "seat holders" only, without

voting rights — and this had become a great bone of contention within the congregation at the time of the Rav's arrival at Shearith Israel.

After much consultation with prominent *gedolei harabbanim* in America, Rav Schwab made the halachic decision to enforce this statute, and membership was refused to non-*shomrei Shabbos*. The Rav, in his halachic opinion letter, made it clear that — while this statute would have to be enforced — he nevertheless welcomed every one of the seat holders to all services and activities of the congregation, including full use of the afternoon “Hebrew School” of the congregation for their children. He had hoped thereby to attract them to become more committed to Judaism, and eventually to become *shomrei Torah u'mitzvos*. He was encouraged in his stand by the Agudas HaRabbanim of America, and especially by the *gadol* Rav Dov Aryeh Levinthal of Philadelphia. In their letters of encouragement, each invoked the *pasuk*: *שְׂאֵרֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יַעֲשׂוּ עֲוֹלָה*, *the remnant of Israel will not commit corruption* (Zephaniah 3:13). The great *gaon* Rav Elchonon Wasserman, *וצ"ל-ה"י*, who was visiting America at that time, and spent a Shabbos at the Rav's home, also strongly applauded this *p'sak din*.

However, over one hundred of the congregants rebelled against this decision, and left Shearith Israel to form their own “Modern Orthodox” congregation, and purchased a building for this purpose a short distance away. The great influx of Orthodox Jews of the late 30's had not yet begun, and Shearith Israel was left with only a small fraction of its original congregants.

As an illustration of Rav Schwab's graciousness toward his opponents in this matter, the Rav and Rebbetzin would have, as a regular guest at their Shabbos table, the newly hired young rabbi of the “breakaway” congregation, who was as yet unmarried.

Nevertheless, this decision established the Rav as an uncompromising proponent of Torah-true Orthodoxy in America, and he was highly respected for his leadership and consistency even among those in Baltimore who opposed him in this regard. In those days there were very few *rabbanim* in America who were willing to lead their congregations, rather than be led by the whims of their congregants.

America at that time was still a veritable wasteland of Judaism, with a few oases in its midst. The city of Baltimore was fortunate in possessing a Hebrew day school, Talmudical Academy, and also a *yeshivah gedolah*, Ner Israel. Upon his arrival in Baltimore, Rav Schwab immediately became active on the Board of Education at Talmudical Academy, and as a daily instructor in the yeshivah — albeit unpaid — and enjoyed the close company of its *rosh yeshivah*, Rav Yaakov Yitzchak HaLevi Ruderman.

In 1937 and 1938 two more sons were born: Myer Jerucham, and Jacob Boruch. Fortunately, there was a Jewish day school for the boys, but there was no Jewish girls school in Baltimore at that time. Judith had to attend

public school, including a public high school for girls. She received her elementary Jewish education from private teachers at home. She later attended the Beth Jacob High School in Williamsburg to complement her Jewish education. Recognizing this great void in Jewish education in Baltimore, the Rav and a group of dedicated *baalei battim* founded the Bais Yaakov School for Girls of Baltimore. This school today is the largest Jewish girls school in America, outside of New York.

In the ensuing years, swelled by the influx of many German refugees and others, congregation Shearith Israel, by then known as “Rabbi Schwab’s Shul,” became a vibrant center of Orthodox Jewish life. The Rav was deeply involved in *hatzalah* efforts both prior to and during the war years. With the help of several of his influential congregants, he was responsible for the issuing of many affidavits for refugees, who were fleeing Hitler’s firestorm in Germany, to enable them to come to America. Many of these settled in Baltimore and joined Shearith Israel, where they felt comfortable with its familiar German *minhag Ashkenaz* and its Rav with whom they could converse in their native tongue. Interestingly, one of these affidavits was for the late Dr. Raphael Moller and his family in 1940. The Rav could not know that many years later, he would work closely with Dr. Moller at the helm of K’hal Adath Jeshurun in Washington Heights.

The home of the Rav and Rebbetzin became a center of *hachnassas orchim* and a place of warmth and encouragement for these many newly arrived, penniless refugees in a strange new land. If the dining-room table could talk, it would tell many fascinating tales and experiences of the varied and sundry guests, ranging from plain ordinary people, poor and downtrodden widows and orphans, to the many famous *gedolei Yisrael* who benefited from Rav and Rebbetzin Schwab’s hospitality.

That simple dining-room table, with its extra “pull-out leaves” for guests, enriched by the *divrei Torah* and stories of *gedolim* and Jewish history so masterfully told by Rav Schwab during the Shabbos and Yom Tov meals which were so beautifully prepared by the Rebbetzin, was the center of the Torah *chinuch* of the Schwab children, and enhanced their sense of security in their Jewish practice and thought. By this time, Rav Schwab had already established himself as a forceful and gifted orator both in English and Yiddish, and as an outspoken spokesman for Torah-true Orthodoxy.

Agudath Israel of America was emerging as a vibrant force for Orthodoxy and *hatzalah* efforts in the United States during this period. In Baltimore in 1941 Rav Schwab organized the second annual Agudah Convention. This *בְּנֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְשֵׁם שְׂמִימִים*, *assembly for God’s sake*, attracted many *rabbanim* and *baalei battim*. Among the honored guests were the renowned *gaon*, Rav Aharon Kotler, and the fiery Agudah lay leader, *Moreinu* Yaakov Rosenheim, who had been one of the Rav’s early mentors in Frankfurt. A group of young

activists, including Moshe Sherer, a student at Yeshivas Ner Israel, helped both in organizing and managing this convention. The first "Agudah Convention" met in 1940 in Cincinnati, under the leadership of Rabbi Eliezer Silver.

In addition to his educational efforts in the day school, yeshivah, and Bais Yaakov school, the Rav instituted an exacting level of *kashrus* in town. In 1941, he also led members of his congregation and others in the organization of a strictly Orthodox *chevrah kaddisha*, as a part of the social welfare organization — which he named *Chevrah Ahavas Chessed* — founded by German Jewish refugees, who were not all necessarily very Orthodox. However, out of their high regard for Rav Schwab, he was readily recognized as their Rabbi, and they followed his *p'sak din* in all religious matters. Rav Schwab wrote a definitive set of *dinim* and *minhagim* for the *chevrah kaddisha*, which is still in use to this day.

By this time, the Rav had become quite proficient in English, and he delivered numerous adult lectures and classes. The participants at these classes benefited greatly from his unique ability to explain difficult subjects in simple language.

The Rav's pen was also busy during those early years. At the request of Rav Elchonon Wasserman, he authored the book, *Beis HaSho'evah*, which dealt with the coming of *Mashiach*, and it was published anonymously in 1941. In the summer of 1951, he published *Shemesh Marpei*, containing excerpts of the explanations of Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch on *sefer Bereishis*. During these years, he also published numerous articles which appeared in various periodicals.

In June 1945, the war was drawing to a close, and the new "United Nations" was in formation in San Francisco. The Rav was asked by Agudath Israel to partake in a delegation to present its official position on matters of worldwide vital Jewish interest, both here and in Eretz Yisrael. During that conference, the Rav met the world leaders of the day.

In the summer of 1951, Rav Schwab spearheaded a delegation of activists to Eretz Yisrael to study the problem of the thousands of newly arrived refugees from Yemen and North Africa, who were living in *maabarot* (transition camps), and were rapidly being absorbed into secular and even antireligious circles in Eretz Yisrael. These activists were members of the *P'eylim* organization and were deeply involved in intensive educational efforts to save these pious and innocent *Sefardim* from losing their ancient religious heritage. During this trip, the Rav came into contact with the great *gedolim* of Eretz Yisrael, including the Chazon Ish and the Brisker Rav. On his return to America, Rav Schwab created a great deal of enthusiasm for the cause of *P'eylim*, and much was accomplished in this respect, resulting in the rescue of countless Jewish souls in Eretz Yisrael.

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During his twenty-one-year tenure in Baltimore, Rav Schwab left an indelible impression on the city, and contributed greatly toward its development as America's foremost Torah city outside of New York.

At age 50, in the prime of his life, three days after Lag BaOmer, May 11, 1958, Rav Schwab joined the Rabbinat of K'hal Adath Jeshurun of Washington Heights, New York City, together with Rav Dr. Joseph Breuer. A year later, Rav Breuer wrote in an essay he had prepared for posthumous publication: "Already in his first year . . . Rabbi Schwab proved to be the right leader for our *kehillah*. May Hashem continue to lend him His assistance."

Rav Schwab's tenure at K'hal Adath Jeshurun, first in association with Rav Breuer, then on his own, and subsequently with Rav Zachariah Gelley, *shlita*, was a most momentous one. K'hal Adath Jeshurun provided him with a platform from which he grew even greater in stature as he aged, and became recognized as a worldwide Torah spokesman, *poseik*, and leader. During the Rav's thirty-seven-year tenure at K'hal Adath Jeshurun, he maintained — and beautifully interpreted — its sacred traditions, with which he was so familiar from the Frankfurt of his youth, while at the same time winning the devoted allegiance to these time-hallowed *minhagim* of a new generation of American-born congregants.

Under Rav Schwab's leadership at KAJ, the use of English replaced German in the sermons, *shiurim*, *derashos*, and publications, to make the teaching of Torah, and especially the Hirschian philosophy, accessible to the younger members. In so doing, he also unequivocally clarified the meaning of "*Torah im Derech Eretz*," which has so often been misunderstood. The changeover to English was gradual. In fact, in his early years at KAJ, Rav Schwab would deliver *shiurim* in impeccable German for the benefit of those members who were more comfortable with that language.

The Rav was always most interested in the educational activities of the *kehillah*. He was therefore at the forefront of the drive to vastly expand the yeshivah's educational focus. As dean of the yeshivah, he was instrumental, together with Rav Breuer, in the founding of such institutions as the Mesivta and Bais Yaakov, the Beis HaMidrash, Teachers' Seminary, and Kollel.

The Rav's devotion to his flock was legendary. He was a trusted confidant, and his ready smile, wise counsel, *berachos* and *tefillos* for the needy and sick, were sought from far and wide, in good times and difficult ones. While dispensing advice, he was especially outstanding in his unyielding devotion to *emes* (truth). Once he had arrived at a conclusion which he considered to be *emes*, he would not waver from it. His devotion to his children and grandchildren was well known. They would consult him on major and minor matters, and ask for his advice and *berachos*. He would say a special *tefillah* for each one of his expectant granddaughters.

He was scrupulously honest in financial matters; he detested deceit and pretension of any kind. He was a true *baal tzedakah*, very often helping those in need without their knowledge. His heart was especially warm to those who had personal family problems due to an inadequate income. He would scrupulously adhere to the laws of *maaser kesafim* — which he, personally, extended to the full *chomesh*. He would keep an exact record of his credits and debits in his *maaser* account, and on his birthday each year, he would clear the slate and forgive any credits due him. He once told a visitor, who had been having financial difficulties, that the secret of a good *parnassah* is the scrupulous adherence to *maaser*.

One could confide in him with complete confidence, in good times and bad. He answered *she'eilos* from anonymous callers, with uncanny precision. He would often say a *tefillah* that *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* grant him the wisdom to give the right answers. On one occasion, he gave what he later thought was an unclear answer, which could be misunderstood, but since the caller was anonymous, he *davened* that the caller would call again. Within minutes, the phone rang, and it was the same caller, providing the Rav with the opportunity to clarify his *p'sak*. The *siyata d'Shmaya* that he merited was obvious.

The Rav assisted many in their quest for employment and housing. In the area of *shidduchim*, the Rebbetzin was actively involved with him, and together they were instrumental in bringing about at least sixteen marriages. The Rebbetzin, חתן, was also very active in all areas of *kehillah* life, especially the sisterhood and *chevrah kaddisha d'nashim*. Her *hachnassas orchim* and acts of kindness on behalf of the poor, aged, and infirm are well known, and deserve the utmost praise.

During his tenure at KAJ, the Rav was also very active in Jewish life outside the *kehillah*. He was particularly interested in the field of Torah *chinuch*, and gave encouragement and honor to those who chose this noble profession. Rav Schwab would often compare them to the *Leviim* of old, whose main function was to teach Torah to the nation (see *Maayan Beis HaSho'evah*, *Pinchas*, *Nimukim* 26:14). He was a champion of decent, realistic wages for all those working in this field, in order to attract the most capable people to this high calling. He was consulted on all major matters by Torah *Umesorah*, and headed their Rabbinical *Beis Din*. He addressed their annual conventions many times.

His skilled oratory was always eagerly anticipated at the annual conventions of Agudath Israel of America. To illustrate his point, he would often weave tales of his experiences with the *gedolim* of the prior generation, such as the Chafetz Chaim, into his addresses, in an effort to drive home his messages. These audiences were never disappointed.

Many other organizations and yeshivos benefited from his addresses. The

*kehillos* of Zurich and them on various occasions.

The *kinah* which he had in memory of the shofar at KAJ, but also in many other places.

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*Unquestioned* *HaSho'evah* and

*kehillos* of Zurich and Basel, Switzerland also invited Rav Schwab to address them on various occasions.

The *kinah* which Rav Schwab composed, at the suggestion of Rav Breuer, in memory of the six million *kedoshim*, is recited on Tishah B'Av not only at KAJ, but also in many *kehillos* throughout the world.

Many literary achievements filled the Rav's busy schedule while at KAJ. Besides his numerous articles in the "Mitteilungen," there were other literary pieces published in various magazines of Jewish interest, here and abroad. The booklet "These and Those" made a great impression on the world of Torah-true Jewish education, with its clear examination of Jewish educational goals.

The Rav and תבלי"ח, the Rebbetzin, spent many summers at "Torah Institute," a camp for *baalei teshuvah* in Moodus, Connecticut, in the company of their daughter, Judy, and her husband, the late Rabbi Yaakov C. Rosenberg זצ"ל. The camp and its parent yeshivah in Yerushalayim, Machon Shlomo, were founded by Rabbi Rosenberg, who was very successful in teaching mature newcomers to Judaism to live committed Torah lives. Rav Schwab was available at the camp to give *shiurim* and personal guidance to the tutors and many of the "campers," whom Rav Schwab would call *mevakshei Hashem*.

Many of the Rav's major addresses, articles, and lectures to the *kehillah*, and elsewhere, were incorporated into a "trilogy" of three books:

*Selected Writings*, published by the 1988 graduating class of Mesivta Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch on the occasion of the Rav's thirtieth anniversary with the *kehillah*.

*Selected Speeches*, published in 1991, which includes his in-depth study on Jewish Chronology, to which Rav Schwab devoted a great deal of effort and time.

*Selected Essays*, published in October, 1994, which includes selections from *These and Those*, and some translated sections of *Heimkehr Ins Judentum*.

In 1992 Rav Schwab encouraged — and financed — the publication by Rabbi Eliyahu Meir Klugman of a major collection of the Hebrew correspondence, *Sheilos U'Teshuvos*, and personal papers of Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch which had never before been available to the public. The Rav considered it a special *zechus* for the *neshamah* of Rav Hirsch to have these papers, replete with his Torah thought, disseminated to the Torah world at large. The Rav named the *sefer Shemesh Marpei*, which alludes to the name *Samson Raphael*, just as he had done to his own rendition of Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch's explanations on *Bereishis* in the *sefer* he had published many years earlier in Baltimore.

Unquestionably, the Rav's "Magnum Opus" was his *Maayan Beis HaSho'evah*, which is a veritable treasure trove of his most original and

profound thoughts on *Chumash*, and on other topics. Excerpts, appropriate to *simchos* and other occasions, are often quoted from this enormously popular *sefer*.

At the age of 86, on *Purim Katan*, the 14th of Adar I, February 13, 1995, at approximately 7 p.m., surrounded by his children, Rav Shimon Schwab peacefully returned his pure *neshamah* to its Maker, amid the saying of *Vidui*, *Shema Yisrael*, and the *Shemos HaKedoshim*, of which he clearly was aware, until his *neshamah* departed from his body. The *levayah* was held the next day, at noon, from the *Beis Haknesses* of K'hal Adath Jeshurun, with brief words by Rav Gelley, and the recital of several chapters of *Tehillim*, all in accordance with his will that a *hesped* not be said at his *levayah*. The *aron* was carried up Bennett Avenue, accompanied by thousands of mourners in silent dignity, and he was brought to burial at the cemetery of K'hal Adath Jeshurun, in Clifton, New Jersey. At the conclusion of the *shivah*, an *azkarah* was held in *shul* to honor his memory.

These few pages are inadequate to fully describe the life of Rav Shimon Schwab, Rav and *Manhig b'Yisrael*. This would require an entire book, which is now in preparation. However, this article gives us a glimpse of a man who was an *eved Hashem*, who had utilized his life for that highest purpose. This was a man who achieved the fulfillment of the daily *tefillah*, *למען לא ניגע לריק ולא נלד לבהלה*, so that we do not struggle in vain nor produce for futility.

יהי זכרו ברוך ותהא נשמתו צרורה בצרור החיים

Moshe Schwab

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