



Rabbis of Chicago



רב חיים יצחק קארב

Rabbi Chaim I. Korb

1874-1957



Rabbi Chaim Korb was born in Piltin, Courland where his father, Rabbi Saul Korb, taught Talmud classes for youths. At the age of 16, Rabbi Chaim Korb attended Rabbi Leizer's class in Telz and studied there with distinction for three years. He also spent one year in Torah study debating with Rabbi Meir Simcha Dvinsker.

In 5656 he married Leah Miriam, daughter of Rabbi Moses I. Rabin, author of rabbinical sefarim and a manuscript on Kabbalah. Rabbi Korb received smicha from Rabbi Itzl Ponevezer, earned the title of "HaGaon", and took over his father-in-law's position as Rabbi in Palangin, Lithuania. Following evacuation during World War I, in 1914 he became Rabbi of Pawlograd, Ukraine. During the Kerensky regime, the wealthy Babrosker Rabbi Gotz wanted to found a yeshiva headed by Rabbi Korb, but at the end of the war the Jews returned to Lithuania, and Rabbi Korb became Rabbi in Zager, where he served for four years.

Upon his emigration to America, Rabbi Korb served as Rabbi in Beth Medrash Hago-dol of Harlem. While there he published the first volume of his renowned sefer, Nesivot Chaim. In 1928 he was requested to head the Talmudical Department of Beth Medrash Latorah in Skokie, where in addition to daily lectures in Talmud, he gave a weekly pilpul for the two highest level classes. Because of his vast knowledge, he was known to other rabbinic in Chicago as the "Walking Sefer Torah".

As Rosh Yeshiva one of Rabbi Korb's duties was to test and confer smicha on the students who complete Yoreh Deah. When he was informed that one of his former students had accepted a position in a non-Orthodox synagogue, Rabbi Korb jeopardized his position at the yeshiva by announcing that he would no longer give smicha.

In 1949 Rabbi Korb made aliyah and was the only the only Rav outside of the family faculty to give shiur at the Chevron Yeshiva, where he continued to learn and write. He was buried on Har Hamenuchot on the 3rd of Sivan 1957.