

# **Impact of the Holocaust on Jewish Missions**

**Presented by Dr. Mitch Glaser**

**Annual Pastors' Conference 2024  
Chafer Theological Seminary**

**Israel – Past, Present, and Future**



# **A Focus on the Warsaw Ghetto**

# **The Jewish People of Poland**

Jews lived in Poland for 800 years before the Nazi occupation. On the eve of the occupation 3.3 million Jews lived in Poland – more than any other country in Europe. Their percentage among the general population – about 10% – was also the highest in Europe.

([yadvashem.org](http://yadvashem.org))

# Why Focus on the Warsaw Ghetto?

Before World War II, the city was a major center of Jewish life and culture in Poland. Warsaw's prewar Jewish population of more than 350,000 constituted about 30 percent of the city's total population. The Warsaw Jewish community was the largest in both Poland and Europe, and was the second largest in the world, second only to New York City.

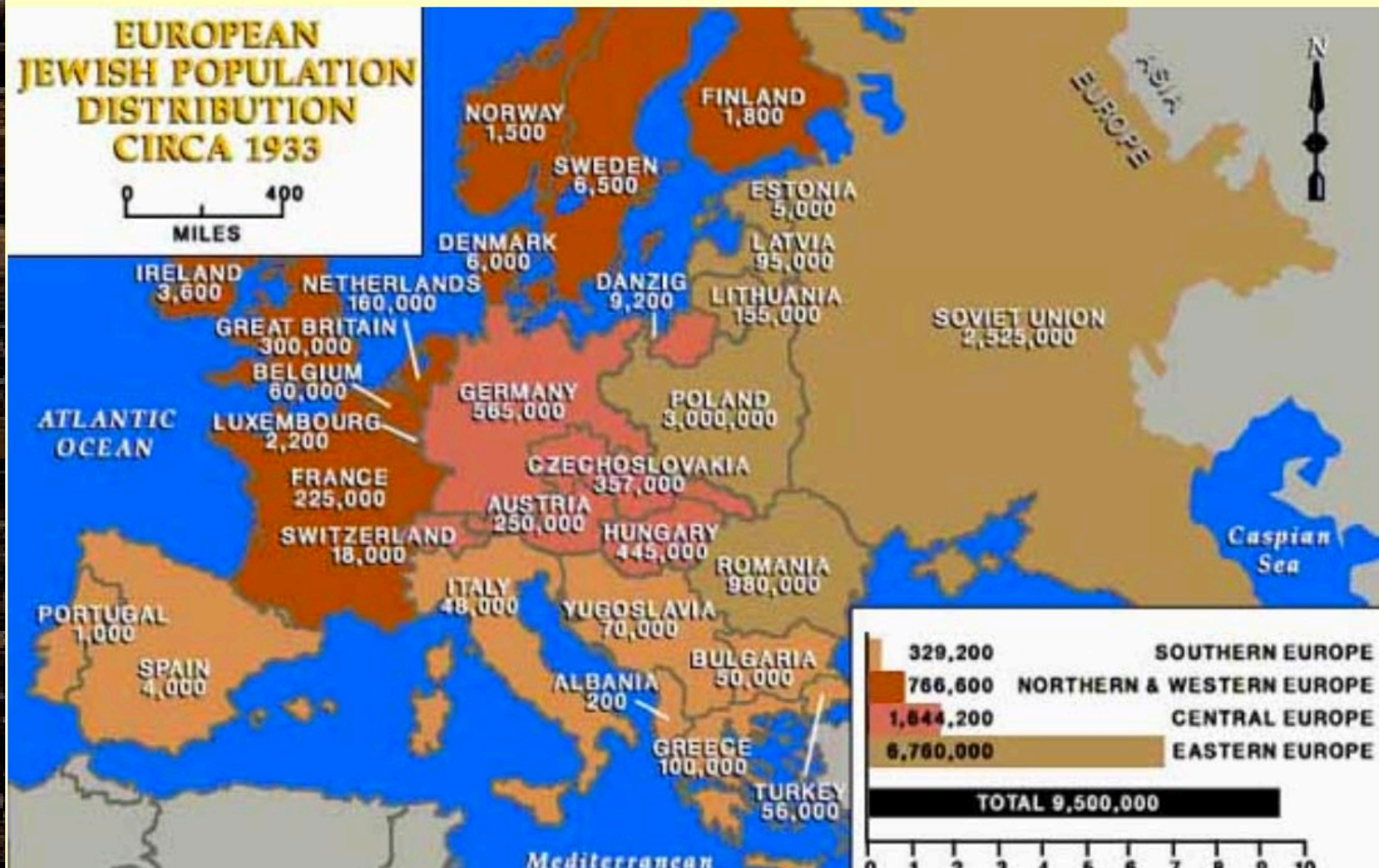
[www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org)

# **Why Focus on the Warsaw Ghetto?**

Warsaw is a critical part of our Messianic Jewish history. The Warsaw Ghetto has been the subject of books, poems, and movies and is an unforgettable part of the fabric of Jewish history. The WG illustrates the impact of the Holocaust upon the Messianic Jewish movement.



# Jewish Population of Europe Before the Holocaust



# Jewish Ministry in Poland





# **Jewish Missions Operating in Warsaw and Poland**

- Bethel Mission –  
*Evangelistic Center and Colony at Lodz*
- Danish Mission – *Lvov*
- British Society for the Propagation of the  
Gospel Among the Jews
- The Barbican Mission
- *Hebrew Christian Alliance Groups (IMJA)*



# **Jewish Ministries Operating in Warsaw and Poland**

- Church's Ministry Among the Jews (CMJ) – *Emmanuel Hall in Warsaw*
- American Board of Missions to the Jews (ABMJ, now Chosen People Ministries) – *Warsaw Ministries*
- Mildmay Mission to the Jews – *Hall in the Jewish quarter of Warsaw helping poorer Jews*
- American European Fellowship – *Warsaw children's ministry, villa at Radoso used in summer*

# Timeline – Four Major Stages

**Oct 1939 – Nov 1940**

Anti-Jewish decrees and the isolation of the Jewish population

*Nov 1940 – July 1942*

The Ghetto is sealed off from the rest of the city

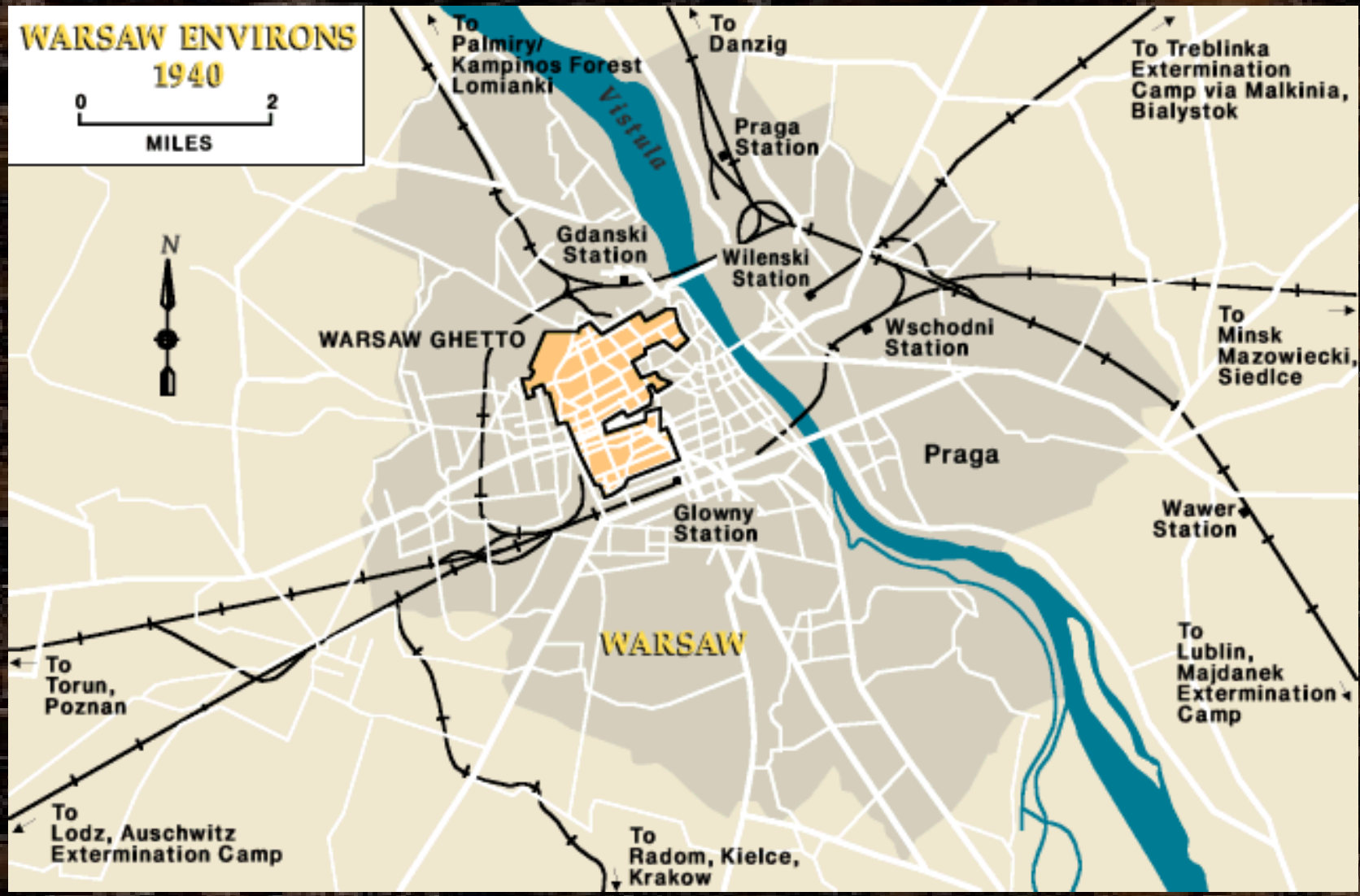
*July 22, 1942 – Sept 15, 1942*

The *Aktion*: a mass deportation of 300,000 Jews

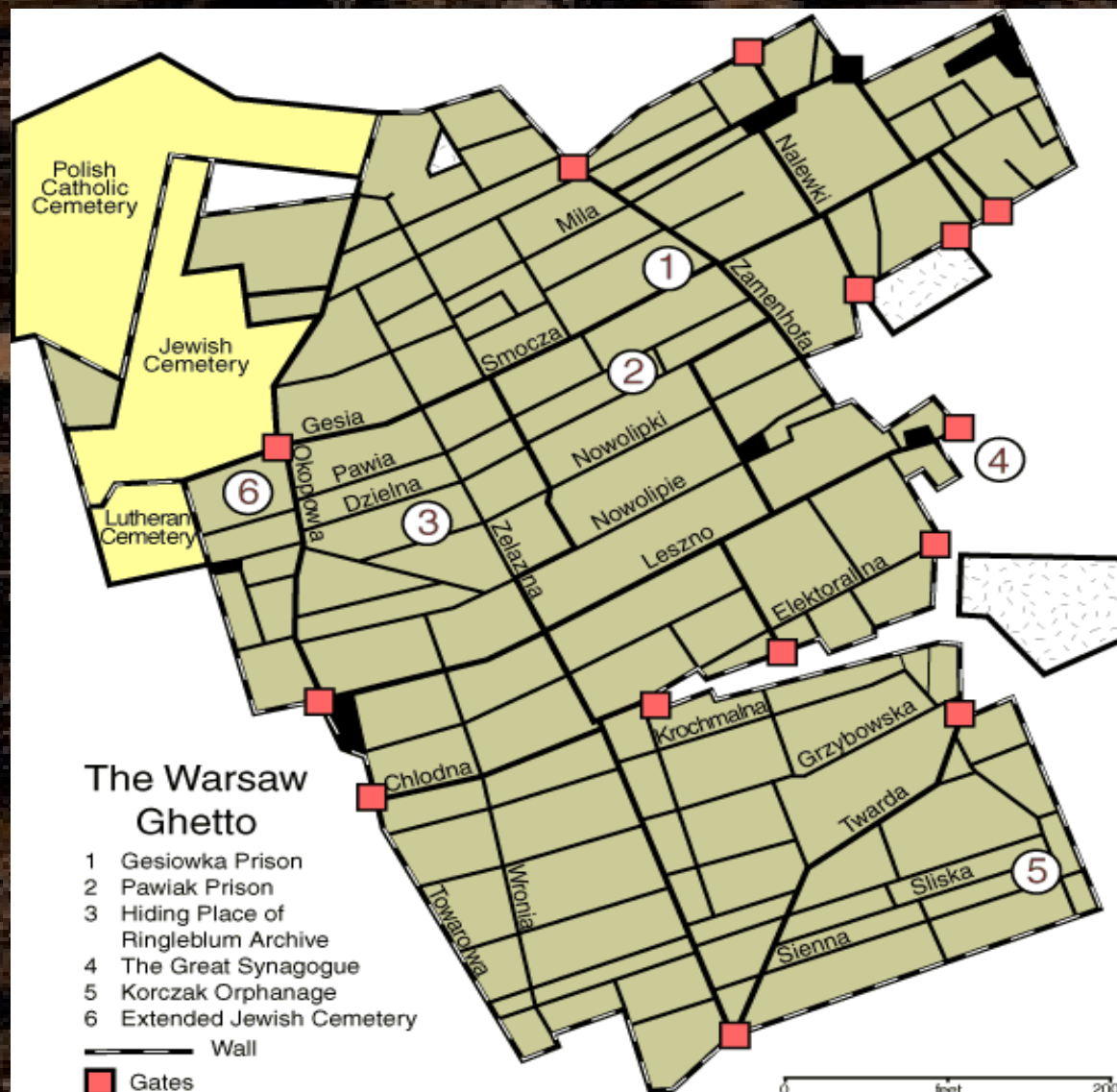
*Oct 1942 – May 1943*

More deportations, the Ghetto uprising, and the final destruction of the Ghetto

# The Warsaw Ghetto

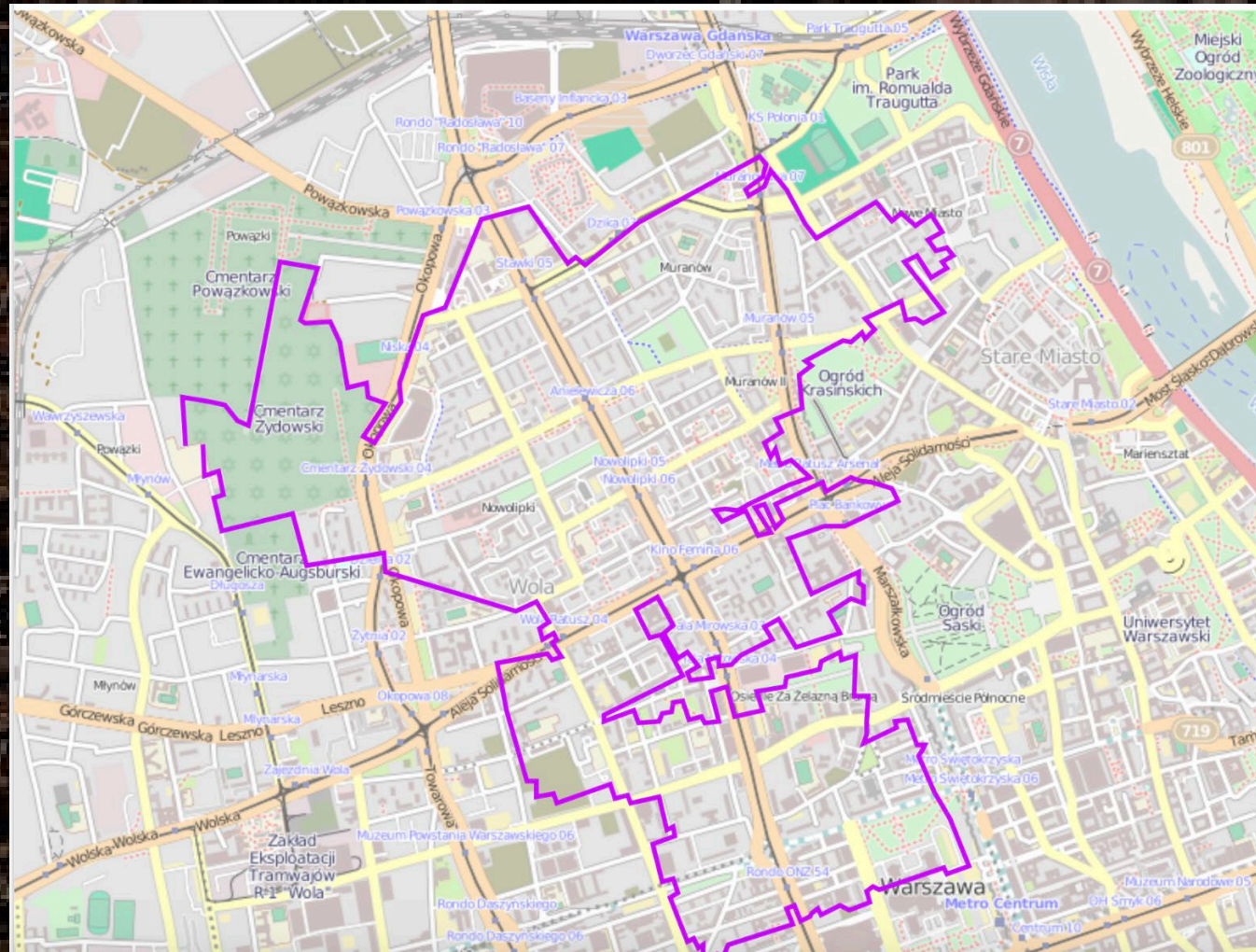


# The Warsaw Ghetto

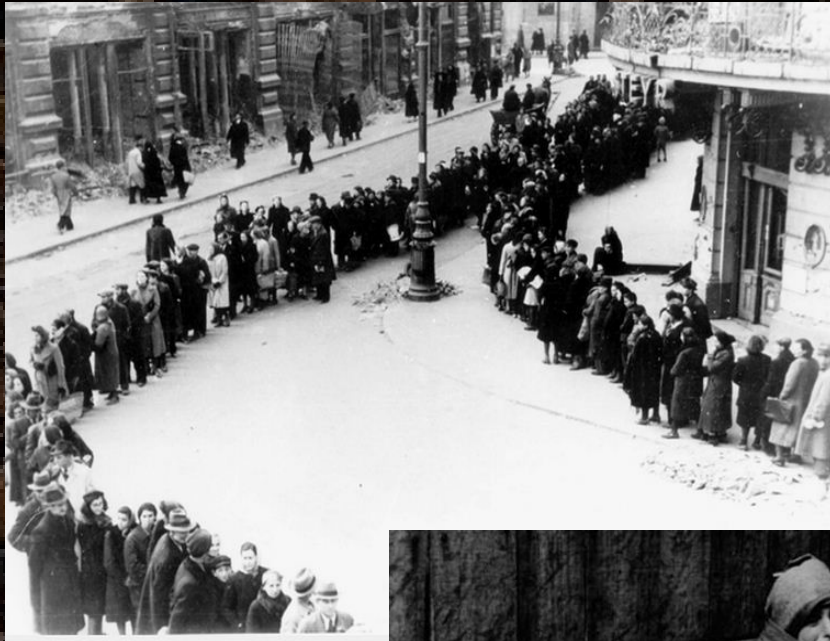




# The Warsaw Ghetto



# Life in the Warsaw Ghetto



*Isolation and  
starvation*



# Life in the Warsaw Ghetto



*Deportation to  
death camps*

How many Jewish believers were in the  
Warsaw Ghetto?

Catholics, Protestants, Messianic Jews

2,000

5,000 – 6,000

More? How many survived?



# Churches in the Warsaw Ghetto



St. Maria's Church – *Leszno Street*

# Churches in the Warsaw Ghetto



All Saints' Church – *Gryzbowski Square*

## **Jewish Life in Polish Society**

"Some police chiefs and men were outsiders to the communities that they served, refugees or evacuees who found favor with the Germans, by whom they were appointed. Some were apostates. In Warsaw, the first police chief was Jozef Andrzej Szerynski, formerly a colonel in the Polish police, a Catholic convert, reputedly an anti-Semite. He undoubtedly recruited police from his circle of apostate friends. (The Warsaw Ghetto had a large population of converts to Catholicism, who were regarded as Jews under German racial law. They worship in the two churches within Ghetto limits)."

- **Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews: 1933–1945***



In the late 19th century a new term of disdain - *mekhes* - entered the Polish language from Judaism.

The term, which comes it seems from the Hebrew word, *mekhes* (tax, levy) and referred to the metaphorical levy (baptism) that Jews had to pay to enter Polish society, was used by both Jews and Poles as a **term of opprobrium**.

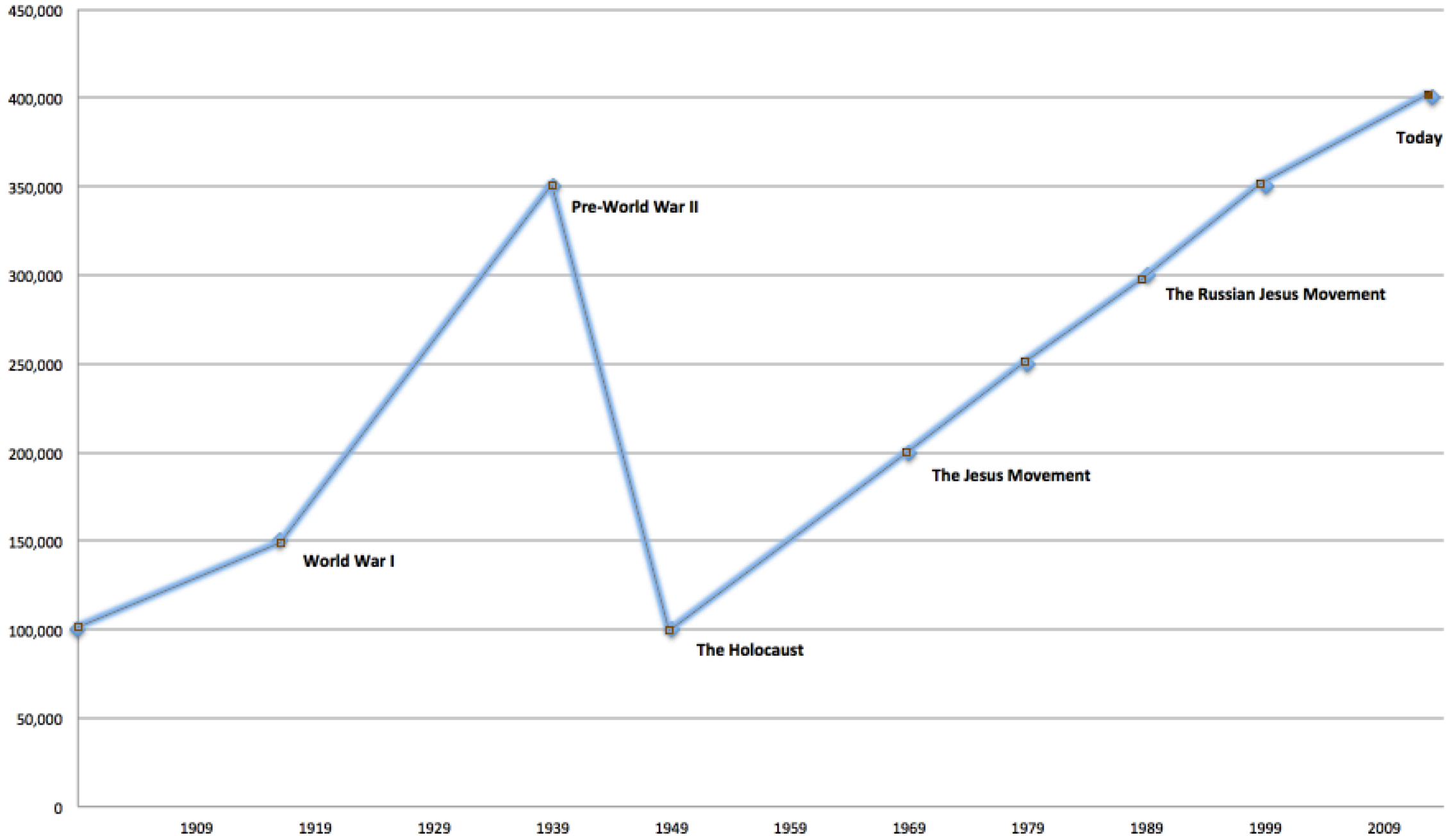


In the early 1930s, Sir Leon Levison, president of the International Hebrew Christian Alliance, wrote regarding **the number of Jews who were coming to the Lord in the twentieth century.**

According to Levison's research:

- 97,000 in Hungary alone
- 17,000 in Vienna
- 35,000 in Poland
- 60,000 in Bolshevik Russia
- Jews were also turning to Christ in Germany, Sweden and Denmark
- In America, careful estimate places the number of Christians of the Jewish race at no less than 20,000

# The Messianic Jewish Movement



## Lessons to Learn from Jewish Believers in the Ghetto

- As believers in Yeshua, we will often be viewed negatively by the Jewish community; even if we are suffering alongside our people.
- Due to the negative history between Jews and Christians, our motivation for believing in Yeshua will always be a matter of suspicion on the part of the Jewish community.
- The notion that historically, some of the greatest anti-Semites were Jews who *converted* to Christianity, is part of the stigma we live with because of our faith in Yeshua.

## **Lessons to Learn from Jewish Believers in the Ghetto**

- Our identification with the Jewish community is not always a matter of choice, and could be forced upon us by external circumstances.
- Be encouraged! The words of Romans 11:1-5 are true, **the Lord will preserve a remnant of Jewish followers of Yeshua in every age and even under unusual circumstances!**



**In the same way then, there has also  
come to be at the present time a  
remnant according to God's gracious  
choice.**

***Romans 11:5***

“When the Germans cleared the church of all the Christian Jews, there was only one Jew left of the church: the crucified Jesus... Jesus came down from the cross and called (to the painting) of his mother: ‘Mame, kim...’. This means Yiddish: ‘Come Mama.’ She (came down and) went to the Umschlagplatz”. (Hannah Krall)

**Thus says the LORD,**

**“If the heavens above can be measured**

**And the foundations of the earth searched out  
below,**

**Then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel**

**For all that they have done,” declares the LORD.**

***Jeremiah 31:37***



**Session #2**

**Messianic Heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto  
and Beyond!**



**CHRISTIANS IN THE WARSAW GHETTO**

AN EPITAPH FOR THE UNREMEMBERED

PETER F. DEMBOWSKI





Warsaw staff. Standing L - R: J. Berkowicz, P. Weiss, B. Jocz, V. Weisman.  
Sitting; D. Pankhurst, H. Carpenter, A. Aizeman, M. Bregman.  
(CMJ Archives, Bodleian Library, Oxford)



CMJ Emmanuel Church and  
Mission House.



# The Polish Messianic Jewish Movement

**BAZYLI &  
ANNA JOCZ**



**JEWISH CHRISTIAN VICTIMS  
OF THE HOLOCAUST**

KELVIN CROMBIE

# **Testimony of Flourishing Ministry in Poland Pre-Holocaust**

“Today when the cross is being twisted into a swastika ... Jewish men and women flock into the mission halls to hear and to learn about the wonderful Savior.” – J. Jocz

# Major Works of Jakob Jocz

- *A Theology of Election: Israel and the Church* (1958)
- *The Spiritual History of Israel* (1961)
- *Christians and Jews: Encounter and Mission* (1966)
- *The Covenant: A Theology of Human Destiny* (1968)
- *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ After Auschwitz* (1981)



Jocz firmly believed that if the Church has no Gospel for the Jews, it has no Gospel for the world.

He was insistent that if Christ is indeed the Messiah, then He is the Messiah for all.

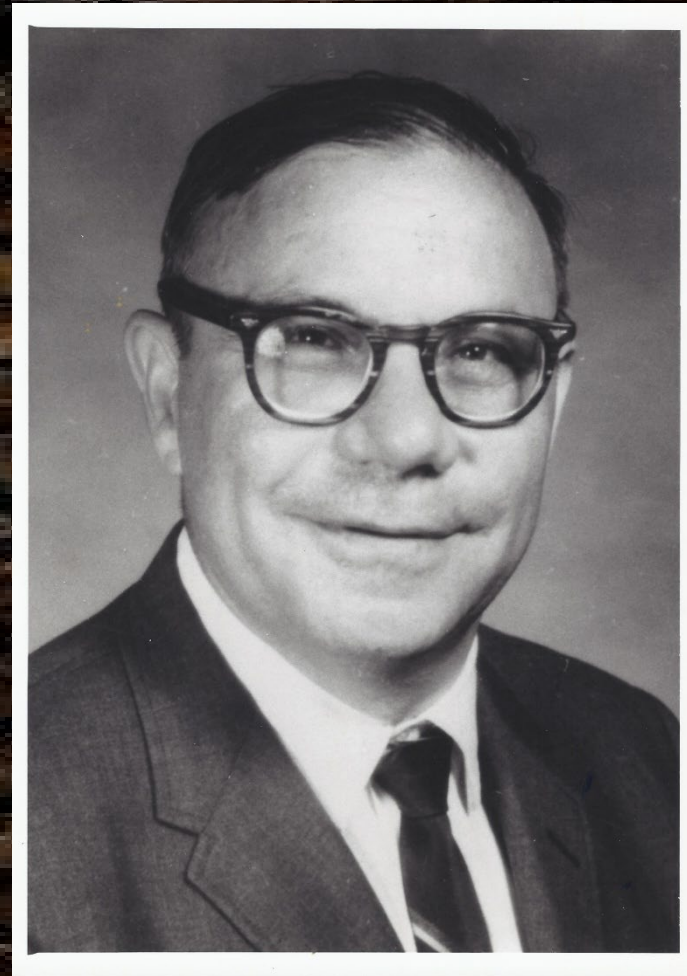


**Session #3**

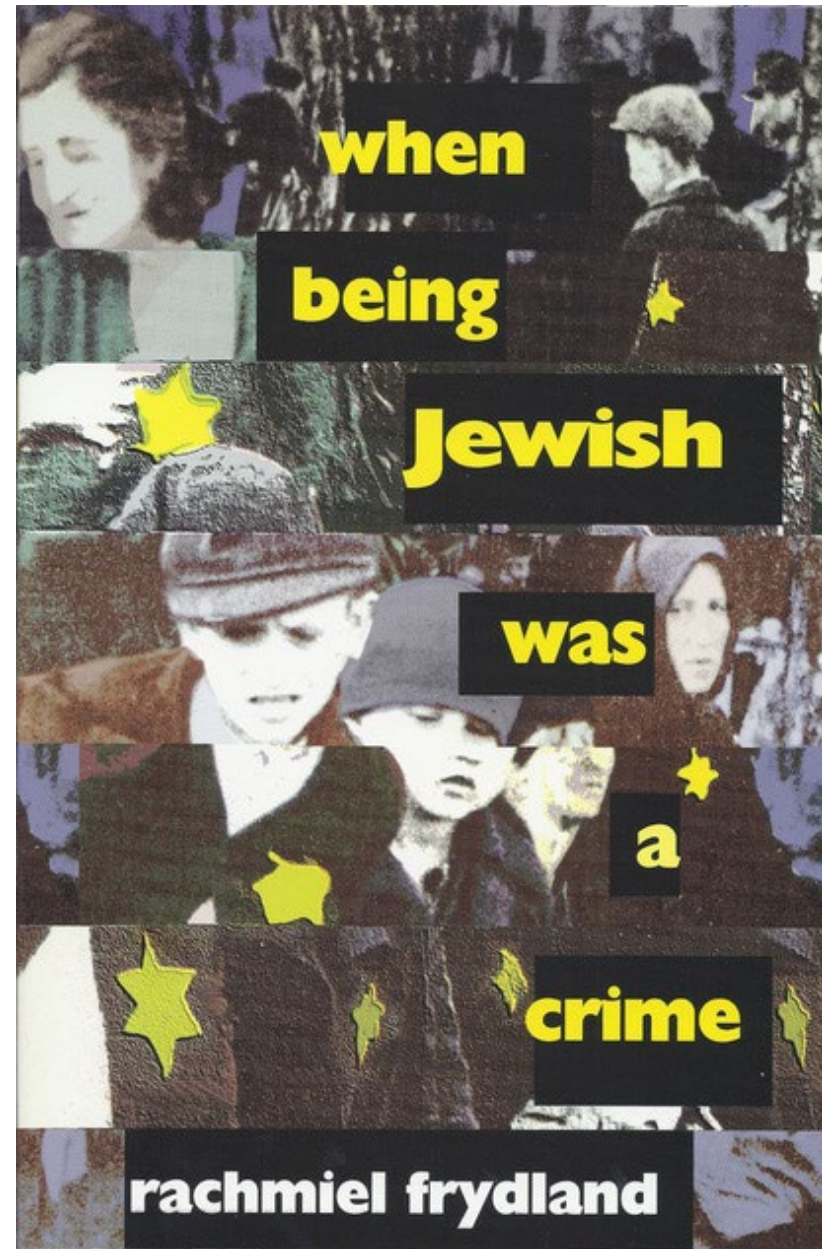
**Messianic Heroes of the Ghetto...**

# Important Individuals

Rachmiel Frydland –  
*well-known Messianic  
Jewish survivor of the  
Warsaw Ghetto*



# A Holocaust Story of Faith and Survival



when

being

Jewish

was

a

crime

rachmiel frydland



...This declaration raised many questions, but the one which puzzled me most was: "Why was Messiah to be cut off?" Further study and reflection caused my ready-made answers to melt away. I realized that my objections were based mostly upon what others had taught me and not upon my own unprejudiced study of the Bible. The prophetic promises which appeared to be fulfilled in Jesus were too numerous to be explained away. As I admitted these things to myself, I determined to read the New Testament to find out about this Jesus.

I obtained a copy of the New Testament in Hebrew. As I read, I compared carefully the many references I found in it to the Tenach (Old Testament). Slowly and clearly, it began to dawn upon me that the New Testament was a continuation of the Old Testament. I reasoned that if the Jewish Scriptures are true, the Christian Scriptures are also true. From this, it followed that Jesus must be my Messiah.

One evening in 1937 I sat in a meeting composed wholly of Jewish people who professed Jesus as the Messiah. At that very meeting, I prayed and asked Messiah Jesus to become my Atonement and Savior.

In late 1944 (he had the year wrong as the Ghetto was destroyed in 1943), by hiding in cemeteries, deserted churches, and the homes of fearful friends, I was one of the few surviving Jews in Warsaw outside the ghetto. In that enclosure were 5,000 Jews, the last of Warsaw's original 500,000. By God's enabling, I secretly slipped into the ghetto and was able to speak comfort to a few of the Jewish believers still alive. Other Jewish brethren heard the message and believed in Messiah Jesus. My friends in the ghetto insisted that I leave. They said that if God had preserved me thus far, I would be a witness to the woes they now experienced. At the end of the war, I could tell the story of their suffering."

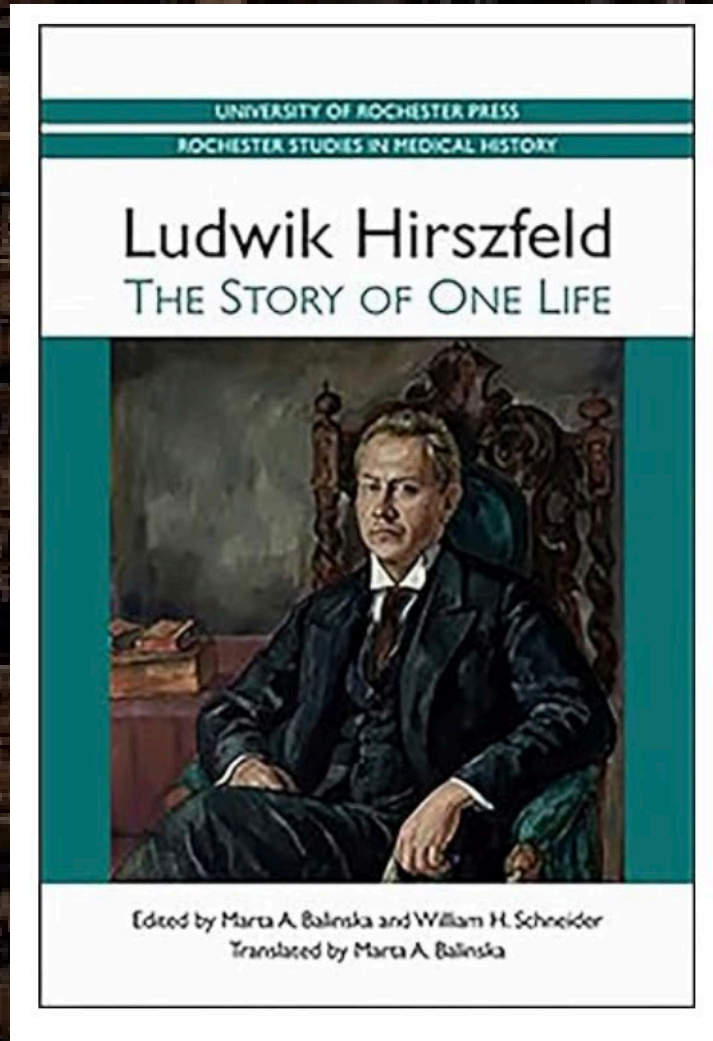
# Important Individuals



Dr. Ludwik Hirszfeld –  
*Catholic Jewish believer,  
and physician who  
became famous for being  
the co-discoverer of the  
inheritance of ABO blood  
types*



# *Ludwik Hirszfeld: The Story of One Life*



*A personal  
testimony of his  
career as a  
scientist and  
experience in the  
Warsaw Ghetto*

Dr. Hirszfeld's autobiographical memoir is a key source for information about Jewish believers, particularly Catholic Jews. His book was published and translated in English in 2010 by Marta A. Balinska. Also called Historia, it was penned in 1943-44 when Hirszfeld was hiding in the Polish countryside, having escaped the Ghetto.

Herzfeld began what amounted to the first two years of medical school training in the Ghetto although he was focusing on eradicating the place of typhus, which was killing so many in the Ghetto.

# Isaac Feinstein



*"We were a happy family." Large picture shows Missionary Isaac Feinstein and Mrs. Feinstein with their 4 oldest children in Galatz, Roumania. The smaller picture shows Mrs. Feinstein with her 6 children in Lausanne, Switzerland.*





# *Isaac Rottenberg, a Martyr for His Faith*



ROTTENBERG BIJ ZIJN VERTREK NAAR AMERIKA



DS. ROTTENBERG DE SCHRIFT VERKLAREND AAN JESHIVA-LEERLINGEN IN POLEN