



## **24 ELUL - RABBI YISRAEL MEIR HAKOHEN KAGAN (1838-1933). THE CHAFETZ CHAIM.**

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The Chafetz Chaim was born in Dzyatlava (Belarus), in 1838. When he was ten years old, his father R' Aryeh Zev, died. His mother moved the family to Vilna in order to continue her son's education. She later remarried and moved to Radin.

After marrying at 17 years of age, he continued his Torah studies, in spite of extreme poverty, spending every waking moment engrossed in Torah.

In 1869 he founded the Yeshiva of Radin. When he was 35 (1873) he published his first book, Chafetz Chaim, a compilation of the laws concerning leshon hara - spreading gossip and slander. He ultimately published over 20 books, including Ahavas Chesed, on the mitzvah of lending money, Machaneh Yisrael for Jews serving in non-Jewish armies, and Nidchei Yisrael for Jews who moved to places where there were few religious Jews, particularly America.

He also wrote the Mishna Berurah, a six volume commentary on Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim, which deals with the general laws of daily conduct, such as prayers, tefillin, blessings, Shabbat, and Festivals. It consists of 6 volumes and took 25 years to complete.

In addition to spreading Torah through his yeshiva, he was very active in Jewish causes. He traveled extensively to encourage the keeping of the Mitzvot amongst Jews. He became one of the most influential rabbis during the late 19th and early 20th century. He passed away in Radun on 24 Elul 1933, aged 95.

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