

# THE SHERIFF F TEL AVIV

While pioneers enthused over each new furrow plowed, **Meir Dizengoff** put his heart and soul into building and running the first new Jewish city in millennia – inspired not by the patriarchs, but by the French Riviera // [Ilan Shchori](#)

**T**hough few even know his name, the true founder of Tel Aviv – the first Hebrew-speaking city in Ottoman Palestine – was watchmaker and silversmith Akiva Aryeh Weiss. This past Pesach marked 111 years since April 11, 1909, when sixty-six families gathered on a sand dune north of Jaffa for a lottery to determine which plots of land in the new garden suburb would be distributed to which members of the Ahuzat Bayit Building Society.

Nevertheless, the figure primarily associated with the city's early years is not Weiss but Meir Dizengoff, Tel Aviv's first mayor, who was in fact among the town's founding fathers on that April day. Dizengoff headed the residents' committee for its first decade and served as mayor until shortly before his death in 1936.

Tel Aviv had only a few dozen inhabitants at first; by the time the neighborhood became a town in its own

Facing page: He gave his all for Tel Aviv – and insisted on his due. Meir Dizengoff riding at the head of the Tel Aviv Purim parade, 1934  
Photo: Zoltan Kluger, Israel Government Press Office





Overshadowed by Dizengoff's fame. Akiva Aryeh Weiss and his house in Ahuzat Bayit, a.k.a. Tel Aviv, the town he founded

Photo: Gidon Shapira, courtesy of the Weiss family



## Dizengoff's first venture in Zion, a substandard bottle factory, was a disaster

which gave it national importance and placed it firmly on the map, were Dizengoff's initiatives: the Levant Fair, the Maccabiah Games, and the commercial port. He oversaw the integration of two waves of immigration, the largely Polish Fourth Aliya of the 1920s and the Fifth Aliya, sparked by Hitler's rise to power in the 1930s. The city had Dizengoff to thank for a large American development loan, and he worked unremittingly toward the construction of the port, which finally opened not long before his death (see "Building in Blue and White," *Segula* 42).

A born rebel, Dizengoff took on Chaim Weizmann and the entire Zionist leadership when necessary. While institutions like the Jewish National

right, it boasted a population of three thousand. At the end of Dizengoff's tenure, the city numbered a hundred and fifty thousand, having multiplied fiftyfold in less than a quarter-century.

Some of Tel Aviv's biggest projects,

Its failure sent Dizengoff back to Europe for the next decade. The bottle factory in Tantura, today on the grounds of Kibbutz Nahsholim  
Photo: Itai Doron

Meir Dizengoff married Zina Brenner in a modest ceremony in Alexandria, and the money they'd saved on a wedding was donated to the Zionist cause. Zina Dizengoff

Photo: Zvi Oron (Orushkes), courtesy of the Central Zionist Archives

Fund promoted the socialist efforts of the kibbutz and moshav movements to make the desert bloom, Dizengoff unabashedly preached urban capitalism. Though regarded as the Zionist Organization's ugly duckling during the 1920s, he was soon vindicated when his White City proved a swan.

### Inauspicious Beginnings

Meir Dizengoff was born on Shushan Purim, February 25, 1861. His birthplace, the sleepy hamlet of Echimăuți, then in Bessarabia (now in Moldova), produced few other notables. On his mother's side, Dizengoff hailed from a rabbinic dynasty; his father, a follower of the Hasidic master of Sadigura, ran various agricultural holdings.

After a traditional heder education, Dizengoff volunteered for the Russian army at age twenty-one, editing a military newspaper in Zhytomyr. The town had its own Jewish intelligentsia (Hebrew poet laureate Hayyim Nahman Bialik spent much of his youth here), and Dizengoff lost himself in books and pamphlets before their mutilation or suppression by the imperial censor.

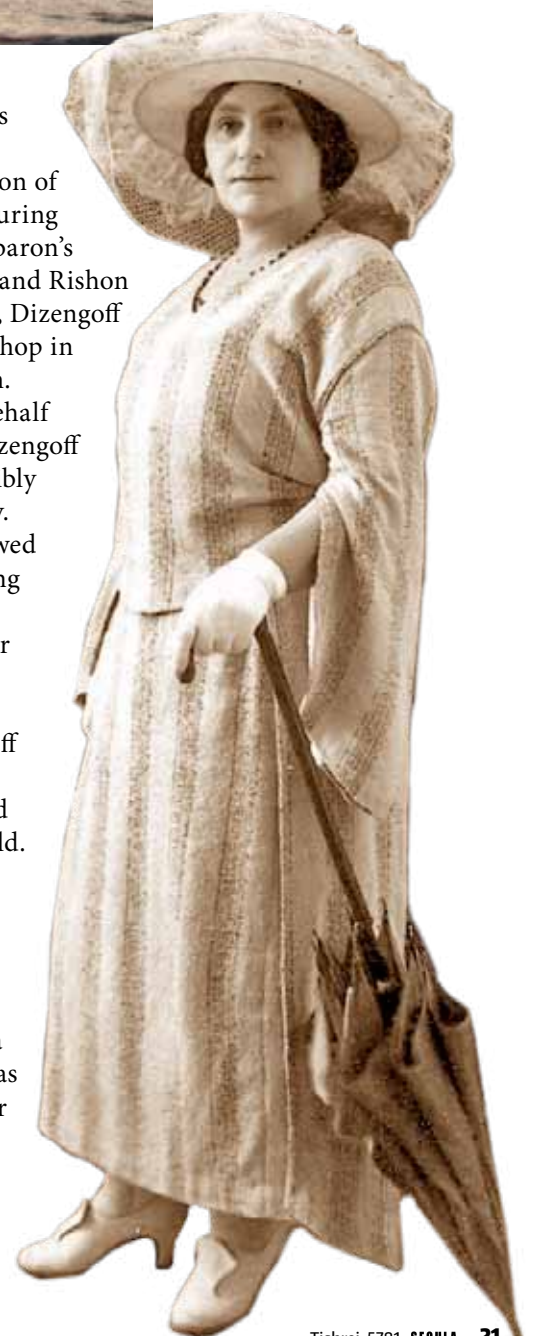
Drawn into Zhytomyr's revolutionary circles, Dizengoff was arrested for subversion in 1885 and spent eight months in jail. Barred by his criminal record from pursuing higher education in Russia, he moved to Paris in 1888 and studied chemical engineering at the Sorbonne. There he met Elie Scheid, point man for Baron Edmond de Rothschild's colonies in Ottoman Palestine.

At Scheid's recommendation, Dizengoff

added petrochemical analysis to his curriculum, thereby qualifying him for the position of setting up a bottle manufacturing plant that would supply the baron's wineries in Zikhron Yaakov and Rishon Lezion. Somewhat hesitantly, Dizengoff accepted the job and set up shop in sandy Tantura, near Zikhron.

Traveling on the baron's behalf in search of suitable staff, Dizengoff included a trip home, ostensibly to tour a nearby glass factory. While in Zhytomyr, he renewed his acquaintance with a young woman he'd met just before his arrest. Zina Haya Brenner had presented herself at the police station as his fiancée, entitling her to visit Dizengoff periodically and supply him with Hebrew newspapers and contact with the outside world. She now agreed to join him in his mission, and the pair set out for the land of Israel, celebrating their wedding en route in Alexandria.

On arrival in Tantura, Zina contracted malaria. As she was pregnant, her doctors sent her to Paris, where she gave birth to a daughter. Tragically, the infant died shortly afterward, and the couple had no other children.





# Mr. Tel Aviv **The Man and His Town**

## Tel Aviv

- 1906** Akiva Aryeh Weiss founds the Ahuzat Bayit housing association
- 1909** April 11/20 Nisan 5669: land in Ahuzat Bayit raffled off in a shell lottery on Jaffa beach
- 1910** Ahuzat Bayit renamed Tel Aviv
- 1917** Jewish population of Jaffa and Tel Aviv is transferred to Alexandria and the Galilee
- 1921** Tel Aviv recognized as a township independent of Jaffa
- 1922** *Haaretz* moves from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv
- 1923** first town in Mandate Palestine to be connected to electricity
- 1924** first elections
- 1926** first Hebrew theater production, staged by Ohel Theater
- 1934** January 21: becomes a city
- 1936** opening of Tel Aviv Port, officially dedicated in 1938
- 1938** Sde Dov Airport opens with flights to Haifa and Beirut
- 1940** aerial bombing by Italian Spitfire planes kills 132 people in one day
- 1945** German Templar population of Sarona deported to Australia, after which the colony serves as British military (and later IDF) headquarters
- 1948** intermittent bombing by Egyptian aircraft
- 1956** biology, law, and accounting programs unite to form Tel Aviv University
- first skyscraper, Shalom Tower, built on the site of the demolished Herzliya Gymnasium
- 2003** White City – the world’s largest concentration of 1930s Bauhaus architecture – declared a UNESCO World Heritage site





By 1921, the neighborhood committee was already referring to itself as the Tel Aviv municipality. Committee headquarters, 1913

Dizengoff's first venture in Zion was a disaster. The local sand proved unsuitable for glass manufacture, and the facility closed in less than three years. In 1896, he moved to Belgium to work in a glass factory producing mirrors. A year later, the company sent him to Odessa to open another bottle plant, but instead he joined the city's famed circle of Zionist intellectuals.

Rubbing shoulders with Yehuda Leib Pinsker, Shimon Dubnow, Rabbi Chaim Tchernowitz, Vladimir Ze'ev Jabotinsky, and Bialik, Dizengoff helped found the Geula Company, purchasing land for Jewish settlement in Palestine. By now a seasoned Zionist, he left Russia again in September 1905, making his home in Jaffa. Among his business deals was Ahuzat Bayit.

### Mr. Tel Aviv

By the time Dizengoff returned to Ottoman Palestine, he was no dewy-eyed

## While socialist Zionists worked to make the desert bloom, Dizengoff unabashedly preached urban capitalism

young pioneer. In 1910, at age forty-nine, he was elected head of the Tel Aviv neighborhood committee, investing all his energies in the area as if it were the child he never had. Creating the town in his own image, he infused everyone around him with his grand vision.

Controlling, even bordering on dictatorial, Dizengoff made dozens if not hundreds of "unanimous" municipal decisions unilaterally. During World War I, as the self-appointed representative of the region's Jewish population to the Ottoman authorities, he fought Ahmed Djemal Pasha's plan to expel the Jews of Jaffa and Tel Aviv. When they were ejected nonetheless, he formed and led an "emigration committee," declaring himself "exilarch" – the title used by the head of the Babylonian Jewish community centuries earlier.

Dizengoff's position only improved after the British conquered Ottoman Palestine in the last year of World War I. With the return of the Jewish population, "Mr. Tel Aviv" was a king in all but name. Respected and liked by the British Mandate authorities, he was granted virtually free rein to pursue pet projects.

No one could stand in Dizengoff's way; easily offended, he habitually made decisions that blocked his opponents. Yet this small, round man's remarkable achievements made Tel Aviv a wonder of growth, modernity, and productivity in an incredibly short time. His legacy included a cadre of highly capable bureaucrats and politicians who followed in his footsteps: Israel Rokach, Shoshana Persitz, Dov Hoz, and Saadia Shoshani, to name but a few.

## Independence!

Among Dizengoff's most notable feats was his persuading the British Mandate authorities to recognize Tel Aviv as a separate municipality rather than part of Jaffa. He pleaded his case in cogent letters polished by Ze'ev Jabotinsky, who had an academic background in law. A veteran of the Jewish Legion, Jabotinsky had been Dizengoff's friend since their days as journalists in Zhytomyr, Kishinev, and Odessa. The resultant document – *Tel Aviv: A Township* – was crucial in obtaining his objective.

The decision to make both Tel Aviv and the German Templar neighborhood of Sarona independent of Jaffa followed swiftly on the heels of the Arab riots of April 1921, in which forty-seven Jews were murdered, yet Dizengoff had been laying the groundwork for autonomy for over a year.

The new mayor speedily established his own police force and court, setting a precedent for Jewish jurisdiction under British rule. But although Tel Aviv soon had its own town hall, it wasn't until January 21, 1934, that the town was declared a city.

## Bark But No Bite

Tel Aviv's dedicated police force was the ultimate symbol of the town's independence and the first of its kind to serve an entirely Jewish population. Dizengoff appointed Hayyim Alperin, another Jewish Legion veteran, to oversee the squad's one commander, one sergeant, one corporal, and twenty constables. At its height, the force swelled to eighty policemen. In 1927, it was



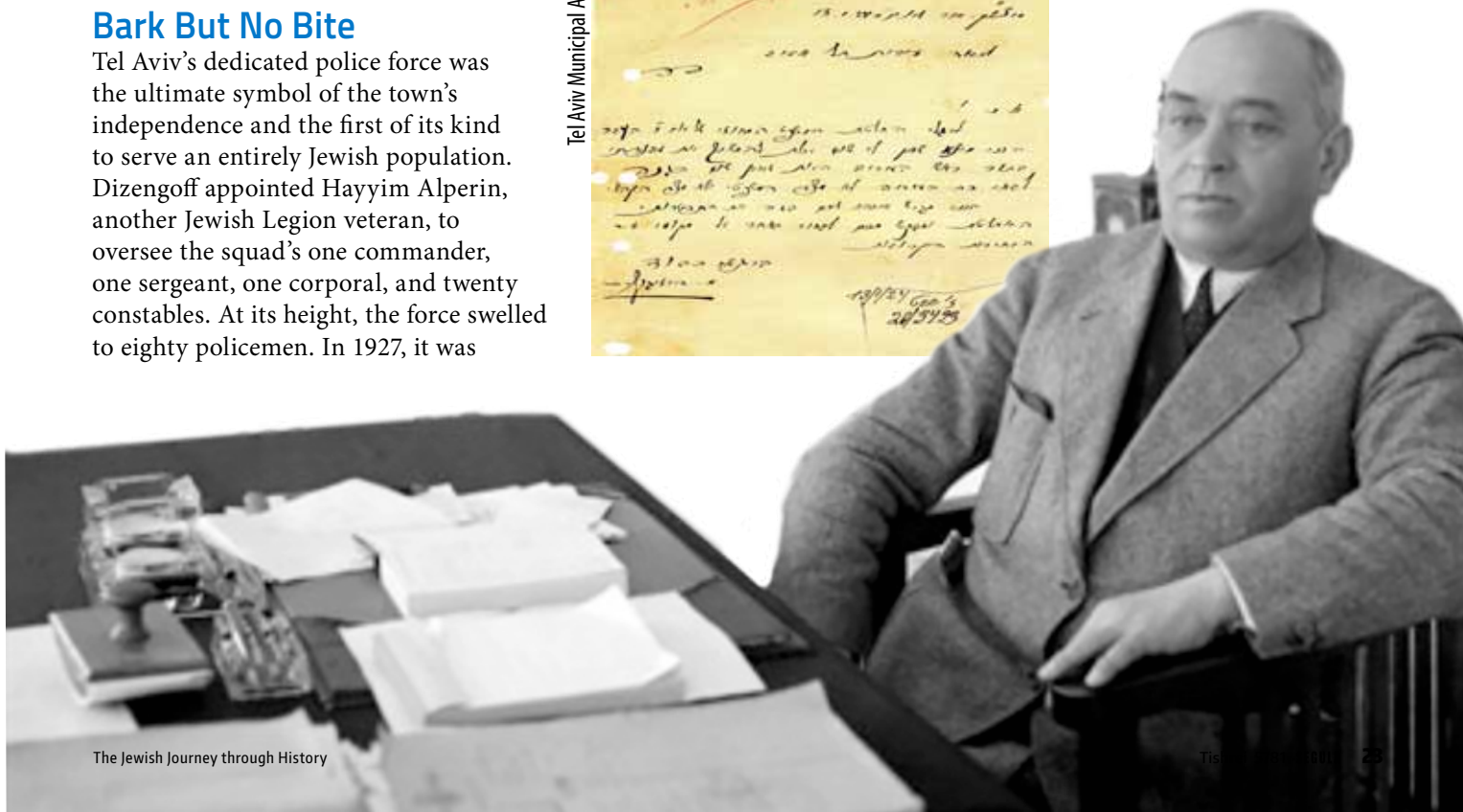
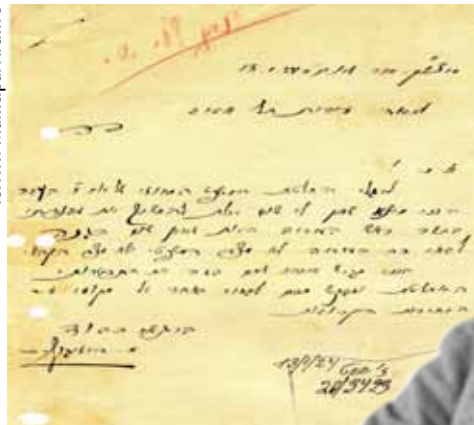
appended to the Mandate police, and Alperin resigned. But until then the Tel Aviv police vigilantly issued fines and tickets, even to the mayor himself.

Dizengoff's first citation, still found in the municipal records and dated July 1921, was for riding his horse through a public park in defiance of local ordinances. The second, a month later, was unusual to say the least.

Over twenty years as chairman of the neighborhood committee and mayor of the town it grew into. Meir Dizengoff voting with his wife, Zina, in Tel Aviv municipal elections, 1928  
Photo courtesy of the JNF Archive

Quick to take offense and resign. Dizengoff in his office, and a letter of resignation tendered when the local court failed to sufficiently punish his assailant

Tel Aviv Municipal Archive



I, the undersigned, was at the shore, in the bathing area, when I saw Mr. Dizengoff entering the surf to bathe with no trunks, only a towel. Nearing the water, I asked him where his bathing suit was. He just waded further out to sea. I waited for him to emerge.

At that point, the following approached me: Mr. Yehuda Frankel, Mr. Shmuel Nativi, and Mr. Ben Cohen, all from the Culture Department, and protested the above's strange behavior. I replied that I'd deliver him to the police and he'd get his just deserts.

When he came out of the water, I inquired about his actions and told him of these gentlemen's complaints. Mr. Dizengoff replied that next time he'd bring his bathing attire, considering the matter closed.

Officer Avraham Diament informed me that he'd had the same experience with the aforementioned.

Please take enforcement measures against this man.

Officer Nathan Klivronsky (Tel Aviv Municipal Archive, file 28b, doc. 117)

Alperin sent Dizengoff a personal letter requesting a written explanation. We have no record of the mayor's response, but neither Diament nor Klivronsky issued any further tickets – to anyone – and Dizengoff apparently continued to do as he pleased.

### Short Fuse

One way Dizengoff maintained his image was by making a scandal of any assumed insult. Whenever the trust, loyalty, or respect due him seemed lacking, he threatened to resign.

One such episode began on December 31, 1923, three weeks before the first Tel Aviv municipal elections, when a resident burst into Dizengoff's office with a complaint. That same day, the aspiring mayor petitioned the local court:

To His Honor, Judge of the Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court,

## When Tel Aviv's Jewish population was evicted by Djemal Pasha in WWI, Dizengoff formed and led an "emigration committee," declaring himself "exilarch"

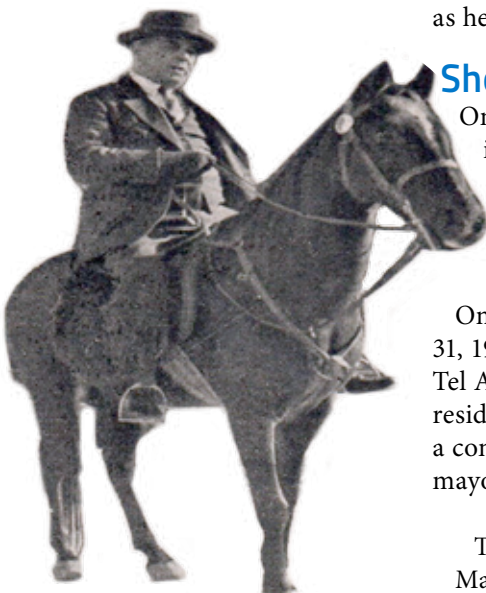
This morning at 9:15 am, as I was seated at my desk in my office at the municipality, Shaul Levy exploded into the room. My assistant, Shalom Mizrahi, held him back at the door on the grounds that he had no permission to enter, but Shaul Levy pushed him aside and forced his way in. I rose to my feet and came to the door to stop the argument [...], but before I could say a word, Shaul Levy said, "Hello, Mr. Dizengoff," and attacked me, raising his hand and striking my cheek. [...] Mizrahi tried to intervene, and Shaul Levy then smashed the glass panes of a cabinet.

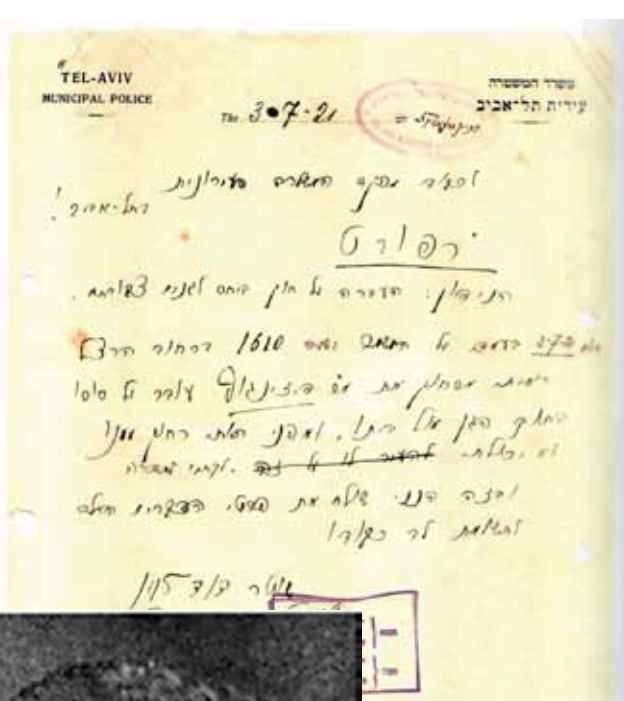
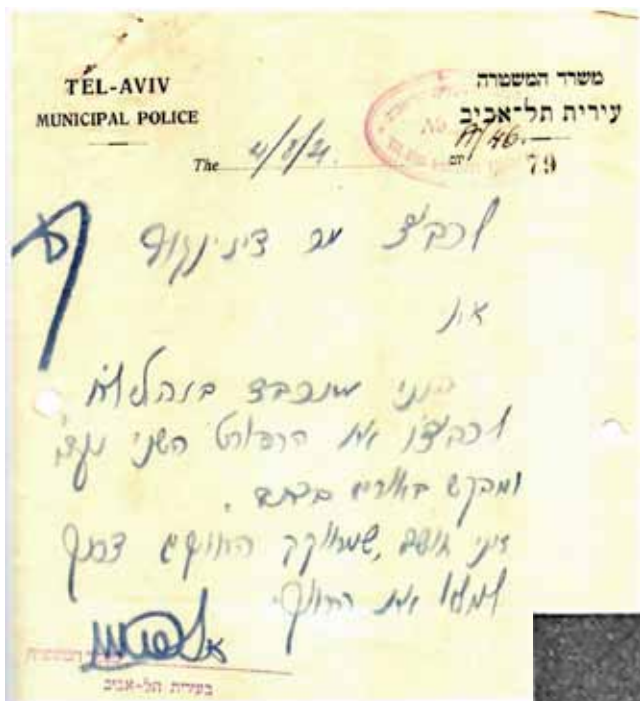
Zelig Rabinowitz and A. D. Levy were present at city hall at the time. Hearing the ruckus, they and the town clerks came in and saw what was going on. After they'd forcibly removed Levy from the room, he kicked up an awful racket in the vestibule, shouting, weeping, cursing the municipality, and generally refusing to leave until the police arrived and took him away.

I request full court proceedings against Shaul Levy and demand that he be punished with the full force of the law for assault and battery on the person of the mayor and his office in the course of fulfilling his duties. (ibid., Dept. 2, file 2a [Hebrew])

Dizengoff promptly convened the municipal action committee and insisted

Dizengoff astride his mare, Mehira (Hebrew for "Speedy")





that a police officer be on duty during future reception hours. The assembled regarded Levy's behavior as an affront to the entire town council and resolved that every possible measure be taken to bring the offender to justice. Over the following days, Dizengoff's desk overflowed with hundreds of letters of support from organizations and institutions, and Levy was suspended from the Real Estate Owners' Guild and the Jaffa Trading Office.

Eleven days later, the court condemned the assailant to either a fifty-lira fine or a month's imprisonment. Dizengoff took the light sentence as a personal insult and resigned next day:

To the Tel Aviv Municipality:

In view of the local court's decision last Friday, I am convinced that I cannot continue my task as mayor, as there is no protection whatsoever – either legal or public – for town officials. I therefore submit my absolute resignation forthwith and request that you choose someone else to take my place until the coming elections.

Respectfully,  
Meir Dizengoff (ibid.)

A delegation of top local officials hastily assured him that the slap he'd received had been felt by the entire Jewish population of Mandate Palestine, and city

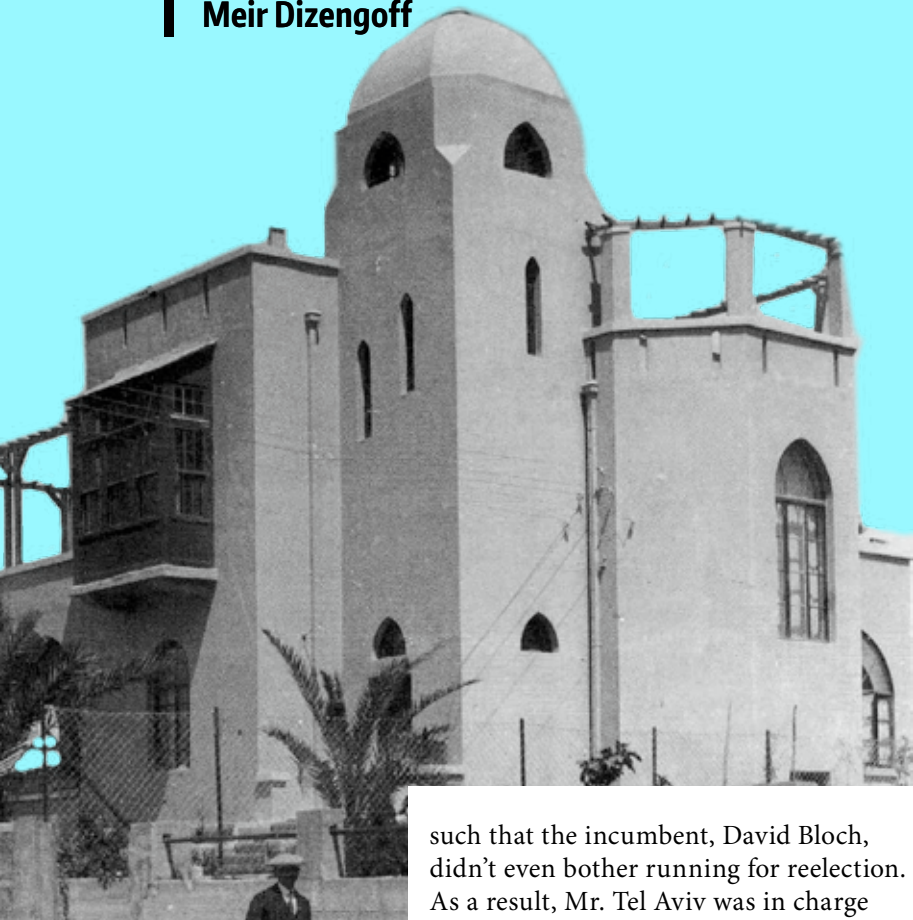
hall publicly denounced Levy. Only then did Dizengoff withdraw his resignation.

Days later, Dizengoff was finally elected mayor rather than simply appointed as such. The fourth wave of Zionist immigration, beginning in 1924, transformed Tel Aviv from a small suburb into a city. But once again, amidst all this expansion and at the height of his activities, Dizengoff stepped down when faced with defeat over a teachers' union issue. This time he refused to change his mind. A few months afterward, he defected to the municipality of Tel Aviv's greatest rival, Jaffa, even substituting for its mayor.

Dizengoff waited until 1928 to seek office again in Tel Aviv. His standing was

Ticket issued to Dizengoff for riding his horse through a public park, signed by Officer David Levine  
Tel Aviv Municipal Archive

The police chief who didn't hesitate to rebuke his mentor. Hayyim Alperin and his letter to Dizengoff on the subject of bathing without appropriate attire



Dizengoff's gift of homes brought cultural worthies to Tel Aviv. Bialik's house on the street named after him, ca. 1925

Photo: Yair Talmor

The official birthday celebrations held every year on the day after Tel Aviv's famous Purim carnival helped make Dizengoff synonymous with his city. Heading the Purim procession, 1935

Photo: Zoltan Kluger, Israel Government Press Office

such that the incumbent, David Bloch, didn't even bother running for reelection. As a result, Mr. Tel Aviv was in charge during the town's boom periods but left someone else to muddle through the economic crises of the 1920s.

### First Modern Hebrew City

Determined to shift the country's cultural center from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv, Dizengoff set about making his town a modern, Hebrew-speaking hub. In the early 1920s, he was already luring Jewish thinkers and writers to Tel Aviv.

One such was Asher Zvi Greenberg, better known as Zionist philosopher Ahad Ha-am, who arrived in Mandate Palestine in 1922. His first place of residence was Jerusalem, but Dizengoff found him a teaching job at Tel Aviv's first Hebrew-speaking high school, Herzliya Gymnasium, as well as a seat on the town council, so he soon relocated. The mayor even bought him a house right by the school and renamed his new address Ahad Ha-am Street.

A similar strategy – a home, a job, and a street – also brought Hayyim Nahman Bialik to Tel Aviv. Though the great poet had planned to live in Jerusalem and was corresponding on the subject with

## Tel Aviv's silver jubilee publications cast Dizengoff as the city's founder, permanently overshadowing that title's rightful owner, Akiva Aryeh Weiss

some of the city's most distinguished inhabitants, Dizengoff reminded him of their days together in Odessa and promised him a much more congenial environment if only he'd agree to live on a plot set aside for his use near the Tel Aviv municipality.

On arrival in 1924, Bialik settled in a house purpose-built for him, and the street was promptly renamed in his honor. He also accepted – at least at first – the public role thrust on him by Dizengoff. Other authors and artists followed, including Reuven Rubin, who purchased a home on Bialik Street with his wife, Esther. Dizengoff's dream was well on its way to reality.





Kibbutzim were all the rage, but Tel Aviv was the economic powerhouse. Agricultural float, Tel Aviv Purim carnival, 1934

Photo: Zoltan Kluger, Israel Government Press Office

For Tel Aviv’s silver jubilee in 1934, Dizengoff invited the first child and grandchild born in the town to his office. Photographer Avraham Soskin immortalized the moment, and Bialik composed his last poem for the occasion:

Grandchild by grandsire  
 Father beside son  
 Weave your web of wonders  
 Tel Aviv, as one

But grandson and grandfather  
 Father and son know  
 The work has still not ended  
 Their hands can’t yet let go  
 (H. N. Bialik, “Of Three Generations,” in Bialik, *Collected Works* [Dvir Publishing, 1954], p. 391 [Hebrew])

A collection of ivory-tower intellectuals, however, wasn’t the only

thing Dizengoff was after. Above all, Tel Aviv was to be a business and media center. Within a few years, the owners of *Haaretz* were coaxed into moving their offices from Jerusalem. The rest is history.

### For the Record

Determined to embellish his place in history, Dizengoff invested heavily in his image. Insignia bore his portrait, and the Elite chocolate manufacturer released a “Dizengoff” candy bar with his face on the wrapper. He even commissioned his own biographies, such as *M. Dizengoff: His Life and Works* and *With Tel Aviv in Exile*, a ghostwritten, illustrated autobiography set against the backdrop of World War I. In 1936, the Tel Aviv municipality funded Alter Druyanov’s *Book of Tel Aviv* in which Dizengoff featured prominently as the city’s founder and Akiva Aryeh Weiss was barely

## Dizengoff

- 1861** February 25/15 Adar 5621: Meir Dizengoff born in Echimăuți, Bessarabia
- 1892** arrives in Palestine
- 1894** moves to Odessa
- 1905** returns to Palestine, settling in Jaffa
- 1910** replaces Weiss as head of the Tel Aviv neighborhood committee
- 1914** WWI dries up international transfers to Palestine. Dizengoff sets up the Crisis Relief Committee with Arthur Ruppin
- 1917** heads an emigration committee for Jaffa and Tel Aviv exiles
- 1924** elected mayor
- 1925** resigns during union disputes favoring labor representative David Bloch
- 1928** reelected mayor, remaining in office until his death
- 1930** wife Zina dies; Tel Aviv Art Museum established
- 1936** September 23/7 Tishrei 5697: Dizengoff dies and is buried in Tel Aviv



The Jewish Journey through History



## Spring City

Ahuzat Bayit's sixty original families voted to rename the suburb Tel Aviv. (Runners-up: "Herzliya" [in honor of Herzl] and "Ir Ganim" [Garden City].) Tel Aviv was also the title selected by Nahum Sokolow for his translation of Theodor Herzl's novel, *Altneuland*.

Sokolow's choice was based on Ezekiel (3:15), in which Tel Aviv appears as a Babylonian city inhabited by the exiles of Judah (although recent research suggests that the correct pronunciation was Tel Abub – "hill of mourning" in Akkadian). *Tel* denotes a hill covering archaeological remains, and *aviv* means spring. The name thus represents both tradition and rebirth.

## Urban Planning

An early street plan for Tel Aviv from 1924 envisaged a menora of nine roads branching off from a main thoroughfare

Patrick Geddes was a groundbreaking British urban planner whose architecture sought an ideal balance between place, work, and family. Close ties to English Zionists resulted in his submitting a design for the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus in 1919, and in 1925, his plan for Tel Aviv was accepted, making it the only city whose core is laid out entirely according to his vision.



“Long live the mayor!”  
Tel Aviv municipality  
decked out in honor of  
Dizengoff’s seventieth  
birthday, 1931



## On May 14, 1948, Ben-Gurion declared the establishment of the State of Israel in Dizengoff’s old home

mentioned. Only in the 1990s did Weiss’ role emerge from Dizengoff’s whitewash.

Even the mayor’s birthday became an official holiday, conveniently celebrated the day after Tel Aviv’s famous Purim carnival, the “Adloyada.” Dizengoff’s seventieth included sporting events, a booklet produced in his honor by a grateful town council, and a children’s parade. All of Tel Aviv turned out to shake the mayor’s hand in the town square on Bialik Street.

A public park was also planned as a tribute to Dizengoff, but he wasn’t happy with the winning entry in the design competition. Then the winter rains turned what was supposed to be Meir’s Park into Meir’s Marsh, as *Haaretz* quipped, and the insulted mayor threw the gift in the municipality’s face. Eventually, the park was indeed dedicated to him – on his birthday, 15 Adar – but only in 1944, eight years after his death.

## Landmark Legacy

Tel Aviv celebrated its silver jubilee by holding the annual Levant Fair at new exhibition grounds in the north of the city. A new map of the town depicted the Geddes development plan (proposed by the British urban planner Patrick Geddes in 1925 but approved only in 1938), though the area involved was still a sandy wasteland. Much municipal energy was expended on how a street named for Dizengoff should be represented on the map, since the mayor was expected to refuse such an honor in his lifetime. Typically, however, Meir Dizengoff had no such qualms.

The only spanner he threw in the works was to request, a day before the dedication ceremony, that the small square in the center of the broad, tree-lined avenue commemorate his late wife, Zina. Dizengoff Square and Dizengoff Street were thus named together at the official opening of the street in 1934, though the square was dedicated four years later, upon completion.

Meir Dizengoff died on 7 Tishrei, September 23, 1936, at age seventy-five. Tel Aviv observed three days of official mourning, shutting down the “city that never sleeps.” For weeks beforehand, the municipality had issued daily updates on the mayor’s health and even organized



a banquet in honor of his anticipated recovery.

The funeral was the largest the region had ever seen. British high commissioner Sir Arthur Wauchope was among the dignitaries in attendance, along with the entire Zionist leadership. The whole town was closed to traffic, and delegations of schoolchildren carried wreaths on behalf of municipal institutions. Dizengoff was buried beside Zina in Trumpeldor Cemetery, and his tombstone was inscribed at his request, “Founder and leader of Tel Aviv.”

The White City’s first mayor didn’t leave others to define his legacy. When his wife died, Dizengoff converted their home on Rothschild Boulevard into the Tel Aviv Art Museum, confining himself to an upstairs apartment. His will bequeathed the house to the public, and on 5 Iyar, May 14, 1948, Ben-Gurion established the State of Israel in its main reception room. The museum has since moved, and Dizengoff’s home is now known as Independence House, with a permanent exhibition in the restored hall where the historic declaration took place.

Since Meir Dizengoff’s death, Dizengoff Street and Meir Alley have been joined by Meir Park, the Kiryat Meir neighborhood near Rabin Square, and a synagogue, Hekhal Meir. There’s a Dizengoff Prize

for art and sculpture, and for Tel Aviv’s centenary, a bronze statue of Dizengoff on his favorite mare was erected opposite the mayor’s home.

Without a doubt, Dizengoff saw his city as the key to restoring Jewish nationhood after two millennia of exile. In many ways, his vivid personality and unique leadership made Tel Aviv what it is today. He certainly remains a role model and inspiration for any mayor elected in Israel. □

Sign announcing the renaming of Street 187, soon to become Dizengoff Street, and the “street” before its development

Tel Aviv Municipal Archive of Historic Documents



**Ilan Shchori**

A historian, tour guide, and journalist, Shchori is a doctoral candidate at the University of Haifa, researching Tel Aviv. See [www.mytelaviv.co.il](http://www.mytelaviv.co.il)



## 18 Sheriff of Tel Aviv

**Meir Dizengoff** didn't actually found Tel Aviv, but as its first mayor he reigned supreme, building the first Hebrew-speaking city since the biblical period. And Dizengoff created this "Israeli Riviera" in his own image: bulging, brash, and ambitious // [Ilan Shchori](#)

## 30 Shul or Show?

With the invention of the gramophone, cantorial pieces once reserved for the synagogue became hit records. Some objected to this use of the "disgraceful shouting machine" and to the **cantorial concerts** that followed. How technology revolutionized Jewish music – for better or worse // [David Olivestone](#)

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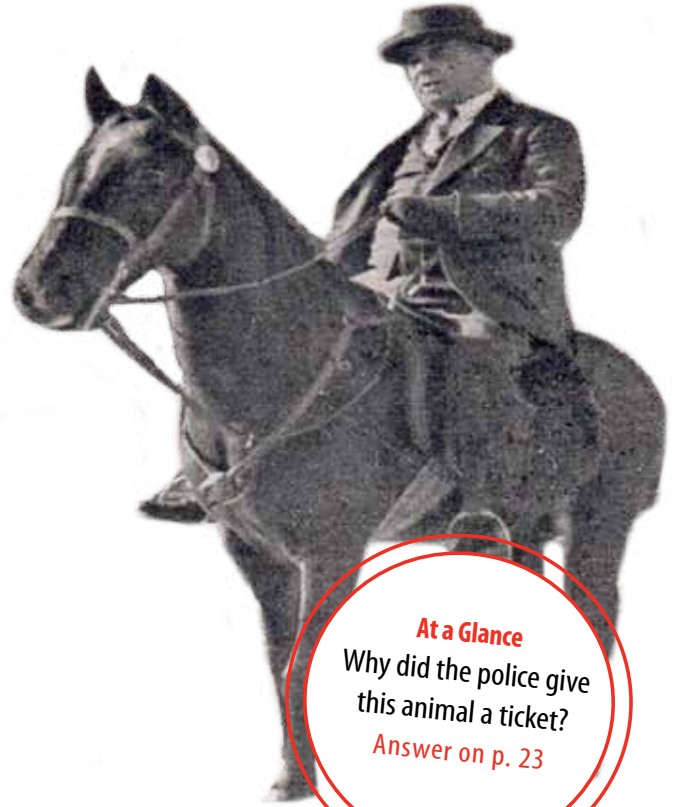
Perhaps the most famous of all Hasidic tales, the story of an illiterate boy whose prayer pierced the heavens has been told and retold for generations. The version recounted by **Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn**, the sixth Lubavitcher rebbe, recast his life's work to launch the mission of his flock // [Levi Cooper](#)

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What role could a Portuguese Jew have played in the English succession and the War of the Roses? The astounding adventures of **Edward Brampton**, a.k.a. Duarte Brandão, from mariner to knight // [Haggai Olshanetsky](#)

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How did **Elijah** lose his hand? The travails of the statue of the prophet atop Mount Carmel // [Tamar Hayardeni](#)



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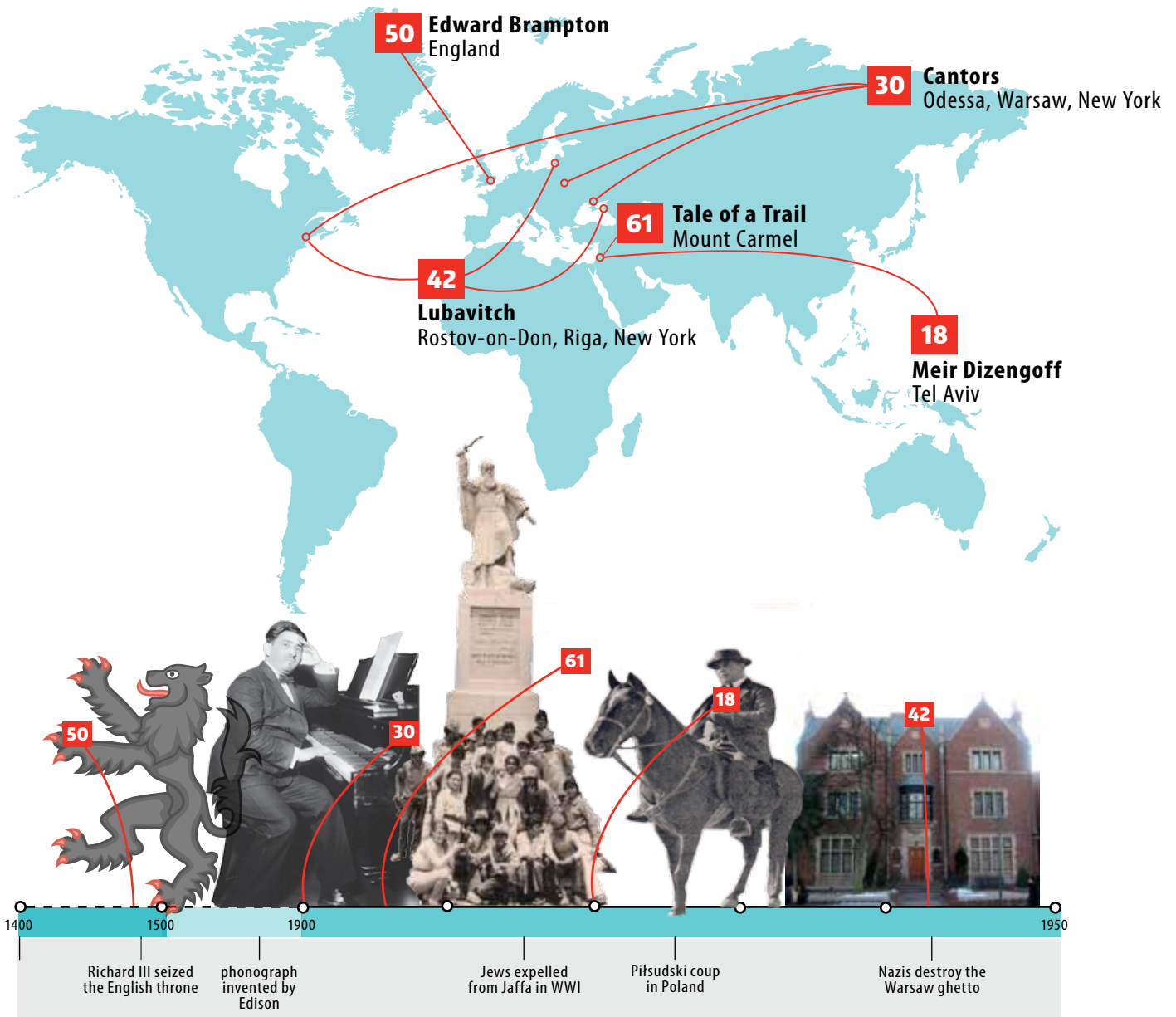
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Cover: Star cantor Yossele Rosenblatt (1882–1933) in his prime. Autographed publicity photograph



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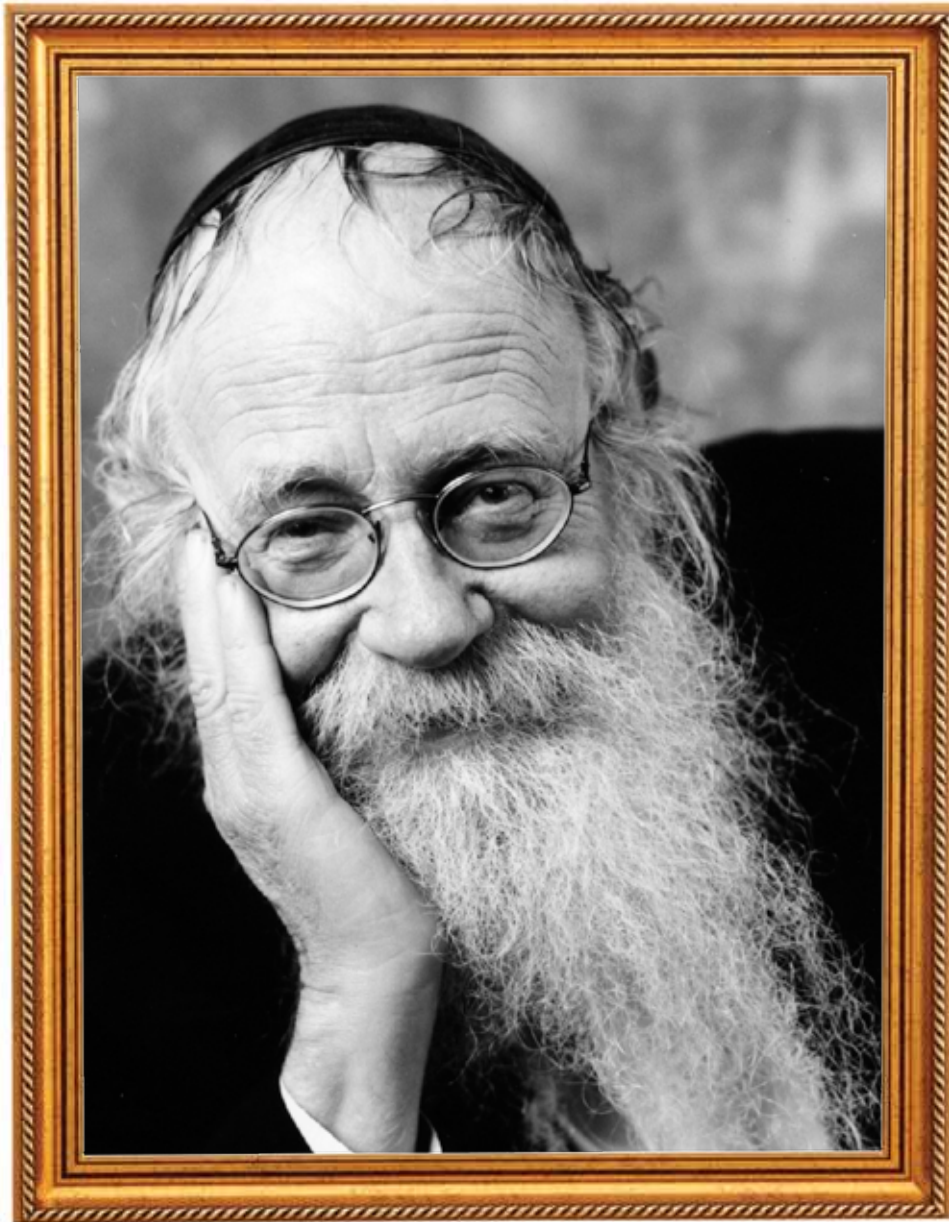
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