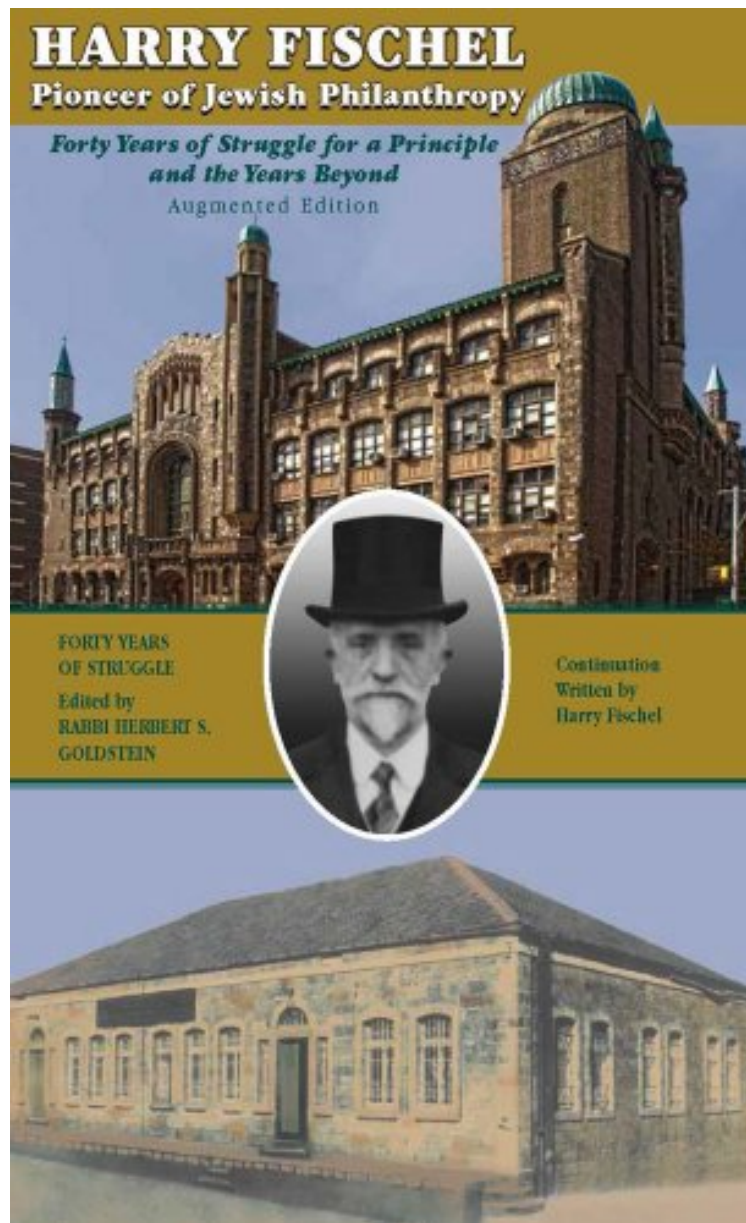


[Mobile book] Harry Fischel Pioneer of Jewish Philanthropy Forty Years of Struggle for a Principle and the Years Beyond

Harry Fischel Pioneer of Jewish Philanthropy Forty Years of Struggle for a Principle and the Years Beyond

Harry Fischel

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Harry Fischel : Harry Fischel Pioneer of Jewish Philanthropy Forty Years of Struggle for a Principle and the Years Beyond before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Harry

Fischel Pioneer of Jewish Philanthropy Forty Years of Struggle for a Principle and the Years Beyond:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A must read in American Jewish history By Matthew Zizmor Harry Fischel - Pioneer of Jewish Philanthropy : Forty Years of Struggle for a Principle and the Years Beyond, Edited by Herbert S. Goldstein; Continuation, Written by Harry Fischel, and the Years Beyond edited by Aaron Reichel. Ktav Publishing Co. 2012, 511 pages. Reviewed by Dr. Matthew Zizmor. This book comprises three books: The first book is Forty Years of Struggle for a Principle which was Harry Fischel's biography written in 1928 and edited by Herbert S. Goldstein. The second book, Continuation, was written by Harry Fischel himself, which covered the years 1927-1941. The third book consists of additional material through his final years and various additional features, including an expanded index of the original book, put together and edited by one of his great-grandchildren, Aaron Reichel. In 1985, my friend Aaron Reichel authored the book The Maverick Rabbi. It was a biography of his grandfather Rabbi Herbert Goldstein. He sent me a copy which I read and reviewed. A few months later, I asked him for a copy of the book Forty Years of Struggle for a Principle. I wanted to read that book because Aaron Reichel kept referring to that book in his notes in The Maverick Rabbi. I was very fortunate to receive a copy because that book had long been out of print. I remember enjoying the book so much that I ended up reading the book twice. When I received the updated and augmented edition to read and review, at the end of 2012. I felt I had no choice but to read it a third time. Harry Fischel was and continues to be a role model. He believed in his principles, his Judaism and his people. He sought to work with broad segments of the Jewish people for his charitable endeavors. Some of his charity work -- and this is only a partial list- The Uptown Talmud Torah, Beth Israel Hospital, American Jewish Committee, The Jewish Orphan Asylum, The American Jewish Relief Committee, The Joint Distribution Committee, Home of the Daughter of Jacob (Nursing Home), Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary, Building and Loan Company of Palestine, and Yeshiva College. He divided his time between his business and philanthropy. Why is this book important? It is about a lay person, not a Rabbi. Yet he did so much for Judaism and the Jewish people. It is not a "Gadolography Book". It is a book about a real person. It is most fortunate that it now includes Harry Fischel's Continuation. Since it is written in his own words, one can understand the man and almost appreciate what made him tick. Today very few people understand history. Just ask high school students about World War II and few can tell you who the players were. Many of our Jewish people did not live through Israel's struggle for independence or the Six Day War. They visit Israel but do not comprehend that many of the Holy sites were not always under Jewish control. Many people have no understanding of the trials and tribulations that immigrants endured. How it was difficult to hold on to one's Judaism. How little was available in Jewish education. How Orthodox Jews struggled to make it religiously and economically. This book should be required reading for every person in the Modern Orthodox Jewish community including teenagers. It should also be read by scholars and lay people of all denominations who are interested in American Jewish history. Students of Yeshiva College and R.I.E.T.S. should be told generally what he did for their school and should then want to read this book. Zionists would appreciate the work that Harry Fischel did for Palestine. Also fundraisers would benefit from this book. The three greatest legacies of Harry Fischel all took place or climaxed after the first edition of his biography was published: 1. How he single handedly rescued Yeshiva College from its creditors and the banks during the Depression. He renegotiated their debts and managed to pay them off. No one else stepped forward. 2. He founded an institute in Israel for advanced Talmudic research. He also founded the Harry Fischel School for Higher Jewish Studies at Yeshiva University. 3. His family and descendants. Dr. Matthew Zizmor has a Dental Practice in the Chestnut Hill area of MA. He is a past President of the Synagogue Council of MA. Dr. Zizmor is a retired Col. of the US Army Reserves. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Auspicious and powerful! By Jayne Cohen-Tollaksen The augmented edition of the book, "Harry Fischel, Pioneer of Jewish Philanthropy, Forty Years of Struggle for a Principle and the Years Beyond," is auspicious and powerful. After reading the first Book, "Forty Years of Struggle for a Principle," and now the augmented edition, I was able to experience the true character of Harry Fischel in even greater depth. I was truly inspired by his great love of G-d, which gave him the courage and strength of will to be able to fight for Jewish values, practices, and rights in the face of imminent danger of failure, financial loss, his health weakening, etc. Nevertheless, he was still victorious. His philanthropic work was absolutely awesome. To name a few, he played a major role in the founding and/or funding of Yeshiva College, the original Institutional Synagogue, hospitals, orphanages, Kosher Food at Ellis Island and in hospitals, Jewish Relief Funds, and beyond. He was a principal supporter of legislation to allow people to observe the Sabbath on Saturdays in the state of New York; he met with four Presidents of the United States, etc. I was inspired by his tenacity as expressed in the description of his meetings with President Franklin D Roosevelt (when he was Governor of the state of New York and President). Such meetings revealed the power of Fischel's intention and his success in manifesting his dreams to enhance Jewish values and education to the highest levels. Equally impressive is the description of the love and care that Fischel gave to his wife and children no matter how engaged he was in other important matters, such as the establishment of the Fischel Foundation, which continues to support Yeshiva University and other institutions and projects. One of my favorite ancient sayings is "Because of Deep Love, One is Courageous," and courageous Fischel was. As a result of Harry Fischel's great love of the wisdom of the Holy Scripture of the Talmud and as a result of

Fischel's ingenious mind, he was able to grasp the pearls of wisdom from the Talmud. He knew it contained knowledge that would be beneficial to other disciplines as well as to the development of science. His foresight led him to preserve and share this knowledge for the betterment of all of humanity, going well beyond the Jewish Culture, for example, to the support of women's rights to vote. His accomplishments are an inspiration for both myself and my husband Jeff Tollaksen. We are honored to be members of the Fischel family. Jeff and Yakir Aharonov are the Directors of the recently established Institute for Quantum Studies at Chapman University in Orange, California. Fischel's lifelong road to success through right action and dedicated service to humanity, has been a great role model for many. Fischel was able to save the lives of thousands of people of the Jewish Faith, in America, Europe, and Israel. He helped them to obtain food, housing and jobs. His work is responsible for keeping the Jewish Religion and Culture alive in America. The book is a great testimony of what the inspirational leadership of one honorable man can accomplish in a single life-time. He sets a supreme example of a man, who by the courage of his love, his principles and actions, has rippled through time, and has forged a higher pathway, creating a better world for all of humanity. By Jayne Cohen-Tollaksen

Harry Fischel was a household name in Jewish communities throughout the world during the first half of the previous century, but his impact on Jewish life today is even greater, in some respects, than it was at the time his biography was first published, in 1928. When *Forty Years of Struggle for a Principle* was originally published, Fischel was already holding his own as a philanthropist with the major Jewish captains of industry, co-founding even such general national charitable organizations as HIAS, which he served as Treasurer from its inception and for over the next half a century. But what set him apart from virtually all the other philanthropists of his era was the percentage of his time and the amount of his fortune that he devoted to Jewish education in America and in Israel, and his roles in both founding and funding many charitable and educational institutions that changed the face of Jewish life for the better. It was only after his original biography was published, however, that Fischel founded the three institutions that bear his name to this day, in America and in Israel, where a street in Jerusalem also bears his name on the corner of the great educational institution that he founded, the Machon Harry Fischel, which produced more than half of the judges in the entire religious court system in Israel, for decades, and which continues to serve the Torah community with distinction to this day. It was only after the original edition of the biography was published that he single-handedly saved Yeshiva College from certain dissolution and oblivion during the Great Depression, and that the building he had single-handedly built for the chief rabbi in Israel became the site of the Merkaz Harav Yeshiva for 40 years, which set the religious and educational tone of the religious Zionist movement in Israel. This is a rags to riches story that rises above all others, in some ways, since, as *The New York Times* put it when the first edition was published, The volume which is beautifully made, preserves [the story] of a man's rise in America from poverty and obscurity to eminence and material success, a story which has in this case an unusual and distinctive flavor because of its subject's devotion to his religious faith. Fischel in his lifetime made a positive impact on notables ranging from the President of the United States whom he convinced to allow HIAS to set up a kosher kitchen on Ellis Island to allow starving immigrants to regain their health and avoid deportation to Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis who obtained a letter for him that protected him on his foreign travels. Fischel's impact on rabbinic leaders ranged from his close relationship with Chief Rabbi Kook who considered him America's top Orthodox philanthropist to his more limited but also impressive relationship with the rabbi known as the Chofetz Chaim in Europe, who went out of his way to host Fischel on one of the latter's trips to Europe. Fischel's impact is still very much felt to this day. The current unanimously elected Chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Columbia University Professor Richard B. Stone, is quoted on a flap of the book to have said, Harry Fischel was a model philanthropist who left a profound and lasting legacy to the Jewish world in general and to the world of Torah education in particular. His biography should inspire our generation.

Only in rare occasions does a person who has made significant achievements and received recognition in his or her own lifetime continue to be remembered years later thanks to sensitive souls who take on the responsibility of reminding their contemporaries of new generations of noble leaders who were recognized in their own lifetimes, and again when an even newer generation arises. Harry Fischel was such a man. He made enormous contributions to a struggling academic achievement, Yeshiva College (later developed as the undergraduate college for young men, the memorable unit of Yeshiva University). In 1928 there was published a volume called *Forty Years of Struggle for a Principle* celebrating his eminent achievements for the founding of the kernel of what is today Yeshiva University. Fischel was then 63 years old and widely acclaimed for his contributions, and fully deserved achievements. Now his successors have risen to the occasion to broaden the canvas and updated the remarkable story of a determined philanthropist who braved the cynical attitudes of those who did not appreciate the sincerity and genuine commitment of a businessman to the academic and religious betterment of his society. --Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm