THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE
***JEWISH BIBLE QUARTERLY* MOURNS THE LOSS OF**
RABBI JOSIAH DERBY

Talmid Chacham im met, mi yiten temurato

Rabbi Josiah Derby, Rabbi Emeritus of the Rego Park Jewish Center, Queens, New York and Congregation Beth Shalom, Coconut Creek, Florida, died early Wednesday morning, December 18, 2002 (13 Tevet). He would have celebrated his 89th Birthday on December 25. Born in Berditchev, Ukraine he came to the United States in 1921. He earned first a BA and then an MA in mathematics from Harvard University, completing his studies in 1937. He attended the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and was ordained as a rabbi in 1943. During World War II, he served as chaplain with the US armed forces. He was descended from 900 years of rabbis (tracing his family lineage back to RASHI and was the seventh generation direct descendent of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, a prominent Hasidic master. In 1942, while a student at the Seminary, he became the rabbi of a community in Rego Park and was instrumental in establishing it as the Rego Park Jewish Center in Queens. While there, he envisioned and then helped found the Solomon Schechter Day School of Queens, the first Conservative day school in the country, which became the model for a national day school movement. He was a leader in the Conservative movement's educational efforts for over 30 years. In 1971, Rabbi Derby was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from the Jewish Theological Seminary. He retired from the Rego Park Jewish Center in 1983 and moved to Coconut Creek, Florida, where he once again founded a synagogue, Congregation Beth Shalom of Coconut Creek. Rabbi Derby served as the first rabbi of the congregation for two years and was then named Rabbi Emeritus.

Rabbi Derby was a lover of Bible studies from his earliest youth and was a scholar, teacher and lecturer of repute. He was a founding member of the Advanced Bible and Talmud Study Group of the Central Agency for Jewish Education of Broward County. In retirement he was able to devote his time to the pursuit of Bible studies and published over 34 articles in the Jewish Bible Quarterly. Another article will be published posthumously.

Yehi Zichro Baruch