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Aleksander Ortner, from Prezov in eastern Slovakia, was the child of his father's third wife. His family, a combination of three families, Ortner, Frankl and Rubin, operated as one unit. His father was a "**Chassid**" and as a young child Aleksander attended "**cheder**." The family, with strong well to do familial connections in Hungary, was in the wine business and was prosperous. After 1939, increasingly restrictive anti-Jewish regulations were enacted, e.g., Jewish owned businesses were required to have a non-Jewish partner, an "**arizator**." In April 1942, deportations began. Certain Jews could get a license exempting them and their immediate families from deportation. One of his uncles received a license. After his family's hiding place was discovered, they were taken to the synagogue courtyard and from there to the train station. Before the train pulled away, he heard an announcement over the loudspeaker ordering his older brother to disembark. Through the intervention of the arizator, the rest of the family were able to get off the train and return home. One week later, the arizator warned his brother of an imminent roundup. His brother managed to hide, the rest of the family was taken to Poprad, a pre-deportation gathering place. His mother, with the help of two acquaintances, saved the family from that day's transport. The next day, they were taken to Zilina, where another transport was scheduled to depart. His mother, with the help of a relative, again saved the family by arranging for them to remain in a separate area for five weeks. Meanwhile, his brother in Prezov, secured temporary exemptions. The family was able to return home where they began to arrange with a non-Jewish smuggler to get them to Koshitze, Hungary. His parents went to Debrecen where they acquired false papers. He and a cousin went to a "**yeshiva**" in Papa. The family was able to send money back and forth from Slovakia to Hungary by way of a non-Jew. In March 1944, the Germans entered Hungary. One day, while visiting his parents, Ortner was stopped on the street by a high-ranking army officer who suspected that he was a Jew. After smacking him, he was ordered to report the next morning to a specific address. His parents quickly arranged for him to get to Budapest and from there he crossed the border into Slovakia. Meanwhile, his mother surreptitiously moved the immediate family to Nagy-Varad, where, a few months later, they were liberated. He and a cousin made their way to the "**Nitre Yeshiva**." Through connections with the local bishop and ties to President Tiso, an area of the the Yeshiva known as the "**Vatican**" was permitted to remain open though all other yeshivas had been disbanded. It remained out of bounds to the local authorities until September 8, 1944, when the Germans surrounded the area. Ortner and his cousin were were caught and taken to a prison in Ilava. A few days later they were taken to Sered, a transit camp. A transport was sent to Auschwitz, which Ortner managed to avoid. He heard that two additional transports were scheduled. He also heard about a person who managed to escape from Sered. He decided to try to escape too in order to make his way to Budapest where the Jews were not being deported. After encountering difficulties along the way along with some inexplicable acts of kindness, he arrived in Budapest. He remained at the home of his brother until Budapest was liberated. Thereafter, he made his way to Debrecen and was reunited with his parents. The family sold their home in Prezov and returned to Koshitze. After acquiring a certificate, the family in Israel on June 30, 1947.