

# Connecting to the Great Rabbinic Families Through Y-DNA: A Case Study of the Polonsky Rabbinical Lineage

by Jeffrey Mark Paull

For a number of reasons, including high rates of intermarriage with other rabbinic families, adoption of fixed surnames well before governmental authorities required the majority of European Jewry to do so, and frequently well-documented lineages, rabbinic lineages hold a special place in Jewish genealogy. Researchers who find a rabbi in their family typically can trace much further back in time than can most European Jewish families. Often, however, contemporary family members are unaware of their rabbinic ancestry.

When a paper trail for a rabbinic genealogy exists back before the mass adoption of Jewish surnames, DNA testing can be useful both to confirm relationships and to help identify other living members of the extended family, many of whom have different family surnames and do not know of the rabbinic relationship. Y-DNA testing of members of the Polonsky rabbinic family demonstrates this process.

The present study focuses on a family of Jewish descent that immigrated to America from the Ukraine during the early part of the 20th century. It presents the genealogical and genetic data that characterizes the Polonsky rabbinical lineage by which its descendants may be identified. The Polonsky rabbinical lineage descends from a nexus of great Talmudic scholars, Jewish community leaders and rabbinic dynasties that formed the bedrock of Judaism throughout Europe and Russia.

## Introduction

Major challenges and difficulties abound in the study of Jewish genealogy. These challenges and difficulties are well known to Jewish genealogists: frequent expulsions and migrations, the dearth of civil and Jewish community records, the lack of Jewish surnames, and the widespread destruction of the repositories of Jewish learning and culture, including synagogues, yeshivas and cemeteries.

As a result, for many people of Ashkenazi Jewish descent, no genealogical records of their ancestors can be found beyond a certain point. Against this reality, however, are a limited number of great rabbinical families whose lines of descent were studied and preserved over the centuries. These families include some who rose to prominence through the great distinction of one or two individuals, and others who produced a succession of illustrious rabbinical scholars or community leaders.<sup>1</sup>

A wealth of genealogical information exists in the Jewish literature for individuals who can establish descent from one or more of the great rabbinic families. Rabbinic sources can provide priceless information regarding their descent to Jews who might otherwise have no means of discovering

who their ancestors were.

Because of the endogamous nature of the Ashkenazi Jewish population, many, if not most Ashkenazi Jews descend from a prominent rabbi or rabbinical lineage, although they may not be aware of it. Endogamy among Ashkenazi Jews was internally mandated through religious and cultural tenets that endorsed marrying other Jews, and was often externally imposed through laws that prohibited marriage to non-Jews.<sup>2</sup>

Culturally, the practice of *shidduch*, or arranging marriages between family members of equal *yichus* or distinguished birth, was common among Ashkenazi Jews for centuries. To have *yichus* was to be descended from illustrious ancestors who were famous rabbis or community leaders.<sup>3</sup> Many rabbinical dynasties made it a priority to ensure that their children married into other prominent and often closely related rabbinical lineages, resulting in frequent consanguineous marriage among cousins of these lineages, resulting in the creation of a highly endogamous population.<sup>4</sup>

This high degree of interrelatedness is one reason why increasing numbers of Ashkenazi Jews are turning to genetic testing as a way of recovering part of their lost heritage by locating “DNA cousins” and identifying their common ancestors. As they do, it is becoming increasingly clear that characterizing the unique DNA markers of the great Ashkenazi rabbis and rabbinical lineages will play a critical role in the ultimate success of such endeavors. Studies such as the “WIRTH” project<sup>5</sup> and the Wertheimer-Wertheim autosomal DNA study<sup>6</sup> have demonstrated the intrinsic value of and need for characterizing rabbinic DNA in an effort to bridge the gap between genetic data and the missing paper trail for Ashkenazi Jews.

Hence, studies such as this, which provide the genealogy of a renowned rabbinical lineage of Ashkenazi descent, combined with the genetic data that describe the unique DNA markers or characteristics of that lineage, have considerable value for both present and future Jewish genealogical studies. Such studies provide the unique autosomal or Y-DNA markers—the generic fingerprint of a specific rabbinical lineage, the gold standard by which individual DNA test results can be compared to determine if a given individual may be a descendant of a particular rabbi or rabbinical lineage.

## Background

The three million Ashkenazi Jews who immigrated to America from Russia between 1881 and 1920 wanted to break with their past and make a new life for themselves

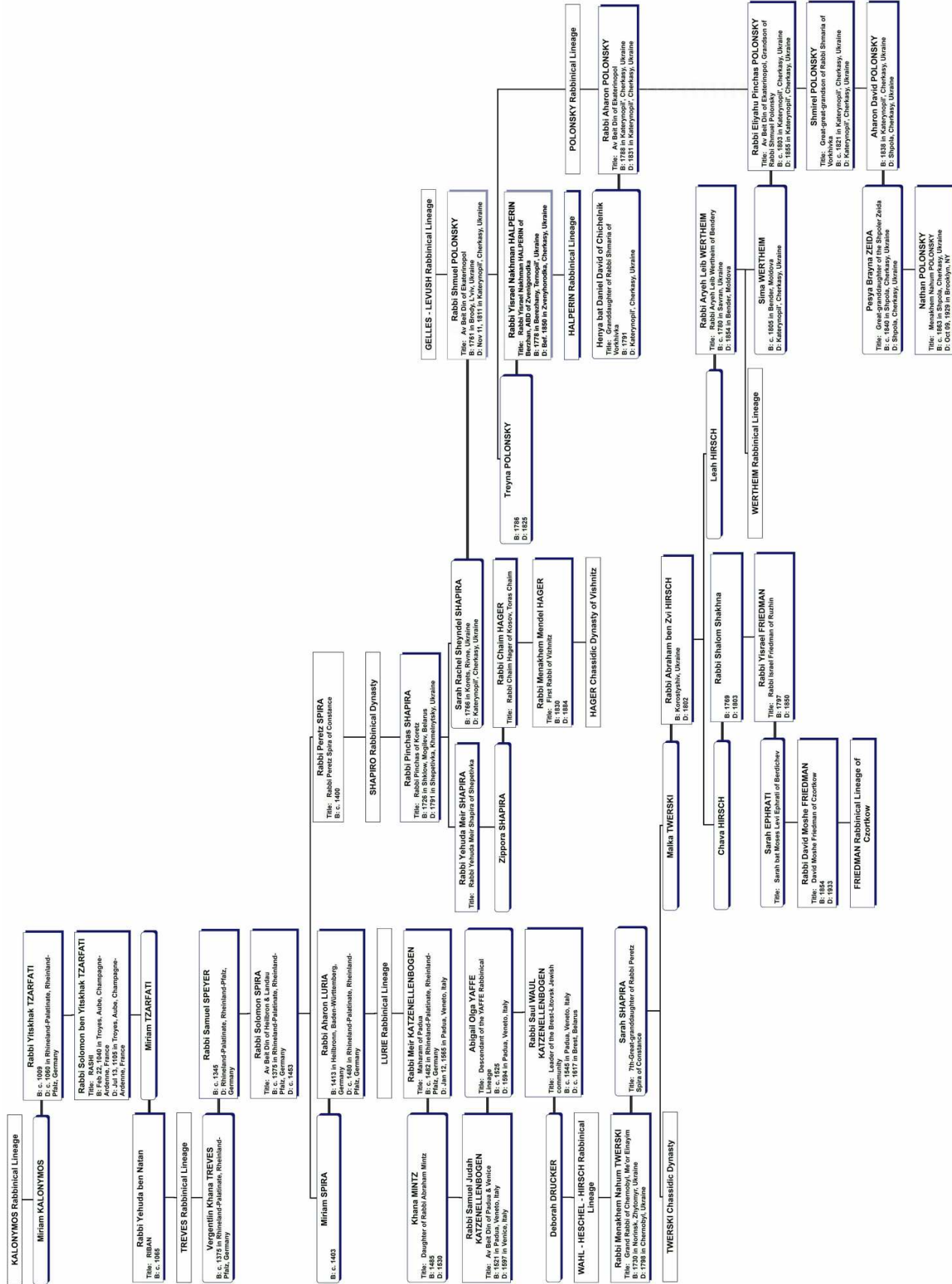


Figure 1. The many rabbinical connections of the Polonsky lineage

and their families in America.<sup>7</sup> In making the transition, they broke with the past so completely that they left behind a large part of their rich cultural heritage. Particularly during the first several decades of the 20th century, Russian-Jewish immigrants were intent on assimilating into American culture. They abandoned many of their religious customs and traditions and rarely spoke with their American-born children of the world that they left behind. As a result, much of their oral history was lost, and with it, their ancestral and rabbinic links to the past.<sup>8</sup>

Such was the case for the Polonsky family. Menakhem Nahum Polonsky, with his wife and four of their children, left Cherkasy, Russia, and settled in Brooklyn, New York, in 1914. Upon his arrival, Menakhem Nahum Americanized his name to Nathan Polonsky and reunited with his other four children who had previously immigrated to the U.S. Among their descendants, little was known about their life before America. Other than whisperings of the family being somehow descended from one of the disciples of the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of Hasidic Jewry, there was no family tree or paper trail to document their ancestors.

That is where things stood for nearly 80 years until the author found a photograph of his great-grandfather Nathan's gravestone and had the Hebrew inscription translated. The inscription revealed that Nathan Polonsky was the descendant of two of the most influential early leaders of the Hasidic movement—the Shpoler Zeida (grandfather of Shpola) (1725–1811), and Rabbi Pinchas Shapira of Koretz (1726–1791).

Fascinated by this finding, he embarked on a comprehensive genealogical research project to uncover the ancient lineage of the Polonsky family. This research culminated in the publication of *A Noble Heritage: The History and Legacy of the Polonsky and Paull Family in America*. It tells the story of how the Polonsky family's lost heritage, embracing many of Europe's most eminent and influential rabbis, dating back to the great 11th-century scholar and biblical commentator Rashi, was rediscovered.<sup>9</sup> While researching and writing *A Noble Heritage*, the author also initiated a number of genealogical research projects that involved studying the autosomal and Y-DNA characteristics of descendants of several family ancestral lines, including the Gelles-Polonsky,<sup>10</sup> Wertheimer-Wertheim<sup>11</sup> and Zeida<sup>12</sup> rabbinical lineages.

### **Polonsky Rabbinical Lineage**

The Polonsky rabbinical lineage is a particularly interesting and relevant lineage from a genealogical research standpoint, due, in part, to its many marriage connections to other notable rabbinical lineages and dynasties throughout Europe and Russia, a brief summary of which is presented here.

The scholarly Kalonymos family, believed by some to be of Davidic descent,<sup>13</sup> left Babylonia about the 8th century, settled in Italy, and then moved to the Rhineland and France in the 9th and 10th centuries. From this family

emerged the great Biblical and Talmudic commentator Rashi (1040–1105).<sup>14</sup> Rashi's family and disciples established centers of learning in many towns in Western Europe and later, in the 14th century, in Eastern Europe. Thus a vast interrelated dynasty of rabbinic families spread across Europe, establishing a framework for future genealogical research.<sup>15</sup>

Notable among this interrelated dynasty of rabbinic families is the Shapiro rabbinical lineage, which traces its descent from Rashi through the Treves rabbinical lineage, and which produced a long line of distinguished rabbis over the centuries. The Polonsky rabbinical lineage was formed when the descendant of a distinguished Galician line of rabbis from Brody married into the Shapiro rabbinical lineage in the late 18th century.<sup>16</sup>

The progenitor of the Polonsky line was Rabbi Shmuel Polonsky (1761–1811). Shmuel was the grandson of Rabbi Menakhem Mendel Levush.<sup>17</sup> Menakhem married the daughter of Rabbi S. Gellis and adopted his father-in-law's surname to become Moses Gellis.<sup>18</sup> How Shmuel acquired the Polonsky surname is unclear but it may be through his connection with the Polonne community<sup>19</sup> while he was serving as the rabbi of the nearby town of Koniow.

Shmuel Polonsky married Sarah Rachel Sheindel Shapira, the daughter of the eminent Rabbi Pinchas Shapira of Koretz.<sup>20</sup> Their marriage produced a distinguished line of rabbis in Kiev gubernia. Shmuel's position as chief rabbi and head of the rabbinical court of Ekaterinopol was passed down through the Polonsky family from father-to-son for five generations, spanning over a century, from 1793 to 1900.

Following the practice of shidduch, each of the descendants in the Polonsky rabbinical lineage married women of impressive yichus who linked Polonsky descendants to many of Europe's esteemed rabbinical lineages, including Kalonymos, Treves, Shapiro, Luria, Katzenellenbogen, Wahl, Yaffe, Twersky, Wertheim, Gellis/Levush and Zeida. The family was connected through marriage to still other distinguished rabbinical families, including the Halperin lineage of Brezhany and Zvenigorodka, the Hager Hasidic dynasty of Vishnitz and the Friedman lineage of Ruzhin and Czortkow.

This vast, highly interrelated network of distinguished rabbinical families, for which there is both extensive genealogical documentation and genetic testing data, makes the Polonsky rabbinical lineage a model lineage for genealogical research purposes. The many rabbinical connections of the Polonsky lineage are summarized in Figure 1. More comprehensive and detailed family trees and descendant charts may be found in both *A Noble Heritage* and the author's website.<sup>21</sup>

Due to the endogamous nature of the Ashkenazi Jewish population, increasing numbers of Ashkenazi Jews may be able to establish descent from one or more of these distinguished rabbinical families on the basis of their DNA match to the unique DNA markers which characterize a particular

**Table 1. Paternal Lines of Descent from the Polonsky Rabbinical Lineage**

Generation	PAULL Line of Descent	PAULEN Line of Descent	GELLES Line of Descent
Common Ancestor	Rabbi Moses GELLIS (Menakhem Mendel LEVUSH), b. circa 1711		
Son	Rabbi Mordecai b. circa 1736, Brody, Austria-Hungary (now Ukraine)		
Grandsons	Rabbi Shmuel POLONSKY b. 1761, possibly Brody, Austria-Hungary (now Ukraine)		Rabbi Moses GELLIS b. circa 1763, Brody, Austria-Hungary (now Ukraine)
Great-Grandsons	Rabbi Aharon POLONSKY b. 1780, Katerynopil, Ukraine		Rabbi David Yitzhak GELLIS b. circa 1785, Brody, Austria-Hungary (now Ukraine)
2nd-Great-Grandsons	Rabbi Eliyahu Pinchas POLONSKY b. 1803, Katerynopil, Ukraine		Rabbi Nahum Uri GELLES b. 1852, Narayow, Poland
3rd-Great-Grandsons	Shmeril POLONSKY b. circa 1821, Katerynopil, Ukraine		David GELLES b. 1883, Austria-Hungary
4th-Great-Grandsons	Aharon David POLONSKY b. 1838, Katerynopil, Ukraine		Edward GELLES b. 1927, Vienna, Austria
5th-Great-Grandsons	Nathan (Menakhem Nahum) POLONSKY b. circa 1863, Shpola, Ukraine		
6th-Great-Grandsons	Louis Isadore PAULL (Levi Yitzhak POLONSKY) b. 1883, Pereyaslav, Ukraine	Leon POLONSKY b. 1888, Shpola, Ukraine	
7th-Great-Grandsons	Melvin Robert PAULL b. 1921, Snowshoe, PA	Arnold David PAULEN (POLONSKY) b. 1921, Brooklyn, NY	
8th-Great-Grandsons	Jeffrey Mark PAULL b. 1951, Pittsburgh, PA		
9th-Great-Grandsons	Justin Matthew PAULL b. 1990, Baltimore, MD Joshua Michael PAULL b. 1994, Walnut Creek, CA		

rabbinical lineage.

In this regard, to say that “all Ashkenazi Jews are related” or that “all Ashkenazi Jews descend from Rashi” is not as much of an overstatement to the extent that one might think.<sup>22</sup> According to Bennett Greenspan of Family Tree DNA, any Ashkenazi Jew who takes the Family Finder autosomal DNA test will match more than 80 percent of the other Ashkenazi Jews in the database.<sup>23</sup> In one recent DNA study of Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jewish communities from around the world, the authors concluded: “The shared genetic elements suggest that members of any Jewish community are related to one another as closely as are 4th or 5th cousins in a large population.”<sup>24, 25</sup>

#### Y-DNA Test Results

In an effort to characterize Y-DNA allele patterns for the Polonsky rabbinical lineage, the author sponsored Y-DNA tests at the 67-marker level for his sons, Justin Matthew

Paull and Joshua Michael Paull, and for his first cousin once removed, Dr. Arnold David Paulen. These descendants of Nathan Polonsky have a well-documented descent from Rabbi Shmuel Polonsky and the Polonsky rabbinical lineage.<sup>26</sup>

The descent of Rabbi Shmuel Polonsky, son of Rabbi Mordecai, son of Rabbi Moses Gellis of Brody, is also well-documented.<sup>27, 28, 29, 30</sup> The genealogical research of Edward Gelles indicated that he, too, was descended from Moses Gellis, and possibly his son Mordecai.<sup>31, 32</sup> Aware of their common ancestral connections, the author invited Dr. Gelles to compare Y-chromosome DNA results. The paternal lines of descent for all five descendants of the Polonsky rabbinical lineage are presented in Table 1.

The Y-DNA tests were conducted by Family Tree DNA (FTDNA) of Houston, Texas. The results showed an exact Y-DNA match between the author and his sons on 67 of 67 Y-DNA markers. There was also an exact Y-DNA 67-

**Table 2. Y-DNA Standard STR Values for Descendants of the Polonsky Rabbinical Lineage**

<b>PANEL 1 (1-12)</b>												
<b>Locus</b>	1	2	3	4	5 - 6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>DYS No.</b>	393	390	19	391	385	426	388	439	389-I	392	389-II	
<b>Alleles</b>	14	23	14	10	13-20	12	12	11	14	10	29	
<b>PANEL 2 (13-25)</b>												
<b>Locus</b>	13	14 - 15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22 - 25			
<b>DYS No.</b>	458	459	455	454	447	437	448	449	464			
<b>Alleles</b>	16	9-9	11	11	25	14	19	33	12-12-15-16			
<b>PANEL 3 (26-37)</b>												
<b>Locus</b>	26	27	28 - 29	30	31	32	33	34 - 35	36	37		
<b>DYS No.</b>	460	Y-GATA-H4	YCA-II	456	607	576	570	CDY	442	438		
<b>Alleles</b>	10	10	20-20	15	15	17	22	34-34	12	11		
<b>PANEL 4 (38-47)</b>												
<b>Locus</b>	38	39	40 - 41	42	43	44	45	46	47			
<b>DYS No.</b>	531	578	DYF395S1	590	537	641	472	DYF406S1	511			
<b>Alleles</b>	11	8	17-17	8	10	10	8	11	10			
<b>PANEL 4 (48-60)</b>												
<b>Locus</b>	48	49 - 50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
<b>DYS No.</b>	425	413	557	594	436	490	534	450	444	481	520	446
<b>Alleles</b>	12	21-22	16	9	12	12	15	8	12	25	22	14
<b>PANEL 4 (61-67)</b>												
<b>Locus</b>	61	62	63	64	65	66	67					
<b>DYS No.</b>	617	568	487	572	640	492	565					
<b>Alleles</b>	12	11	13	11	11	13	12					

marker match between the author and his cousin, Arnold David Paulen (Table 2). These results were not surprising since the common paternal ancestor for all four closely-related Polonsky descendants, Nathan Polonsky, was recent—between two and four generations.

Y-DNA test results for Edward Gelles closely matched those of the four Polonsky descendants. The results showed a near-exact match of 36 of 37 Y-DNA markers, and 65 of 67 Y-DNA markers between Gelles and the four Polonsky descendants. The Y-DNA tests also identified all five descendants as belonging to the R-M124 haplogroup, which is relatively rare among Ashkenazi Jewish populations.<sup>33</sup>

### Discussion

The author, his sons and his first cousin once removed were all exact Y-DNA matches at the 67-marker level. This identical 67-marker Y-DNA match among the four Polonsky descendants, together with their documented proof of descent from the Polonsky rabbinical lineage, provides a high degree of confidence that the Y-DNA allele pattern presented in Table 2 accurately represents the Polonsky rabbinical lineage.

The near-exact match on 65 of 67 Y-DNA markers between Edward Gelles and the four Polonsky descendants provides important validation of these results. FTDNA's Y-DNA time predictor (TiP) report<sup>34</sup> dictates that the probability of a shared common ancestor between Dr. Gelles and the Polonsky descendants within eight to twelve generations as between 84.77 and 96.82 percent (Table 3).

As shown in Table 1, the most recent common ancestor for Edward Gelles and the Polonsky descendants, Rabbi Mordecai, lived between five and ten generations ago in the two respective lineages. Hence the Y-DNA evidence corroborates the conclusions drawn from the genealogical evidence—that Edward Gelles and the four Polonsky descendants share a common ancestor who was born in the early 1700s. This was nearly a century before hereditary surnames became mandatory for Ashkenazi Jews living in the Russian Empire's Pale of Settlement.<sup>35</sup>

### Predictions of the Common Ancestor

The data presented in Table 3 shows how Y-DNA testing can be used to corroborate known and suspected relationships, in addition to discovering new ones. According to FTDNA's Y-DNA time predictor (TiP) program, the author and his sons were estimated to have an approximately 90 percent chance of sharing a common ancestor within four generations. The same probabilities were estimated for the author sharing a common ancestor with his first cousin once removed. In each case, the program's predictions were accurate, although a bit conservative; the actual probability of sharing a common ancestor with these close relatives was somewhat higher (100 percent as opposed to 90 percent), and the number of generations somewhat lower (1 to 3 generations as opposed to 4).

Edward Gelles is the author's fourth cousin, four times removed, which means that our common ancestor lived five generations ago in the Gelles lineage, and nine generations

**Table 3. Probability of a Descendant of the Polonsky Rabbinical Lineage Sharing a Common Ancestor With Other Known and Newly Identified Descendant**

Number of Generations	Probability of Sharing a Common Ancestor with Polonsky Descendant, Dr. Jeffrey Mark Paull, within the Specified Number of Generations									
	Justin Paull	Joshua Paull	A. Paulen	E. Gelles	B. Brofsky	R. Effert	D. Nabutovsky	J. Shaffer	K. Gankin	M. Trager
4	89.79%	89.79%	89.79%	45.29%	45.55%	45.55%	45.55%	25.06%	24.94%	10.17%
8	98.96%	98.96%	98.96%	84.77%	84.97%	84.97%	84.97%	70.62%	70.47%	49.33%
12	99.89%	99.89%	99.89%	96.82%	96.89%	96.89%	96.89%	92.15%	92.07%	80.96%
16	99.99%	99.99%	99.99%	99.43%	99.45%	99.45%	99.45%	98.31%	98.29%	94.49%
20	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	99.91%	99.91%	99.91%	99.91%	99.68%	99.68%	98.66%
24	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	99.99%	99.99%	99.99%	99.99%	99.95%	99.94%	99.71%

ago in the Polonsky lineage (Table 1). FTDNA’s Y-DNA TiP program predicted between an 84.77 percent and 96.82 percent probability of a shared common ancestor who lived between 8 and 12 generations ago, which accurately predicted our known relationship (100 percent probability of a shared common ancestor living between 5 and 9 generations ago).

In addition to these five known relationships, Table 3 presents data for six new and previously unknown potential relationships based upon the closeness of their Y-DNA match to known Polonsky descendants. R. Effert and D. Nabutovsky match the four Polonsky descendants on 64 of 67 Y-DNA markers, and B. Brofsky matches them on 63 of 67 markers. FTDNA’s Y-DNA TiP algorithm predicts that all three of these men have between an 84.97 percent and 96.89 percent probability of a shared common ancestor in the Polonsky lineage who lived between 8 and 12 generations ago. This indicates that their shared common ancestor, like that of Edward Gelles, preceded Rabbi Shmuel Polonsky by at least one generation.

Similarly, J. Shaffer, K. Gankin and M. Trager match the four Polonsky descendants on 63 of 67 Y-DNA markers, and the TiP program predicts that these three men have between an 80.96 percent and 98.31 percent probability of a shared common ancestor in the Polonsky lineage who lived between 12 and 16 generations ago, thereby indicating that their shared common ancestor preceded Rabbi Shmuel Polonsky by several generations.

The fact that all of these men have different surnames but likely descend from the same paternal lineage illustrates the dilemma that confronts many, if not most, Ashkenazi Jews—that their common ancestor often predates the era in which Jewish surnames came into use. Several generations later, the descendants of those common ancestors adopted surnames based upon the places they lived, occupations they had, people they married, neighbors who “adopted” them to avoid military service or the whims of the local authorities. This makes tracing Jewish lineage difficult using traditional genealogical methods and emphasizes the value of Y-DNA and other genetic tests as an essential component of Jewish genealogy.

### R-M124 Haplogroup

In addition to having a high percentage of standard Y-DNA markers or short-tandem repeat (STR) values in common, another Y-DNA characteristic that all descendants of the Polonsky rabbinical lineage share is that they all belong to the relatively rare R-M124 haplogroup.<sup>36</sup> The R-M124 haplogroup is practically unknown in Europe except among a small cluster of Jews, and its origin remains a mystery.

Two confirmed Ashkenazi clusters of R-M124 individuals may reflect an ancient Babylonian (Iraqi), Persian (Iranian) or Central Asian origin. The largest cluster is referred to as “Eastern Europe” or “Jewish A,” tentatively identified by single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) F1092, F1159, F1758 and F3604. The second smaller cluster is referred to as “Jewish Heritage-Rumania” or “Jewish B,” tentatively identified by SNP L288.<sup>37</sup>

Several possible explanations have been proposed for the appearance of these clusters among Ashkenazi Jews in modern-day Eastern Europe, Russia and Ukraine, including conversions to Judaism by Assyrians,<sup>38</sup> the importation of Jewish sages and teachers from Babylonia at the behest of the Khazars,<sup>39,40,41</sup> the migration of Jewish Exilarchs from Babylonia to France,<sup>42</sup> and Jewish expulsions from Babylonia and Persia.<sup>43</sup>

In addition, some Jewish R-M124 individuals in the FTDNA database have no known Eastern European Ashkenazi ancestry. Rather, they are believed to be Mizrahi Jews, with paternal lineages dating back several hundred years to Persia (Iran). The existence of Mizrahi and Ashkenazi Jews with similar genetics supports a shared Asian origin, perhaps in Babylonia. Research projects to investigate specific R-M124 SNP markers that may be unique to Ashkenazi Jews are ongoing, and will help further elucidate the origins of the Jewish R-M124 haplogroup.<sup>44</sup>

### Conclusions

This study demonstrates that, even in the complete absence of a paper trail, it is possible to connect to a rabbinical lineage purely on the basis of Y-chromosome DNA data, and six new probable descendants of the Polonsky

rabbinical lineage were identified in this manner.

The widespread destruction of Jewish genealogical records and cemeteries, combined with the rare usage of Jewish surnames prior to the early 19th century, have always represented major obstacles in conducting Jewish genealogical research. Helping to fill this void have been the genealogies of the great rabbinical families. These genealogies documented and preserved over the centuries represent a precious gift that has been handed down through the generations. They provide the contemporary Jewish community with a way to connect to our ancestors and to our Jewish heritage.

The author hopes that this study of the Polonsky rabbinical lineage will be among the first of many subsequent studies that will provide the essential information necessary to fully characterize both the genealogical and genetic profiles of the great rabbinical families. Such studies will lay a foundation for uniting these two sources of information and for meeting the needs of Ashkenazi Jews all over the world who seek their ancestral origins.

#### Notes

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13. Andres J. Bonet: “The Bonet-Kalonymus-Shem Tov: Direct Descendants of King David and Princes of Septimania.” *Sharsheret Hadorot*, Volume 17, No. 2, June 2003.

14. Neil Rosenstein: *The Lurie Legacy: The House of Davidic Royal Descent*. Avotaynu, Bergenfield, NJ, 2004. On the first page of the book, Dr. Rosenstein presents a family tree depicting Rashi’s descent from King David through his father’s descent from Jochanan ha-Sandlar and Hillel the Elder. Rashi’s father was Rabbi Yitzhak Tzarfati; his mother was Miriam Kalonymos. Hence, Rashi may have been descended from King David through both his mother’s and his father’s lineage.

15. Rabbi Shmuel Gorr: *Torah and Genealogy*, cited in Davidic Dynasty: [www.davidicdynasty.org/Torah.php](http://www.davidicdynasty.org/Torah.php).

16. Edward Gelles: op. cit., p. 5–16.

17. *Ibid*, p. 201–203. Gelles cites the surviving Brody rabbinical court (beth din) records dating from 1808–1817, to show that the names of Levush and Gellis were used interchangeably by Rabbi Menakhem Levush and the members of his family. Gelles concludes that Rabbi Menakhem Levush and Rabbi Moses Gellis were one and the same person. (Note: the Gelles surname was originally spelled Gellis).

18. In a recent correspondence, Gelles states “As for our ancestor Moses Gelles-Levush I am suggesting that his Levush name was indicative of direct descent from (Rabbi) Mordecai Jaffe of Prague.” Edward Gelles: “Yaffe - Levush - Gelles Connection.” E-mail correspondence with Jeffrey Mark Paull, August 24, 2013.

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32. Edward Gelles and Jeffrey Mark Paull: op. cit., According to Gelles, whether the younger Rabbi Moses Gellis from whom he (Edward Gelles) descends was a brother or a cousin of Rabbi

Shmuel Polonsky is open to question.

33. Bennett Greenspan: *Haplogroups—What They Are and What They Mean for Jews*. International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) Conference, Boston, MA, August 6, 2013. Greenspan indicated that only about one percent of the Jews in Family Tree DNA's Y-DNA database belong to the R-M124 haplogroup. Nearly all of the Jews in FTDNA's database are of Ashkenazi descent.

34. FTDNA's time-predictor (TiP) is a program that predicts the time to the most recent common ancestor for two men based on their Y-Chromosome STR matching and STR mutation rates. FTDNA's TiP program uses specific mutation rates that have been proven to differ across STR markers. This improves the power and precision of estimates of time to the most recent common ancestor (TMRCA). [www.familytreedna.com/faq/answers.aspx?id=51#2124](http://www.familytreedna.com/faq/answers.aspx?id=51#2124).

35. Laws mandating the adoption of fixed Jewish surnames were enacted in the Russian Empire in 1804 by Czar Alexander I and in 1835 by Czar Nicholas I: Imperial Statute Concerning the Organization of Jews, Article 32, December 9, 1804, and Article 16, May 31, 1835.

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