

World's oldest man—an Auschwitz survivor—dies at 113

Yisrael Kristal, an Orthodox Jew, celebrated his bar mitzvah in Israel last October, 100 years late.

by [Michele Chabin](#) in the [September 13, 2017](#) issue



Yisrael Kristal, 113 years old, at his bar mitzvah in September 2016. Photo courtesy of Kristal family via [Creative Commons license](#).

Yisrael Kristal, 113, an Auschwitz survivor considered by Guinness World Records to be the world's oldest man, died August 11, a month before his 114th birthday.

An Orthodox Jew, he celebrated his bar mitzvah in Haifa, Israel, last October—100 years after the age that Jewish boys traditionally mark this rite of passage. Kristal

hadn't had the ceremony in 1916 in Poland amid World War I. His father returned from war only to die a year later. His mother had died three years earlier.

Kristal's first wife died in the Auschwitz death camp and their two children died in the Nazi-controlled Lodz ghetto. When he was liberated from Auschwitz, "he weighed 81 pounds," his daughter, Shulamit Kuperstoch, told reporters last year. In 1950, Kristal and his second wife and son immigrated to Israel, where he opened a candy factory. His daughter was born in Israel.

When Guinness World Records crowned Kristal the World's Oldest Man in 2016, he said: "Everything is determined from above and we shall never know the reasons why. There have been smarter, stronger, and better-looking men than me who are no longer alive. . . . All that is left for us to do is to keep on working as hard as we can and rebuild what is lost." —Religion News Service; Israeli news reports