

# The Jewish Weekly

## A Shavuot Deposit

By Rabbi Yerachmiel Tilles

Sunset and the festival of Shavuot were fast approaching. The Jewish merchant hurried frantically towards the Beit Midrash Study Hall in Lishinov, Austria. He was in the midst of a journey to purchase merchandise and pursue investments, and had detoured to spend Shavuot with his rebbe. Now though, while it was still permissible to carry money, he had to quickly find a secure place to hide the thick wallet of currency that was bulging in his jacket pocket. Yet hours had already passed in an unsuccessful search.

In desperation he decided to reconsider his first idea, which he had originally rejected as being too impudent. He would ask the rebbe himself to keep the money in a safe place until the 48 hours of the festival ended. Who could possibly be more reliable than the rebbe!

He ran into the Beit Midrash, took a few deep breaths, gathered his courage, and in fear and trembling, respectfully requested from the rebbe that he allow him to deposit his wallet with the Rebbe for safe-keeping over the holiday.

The Rebbe, Rabbi Mordechai of Neshkiz, presented his chasid a big smile and said that he is happy to oblige him. He took the money, and with the owner watching him closely, he stuck the wallet deep within a large kitchen cabinet filled with pots and dishes, placing it inside a large bowl, and then inserting another bowl of the same size on top of it.

"Now you don't have to worry anymore," he addressed the merchant; "your money is hidden securely with us. So, go right away to the mikveh and prepare yourself for the holy occasion."

The chasid felt as if a great load had been lifted from his shoulders, he was so relieved. He thanked the rebbe and parted from him with a light heart.

Before sunset, he joined the crowd of chasidim that packed the Rebbe's synagogue. He found a place to sit between two friends, opened a book of Torah thought and began to study intently, completely detached from all thought of the work week that had passed, and even of the week to come two days later.

The atmosphere of festive holiness was palpable. The Evening Prayer for Festivals exalted the spirits of all present even higher, an exultation that continued through the holiday meal and reached its apex at the Rebbe's 'tish' (open 'table'), where a large crowd of chasidim gathered after concluding their own meals.

A flow of inspiring words from the Rebbe initiated preparation for the receiving of the Torah anew the following morning. Throughout the night, the chasidim read the traditional long passages of Torah in the "Tikun Leil Shavuot." As soon as the sky began to brighten, the appropriate Morning Blessings were recited, and they delved deeply and enthusiastically into Torah study in preparation for the festive morning prayers.

After the first long section that concluded with the singing of the Hallel prayer, the Rebbe returned to his room to prepare himself for the recitation of the Akdamot [a prayer unique to Shavuot day]

immediately prior to taking out the Torah scroll from the 'Holy Ark.' Some of the chasidim, knowing it would be a while until the Rebbe returned and feeling weak from the all-night vigil, darted into the Rebbe's house to nibble a bit of pastry in order to strengthen themselves for the major part of the Shavuot morning service. They returned quickly to the synagogue and joined the congregation in anticipation of the Rebbe's return.

At last, the Rebbe entered and strode up to the table in the middle of the shul upon which the Torah scroll would be rolled open and read. His demeanor was fiery, but his voice was sweet as he began to chant the Akdamot and pour out his soul to the Creator of all. He himself read aloud from the open scroll, and when he started the portion of the Ten Commandments, every one present felt as if they were assembled at the foot of Mount Sinai.

Evening and morning, night and day. The 48 plus hours passed in a rarified spiritual atmosphere, with total detachment from the weekday world. The second day came to a close, darkness settled, and the large braided candle was lit for the concluding Havdala ceremony. Afterwards, it was only with difficulty that the chasidim were able to depart from the Rebbe's 'court' and his presence.

Also the merchant chasid felt it difficult to descend from the spiritual heights he had crested and turn to the business affairs that awaited him. Still full of emotion, he entered the Rebbe's home to request the return of his money.

The Rebbe hurried to the hiding place inside the kitchen cabinet and moved aside the upper bowl that concealed the wallet. It was not there!

The rebbe was shocked momentarily, but then he figured that perhaps it had fallen from the bowl deeper inside the cabinet. He felt along the sides and on the lower shelf, but there was no trace of it, not a single bill.

He hastily summoned his entire household to help in the hunt. The traumatized merchant stood frozen in place, his face white as frost.

All the frantic searching produced zero results. The rebbe approached the stunned merchant and did his best to calm him. "Don't worry. I'll give you now all the money I have in the house, every last ruble, and the rest I will with G-d's help pay you back in installments."

"Heaven forbid that the Rebbe's savings should be drained on my account," the chasid cried out. I won't take even a kopek from the Rebbe."

The matter of the theft disturbed the Neshkizer greatly. How much suffering he had caused his devoted follower! He decided that emergency measures were called for.

During this time period, the great tzadik (holy man), one of the three main senior disciples of the Baal Shem Tov, Rabbi Pinchas of Koritz, was living in the nearby town of Brody. Rabbi Mordechai of Neshkiz decided he would go to Brody and ask the tzadik for his advice and blessing, even though he had never visited him even once before.

He set out that same day. The merchant meanwhile was still in Lishinov, waiting and hoping for a positive development.

In Brody, R. Mordechai headed directly to the shul-story hall of R. Pinchas. Before entering he saw in the courtyard a middle-aged Jew pacing back and forth

## It Once Happened...

while engrossed in reading Tehilim. He walked towards him and said, "Excuse me. Please can you tell me when it is possible to speak with the Rebbe?"

The man ignored him. He didn't even break stride or pause his recitation. Maybe I'm not close enough, or maybe I didn't speak loud enough," wondered R. Mordechai.

He stepped closer and raised his voice considerably. No response. "Could he be deaf," he wondered even more, "or is he simply rude?" He decided to try one more time, more loudly and a bit sharper.

"What is the explanation of such behavior? Is it really impossible or so difficult to tell a guest in which hours the Rebbe receives people?"

The man stopped in mid-step and ceased his Psalm-saying. He turned to look directly in the eyes of R. Mordechai and said, "And what is the explanation of the ineptness of a younger man that he does not know how to properly secure the money another person entrusted to him for safekeeping?"

R. Mordechai instantly realized that this Jew must be R. Pinchas himself. He apologized for his brusque speech and reported to him all the details of the unfortunate mishap with the deposit.

"Listen to me," R. Pinchas said in a tone of assurance.

"Tomorrow morning, make sure to go up to lead the prayers. When you reach 'The Song of [the Egyptians drowning in] the Sea,' enunciate extra loudly and clearly the verse, 'Amar oyeiv: erdof; aseeg; achaleik shalal' - 'Said the [Egyptian] enemy: I will pursue [the Jews]; I will overtake, I will divide the plunder...'

"At the moment you are saying these six words, count the men that are praying alongside the north wall of the shul, one person per word. The person who corresponds to the word 'shalal/plunder,' you can be certain this is the thief!"

R. Mordechai did exactly as R. Pinchas instructed. When he said "shalal" he stared intently at the sixth man from the right along the north wall of the shul. Instantly the man's face turned as white as his shirt and he fainted. The shul was in an uproar until finally the man opened his eyes and stood up, and then returned to his prayerbook.

After the prayers, the man hurried to see the Rebbe privately, and in a broken voice confessed that he was indeed the thief. He told that he was one of those who had gone into the Rebbe's house on Shavuot morning to taste something, and had noticed the wallet in the cabinet. A strong desire for the money overcame him, so he snuck it all into one of his pockets.

"Rebbe! Please!" he exclaimed and burst into tears. "Instruct me how to do teshuvah ('repentance')."

Only after the man returned the sum in its entirety did the Rebbe prescribe for him a path to rectification. The man fulfilled meticulously every detail in the rebbe's directive. With the passage of time, he became a well respected chasid of Rabbi Mordechai of Neshkiz.

Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.



### YF GRAPHICS

Shabbat Times - Parshat Bamidbar

Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	6:53	8:10
Tel Aviv	7:08	8:12
Haifa	7:01	8:13
Be'er Sheva	7:09	8:11

### A Son For A Son

By Rabbi Dovid Silber

In the early 2000's, Gadi Rimon, an Israeli Defense Force soldier stationed outside of Ramallah, was shot by an Arab terrorist. It happened very early in the morning, and no one else was awake to hear it. Gadi passed out and was bleeding steadily, his life heading toward a silent end.

However, another soldier, Shlomo Bergman, who was stationed nearby, heard the shot and went to investigate. He found a fellow Israeli soldier bleeding to death. He tried the best he could to stop the bleeding and called for help. While waiting, he kept applying pressure to the wound - literally holding Gadi's life in his hands.

Gadi was taken to the nearest Israeli hospital where he underwent emergency surgery. Gadi's parents were notified and they rushed to the hospital. Imagine the fear of the parents who were only told, "Your son has been injured and is in the hospital undergoing surgery."

When they arrived the doctor, Rafi Beket, told them that Gadi was shot and had needed many units of blood, but will recover and be alright. However, had it not been for the immediate actions of the other soldier, their son would have bled to death.

It was a miracle that the other soldier heard what no one else heard, and managed to locate Gadi as quickly as he did. The parents wanted to thank that soldier, but he had just left the hospital after hearing that the soldier he helped would survive.

While recuperating at home, Gadi and his parents called the army to find out the name of the other soldier so they could thank him personally. Unfortunately, that soldier's name was not recorded and although they tried other paths of enquiry, they were unable to track down who that other soldier was.

Gadi's mother, Tamar Rimon, knew that the important thing of course is that Gadi is well, yet she could not help feeling that as long as she couldn't meet and thank the soldier who bravely saved her son's life - the entire frightening episode would not be fully over. Not being able to express gratitude to the soldier continued to give her an empty feeling.

But then she had an idea.

The couple owned a grocery store in Ashdod, so they decided to put up a sign in the store, describing what happened, figuring that Israel is a small country and eventually they might find out who the mystery soldier was.

Nearly a year passed with no response. Finally, one morning about a year later, a woman customer from out of town noticed, upon exiting, the sign hanging by the door of the store. Anat Bergman recalled how happy her son Shlomo was when he came home one Friday night and told them how he heard a shot and was able to save another soldier's life. She went back and told her son's story to Tamar Rimon, who was behind the

counter that morning. The two stories matched and the two women fell into each other's arms.

After a few emotional minutes, they decided to try to reach their sons on cell phones and see if they could meet at the store. Fortunately it turned out that both the young men and even the fathers were able to all meet there that afternoon.

The families gathered for an emotional 'rendezvous'. The soldiers recounted army experiences and finally after all this time Tamar Rimon could stand up and thank Shlomo Bergman for saving her son Gadi's life. Or, as she put it, "You saved my world". She looked forward to feeling "completion" after all this time by thanking the soldier. Little did she know that the story was hardly complete.

After the tearful thank you, Anat privately asked Tamar to speak with her outside. The two women went out alone, whereupon Shlomo's mother startled Gadi's mother by asking her, "Look at me - don't you remember me?"

"No, I'm sorry. Did we meet before? When? Where?"

"Yes, we did," Anat replied. "You see there is a particular reason I came into your store today. I used to live here, and this time although I was just passing by, I wanted to give you my business, even though I was only buying a few things. I just can't believe you are the mother of the boy whose life my son saved."

"What are you talking about?" Gadi's mother exclaimed.

The other woman answered, "Twenty-two years ago I used to live around here and came all the time to buy milk and bread. One day you noticed that I looked really down and you were very nice and asked me why I seemed so down and I confided in you. I said that I was going through a very difficult time, and on top of that I was pregnant and planning on having an abortion.

"As soon as I said 'abortion' you called your husband over and the two of you seemed to forget about your own store and business. You just sat down and patiently listened to me. I still remember clearly what you said.

"You told me that it is true that I was going through a hard time but sometimes the good things in life come through difficulty, and the best things come through the biggest difficulties. You spoke of the joy of being a mother and that the most beautiful word to hear in the Hebrew language is 'Ima' (Mommy) when spoken by one's child. You both spoke and spoke until I was convinced that I really should have this baby. So you see, G-d paid you back!"

Tamar's eyes opened wide. Anat continued.

"I had a boy twenty-one years ago that you saved by telling me to think twice before doing the abortion." With happy tears she declared, "My beloved Shlomo wouldn't have been alive if not for you. And lo, he was the one who grew up to save your precious Gadi's life!"

Reprinted from [friendsofsefrat.org](http://friendsofsefrat.org).



The ultimate royal wedding. That's how our prophets describe the revelation of Hashem to His people at Mount Sinai. The anniversary of which we celebrate on Shavuot. The King of kings entered into a lasting, covenantal bond with His people. We recall this every Friday night in the Lecha Dodi when we sing, "יש עליך אלוהים כמשוש חתן על" – May Hashem continue to rejoice with our people in the same way as a bride and groom rejoice together."

This was also recorded by the prophet Hoshea, who in the concluding verse of the Haftara of Bamidbar, cites the words of Hashem, "וארשתך לי לעולם" – That I will betroth you unto Me forever, ובמשפט – I will betroth you unto Me with righteousness and justice, ובחסד – and with lovingkindness and with mercy, וברחמים – and with lovingkindness and with mercy, וארשתך לי באמונה – I will betroth you unto Me with faithfulness, וידעת את ה' – and you will know the Lord."

We have here, not only the ingredients of that remarkable relationship between the Almighty and His people, but also the ingredients for any successful marriage.

First of all, "וארשתך לי לעולם," one needs to be in this for the long term. Doing whatever possible to guarantee that this will be a lifelong, wonderful relationship.

"וארשתך לי בצדק ובמשפט." In one's home there needs to be righteousness and piety, justice and fairness in every action that one carries out.

And also, "ובחסד וברחמים," of course, there must be lovingkindness, selflessness, mercy and acts of empathy in which people readily and naturally give up themselves for others.

"וארשתך לי באמונה." It goes without saying that there must be faithfulness, fidelity and loyalty.

The last ingredient is so crucially important, "וידעת את ה'." A great relationship is one in which there is an awareness of the presence of Hashem, where there is an abundance of spirituality to guide and to inspire us.

At Shavuot time, we are mindful of how the relationship forged between the Almighty and our people at Sinai, continues to exist and thrive to this very day. So too, our blessing for every husband and wife is that they should apply those very same ingredients that exist between Hashem and ourselves into their marriages in order to guarantee, please G-d, that they will have lifelong meaning, fulfillment, happiness, joy and success.

So let's all apply the ingredients and let's pray for our soldiers who go out to protect us and those who need healing, shidduchim, children and parnassah and may we be blessed to have the most awesome, gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful, healthy, amazing, relaxed, spiritual, sweet, happy Shabbat and Chag Shavuot Sameach.

### The Jewish Weekly's PARSHA FACTS

Yossi

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: NONE

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 159  
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1823  
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 7393

HAFTORA: Hoshea 2:1 - 22

This week we study Chapter 6 of Pirkei Avot

Friday, May 14, 3 Sivan, marked the beginning of the שלשת ימי הגבלה – the three days before Shavuot, on which the Bnei Yisrael purified themselves before receiving the Torah.

Shavuot is Monday, May 17, 2021.

# במדבר

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