

# The Jewish Weekly



In Loving memory of

**Mendy Klein**

ר' מנחם משה ז"ל

בן ר' נפתלי הירצקא

נפטר ל"ג בעומר

י"ח אייר תשע"ח

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

## The Miraculous Mugging!

By Rabbi Tuvia Bolton

In the second quarter of the 20th century, there lived in New York City a poor Jewish widow. Her husband, who had been a Rabbi, suddenly passed away just a year or so after the birth of their first son, Moshe, in 1921, leaving her alone to provide.

She managed to make ends meet by cleaning houses and somehow scraped together enough each week to get along and even to put a bit of money aside. But then tragedy struck.

Moshe became ill and the standard treatments that their family doctor prescribed didn't help. He referred them to the hospital where, after extensive testing, they also admitted that they couldn't diagnose the disease but it looked bad.

She had spent her meager savings but she certainly did not give up. After frantic searching and inquiring, someone mentioned the name of a great specialist. Sparing no time, she got his phone number, called his office, requested that he make a house call and assured him that money was not an obstacle.

When the professor arrived at her run-down apartment building he began having serious doubts, and when he knocked on her door, entered and saw that poverty was screaming from every corner he had an urge to just turn around and go home. But something told him to accept it with equanimity.

He examined the boy, went to the sink to wash his hands, turned to her and said. "Your son has a rare disease. I know what it is, I know what the cure is and I know where you can get the medicine. It's in a large drug store about three miles from here. They are the only ones that can make it. But there's a problem. It will be very expensive; a few thousand dollars. I'm willing to forget about my payment, but do you have money to pay for the medicine? They won't give it to you for free, that's for sure. What are you going to do?"

The woman, tears of gratitude filling her eyes, thanked the doctor profusely and firmly stated that as far as the money goes she was sure that G-d would help.

He packed up his instruments, wrote out the prescription, she thanked him again and again and as soon as he left she ran outside, caught a taxi to the pharmacy, approached the counter and handed the prescription to the pharmacist.

The pharmacist took the prescription and as he examined it his brow raised in wonder and he glanced at her several times. Then he leaned forward, narrowed his eyes and said to her skeptically, "This will take a while and will cost a few thousand dollars. Have you got the money?"

She stood straight, stared him back in the eyes and replied that she was prepared to promise that she would come in and clean the drugstore every evening after she finished work, until she covered the bill. She was willing to even put the agreement in writing and sign it, but she needed the medicine to save her son's life.

The pharmacist relaxed a bit. He smiled and replied that, in fact, she was in good luck because their

cleaning woman just quit and they needed a replacement. But it would only be for two hours a day and at that rate it would take...he took out a pencil and paper, began calculating, and when he finished he looked up and announced: one year and eight months to pay off the debt!

She immediately agreed, signed a paper obligating herself to work until she had paid for the cure, and in one hour was on her way out the door with several bottles of medicine and instructions how to use them, in her purse.

However, when she looked in her pocket book she realized that she had spent the last of her money on the taxi and now didn't even have a coin for bus fare. So she began walking home, striding along as quickly as possible.

It was cold outside but she was sweating. It was over an hour's walk to her house and by the time she had walked one hour it was already dark. There was no one around, she was alone, it was getting really cold and she was passing through a bad neighborhood. She put her purse under her coat so as not to draw unwanted attention, quickened her gait, said a few prayers, looked down at the pavement in front of her and walked as fast as possible, careful not to look up.

But it didn't help.

Suddenly she felt someone grab her by the shoulders from the front, push her against a wall and say almost sarcastically, "Whatchu got there under that coat?"

She looked up to see a massive man who had wrested her purse from her and was opening it. A freezing wind was blowing. No one was around.

"Please" she pleaded. "I have no money. All I have is medicine for my sick son, he's dying. Please...please let me go!" But that didn't work either.

"Medicine!?" he smiled! "Let's see. Medicine huh? Maybe it's something good!" He opened one of the bottles, took a big smell and waited for something to happen.

"Ich! Ugh! It's terrible! It smells like puke!" he yelled as he opened the rest and poured their contents all over her head and coat. Then he pushed her again against the wall and slapped her face hard, knocking her down to the pavement. Spitting and cursing, he threw the empty bottles and her empty purse at her and ran off.

Whimpering silently from the trauma, she determinedly managed to stand up without hesitating. After brushing herself off, she picked up the bottles and returned them to her purse, buttoned up her coat and began walking to the drug store as fast as possible, even though she was limping a bit, while praying it was still open.

An hour later she arrived and with tears thanked G-d that it indeed was still open. She again entered and approached the counter. When the pharmacist appeared from the back room and saw her he gasped, "My G-d, what happened to you!? And what is that unpleasant smell? Your face is all swollen? Please, sit down. I'll get you some water. What exactly is that smell?!"

She refused the water, said she was all right and explained quickly. "I got beaten and robbed. Thank G-d I'm alive. But it's not really important. The main thing is that right now I no longer have the medicine and of course I still need the medicine. Please, give me the paper I signed and I'll sign for another year and eight months. Please, I must have that medicine for my son."

## It Once Happened...

The pharmacist stared at her and began to tremble. "Tell me," he asked plaintively, in a voice emanating fear, "that smell and that stain on your coat...that's the medicine?"

"Yes." She answered as she took the empty bottle from her purse and handed it to him. "But it's not important what happened to me. I need...."

The pharmacist cut her short, took the bottle, read the label, put his hand over his face and almost fell over backwards as he repeated to himself "No! Oh no! I don't believe it! It can't be! No!"

As he removed his hand and looked again at the bottle, his eyes filled with tears. He gazed at her as though she was a ghost and kept repeating "I don't believe it. I just can't believe it!"

After a few minutes he came to himself and said almost in a whisper, "Listen! I made a mistake. A terrible mistake! I gave you the wrong medicine! If your son would have taken what I gave you it would have killed him. Do you understand? I would have killed him! He'd be dead.

"It's crazy," he added, after a few moments of intense thought, "but do you realize what a miracle it was, that you got robbed!"

He wiped his brow, leaned forward, lowered his voice and said, "Listen, lady, please don't tell anyone about this. No one! If this became known I could lose my license. Look, I'll give you the right medicine, and for free. Just wait here." He disappeared into the back room and in a minute returned with several bottles identical to the first.


"Here. No charge. And here, watch this!" He took the contract she signed and ripped it up. Then he took out his wallet and gave her a bill, "Here is a hundred dollars. This time, take a cab home; don't walk! And the rest, spend it on your son."

He also provided her some gauze pads and ointments and put them in a bag. "Here is something for that swelling on your face. But please, you must not tell anyone. Not until I retire, which will be in ten years or so. Okay? If you feel that you deserve more money, just tell me. I'll be delighted to give you."

She shook her head no and even tried to give the hundred dollars back, but he insisted she take it for her son. Next, he escorted her outside and hailed a cab for her, which he promptly paid for in advance.

The medicine worked. Her son not only lived, he grew to be a rabbi of great stature; Rabbi Moshe Sherer, who became the chairman of Agudat Yisroel branch in the U.S.A, and eventually of the entire international organization, until his death in 1998. He used to tell this story every year on the anniversary of his mother's passing.

Reprinted from an email of Yeshiva Ohr Tmimim, [www.ohrtmimim.org](http://www.ohrtmimim.org).



### Y-GRAPHICS

Shabbat Times - Parshat Emor

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	6:46	8:02	8:40
Tel Aviv	7:02	8:05	8:37
Haifa	6:54	8:05	8:40
Be'er Sheva	7:03	8:03	8:39



## From Hebron to Meron By Rabbi Shmuel Butman

It was a typical autumn day in 1906 when Rabbi Yedidya Horodner walked into the "Tiferet Yisrael" synagogue in the Old City of Jerusalem with a big smile on his face. With a grand flourish he placed a bottle of whiskey and some cake on the table, and invited everyone to make a "l'chayim."

The congregants wondered what the cause for celebration might be. A rumor had been circulating that the day before, Rabbi Horodner had gone to all the local yeshivas and distributed candy to the children. Something good had obviously occurred, and they waited expectantly to hear what it was.

Indeed, after everyone had made a blessing on the cake and lifted a few glasses, the Rabbi filled them in:

The whole story revolved around the Rabbi's nephew, a 15-year-old boy named Shmuel Rosen who was originally from Riga. His father, Rabbi Ozer Rosen, had sent the lad to his uncle when he was only eight years old, in the belief that there was no better place in the world to develop the boy's intellectual talents than the Holy City.

Rabbi Horodner raised little Shmuel as if he was his own son, and the boy flourished. He was a delightful child, and exceptionally devoted to his studies.

A few weeks ago, however, disaster had struck. After experiencing deteriorating vision for several months, Shmuel was now completely blind. The total darkness had set in as he was sitting and poring over a volume of the Talmud.

The boy's spirit was completely broken. For days and nights he wept over his fate, most bitterly over his inability to study Torah by himself. Suffering from a profound sadness, he withdrew and rarely ventured from his room.

His uncle felt helpless, until it occurred to him that a change of place might do the boy good. He contacted his friend, Reb Shimon Hoizman of Hebron, who agreed to let the boy stay in his house. Shmuel felt a little better in Hebron, but remained very depressed.

At that time the Jewish community of Hebron was headed by two Torah giants: the Sefardic Rabbi Chizkiyahu Medini (author of Sdei Chemed), and the Chasidic Rabbi Shimon Menashe Chaikin, the chief Ashkenazic authority in the city. Every evening at midnight, the two Rabbis would go to the Cave of Machpeila, the resting place of the Jewish Patriarchs and Matriarchs, to recite Tikun Chatzot (a special prayer lamenting the destruction of the Holy Temple).

R. Shimon Hoizman was very affected by the boy's suffering. But what could he do to help? Then one evening, he came up with a plan....

About a half hour before midnight R. Shimon went into Shmuel's room. "Wake up, son," he whispered to him softly. "Get dressed and follow me." The two went off into the night, in the direction of Rabbi Chaikin's courtyard.

A few minutes later the two chief Rabbis could be seen approaching, on their way to the Cave of Machpeila. As soon as they reached the spot where R. Shimon and Shmuel were standing, R. Shimon disappeared, leaving Shmuel by himself. The two Rabbis quickly realized that Shmuel was blind. They gently asked him how he had become sightless.

When the young man got up to the part about how he had become totally blind while studying, Rabbi Medini asked if he remembered the last words he had been able to see. "Of course I remember!" Shmuel responded. "They were in Tractate Chulin, page 36A: 'On whom can we depend? Come, let us rely on the words of Rabbi Shimon [Bar Yochai]'"

The two Rabbis became very excited. "If that is the case," they said almost simultaneously, "then you can certainly rely on the holy Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai to help you. Go to his grave in Meron, ask for his blessing, and G-d will surely heal you."

The next morning Shmuel returned to Jerusalem, and the very same day he and his uncle set off for Meron. It was a difficult journey, but after several days they arrived safely. Even before they approached the holy gravesite they were filled with a feeling of confidence. For days they remained at the grave of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, praying steadily to G-d for a miraculous recovery.

The miracle occurred exactly one week later. Rabbi Horodner was reading aloud from the Gemara when all of sudden Shmuel let out a yelp. "Uncle! I can see your shadow!"

Over the course of the next few days Shmuel's vision improved steadily, until 13 days later it was restored completely. Still camped out at the holy gravesite, uncle and nephew broke out into a spontaneous dance, as they sang the verses that are traditionally sung on Lag b'Omer, the anniversary of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai's passing:

"His teachings are our protection;  
they are the light of our eyes.  
He is our advocate for good,  
Rabban Shimon Bar Yochai..."

*Reprinted from an email of lchaimweekly.org*



# ל"ג בעומר שמח!



Where do we have a mitzvah to count?

In Parshat Emor the Torah tells us, "וספרתם לכם - Count for yourselves," meaning that from the second day of Pesach until the festival of Shavuot we must count forty-nine days. Why do we have such an imperative within the 613 mitzvot of the Torah?

"Number our days"

We can provide an answer from Tehillim which states, "למנות ימינו כן הודיע - Teach us, Hashem, to number our days," indicating that when we look at our lives we shouldn't consider ourselves to be a certain number of years old but rather, a certain number of days old.

This was certainly the outlook of the founder of our faith, Avraham Avinu. In Parshat Chayei Sara, the Torah tells us, "ואברהם זקן בא בימים - Avraham was old, having lived for many days."

It was in a similar fashion that Pharaoh noticed that this was the key characteristic of Yaakov Avinu, and so Pharaoh said to him, "כמה ימי שני הייך? - How many are the days of the years of your life?"

Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov utilized every single day advantageously. How can we make the most of every single moment? The answer comes in the continuation of the verse of Tehillim, "למנות ימינו כן הודיע - Teach us to number our days," "ונביא לבב חכמה" - in order that we should become wise-hearted."

In all other languages either you are wise with your mind or compassionate with your heart, but in our tradition we strive to become wise hearted, fusing together the finest capacities of thought and compassion so that we can believe with feeling, and become a blessing to the world.

That is what the tefillin represent. We have a 'tefillin shel rosh' on top of our heads and a 'tefillin shel yad' on our arm, which faces the heart.

During this period of the Omer we recall what the Talmud tells us about the students of Rabbi Akiva who were brilliant in their minds and yet not sufficiently compassionate in their hearts. That is why we mourn throughout this period. Therefore Hashem gives us a mitzvah to count days in order to make the most of every single one, so that we should become wise-hearted and a blessing to our environment, teaching us that if we count our days, we can make our days count.

So let us make our days count by joining in prayer 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 and happy Shabbat.

## The Jewish Weekly's PARSHA FACTS

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 63  
MITZVOT ASEH: 24  
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 39

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 124  
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1614  
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 6106

HAFTORA:  
Yechezkel 44:15 - 31

שני - Pesach Sheni is this Friday, 14 Iyar - May 5, 2023.

לג בעומר Lag B'Omer is Tuesday, May 9, 2023.

This week we study Chapter 4 of Pirkei Avot

# תורת אמור

This week is sponsored in honor  
of the fifth Yahrzeit of  
my close friend and mentor,

## Mendy Klein

ר' מנחם משה ז"ל בן ר' נפתלי הירצקא ז"ל  
לג בעומר - י"ח אייר

