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A Walking Miracle

Arele Karnevsky

When I was a baby, my family discovered that my legs were bow-legged (curved). My mother took me to a specialist. He said not to worry, for I would eventually grow out of it.

I didn't.

My mother was very concerned about my medical situation. She brought me to the Hospital for Joint Diseases to see what they could do for me. They told my mother that I would have to wear braces on my legs to straighten them. We kept visiting the hospital for regular check-ups.

Once, my mother asked the specialist how long he thought I would need to wear braces. The doctor estimated that I would need them for at least a year. He suggested that I come back in three weeks, when X-rays would be taken of the leg to determine how much longer I would need the braces.

As it turned out, the day of my scheduled X-ray appointment was the day of my brother's birthday. It was customary that the Sunday before one's birthday, one would pass before **the Lubavitcher Rebbe** to receive a blessing and dollar from him. My mother, my older brother and I all went before the Rebbe for dollars the Sunday before my brother's birthday and my appointment.

My mother introduced the two of us to the Rebbe and told him in Yiddish that my brother's birthday was that Thursday. The Rebbe handed my older brother two dollars, instructing him to give it to charity on the day of his birthday.

Then it was my turn to pass before the Rebbe. After that it was my mother's turn. She thought about saying something to the Rebbe about the X-rays that were to be taken on Thursday, but was too overwhelmed in the presence of the Rebbe to say anything. She decided to say nothing, instead asking my father to write a letter to the Rebbe. When her turn came the Rebbe handed her a dollar and she started to leave. But then the Rebbe handed her another dollar saying, "This is for Thursday!"

My father gave in a letter with a request for the Rebbe's blessing before the Thursday's appointment.

Later, my parents received a phone call from the Rebbe's secretary. He told them that the Rebbe instructed them to check their *tefilin* and *mezuzot* and to report back to the Rebbe what the *sofer* (scribe) had found.

My father immediately removed all the *mezuzot* from the doorposts and took them and his *tefilin* to the *sofer*, this time a different *sofer* than the one he usually used.

The *sofer* checked both the *tefilin* and the *mezuzot* and found three mistakes: two mistakes in the *mezuzot* and one in the *tefilin*. All the mistakes were found in the legs of each of the problematic letters.

One had a hole in the foot of the letter and the ink was coming through the other side of the parchment. This indicated that the *mezuzah* was invalid from the moment it was originally written. It was now as obvious to us as a ringing bell that the Rebbe's advice to check *tefilin* and *mezuzot* was divinely inspired.

The other two letters were found to have cracks in them.

The invalid *mezuzot* were replaced, in fact, my grandmother went out and bought ten of the best-quality *mezuzot* from Israel as a gift for the family.

That Thursday I went to the hospital. My entire family was very excited about what might happen. Even my father, who was not always able to accompany me to my regular hospital check-ups, came along to see what miracles lay in store.

The doctors took me into the X-ray room and took the required X-rays of my legs. The doctor soon came out of the room completely shocked, his eyes wide in disbelief.

"How long has your son been wearing these leg-braces?" he asked.

"Oh, about a few months," my parents answered.

"I looked at your son's previous X-rays," the doctor continued. "They show your son's legs to be curved. For some inexplicable reason, the new X-rays show his legs to be totally straight, just perfect! Usually a case such as your son's would need surgery or possible years of wearing these leg-braces. Your son is completely healed."

The leg-braces are still in my house. They are there to remind my family and me of the great miracle. I am forever grateful to the Rebbe for his blessing.

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*Source:* Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from *Geulah* (#67)

*Connection:* The mitzvahs of *tefilin* and *mezuzah* are mentioned both in last week's and this week's Torah reading. These four verses are incorporated into the Shma Yisrael prayer.

*Biographical note:* **Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe** מ"נ: [11 Nissan 5662 - 3 Tammuz 5754 (April 1902 – June 1994 C.E.)], became the seventh Rebbe of the Chabad dynasty after his father-in-law's passing on 10 Shvat 5710 (1950 C.E.). He is widely acknowledged as the greatest Jewish leader of the second half of the 20th century. Although a dominant scholar in both the revealed and hidden aspects of Torah and fluent in many languages and scientific subjects, the Rebbe is best known for his extraordinary love and concern for every Jew on the planet. His emissaries around the globe dedicated to strengthening Judaism number in the thousands. Hundreds of volumes of his teachings have been printed, as well as dozens of English renditions.

