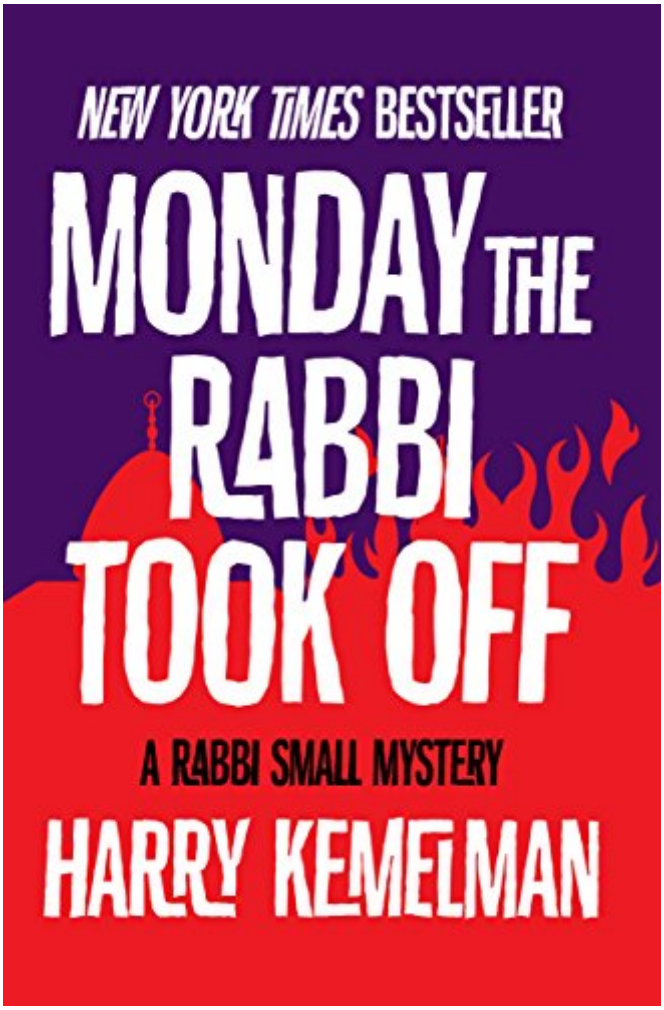
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# Monday The Rabbi Took Off (The Rabbi Small Mysteries)




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## Synopsis

A bomb plot draws Rabbi Small into international intrigue while heÃ¢â ¬â„¢s vacationing in the Holy Land in thisÃ Â New York TimesÃ¢â ¬â œbestselling novel David Small has spent 6 years as the rabbi of BarnardÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Crossing, Massachusetts, and every year his job has been in crisis. In desperate need of time away, he embarks on a 3-month trip to Israel. He expects a relaxing, soul-nourishing stay, but wherever Rabbi Small goes, murder follows. Ã Â A bombing disrupts his vacation and the rabbi finds himself thrust into a world of terrorism and political discord in the divided city of Jerusalem. He teams up with an Orthodox Israeli cop to hunt down the terrorists before they can attack again. Dispensing Jewish wisdom as he employs his astute detective skills, Rabbi Small might be the only one who can crack this explosive case. Ã Â

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Even in Israel the rabbi can get in trouble. Of course his board of directors back home is plotting his termination, that’s a given. While the rabbi is in Israel, they take advantage of his absence to work

on his dismissal.Miriam and David are staying at an apartment arranged for by Miriam's aunt who knows somebody with an empty apartment available. Miriam's aunt knows everybody in Israel, which comes in handy. When a boy a member of his congregation has asked him to look up is charged by the police with a serious crime, David springs into action.There is a formula to the novels: the rabbi's board of directors is trying to fire him, there's a murder to solve, the rabbi solves the murder, the board of directors drops the effort to fire him. Well, there's a certain comfort to a formula. One doesn't have to worry about novelty. It became a pleasure to see how Kemelman would find a way to work within it this time.

I find the Rabbi Small series difficult to review for others. When these first came out they were considered a novel, not a mystery and there is the problem. They really don't rate high as a mystery, that is second to the story. Also, they were written almost half a century ago, a time when people relaxed, didn't feel the need for constant stimulation. I very much enjoyed the book with it's insights into Judaism and the Holy City. But, will you enjoy the book? I don't know. If you are looking for constant action, blood & guts, a hard core murder mystery - no, you'll be disappointed. If you think classic (black & white) movies are mostly boring, then pass this by. However, if you want a bit of humor, a light mystery and want a view on the Jewish way of life - this is for you. It's light enjoyable reading that still teaches you something.

This book was interesting from several standpoint. The mystery did not begin until more than halfway through and was not particularly mysterious. The book primarily introduced the main character and his early midlife crisis. I enjoyed though do not completely understand the discussions on the role of the rabbi.

We have become accustomed to the two most prevalent Mystery forms: open and closed. From amateur detective to tight and grim police procedural, we always expect the novel to start with the murder.The Rabbi Small series introduces all the intricately related characters and leaves you guessing who will be murdered until the middle or even 3/4 point. Then you can't put it down until you figure out who did it, why they did it, and how Rabbi Small will figure it out before the police do. Or will he fail this time?This novel brings you to Israel in the 1960's. It is apparently crafted from personal experience as it nails dozens of tiny details a visitor today would never know of. The most haunting aspect, though, is how the situation with the Palestinians and local politics is today still locked into that of the 1960's and 1970's as accurately portrayed here.For contrast try watching the

imported Israeli TV Series Srugim, which is on  Prime Video. It is set in modern Jerusalem.

The book was very insightful. It was not the usual "must stay to find out who gets killed next" type of tale. A murder was committed, and you just wanted to continue reading to find the clues. The author took the time to explain the thoughts and feelings of the major characters as well as telling how the characters thought and felt about each other. Very enjoyable.

We open these pages to find all the usual temple politics brewing. Rabbi Small’s contract is up for renewal. The old guard love him, but the new board members hanker for a more rabbinical rabbi, someone impressive and forward-thinking. Where does Rabbi Small stand? He ignores the politics and announces he’s taking a three to four month leave of absence to go to Israel, a lifelong dream.This book is great fun. On the one hand we watch the growing popularity of the substitute rabbi, who gives short snappy sermons and curtails the prayers. Will the temporary rabbi succeed in usurping Rabbi Small?And then there are the fascinating scenes of the Smalls’ day-to-day life in Jerusalem, complete with a very managing aunt who looks after them. We visit the Wall with the rabbi, and are privy to his somewhat quixotic opinions. And we get involved with the rabbi in a mystery surrounding a terrorist bombing.The rabbi’s discussion with a police inspector who doubts his orthodoxy is quite amusing. Can the rabbi solve a case in unfamiliar territory by sheer rabbinical logic?The Rabbi Small mysteries are very low-key, like the rabbi himself. This is their charm. And they also give an engaging picture of Judaism and Jewish communities.The rabbi’s methods of solving puzzles are purely cerebral, rather like Sherlock Holmes. Much as I enjoy modern thrillers and police procedurals, the Rabbi Small books are a refreshing change. I’m wending my way through the whole series with great pleasure.

Usually I can count on books from this series to provide a good, satisfactory read. This was not one of them. The first part consisted of discussions among the members of the congregation about the implications of the rabbi’ s plan to take a leave of absence. Most of the rest of it consisted of the rabbi wandering aimlessly around Jerusalem while his wife worked at a volunteer job and the people back home became satisfied with the rabbi’ s replacement. Then he returned right on time and we were back to where we started. The book read like a school exercise in "bringing out possible aspects of a situation." I, for one, really prefer a book where at least something happens.

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