



A Story for the Shabbos Table

סיפורי הבעל שם טוב

THE REWARD OF GIVING TZEDAKA WITH A FULL HEART

Once upon a time, a Yid with a lot of *Tzoros* came to the Baal Shem Tov. This man needed a big Bracha from Hashem, so he came and asked the Baal Shem Tov to daven for him.

The Baal Shem Tov, who had a deep love and concern for every Yid, felt deeply pained about this Yid's *Tzoros*, but he saw in Shomayim that he would not be able to help him.

The Baal Shem Tov then got up from his seat, and went to the bookcase. He took out the first Gemara that he came to, which was a Gemara Bava Basra. He then opened the Gemara, and looked at the page that he had opened to. It was דף טו עמוד ב', where the Gemara says מאי מעשה ידיו ברכת א"ר שמואל בר רב יצחק כל הנוטל פרוטה מאיוב מתברך. "You have blessed the work of his [Iyov's] hand. Said R. Shmuel the son of R. Yitzchak: Whoever merely took a coin from Iyov was blessed with success", because Iyov's *Tzedakah* was blessed with *Hatzlacha*.

The Baal Shem Tov realized that the fact that he opened up to this Gemara, is Hashgocho Pratis, that through this teaching in the Gemara, this person will be able to be helped.

The Baal Shem Tov started thinking about what the meaning could be, until he realized.

There was a Yid who lived in Brod, whose name was Reb Shabsai Meir. Reb Shabsai Meir was a Yid who could learn, and he also was a wealthy businessman who gave a lot of *Tzedakah*. Though he was very successful, and kept getting richer, he did not buy a new house, and he continued to live simply, with regular furniture in his house.

Only one thing had changed. Reb Shabsai Meir began giving larger amounts of money to *Tzedakah*. He used to daven that the *Tzedakah* that he gives be blessed with success. "Hashem, please give me the ability to give *Tzedaka* with a full heart," he would daven. "May those who receive *Tzedaka* from me be blessed with wealth."

His sincere acts of *Tzedakah* – many of which were done secretly – made such an impression in Shomayim, that his *Tefilos* were answered. The Bais Din in Shomayim ruled that Reb Shabsai Meir deserved to be blessed with success in his *Tzedakah*. So anyone who received *Tzedakah* from him would suddenly experience good fortune and success.

Remembering this, the Baal Shem Tov understood that it was Reb Shabsai Meir who could bring the bracha for this person that had come to him.

The Baal Shem Tov told him, "Go to Brody, and when you get there, contact Reb Shabsai Meir. He has a lot of *Hachnosas Orchim*, and will surely invite you to his home for Shabbos. After Shabbos, you should thank him for his hospitality and ask him to give you a Bracha in the *zechus* of his great *Tzedakah*."

The person did as the Baal Shem Tov had told him. He was invited to Reb Shabsai Meir's home, which was filled with guests. Reb Shabsai Meir gave everyone the best and nicest portions, with a generous hand.

After spending a wonderful Shabbos in the home of Reb Shabsai Meir, he approached his host as the Baal Shem Tov had told him.

"Please give me a Bracha," he begged. "With the power of your special acts of *Tzedakah*, ask Hashem to show me *Rachamim* and help me.

Reb Shabsai Meir blessed the man with deep feeling. And true to the Baal Shem Tov's word, Hashem accepted the Bracha and the person was helped.

[Source: Sefer HaSichos 5701 p 39-40. The Friediker Rebbe said this story to a wealthy man, who gave a lot of *Tzedakah*, and had been chosen to be the chairman of the gathering for the Friediker Rebbe's *Pidyon Shvuyim* fund]