



A Story for the Shabbos Table

סיפורי הבעל שם טוב

HE WOULD NOT REVEAL HIS SECRET... EVEN TO ELIJAHU HANAVI!

In the holy city of Tzefas, there lived a simple Yid, who knew how to Daven, but no more than that. He was very sincere, and did a lot of good deeds secretly.

One night in the year 5333 (1573), as he sat on the floor of his home, at midnight, saying Tikkun Chatzos, this Yid heard a knock at the door. "Who's there?" he called out. "Eliyahu Hanavi!" came the response.

The Yid went and opened the door to his humble home. As soon as Eliyahu Hanavi entered the doorway, the house was filled with light, and a shimmering joy that transformed every room. The babies awoke instantly, and began dancing in their cribs. "Sit, sit," proposed the simple Yid. "My master and teacher, please sit."

Eliyahu sat down on a rickety chair and turned to the simple Yid. "I have come to reveal a deep secret: the year of Moshiach's arrival. However, I am curious to know the reason why Hashem has singled you out for this unique privilege. Please tell, what extraordinary deed did you perform on the day of your Bar Mitzvah? In merit of this deed, the Bais din Shelmaloh (the Heavenly Court) ruled that you are deserving to hear this and many other awesome secrets."

"What I did, I did for Hashem's honor," replied the simple Yid. "Why should I reveal my deed to others? If, my Master and Teacher does not want to reveal the secrets because of this, - then I wholeheartedly forgo the honor. I was taught to do things for Hashem's sake, and that they should be hidden from publicity."

As soon as the Yid finished speaking, Eliyahu Hanavi suddenly disappeared. The Heavenly Court was in an uproar. Such

sincerity and devotion were completely unprecedented: never had anyone turned down the chance to study under the tutelage of Eliyahu Hanavi merely for the sake of concealing their good deeds. After extended discussion, the Court decided to reward the Yid nonetheless. Eliyahu Hanavi returned and taught the simple Yid Torah, revealing the secrets hidden from all but the greatest Tzadikim.

With time, the Jew became a truly righteous individual. He became such a great That no one in his generation was like him. But he still kept quiet about it, and no one knew about his greatness and holiness.

At the end of his life, the Yid from Tzefas passed away, and his Neshama was immediately taken into Gan Eden. Malochim led the Neshama directly to the room of the heilige Avos. But the good Malochim protested saying that this is not enough of a reward for this Tzadik, who concealed his greatness for so many years. All his deeds were performed only, LeSheim Shomayim (for the sake of Heaven).

After due consideration, the Heavenly Court decided to send this special Neshama back to earth, Having spent a life hidden, and the world did not merit to benefit from his Torah, this heilige Neshama would now brighten the world with a new path in serving Hashem, so the earth will be full of the knowledge of Hashem, to hasten the coming of Moshiach.

This story was sent in a letter to the Baal Shem Tov by Reb Adam Baal Shem, the leader of the Tzadikim Nistarim. He finished the story by telling the Baal Shem Tov that this story is about his Neshama, and that from Shomayim they have decreed that he must reveal himself.

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