



## A Story for the Shabbos Table

## סיפורי הבעל שם טוב

### THE REBBE HID HIS GREATNESS

*In honor of Bais Iyar, we are printing a story about the Rebbe Maharash.*

One time, when the Chossid Reb Shmuel Ber Barisover was in Lubavitch, he heard a Maamar from the Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek. After the Maamar he had a question about something the Rebbe had said from the Sefer Eitz Chaim (a Kabbalah Sefer).

When he was reviewing the Maamar, he asked his question to several of the Chassidim, but no one had an answer. What did he do? He went to each one of the Tzemach Tzedek's sons and asked him the question. Each son answered him according to the way he thought, in his own style, but Reb Shmuel Ber was still not satisfied with their answers.

There was one son which Reb Shmuel Ber did not ask and that was the youngest son, the Rebbe Maharash. This was because the Rebbe Maharash was the youngest and was shy and kept to himself, meaning that he hid his greatness, so Reb Shmuel Ber did not even think to go to him with his questions

By this time, it was already quite late, so Reb Shmuel Ber decided to go back to the place where he was staying. On the way, he passed by the Rebbe Maharash's house, and noticed that there was light inside. When he saw the light still burning at such a late hour, he became curious. He wondered what he was doing in the middle of the night.

The Rebbe Maharash's house, in the courtyard of the Tzemach Tzedek, was built with very large windows in the style of the rich (only wealthy people had homes with large windows in those days). So Reb Shmuel Ber lifted himself up and peeked inside the window. What did he see? The Rebbe Maharash was sitting at a table with a copy of the Eitz Chaim open to the very page that his question was about!

"Well!" he thought to myself. "Now I've got to get inside to discuss this with him." He climbed down from the window and went

around the house to the front entrance. The door was locked, so he knocked several times.

"Who is it?" asked the Rebbe. "It's Shmuel Ber," he answered. "I'll be right there," the Rebbe Maharash said from behind the closed door. A few minutes later the door was opened and Reb Shmuel Ber entered the house. But what did he see? On the same table where just moments ago had lain a copy of the Eitz Chaim, was now a pile of newspapers, in both Russian and German. Not a trace of the sefer was to be found.

The Rebbe invited him in to sit down. "What can I do for you at such a late hour, Reb Shmuel Ber?" he asked. "I wondered if you could help me with a question I had about the Rebbe's Shabbos Maamar, on the Eitz Chaim," Reb Shmuel Ber said. "Ah, Reb Shmuel Ber," answered the Rebbe Maharash. "I have heard that you are a very intelligent man. Why would someone so smart come to ask me such a thing?" he asked.

"If you do not give me a serious answer to my question, I will tell everyone in Lubavitch what I saw tonight through your window," he threatened. "It will surely be the talk of the town. Five minutes ago you yourself were sitting with the Eitz Chaim, just now you've put these newspapers in their place."

The Rebbe Maharash smiled and began to discuss the question and the answer. The two men sat deep in discussion until it grew light outside, and when Reb Shmuel Ber left at dawn, he was full of awe at how much the Rebbe Maharash really knew.