



Every Jew is a Brother

**FINALLY
THE BAAL
SHEM TOV
REPROACHED
HIM, “WHERE
IS YOUR
DERECH
ERETZ? I AM
ASKING YOU
A QUESTION
AND YOU ARE
IGNORING
ME!”**

“How is my *misnaged* doing?” asked the Baal Shem Tov.

As he asked that question upon entering town one Thursday, there was no trace of mockery or scoffing. The Baal Shem Tov’s concern was absolutely genuine. His great love for every Yid expressed itself even to those who opposed him.

This message was further strengthened when his Chassidim told him, that the *misnaged* was terribly sick and couldn’t move or talk. The Baal Shem Tov immediately requested to go and see the sick man.



This town was one of the regular places the Baal Shem Tov would visit. Living there were three brothers; two of them were staunch supporters of his who would always care for his needs and lodgings when he came to town. The

third brother was a bitter opponent of the Baal Shem Tov and his way of life.

It was therefore quite a surprise when he mentioned that he would like to visit the ailing “*misnaged*.”

The next day, on Friday, he approached the other two brothers and asked them if it would be okay if he visited their sick brother.

“Had he been in a normal and healthy state,” they replied, “he would certainly refuse to see you. Now, however, he can’t move a muscle so it is certainly possible. Indeed there is a small room adjacent to where he is lying in which you can daven.”

The Baal Shem Tov then instructed them to prepare an *aron kodesh* and a *sefer Torah*.

As Shabbos neared, he davened *mincha* in that small room followed

by *kabbolas Shabbos* and *maariv*.

In the morning he again davened, with *shacharis* lasting several hours after midday.

Following the lengthy *shacharis*, the Baal Shem Tov went to the hallway to cool down, when he heard moaning and groaning coming from the ill man.

“Let’s go visit the sick,” he announced.

The small group gathered around the bed, waiting to see what would happen next.

The man’s mother was also in the room and when she saw the illustrious guest who had come to visit, she turned to her motionless son and exclaimed, “Why aren’t you greeting the *tzaddik*?” There was no reply, as the man lay still.

The mother then took his hand and placed it into the holy hands of the Baal

לזכות
 הבחור הנעלה התמים
מנחם מענדל שיחי
 לרגל יום הולדתו התשע עשרה
 ביום כ"ט סיון ה'תשע"ז
 לחיזוק ההתקשרותו לכ"ק אדמו"ר,
 ושיצליח בלימודו, לימוד הנגלה
 ולימוד החסידות
 נדפס ע"י הוריו
 הרה"ת ר' שניאור זלמן
 ומרת דבורה שיחיו
 קפלו



Shem Tov who then began to question him.

“Have you learned during your life?”

Silence.

The same thing repeated itself again and again, but to no avail.

Finally the Baal Shem Tov reproached him, “Where is your *derech erez*? I am asking you a question and you are ignoring me!”

At last the man answered, “I have learned Gemara.”

“In which *masechta* does it discuss the idea of the greatness of suffering?” asked the Baal Shem Tov.

“In Brachos.”

“And what does it say there?”

“A person shouldn’t want them or their reward.”

The Baal Shem Tov then questioned him further, “Is suffering precious to you?” He replied, “Not them or their reward!”

The Baal Shem Tov then instructed him to stretch out his hand and he did so. Next he told him to move his feet off the bed and he was able to manage this as well. Get dressed, wash your hands, on and on came the instructions and the man was miraculously able to follow all the directions he was given.

As all the Chassidim gazed on with amazement, the once sick man followed them to shul and davened *musaf* with everyone—completely healthy once again. **1**

(*Shivchei HaBaal Shem Tov*)

