

Shalosh Seudos - A short story by an FFBT

Posted by Ben Moshe - 27 Jul 2009 16:42

Shalosh Seudos

The flyer attached to the *shul* bulletin board catches your attention. A well-known Chassidishe Rebbe will be in your neighborhood this Shabbos, conducting *tish* at the local *kloiz*.

You give the flyer a cursory glance, then mutter to yourself that this is not for you. You mutter this because you are, after all, Mr Misnagid himself, fiercely proud of his Lithuanian heritage and non-Chassidishe stock. Your great-grandfather, whom you are named after, was a *bakovodiker* Brisker *balebos*, *boki* in *shas* and *poskim*. Your Tante Bluma, they say, was an intellectual, no fuzzi-ball.

Then you realize what a myopic fool you are.

You think back to those early days when you struggled to find your path back. You would listen to tapes of the gentle, brilliant and humble voice of Reb Yitzchak Kirzner *zatzal*, a giant of a genius, whose *shiurim*, based on teachings of the Chassidic masters, had turned scores of searching Jews towards lives of *kedusha*. He had helped you too discover that warm flame deep within you, a flame heavily covered but dormant, and had fanned it to life.

You think back to those powerful essays of the Nesivos Sholom. You had devoured the Slonimer Rebbe's Nesivos Sholom because, at the time, it was your life raft towards courage and sanity in a stormy sea. Those *seforim* talked about the closeness and love of Hashem during periods of desperate spiritual struggle. They spelled out ABCs you had never considered: What is Holiness? What is Shabbos? What is Love? What is Torah?

You feel like an ingrate. So, you'll go. *Shalosh Seudos*. It's a date.

It is Shabbos afternoon just before Mincha. You are in the M.... Beis Hamedrash wrapping up a marathon four-hour *seder*. Your mind is sharp. You feel lightheaded and agile. Aside from slight acid reflux resulting from a new chicken recipe that you had tried earlier in the day, everything is

perfect. The world, on a late Shabbos afternoon, is magical. You watch people stream in to *daven* and you scan their open-book faces. You spot fellows who have obviously just roused themselves from deep sleep. They are still groggy and seem uncomfortable having to present themselves in shul. You start to feel condescension towards these *leidigers*, but you immediately stop yourself. Yes. You immediately stop your-*baal gayva*-self, because there "but for the grace of G-d" go you...

Shaleshudos. Ra'avo DeRa'avin.

The dining room is full. You gaze at the Rebbe's face, and take in its beauty. You had once heard that an eye doctor had examined a *tzaddik's* eyes and had exclaimed that the *tzaddik* had the eyes of a young child. You see those eyes now. Holy eyes. Watery, milky, shiny eyes. Eyes that see everything, and see to the core of everything, but eyes that have gazed at nothing outside their own holy space. *Yedid Nephesh*. The Rebbe is crying. *Tzomo Lecho Naphshi*. You too are crying.

Boldly, you make your way over to the Rebbe. You give him *sholom*. He is startled for a moment, then holds your hand tightly in his two hands. You privately lock eyes and your souls brush momentarily against each other. You feel lighter, more elevated. You remember once reading in Nesivos Sholom that a person's *nisyonos* are often too big to shoulder alone. The only way to find relief is to become a part of the larger *tzibbur* and connected to the *tzaddik*. This all makes so much sense now.

Your anthropologist inner self glances around the room. You take in swaying *chassidim* singing with *hislahavus*. But you see something else too. You notice a young fellow looking bloated and bored, stealing glances at the clock. You spot two smirking *chevramen* engaged in animated conversation, clearly not discussing the *parsha*. You watch a teenager bobbing for herring in apple juice.

And you ask yourself: Do these people not get it? Can they not feel the holiness of the moment?

But the answer comes to you in a flash.

Bemokom sheba'alei teshuva omdim....

The struggle.

The reward.

Hodu Lashem Ki Tov!

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Re: Shaleshudos - A short story by an FFBBT
Posted by Efshar Letaken - 27 Jul 2009 16:49

Very Well Put!

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Re: Shaleshudos - A short story by an FFBBT
Posted by jerusalemsexaddict - 27 Jul 2009 17:25

Neched Avraham,

gevaldig!what an insight!i never looked at it that way.we are more open to ruchniyus sometimes because of our struggles.

brother,you are a writer waiting to happen.your story by walmart was moving.a simple shopping story but impressing upon the oylam the two scenes happening at the same moment.the one everyone sees and your personal inner oylam of your neshamas struggle.so inspiring!and the humor is without a doubt one of your strongest points.i give u a bracha that it should help u to overcome all your struggles.stay strong!(though i have no doubt u will)-uri

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Re: Shaleshudos - A short story by an FFBBT
Posted by the.guard - 27 Jul 2009 17:37

I have a feeling we'll be seeing a lot of "Ben Moshe" in the coming Chizuk e-mails!!

Chazak ve'ematz, holy brother. You have Teshuvah and you have writing skill. The combination of the two is PRICELESS to us here on GYE :D

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Re: Shalosh Seudos - A short story by an FFBBT
Posted by battleworn - 28 Jul 2009 16:11

Ben Moshe, I'm crazy over your stuff! This is oxygen to us over here, so please keep a steady

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Re: Shalosh Seudos - A short story by an FFBBT
Posted by chaimhelp - 23 Jun 2011 04:09

Gevaldig! Written like a true litvak.

:D

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supply coming