

## PREFACE



*The Tremble of Love: A Novel of the Baal Shem Tov* is an historical novel inspired by the life of Rabbi Yisroel ben Eliezar who became known as the Baal Shem Tov, the Good Master of the Name.

Born in 1698 in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Baal Shem Tov was a healer and spiritual guide. It is said that everywhere he went he encountered the *Shechinah*, the Sacred Presence. The Baal Shem Tov's life is swathed in legends and tales of miracles. He wrote no books and asked his followers not to write down his teachings, but instead to live them, through their loving actions and their joy.

The intention of this book is to bring the world and heart of the Baal Shem Tov to life and to convey the essence of his teachings. While events reputed to have occurred in the rabbi's life are woven into the tapestry of this telling, the novel is a fictional account. A number of the book's characters are based on people known to have been or believed to have been in the Baal Shem Tov's life; others have been inspired by my study and my inner relationship with the master.

*The Tremble of Love: A Novel of the Baal Shem Tov* tells the story of a rare teacher who saw love everywhere and beckoned it forth from the hearts of rag pickers, ruby merchants, midwives, and murderers. It is said that to tell and listen to stories about a great soul evokes blessing. May it be so.

Ani Tuzman  
Massachusetts, USA