



A Story for the Shabbos Table

סיפורי הבעל שם טוב

THE MITTELER REBBE'S DREAM

One day, the Mitteler Rebbe came to see the Alter Rebbe, worried and crying. He told his father that his heart was troubled by a strange dream.

In his dream he had seen a wide river. Its clear waters flowed strongly, and though they were constantly refilled, there were no waves. As it flowed far away it filled little ponds on all sides, but continued flowing with quiet energy.

Then he saw two men wearing long garments coming close. The taller man had one leg thicker than the other. A little further away, he saw two other men, and then he saw his father, the Alter Rebbe.

On the river there lay a board. The shorter man told the taller man to step onto it. He did so but the board began to sink, and the water quickly rose to cover part of his body. Then the board came up again, but then so did the water. This went on a few times, until the shorter man finally told him to step off the board.

As this was happening, the two other people had a few times approached from the distance and had gone back. The whole time they had remained unclear, and from this point on they were no longer seen.

The remaining three people then walked away, holding each other's arms, the shorter man in the middle, the taller man to his left and the Alter Rebbe to his right.

They continued until they came to a great river. This river had a lot of water with many different colors, and it flowed rapidly; on all sides its waves rose and fell like the waves of the sea.

In the river, far away, he saw a wave rise up and fall. Within a moment other waves also made strong efforts to rise up high, but they too fell upon the nearby banks. When each wave fell on the riverbank, it made a little pool, but very quickly, the little pool that each one formed

was swallowed up in the ground and vanished, and in its place appeared trees with fruit on them.

While this was happening he heard the voice of the shorter man. He was pointing at the Alter Rebbe and telling him to walk along the board. The Alter Rebbe walked straight along it until he reached the end, and then wanted to move it further along. However, the shorter man signaled him to return, and said: "With the power of these waves of water one can pass complete even through waves of fire."

And at this point the Mitteler Rebbe woke up.

After the Mitteler Rebbe told over his dream, his father, the Alter Rebbe told him to daven and then come in to him and he will explain the dream to him.

After he davened, he came back to his father, and the Alter Rebbe told him that the shorter person in his dream was the Baal Shem Tov; and the taller one was the Maggid of Mezritch, who suffered pain in his leg. And by telling the Maggid to walk along the board (but the board was sinking), the Baal Shem Tov was showing him that even with the teachings of the Maggid's talmidim, it was still possible to sink.

The Alter Rebbe continued explaining the dream to the Mitteler Rebbe: "The second river is filled with the tears of Baalei Teshuvah. Twenty-five years ago, I heard from the Rebbe [the Maggid] the mashal which compares *tzaddikim* and baalei Teshuvah to two sons of one king. Hearing that mashal, it became engraved in my mind that one should make an effort to bring every single Jew near [to *Yiddishkeit*]. I spent five years traveling from place to place, with my identity sometimes known and sometimes not, to awaken people in this direction."

[This story was told by the Frieddiker Rebbe at the Yud Tes Kislev Farbrengen in 5692. Printed in Likutei Diburim Vol 5]