

THE SEA

It was a cold and wintry afternoon as I stood on the beach watching the magnificence of the stormy sea. In spite of the weather, a **windsurfer** was out there alone among the waves bravely riding his surfboard. I noticed that he didn't pay attention to the time of day. It was almost dark but I couldn't leave. I was spellbound as I watched him.

As he surfed the waves some of which could have been at least five meters high, he came very close to the rocks. I watched him with an open mouth as he reached these heights and then disappeared into the foam. The waves churned and covered him.

I thought he was gone - that I would never see him again. But a minute later I saw him peeking through the other side of the wave. For more than half an hour I stood rooted to the spot, watching him as he surfed: I couldn't move. He was marvelous and it was breathtaking to see him.

As darkness fell he let the waves return him to the shore. I ran towards him because I wanted to congratulate him. I saluted him and told him that he had won the sea in a way that I had never seen anyone else do before. He was really an expert. We exchanged looks. He was a little older and asked me for my name.

"Mordechai," he asked, "How could you say something like - I won the sea? Is there really anyone who could win the sea?"

"Let's leave humility in its place." I replied, "I'm sorry but you definitely won the sea I saw you,"

Again he looked me over and said: "Is there anyone who could win the sea?"

I did not understand.

"Have you ever seen an orchestra?" he asked.

I replied that I had.

"Did the orchestra have a conductor?"

"Yes."

Then he asked: "Is there such a possibility that any musician in that orchestra would strike a note without a cue from the conductor?"

"Certainly not," I answered. "Each one only plays after he gets his cue."

"And if one will start a little later or earlier?"

"Then the harmony of the chords will definitely be ruined," I replied.

“Listen carefully,” he said. “Just as a conductor leads an orchestra, the sea is also conducted. When you saw me dancing on the waves I did not dance the way that I wanted. I was totally listening to the sea with all my heart and soul.

For the first ten minutes or so that I surf, it’s hard for me. But after about 15 minutes there is no difference between the waves and me, there isn’t the sea and me and the surf board - there is only sea. I allow myself to be totally absorbed by the flow of the water.”

He looked at me as if to judge if I could really understand what he said. Then he continued: “After those 15 minutes do you know what happens to me? The sea flows through my veins and I in fact become one with the sea.”

Again he looked at me to see if I understood and then he continued: “Do you know what happens next? When the sea flows through my veins I feel it so strongly, I sense the life in the sea. There is someone who gives life to the sea.” He looked at me, and smiled.

“God gives life to the sea did you know that? The sea breathes. The sea is alive and when I dance on the waves and the sea flows through my veins, I encounter God. Surely you want to know what I did for such a long time on the wave.

Know that I prayed.

The dance you saw me do on the waves was a dance before God. I know and I am sure that he saw me dance and heard my prayer. He always answers me when I am like this on the waves.

In order to achieve this feeling of being so close to God the sea must be very stormy. The higher the waves the closer to God I feel. If the sea is calm I can’t come so close to him. You will surely ask me why. Because when the sea is stormy I have to be that much more attentive to the waves. When the sea is calm I can pay attention to the birds flying or to the child playing in the sand on the beach. But when it is stormy I must focus my entire being on the waves. I can’t see or hear anything else.

I fuse with the waves and melt into the sea. We become one. The sea doesn’t allow me to take my attention from it. I must meet and sense it in order to gain the strength to sail into a safe harbor.”

How interesting this was. I was listening to a person speak so clearly and emphatically about his intimate encounter with God.

Then he said, “I want to tell you a secret. The sea doesn’t finish here on the shore. I leave the waves, shower, dress, and drive home. The sea continues all the way. As I’m driving down the highway I see the sea as it continues.

At sea I can’t dance the way I want and on the road I can’t drive, as I want. The traffic is both busy and uncontrollable. People are rushing to get to their destinations and I must be constantly aware of what is going on around me. I reach my home but even there the sea doesn’t end.

There I meet my wife – sometimes it's blue and white, and sometimes it's black. There too I must be totally attentive to those around me.

But just like at sea, I can't stand upright when a wave comes towards me just because I feel like it, for if I try to, then the wave will just throw me down. The sea doesn't listen and I must go along with it. So too at home I can't just do what I feel like.

When I come home, I'm tired and hungry. I want quiet but who is interested in what I want. You know when there are whirlpools at sea I can't fight against them or they will finish me off very quickly. So I let myself be taken and then try to escape. Either I will be saved or not: but if I fight against them I will surely lose.

When two of my children fight with each other I find myself in the middle. One pulls me this way and the other that way. It's like a whirlpool. Here too I must let myself be taken and only then can I steer my ship to shore. Only when I let the energy flow through me will I be able to merge.

If I educate my child in my way and not his, then I won't see the child I will only see myself. The whirlpool will become even greater as I am pulled in so deeply that by the time the child is only 16, I will have lost complete control.

This is our challenge: to remember that life is one big sea: and the conductor no other than God Himself. How honestly do I believe that He directs the big strong waves in which ever sea I find myself?"