

The rabbi said to his son: **"Do you see what this merchant is saying quite spontaneously without our even asking? Is he not on his way from there?!?"** They turned back and went home.

The son died. Afterwards he came to his father, the rabbi, in a dream. The father saw him standing there in great anger.

**"Why are you so angry?"** asked the father.

The son answered that he should journey to the same Tzaddik that he had wanted to visit. **"He will tell you why I am angry!"**

The father awoke and said it was pure chance. Afterwards he had the same dream again but he said that this too was a meaningless dream. Until it happened a third time and he realized that this was no empty matter, and he journeyed there.

On his way he met the same merchant that he had met previously when traveling with his son. He recognized him.

**"Aren't you the one I saw in that inn?"** he asked. **"You certainly did see me,"** replied the merchant. He opened his mouth wide and said to him, **"If you wish, I will swallow you up!"**

**"What are you talking about?"** asked the rabbi.

**"Do you remember when you journeyed with your son?"** replied the merchant. **"First a horse fell on the bridge and you went back. Afterwards the axles broke. After that you encountered me, and I told you he is a lightweight. Now that I have eliminated your son, you are free to travel. For he was on the level of the Small-Light, while that Tzaddik is the Great-Light. If they had met together, the Mashiach would have come. Now that I have got rid of him, you may travel."**

As he was speaking he disappeared, and the rabbi had nobody to talk to. The rabbi journeyed to the Tzaddik crying, **"Woe! Woe! Woe for what is lost and cannot be found!"**

May God quickly bring back our lost ones! Amen!

This merchant was the Angel of Death himself. He took on the guise of a merchant and deceived them. Afterwards, when he encountered the rabbi a second time, he himself rebuked him for listening to his advice. For that, as we know, is his way. May God protect us!