

Story 759 (1985 Tape 2)

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*Cure*  
The Princess Cured by the Waters of Pamukkale<sup>1</sup>

Many years ago there was a small kingdom near Pamukkale. The king of that land had but one child, a daughter, who was ill and ugly. She was afflicted with a skin disease that seemed incurable. The king had brought in many famous doctors and learned men to his palace to try to cure the princess, but none of them was able to help her. After a while she grew tired of all of these efforts to cure her

One morning she ran away from the palace and, after walking all day, came to a place where there were many hot springs, a place that today is called Pamukkale. Being dusty and tired, she entered the water as soon as she saw it and

<sup>1</sup>Pamukkale means cotton castle. It is the name of a cliff above the Plain of Denizli, a cliff from which springs of hot mineral water flow. The mineral deposit left by the water is snow-white and resembles cotton. In Roman times a spa built around these springs was a resort to which Roman Emperors came to relax. This spa is on the edge of the ancient city of Hierapolis, a prominent city in Greek, Roman, and Byzantine times. Because the beautiful cliffs and ancient ruins are attractive to tourists, the Turkish government has made the area a national park in order to control its use and protect it.

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bathed in it. When she came out of the water, she lay under a tree and slept there all night.

A horseman from afar rode up to that place on the following morning. When he saw a beautiful girl sleeping beneath a tree, he gazed upon her and fell in love with her. For some time he just sat and watched her as she slept. After a while the princess awoke, and she became frightened when she discovered that a stranger was watching her.

The man introduced himself: "I am a prince of such-and-such a kingdom. I was on my way home when I saw you here and fell in love with you. Will you marry me and come to my kingdom with me?"

The princess was very surprised to hear this, but she quickly concluded that the stranger was simply making fun of her. She said, "I am very ugly. Why would someone like you wish to marry me?"

But the prince said, "No, no, that is not true! You are not a bit ugly but the most beautiful girl I have ever seen.

She did not believe this, of course, but the prince pointed to her image in the water. When she looked at her image, she was amazed to see a very beautiful girl. When she ran her hands over all the places on her skin which had been diseased, she discovered that they were now healed

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She realized then that she had been made well by the curative waters of Pamukkale <sup>2</sup>

They returned to their families and asked for permission to marry. After the necessary preparations had been made, the two were married, and they lived together happily.

<sup>2</sup>There are a great many hot springs throughout Turkey. Several dozen in Western Turkey have become famous spas visited by thousands seeking to improve their health. In the 1970s some question about the healthfulness of Pamukkale's water was raised when it was discovered that it contained radioactive particles.