

Story #166 (Tape #2, Summer 1970) Narrator: Ahmet Kalaycı (Süslü)

Location: Güvem Nahiye  
Kızılcahamam kaza  
Ankara vilayet

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The Padişah and the Goatherd Catechize Each Other

This is called a story. You get the taste if you listen to it. I let the snake hang down from <sup>the</sup> alem [capstone on the conical dome on top of the minaret] and it coiled round the minaret. Let me tell you the tale, and you listen to the lies. [This introduction occurs in Turkish in six lines rimed in three couplets.]

In the old days, the padişahs used to go to inspect the villages on horseback. One day when a padişah was visiting villages, he came upon a herd of goats by a fountain and a shepherd. The padişah intended to find out if the young man knew what the commandments of God were,\* and he asked him whose creature he was.

He said, "I belong to my village."

"To whom does the village belong?" asked the padişah.

"It belongs to the muhtar," said the shepherd.

"To whom does the muhtar belong?"

"He belongs to the nahiye müdürü."

"To whom does the nahiye müdürü belong?"

\*Both in this tale and in #167, there are references to commandments of Allah. In this tale (#166) the five basic conditions of Islam, or commandments, are not mentioned but instead, political fealty and technicalities of Moslem liturgy. Nor are they given in #167, but in #167 the reference is clearly to the five basic conditions or commandments of Islam. Though not spelled out, they are implied, for the death sentence was not given for ignorance of lesser laws. The commandments are these:

- 1) Pronounce the statement, "God is one, and Mohammed is his Prophet."
- 2) Pray the prescribed 5 daily prayers
- 3) Fast during Ramazan
- 4) Go to Mecca on pilgrimage if it is possible to do so
- 5) Give alms to the poor

"He belongs to the kaymakam."

"To whom does the kaymakam belong?"

"He belongs to the governor [vali]."

"To whom does the vali belong?"

"He belongs to the President [sic]."

Now it was the shepherd's turn to test the padişah's knowledge. "How many rekats are there in the morning service?" he asked the padişah.

The padişah was confused and could not answer.

The boy said, "The morning service has 8 rekats, 4 of them farz and 4 of them sünnet," and he struck the padişah with a stick four times.

He then asked, "How many rekats are there in the noon service?"

The padişah could not answer this question correctly, either, and he said, "Fifteen rekats."

shepherd then said, "It is not 15 rekats. The noon service is 10 rekats--4 farz, 4 sünnet, and 2 of them final sünnet." He struck the padişah with a stick ten times. Then he asked, "How many rekats are there in the afternoon service?"

The padişah said, "It is 10 rekats."

The shepherd said, "No, it is not 10; it is 8 rekats," and he struck him eight times. Then he asked him about the evening service: "How many rekats are there in the evening service?"

The padişah could not answer this question correctly, either, and the shepherd punished him for this error, too.

it was the turn of the night service. "How many rekats are there in the night service?" he asked.

"Eight rekats," said the padişah.

"No, that is not right. It is 12 [sic] rekats," said the shepherd, "4 farz,

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4 sūnnet, 2 final sūnnet, and 3 fitr--13 in all." The boy hit the padişah 13 times. The shepherd then walked some distance away. The padişah's vizier laughed a little.

The padişah asked, "Why are you laughing? Are you laughing because the shepherd tortured me?"

"No, I am not laughing at that. I am laughing because the shepherd behaved like a fool," said the vizier.

The padişah asked, "Why did he behave like a fool?"

The vizier answered, "Because he forgot the teravih."\* [The shepherd had the opportunity of hitting the padişah 32 times and missed it because he forgot the teravih.

\*Women come to the mosque during Ramazan for the night service, when the service is extended from 12 to 32 rekats.