

Story #482 (Tape #11, 1970)

Narrator: Sadık Erol, in 70's,  
chauffeur to Atatürk  
right after World War I

Location: Pazar köy, kaza of Mengen,  
Province of Bolu

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The Tree That Bore Fruit on the Day It Was Planted

One day Harun Reshid went on tour of his country with his vezir to learn how his subjects lived. Along his way he saw a poor old man leaning on a stick as he was trying to plant a tree. He was so weak and frail that he could hardly stand.

When Harun Reshid asked his vezir about this man and about his reason for trying to plant a tree, the vezir responded, "Your majesty, it seems simply that this man is very fond of trees."

Harun Reshid had his vezir ask the old man this question: "What are you doing?"

"I am planting a tree, son," said the old man.

"But why are you planting it?"

"I am planting it for the sake of Allah," said the old man.

"But you are already so very old. Do you think you will live to enjoy fruit from this tree?"

"Perhaps I shall," answered the old man

Harun Reshid was pleased with this discussion and he directed the vezir to give the man a golden lira. (That was, you know, back in the age of gold money.) The vezir went to the old man and said, "Father,

take this gold coin."

The old man took the gold coin and held it up, saying, "Look! My tree began bearing fruit even while it was being planted."

This too pleased Harun Reshid, and he directed his vezir to give the old man another coin. When the vezir gave him another gold coin, the old man held up both his coins and said, "You see! The tree I am planting has borne two pieces of fruit."

Harun Reshid ordered still another piece of gold money for the old man. When he received it, the old man held up the three golden coins and said, "What more could one expect from a tree than that it bear three pieces of fruit on its first day?"