

Story 702 (1981 Tape 1

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Allah Rewards Hard Work

There was once a very learned hoca living in the city of Kayseri. One day the people of Kayseri went to this hoca with a request. They asked him to go to İstanbul and persuade the Şeyhülislâm^{134, 135} to request the padişah to remove the Governor of Kayseri Province, a very cruel man.

When the hoca reached İstanbul, he said to himself, "Instead of going to an inn, let me instead spend the night praying at a mosque." While he was in a mosque praying beside the mimber,² he glanced around and saw that the Kutup³ of the World was standing near him. The "Three" came, the "Five" *Şems-i* came, the "Seven" came, the padişah came, his twelve viziers *groups* came, the Şeyhülislâm came--all of these came and formed a circle around the Kutup.⁴ The Kutup reported, "The governor of such-and-such a province has done thus and so. The governor of this-and-

¹The chief Moslem administrative officer in Turkey. The Şeyhülislâm is the only religious officer in the government of the Republic of Turkey.

²The mimber or minber, though not an altar, is a raised dais, reached by almost ladder-like steps, from which the weekly sermon is preached during the Friday noon service.

³Kutup means, literally, pole or axis.

⁴In Islamic mysticism it is believed that much of life here on earth is controlled by select mortals headed by the Kutup of the World and made up of various number groups, running from the "Three" to the "Forty." The smaller the number, the greater the authority is.

province has done so-and-so." He reported in this way on activities of five or six governors, but at no time did he even mention the Governor of Kayseri Province.

In the meantime, the "Forty" entered the mosque. One of "Forty" said, "A member of our group has died. Whom shall we get to replace him?"

The Kutup of the World said, "Replace him with the most serious man you can find."

[Ahmet Uysal: "What do you mean here by the word serious?"

Narrator: "One who works the most for Allah."]

The "Forty" left to carry on their search for a replacement the member they had lost. When they returned, they reported that they could not find a more serious man than a certain black priest in Russia.

"Then let him become the new member of the 'Forty,'" said the Kutup.

The next morning the hoca presented himself to the Şeyhülislâm and reported to him that this-and-that had been occurring in Kayseri. The Şeyhülislâm accompanied the hoca to the padişah where the hoca repeated his charges.

Thereupon the padişah said, "O hoca, you were there last night--weren't you? You work hard and please Allah, and then the governor will be removed."⁵

⁵It is only at the end of the tale that the listener or reader becomes aware that it is all a parable. The point of its didacticism is that hard and divinely-approved work is the key to the achievement of one's wishes.