

Story 839 (1974 Tape 19)

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Erzincan Province

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Curiosity and a Donkey

I want to tell you something about curiosity. It seems that almost everyone is curious about something. We all have a peculiar kind of desire which we call curiosity. Some people are curious about horses, some about guns, some about hunting, some about the sea, some about the land, and still others about trees.

There was once a man who one day lost his donkey. He looked all over for it. He looked here, he looked there, he looked everywhere he could think of, but still he could not find it. He then went to the mosque and spoke to the (hoca)¹ just before prayer time: "I have lost my donkey and have been unable to find it. Could you possibly ask the congregation from the (mimber)² if any of them has seen my donkey?"

"That could be done," said the (hoca.) *Thurpant*

After the prayer service was over, and before he delivered

¹The hoca is the Moslem priest of a given congregation. In pre-Republican days he was also the village schoolmaster, for in those days education was provided by the clergy.

²The mimber (also minber) is similar to a pulpit. Access to it is via a very steep stairway, so steep that it is almost like a ladder.

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his weekly sermon, the hoca spoke a few words about curiosity. "A man without curiosity is not good for very much in this world. Most people have curiosity about something. Now tell me, you members of my congregation, if there is anyone among you who has no curiosity."

Someone stood up in the back of the mosque and said "Hoca, I don't have any curiosity about anything."

The hoca asked, "How about property? Wealth? Hunting? Birds? Crops? Nothing?"

"Nothing," the man answered.

The hoca then shouted, "O you who lost your donkey! We have found it! It is right here!" After making that announcement, the hoca proceeded to deliver his sermon.