

Story 874 (1964 Tape 2)

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Giresun Province

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The Bektāsi,¹ Walnuts, Pumpkins, and Allah's Wisdom

On a warm summer day a Bektāsi was relaxing as he sat in the corner of a field beneath a walnut tree. The field was planted in pumpkins, and he saw some pumpkins as large as this chair I am sitting on. As he gazed about, he also looked up at the walnuts on the tree above his head. He then said to himself, "That Allah of ours does not really know his business. He makes so many stupid mistakes. Instead of giving the small walnuts of this tree to a small plant

those vines in the field, he gives them to a huge plant this tree and instead of giving those very large and heavy pumpkins to a big plant, he has them grow on small weak vines. What a mistake! If I had been arranging this I'd have put the big pumpkins on this big tree and the little walnuts on those small vines!"

¹ A Bektāsi is a member of a dervish order of the same name. In pre-Republican days the Bektāsi order was a very powerful organization both religiously and politically. Along with all other dervish orders, it was outlawed during the Kemalist Reforms of the 1920's. The Bektāsi character was known for its unorthodox Moslem attitude, its seeming irreverence, and its independence. One must know this to appreciate the humor--often ironic--of Bektāsi tales.

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There was a crow in that tree, and it pecked at one of the walnuts. The walnut fell upon the Bektaşi's head with a thump. Picking up the walnut and looking at it, the Bektaşi said, "O Allah, I am sorry It was I who was mistaken. If this walnut had been a huge pumpkin, what would have been my fate today?"