

Story 1150 (1969 Tape 7) Narrator: Celâl Eren, aide to
the mayor

Location: Polatlı, kaza town of
Ankara Province

Date: 1969

Water for Şuhare Village

In 1968 a pipeline carrying drinking water was brought to the kaza of Polatlı. This was done by means of a contract for 7.5 million Turkish liras, and the job was supposed to be completed in eight months' time. This included carrying the pipeline to each of the villages of the kaza.

The pipes were all laid, and water flowed to all of the villages except one, a village named Şuhare. It is about thirty kilometers from the town of Polatlı. The construction crew worked day and night to get water there because almost all of the eight months had elapsed. Water would not flow through the pipes that went to Şuhare, and so the crew dug them up and laid new pipes. Now water flowed to Şuhare, but the water pressure was so great that some pipes within houses burst, and these houses were flooded. The owners of those houses became so annoyed that they went to the mayor and said angrily, "We don't want this water Take it away!" This was very embarrassing to the mayor, for it was only a month away from elections, and we wanted to have the water project completed before the elections

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We visited this village frequently to see how the work was going. We went there on Sunday, May 15, 1968, and we found there even the chief engineer of the construction team working on the project. We kept wondering what reason there could be for all of the difficulty in getting water to Şuhare. No other village in the area had this problem. It finally occurred to me that there might be a sheik or saint named Şuhare buried here somewhere, and it might be he who prevented water from coming to the village. I told this to the construction crew on that Sunday.

"What can we do about that?" they asked

"Let us sacrifice a sheep and direct a special prayer to Allah. Then perhaps (inşallah¹) the water will flow and cause no further problems."

They agreed to try this. We returned to Polatlı and bought a sheep. We slaughtered it at Şuhare, and we distributed all ^{Charity} of the meat among the poor people there.² This solved the whole problem. Just one day before the elections, every village in the kaza, including Şuhare now, was receiving drinking water through the new pipeline

¹ inşallah means If Allah is willing. It is said as a safeguard against what might otherwise appear to be presumption. It is a means of avoiding hubris.

² Charity is a key element in İslam. Sacrifices of animals almost always have implicit in them the understanding that at least part of the meat will be given to the poor.