

Story 1153 (1969 Tape 7)

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### The Legend of Muratpaşa Mosque

In the Şarampol district of Antalya is the largest mosque in Antalya, the Muratpaşa Mosque. The area where it now stands was once occupied by a business in secondhand goods operated by a dealer named Murat Usta. This Murat Usta worked very hard but earned little more than enough to live on. He was a strictly honest man, however, and he never envied the wealth of others.

One night this Murat Usta had a dream in which he was approached by a group of angels who said to him, "Murat Usta, you have a good thing waiting for you in the desert of Arabia. Go there and get it." After the morning prayers of the next day, Murat Usta started to travel to Arabia. He traveled little, he traveled far, and after a while he reached a place where there was growing a single grapevine, and on that grapevine there was a bunch of grapes.

When he saw that bunch of grapes, he said, "This must be the good thing waiting for me. O Allah, thank you!" He picked the bunch of grapes and ate it. Then he continued on his way.

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Soon after that, he reached a town and there, to his surprise, he met some old friends of his. "What are you doing here, Murat Usta?" they asked him.

"I was told in a dream that there was a good thing waiting here for me. I received that and now I am returning home."

His old friends laughed and made fun of him. One of them said, "Well, now look at this fellow who came all the way here because of a dream he had. Back home I once had a dream that there was a secondhand dealer living at Şarampol who had a of gold hidden under the stairway in his house, but I did even pursue that, close as it was!"

After hearing this, Murat Usta bade his old friends farewell and returned to Şarampol. When he reached his own house, he immediately dug beneath the stairway, and there he found buried two pots of gold. With some of this money, he had a mosque built. In one corner of the mosque--but no one else knew which corner--he buried a quantity of gold large enough to build a second mosque when time had demolished the first one. As years went on, both that mosque and the surrounding area became known as Muratpaşa in honor of the man who had been a dealer in secondhand merchandise.

Much later, people who had heard of the gold buried in the mosque tried to find it. One night they secretly tore

*Joanna,  
buried*

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out one whole corner of the mosque, but all they found was a note in a jar. The note said, "It's not with me but with the other."<sup>1</sup> And so the buried gold of Murat Usta was never found.

<sup>1</sup> See commentary in Notes, Vol. 6, on this enigmatic message. It involves a motif common in this kind of legend.