

Story 1456 (1992 Tape 5)

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Location: İzmir, İzmir Province;  
taped at Lubbock, Texas

Date: May 1992

A Simple Cure for A Simple Man

One day a Laz who lived on the Black Sea coast began to have severe pains in his eyes. He went to a doctor and complained about these pains. The doctor examined the eyes of the Laz very carefully, but he could not discover anything wrong with them. The doctor asked the patient, "Where does this pain come from? When does it begin?"

"It always begins while I am drinking tea," answered the Laz.

The doctor thought about this very hard and said to himself, "By Allah! What possible relationship can there be between drinking tea and having eye pains?" To his patient he said, "Let us have some tea now." When the tea had been brought, he said to the Laz, "All right. Now drink this tea and demonstrate for me just how and when your eye pains begin."

The Laz took his glass of tea, put some sugar in it, and then stirred it with a spoon. Then he began to drink the tea while the handle of the spoon was still sticking out of the top of the glass and poking his eye.

The doctor saw at once what was happening. After they had

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finished their tea, the doctor said, "Here is my diagnosis of your problem. It comes from drinking tea that still has a spoon standing in it.<sup>1</sup> Take the spoon out of your glass before you begin drinking tea, and then your eye pains will not occur again

Very pleased that the doctor had discovered the cause of his suffering, the Laz said, "Thank you very much, doctor. Allah bless you for what you have done for me!"

<sup>1</sup>To appreciate this anecdote, one must be acquainted with the way tea is served in Turkey. It is served in very thin glasses about the size of fruit juice glasses in the U.S. (about 2 inches in diameter and about 3.5 inches high). The small spoon, usually served right in the glass, is .5 to 1.25 inches longer than the glass is high. Because of the small diameter of the glass, the spoon remains practically vertical. If the tea were served in Western teacups, there would be no basis for this anecdote.