

Story 1535 (1992 Tape 1

Narrator: Mustafa Aytekin, 30

Location: Derinkuyu, a kaza town in Nevşehir Province

Date: 1992

Hoca's<sup>1</sup> Unconcern about Wife's Mental State

One day while Nasreddin Hoca was spending some time in a coffeehouse he was approached by Ali and Cemal as they came running through the door. They said, "Aman,<sup>2</sup> Hoca Efendi!<sup>3</sup> Your wife has become so angry that she is losing her mind!"

Nasreddin Hoca answered them very calmly. He said, "friends, I have never observed any indication that my wife had a mind. She cannot lose what she does not have."

<sup>1</sup>A hoca is a preacher and the religious leader of a community. In pre-Republican times the hoca was also the community teacher. Separation of church and state in the Republic required that teachers be people of secular rather than of religious training. Nasreddin Hoca is Turkey's most popular comic folk character.

<sup>2</sup>Aman is a common exclamation in Turkish. It may (negatively) mean alas! or oh, dear! Used more positively, it may suggest, oh, my goodness! or the equivalent of wow! or golly!

<sup>3</sup>A mild honorific, comparable to Sir, it usually follows a first name: Hasan Efendi. At one time it was used to show respect to distinguished people, but it has become so devaluated in the twentieth century that it now is used only for servants and children.