

Story 1553 (1992 Tape 2)

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in Nevşehir Province

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Nasreddin Hoca¹ Remains Faithful to His Word

One day some acquaintances of Nasreddin Hoca asked him, "How old are you, Hoca?"

Nasreddin replied, "I am forty years old."

Five or six years passed. Then one day some of the same people again asked the Hoca's age. "How old are you, Hoca?"

"I am forty years old," he answered

But those among the people who had asked him that same question six years earlier objected. They said, "Hoca, how can that be? Six years ago when we asked you your age, you said that you were forty years old. Now you claim that you are still forty. How can that be?"

The Hoca answered very calmly, "If a man is honest, he will not go back on his word."

¹A 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.