

Story 1579 (1987 Tape 3)

Narrator: Hüseyin Gümüştas, 54

Location: Bılık village, ~~...~~
Devrek kaza,
Zonguldak Province

Date: June 19,

Returning Ramazan,¹ Unreturning Man

There is a green grocer living here in our village whom I do not like. Once during Ramazan he saw me smoking a cigarette. Just as soon as he noticed that, he said to me, "What are you doing? This is Ramazan, and you are committing a sin in desecrating Ramazan!"

I answered, "Well, it is only one Ramazan. Next year there will be another Ramazan, and every year after that there will also be one, but when I go, when I die, I shall never return."²

The green grocer continued to criticize me. He said, "Allah will not forgive you! You have to prepare yourself in this world for living in the next world. Allah knows what you

¹The ninth month on the Islamic lunar calendar. (Although Turkey and several other Moslem countries are for official and business purposes on the Gregorian calendar, the religious calendar remains lunar. This causes Ramazan to come about three weeks earlier each year on the official Gregorian calendar.) During Ramazan nothing is to pass the lips of the devout Moslem between sunrise and sunset.

²This is a common rationale used by people to excuse their failure to observe fasting during Ramazan. It occurs also early in ATON 494.

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doing! He is so great that he is everywhere--not just in this world or in the sky but everywhere. You cannot see but He can see you. You cannot hear Him, but He can hear you. You cannot touch Him, and yet He is everywhere."

I couldn't stand his talk any longer, and I couldn't resist saying something that would shock him. This is what I said: "Oh, uncle, you probably wanted to say that Allah does not exist at all, but you just did not have enough courage to do so."