

Story 1651 (1971 Tape 1

Narrator: Behçet Mahir, mid-60s

Location: Erzurum, capital city of Erzurum Province

Date:

The Wisdom of a Child¹

A man who was a follower of Mohammed from the very beginning, like Christ's disciples, was once walking in the desert, and there he saw a little boy crying. He was beating himself and putting soil on his head and face. This man asked the boy, "My little son, who has beaten you hard enough to make you cry so? And while you are crying, at the same time you are laughing with joy. And why are you putting the soil on your head and face? What is the reason?"

The very little boy answered this way: "Oh, sir, nobody has beaten me. I have beaten myself and I am crying for myself."

When the man heard this answer, he paused. "How can you beat yourself, my son? What is the reason hidden here?"

¹This was an exemplum interpolated in ATON Tale No. 330. Because it is a tale complete unto itself, we have here given it individual status. This seems necessary in order to prevent its becoming "lost" in the very long Tale 330.

Story 1651

"Sir, while my mother was making a fire, I watched her. God has a bell as red as pomegranate and has His wrath. I am crying for this wrath, anger, and rage of God," answered the boy.

"But, my son, your sins will not be accepted as sins by God. You are just a little boy. You have gained neither sins nor good deeds. Nothing will be asked from you, my son. Your intelligence is not sufficient to make you an adult. What is this you cry for? Your thinking is quite incorrect." So spoke the man

"Sir, while my mother was making a fire under the stove, she used the small wood first. Then, these tiny pieces of wood made the bigger ones burn. Just so, I understood that sin also grows from something small. It grows little by little. That is why I am crying.

When the little boy said these words, the man understood how mature this boy was. Then he said, "Very good, my boy. Now tell me the reason that you are playing with this soil and why you are putting the soil on your face and head."

The boy answered, "Sir, finally, one day, we will be put into the earth." It is true, gentlemen. Everybody is

Story 1651

created from earth and finally one day will go back to earth. "As of now, I am trying to get used to the earth, so that one day when they put me into the earth, neither the earth nor I will be a stranger to the other. That is

I am trying to communicate with the earth. Finally, we will be buried in the earth. We will see that happiness."

The man liked very much the little boy's answer. "You right, my boy. You are very young, but your wisdom is great. What should I say? It is fine. What about this laughing of yours? Can you explain that?" asked the man.

"Uncle, the reason why I am laughing is that there is such a God ruling this world, a God who has wisdom. He likes wisdom very much. His wisdom is very great. I remembered this wisdom, and I am so happy that I am laughing. Such a wonderful judge He is that you tell it to the wind and you are forgiven.² You cannot find this judgment in any of the judges. You are the most powerful judge, the perfect one, You who appreciate wisdom. This is the reason

²Moslem people, after they pray, look first to the right and then to the left. The meaning of "telling it to the wind" derives from this practice--Ulvi Doğan. There are other interpretations of the significance of this gazing to right and left after completing prayers.

Story 1651

I am smiling and feeling happy. This good news is really good news for the whole world.

When he heard this answer, the man understood that the truth, the hidden existence, of this boy was an answer to the world. "Very good, my boy. You have spoken wonderful words. What should I say? May we play Hide-and-seek with you?"

"All right, uncle. Let us play that also."

"Yes, my boy. First you hide and let me find you."

The boy answered, "If I hide first, it will be very difficult for you to find me. I am very tiny, and I can fit everywhere. My body is very tiny. Only first you hide and let me find you. Then I will hide and you can me."

My God, look at him. Look what he is saying. "I am very little. Wherever I want I can hide. I can fit But first you hide and let me find you."

Then the man said, "Close your eyes, my boy."

The boy put his hands over his eyes and closed his eyes. "I have closed my eyes. Go ahead and hide."

The man read one of the most powerful prayers in the Koran and asked to be lifted to the sky. Yes, in the

Story 1651

Koran there is very great power, powerful prayers. But they are hidden. One must know the exact prayers. Everybody cannot know it.

When the boy opened his eyes, he saw the man going up toward the sky. He held his feet and pulled him back to the earth. "Come on, uncle, come back to the earth. Hide-and-seek should be played on earth. Why are you running away to the sky? We have bargained on the earth."

When the man heard these words, he kissed the boy on the eyes. "Bravo, my boy. You are very mature."

"With bravo you cannot feed my stomach. Now let me hide, and you find me. Afterwards, we shall talk about it." Then the boy said to the man, "Close your eyes." The man closed his eyes, and the boy went into his heart

"I have hidden," shouted the boy.

The man opened his eyes and saw that the boy was nowhere. He searched the land, but could not find the boy. He searched the sea, but could not find the boy. He searched the ground, the air, but could not find the boy "Hey, my boy, where are you? I cannot find you."

"I have hidden. Look for me and find me."

The man noticed that the voice was coming from a

Story 1651

nearby place, but the body was not visible. The boy himself was not there. "My boy, I know you like me very much. I tried to find you, but I cannot find you. Wherever you are, please come forth and let me see you."

When he said this, the boy jumped from his heart. "Hey, uncle, you have not become a grown-up man, a human being. I have hidden in your heart."

Here, sirs, we should take a piece of advice. We should understand this advice. Before searching your inside, your heart, why should you go around looking for thing? First look into yourself. That is why I have brought this sample, this stone, here. Yes, first we should clean inside of ourselves and check our hearts. The people are this way. Why should I care? Why should you care? You save yourself. You think of yourself. You, yourself, see what is there inside of yourself. Thus, this is what suits us best. See what a work that little boy has done. Yes, that is true. Whatever human beings for, first they look for it in themselves. Whatever find, they find it in themselves. Goodness is in the hands of oneself. Goodness is in the heart of oneself. Evil is also in people themselves.