

Story 1725 (1993 Tape 3)

Narrator: Rıza Emekter

Location: İlyesheci village,  
Şarkışla kaza,  
Sivas Province

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Allah's Loss Through Lack of Proof

There was once a very poor man who had no children. After he had waited patiently for a long while for a child, he finally prayed to Allah, saying, "O my great Allah, if You will give me a son, I shall sacrifice a sheep to You."<sup>1</sup>

Time passed, and eventually the poor man's wife did bear him a son. The man was very happy at having a son but because he was so very poor, he began to have second thoughts about making the sacrifice he had promised. He asked all of his friends if they thought it really necessary for him to sacrifice a sheep. They said to him, "Go and talk about this with the dervish who lives at such and such a place. He is known for his wisdom

<sup>1</sup>A vow to make a votive offering in thanks to the Deity is known in Turkish as an adağ. The offering itself is also called adağ. Faithful Moslems would be aghast at the prospect of anyone's failing to keep such a commitment.

Story 1725

Following their advice, the poor man went to the dervish and explained his situation. The dervish asked him, "Did you sign anything?"

"No," answered the poor man.

"Well, after all this time, I think that you should simply deny that you ever made such a promise."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>The narrator does not indicate that the dervish was a member of the Bektāṣi order, but it would have made the tale more credible if he had done so. Most dervishes in folktales are honest, reverent, and sometimes sternly righteous. The Bektāṣi dervishes, however, are known for their cynicism and sometimes blatant irreverence. The advice given the poor man might well have come from a Bektāṣi.