

Story 1844 (1984 Tape 6)

Narrator: Ali Çiftçi, farmer; by the time he told this tale, he must have been in late 60s or early 70s

Location: Çıkırıkçı village, Sarıkaya kaza, Yozgat Province

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A Miracle That Saved Ebu Bekir¹ and Converted a Jew

A man once went to Ebu Bekir and said, “My dear father, I owe 12,000 akçes² to a certain person. Give me that amount of money to pay my debt.”

Ebu Bekir answered, “I own nothing but this sweater on my back.” He had spent all of his wealth in support of the Prophet Mohammed.

“No. I have heard that you have plenty of money.”

Wanting to help the young man who had appealed to him for money, Ebu Bekir went to see a Jewish moneylender. He said to that

¹The first caliph. (The caliphs succeeded Mohammed as administrators of Islam, but they were not prophets.) Converted to Islam, Ebu Bekir used his considerable wealth to support the Islamic movement. In Arabic sources the name usually appears as Abu Bakr.

²A small silver coin worth a third of a para, which in turn was worth 1/40 of a kuruş, which in turn was worth 1/100 of a lira. Extreme devaluation of the Turkish lira to 1/40,000 of a U.S. dollar has made the other denominations historical items.

Story 1844

Jew, “Lend me 12,000 akçes until tomorrow noon. If I cannot repay you by that time, I shall become your slave. You can then have me do whatever work you wish, or you can sell me.”

The moneylender agreed to this and handed Ebu Bekir the amount of money he had requested. Ebu Bekir then took that money to the young man who needed it.

The following morning arrived. What could Ebu Bekir do to repay by noon the money he had borrowed? He had no trade that could produce so much money so fast, and so Ebu Bekir became resigned to becoming a slave. Near noon he went to the home of Prophet Mohammed to see Ayşe, his daughter, who was the Prophet’s wife. After Ebu Bekir had told Ayşe about his situation, they embraced each other and cried. He then said, “My daughter, renounce me, for I shall become a slave of the Jew.”

As Ebu Bekir was leaving the Prophet’s house, one of Ayşe’s tears fell to the floor and immediately became a jewel. This miracle was caused by the will of Allah because of the extreme distress Ayşe felt about her father’s situation. She called, “Father, come back! By the will of Allah a teardrop of mine which struck the floor has become a jewel! Take this jewel to the market and sell it so that you will have money to repay the Jew.”

Story 1844

As Ebu Bekir was on his way to the market, Allah spoke to Gabriel. He said, “Gabriel, hurry! Go to my heavenly treasury and take from it 20,000 gold coins. Sıddık³ is going to sell a special jewel. Buy it from him with the gold coins, for I want that jewel.” So Allah had turned Ayşe’s teardrop into a jewel, and then He Himself wanted it. He said, “I shall hang that jewel to the highest level of heaven,⁴ and its light will be a beacon for those who believe in the Islamic religion.”⁵

Taking the 20,000 golden coins from the treasury of heaven, Gabriel went to Ebu Bekir and said, “O Sıddık, what are you doing?”

“I am going to the market to sell this jewel.”

“How much will you ask for it?” said Gabriel.

“I shall ask 12,000 akçes.”

“It is worth much more than that.” Then Gabriel gave Sıddık the 20,000 gold coins, took the jewel, and disappeared.

Ebu Bekir took the 20,000 gold coins and returned to his home. There he found the Jew waiting for him. The Jew said to him, “Pay me the 12,000 akçes that you borrowed from me or come with me and be my slave.” When Ebu Bekir laid the money on his bed, the

³A nickname of Ebu Bekir. The word (usually spelled with just one d) can mean truth, sincerity, or purity.

⁴The term used here by the narrator is arş-i rahman.

⁵The expression used here is ümme-i Muhammed.

Story 1844

Jew looked at it in amazement. “This is too much money,” he said. “It was only 12,000 akçes that you borrowed from me.”

“This money came to me as a replacement for the 12,000 akçes that you lent me.”

The Jew picked up one of the gold coins and examined it. He saw inscribed on one side of it the statement “There is no god but Allah.” Turning it over, he saw inscribed on the other side the word İhlâs.⁶ He then said, “Sıddık, yours is the right religion!”

Right there and then the Jew changed his religion and became a Moslem. After that, he and Ebu Bekir took the 20,000 gold coins and distributed them among the poor.

⁶The word can mean sincerity of heart or sincere worship. It is also the name of a short chapter in the Koran.