

Story 1874 (1996 Tape 1)

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Osmaniye kaza,
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The Well-Located Wedding Ring of Nasreddin Hoca¹

We all know the story about Nasreddin Hoca's trying to turn Akşehir Lake into yoğurt. There is another story about Hoca and that lake.

One day Nasreddin Hoca was walking along the shore of that lake. As he was doing so, his wedding ring slipped off his finger and fell into the water. Because the water was quite deep right there, it would have been quite impossible for the Hoca to retrieve the ring. He therefore made no attempt to recover it. But he ended his walk at that point and returned home.

A day or so later his wife noticed that Hoca was not wearing his ring. She asked, "You big, bearded man, did you lose your wedding ring?"

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 beloved comic folk character. Sometimes wise, sometimes foolish, he is always very human. He typifies the unheroic "little man" who uses his wits to cope with forces more powerful than he is.

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“No! Of course I have not lost it!” replied Nasreddin Hoca. “I know exactly where it is, and I know exactly where it will remain.”