

Story 1910 (1995 Tape 4)

Narrator: Güler Soytaş, 45,
attorney

Location: Antalya, capital of
Antalya Province

Date: August 12, 1995

Credibility: Nasreddin Hoca¹ vs Donkey

One day one of Nasreddin Hoca's neighbors knocked on his door. When the Hoca opened the door, the neighbor said, "Hoca, could you please let me borrow your donkey for a few hours?"

Nasreddin Hoca did not wish to make such a loan to this man, but he did not want to offend his neighbor by flatly refusing his request. Instead, he answered, "My donkey is not here right now."

But the Hoca's donkey was actually in his stable, and right at that moment it began to bray loudly. Hearing this, the neighbor said, "Aren't you ashamed of yourself, Nasreddin Hoca? You are a grown man, but you have just now told a lie!"

Nasreddin Hoca answered very calmly, "You are the person who should be ashamed. How can you give more credence to the statement of a donkey than you do to my statement?"

¹A hoca is the preacher and religious leader of a community. In the pre-Republican era the hoca was also the community's teacher, for education was then the responsibility of the clergy. Separation of "church" and state in the Republic required that teachers be people with secular rather than religious training. Nasreddin Hoca belonged to the earlier period. For centuries he has been Turkey's most beloved comic folk character.