

Story 744 1985 Tape 1)

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Why There Are No <sup>all</sup> Jews <sup>all</sup> at Kayseri

The people of Kayseri are known to be very intelligent. They know how to conduct their businesses and how to make money. Jewish people are often said to have these same qualities.

There was once a Jewish family traveling through Anatolia<sup>1</sup> looking for a place in which they could settle down and earn a living. They stopped briefly at several towns and cities along their way, and one day they reached Kayseri. When the mother, father, and children saw that city, they thought it looked attractive, and so they decided to stay there for a few days and, if they continued to like it, to remain there permanently.

They knew very little about Kayseri people, however, and the father felt that they should learn something about them as soon as possible. For this purpose he sent his son to a food store with these directions: "Say to the shopkeeper, 'My father wants you to sell him something--just one thing--which he can eat and by which he can be made cool,

<sup>1</sup>Anatolia usually refers to the Asian part of Turkey.

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which my mother can eat and by which she may be entertained, and which our horse can eat and thereby have his hunger satisfied."

The Kayseri shopkeeper was surprised to hear such an intelligent request, but he did not hesitate in responding to it. He at once gave the boy a watermelon and said, "Take this to your father and say to him, 'You should eat the inside of this and feel cool as a result; your wife should eat the seeds and be entertained by that; and the rind should satisfy the hunger of your horse.'"

When the boy delivered the melon and repeated what the shopkeeper had said, the father said, "These Kayseri people are even shrewder than we Jews are. We cannot succeed very well here. Let us move on to some other place."

When other Jewish people heard of this, they too decided to avoid Kayseri. That is the reason that there are no Jews living in Kayseri today.