

Story 1563 (1992 Tape 2)

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Location: Derinkuyu, kaza town
in Nevşehir Province

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Nasreddin Hoca¹ Adjusts the Calendar

Because Nasreddin Hoca was considered in his village to be a very knowledgeable person, he took various steps in order to be able to answer questions that people might ask him. In order to be able to answer people's question when they asked him what day it was, he used a special method to keep himself informed. On the first day of every month he put a small stone in a jar, and then each morning after that he added another stone. Then when anyone asked him what day of the month it was, he would simply count the stones in the jar and tell the person what day of the month it was.

Nasreddin Hoca's young son noticed his father placing a stone in the jar every day. In order to help his father, the boy one day put a whole handful of stones in the jar. Soon after that, a neighbor went to the Hoca and asked, "Hoca, what day of the month is it?"

Nasreddin Hoca counted the stones in the jar and found

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 popular comic folk character.

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that there were sixty there. That seemed to Hoca to be too high a number, and so he decided to reduce the number a little bit. He said, "Today is the fortieth day of the month."

The neighbor was quite confused. He said, "Alas, Hoca, how can that be? There are no more than thirty days in a month."

The Hoca answered, "If we were to depend upon the daily stone I place in my counting jar, today would be the sixtieth of the month, but just to accommodate you, I canceled twenty days."