

Story 1126 (1966 Tape 6) Narrator: Bozkurt Güvenç, retired military officer, now Secretary of Hacettepe University

Location: Ankara

Date: Summer 1966

(Nasreddin Hoca Reaps Three Crops
from the Same Tree in One Day)

One day Nasreddin Hoca went out into his garden and planted a date pit. As he was doing this, he was observed by the padişah, who was passing by at that moment. Looking at the Hoca's white hair and white beard, the padişah said, "Hoca (Efendi)¹ why do you bother to plant that pit? It may take forty years² for it to produce any dates, and you will not be here to collect that fruit

The Hoca turned to the padişah and said, "My padişah, if all men thought as you do, there would be no fruit in all this world."

Realizing the foolishness of his question, the padişah felt ashamed of himself. To make up for this, he gave a bag of gold to the Hoca.

¹ The word efendi is a term of respect when added to a proper name. It was once used to flatter or gratify prominent people. The word has been so devaluated in the twentieth century, however, that it is now applied only to the names of children and servants.

² Although date palms take longer than some trees to reach maturity, they bear fruit after 10 or 15 years, not 40. The number 40 is so popular in Middle Eastern lore that it is often used automatically with no regard to reality.

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Nasreddin Hoca said, "My sultan, many people plant and wait forty years to reap any benefit. But I have planted a pit and reaped a benefit on the very same day."

The padişah was again pleased with the Hoca's words and gave him a second bag of gold. The Hoca then said, "How remarkable Most plant a pit and wait forty years for crop, but I have planted a pit and reaped two crops on same day it was planted

The padişah then said, "Look here, Hoca! I am going to give you a third bag of gold, but I am doing so on the condition that you will not utter another word after receiving it!"