

Story #470

Narrator: Professor Suheyl Ünver

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Behlül Dane on the Contents of the Three Worlds

One day Harun Reshid was talking with Behlül Dane. Behlül asked him, "Do you know what is most abundant beneath the earth, in the sky, and on the surface of the earth?"

Harun answered, "Beneath the earth the dead are most abundant; in the sky the angels are most abundant; and on the surface of this earth animals are most abundant."

"No, you did not answer the question correctly," said Behlül. "The good deeds of the just are the things most abundant in the sky. If you rule your subjects justly, you will also have done many good deeds. Have you not heard the words of our Prophet that an hour's good deeds is better than a year's worship? The most abundant thing on the surface of the earth are the high ambitions of men. The most abundant thing beneath the earth are the remorse and penitence of great men--which will last forever. Down there they keep saying, 'We wish now that we had done more good during our lives.'"