

Story 1440 (1971 Tape 7)

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Silifke kaza,
İçel Province

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The Misunderstanding of a Karakaya Camel

One year during the harvest season, the Karakaya people said, "After we finish reaping and threshing the wheat, let us sit down on the threshing floor¹ and eat ütme.²" It took several days for them to reap and thresh their wheat crop, and when it was finished, they loaded the wheat on several camels and started back to the village. Then someone remembered that they had planned to eat ütme before they returned to the village

"Oh, that is all right," one of them said. "We can roast some ütme right on the back of one of the camels." They lighted a small fire on the back of one of the camels, but, of course, this caused the animal a great amount of pain. It began to run around frantically and bellow loudly.

Seeing its distress, several people shouted at it, "Sit down in the mud! Sit down in the mud!" But the camel did not

¹A circle of packed-down clay, perhaps 60-80 feet in diameter, upon which the wheat stalks are cut up into small pieces by having a flint-studded platform dragged over them repeatedly. After this threshing procedure, the cut-up stalks are winnowed to separate the wheat from the straw.

²Green wheat that is roasted.

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seem to understand their directions. Finally when the poor animal jumped over the edge of a cliff, the people thought that it had at last heeded their advice and sat down in the mud