

Story 1522 (1981 Tape 9)

Narrator: Ali Çiftçi, farmer;
in mid-60s by this
time

Location: Çıkırıkçı village,
Sarıkaya kaza,
Yozgat Province

Date: 1981

Martyrdom of Ancient "Moslem" Family

One of the pharaohs had a treasurer whose wife was named Maside. Both the treasurer and his wife were Moslems

/Ahmet Uysal: "So there were Moslems before the time of Mohammed?"

Narrator: "Yes, there were many. In all four great books that came down to earth Mohammed's name is mentioned."¹

Ahmet Uysal: "What are the titles of those books?"

Narrator: "The first was the Torah.² The second was the Zebur.³ The third was the Bible,⁴ and the fourth was the Koran. The Torah was revealed to the Blessed Moses. In its original form it came in

¹This is Ali Çiftçi's imagination (or the imagination of his folk heritage) rather than a matter of fact.

²The Torah is defined (1) as "the whole body of Jewish religious literature," and (2) as "the Pentateuch" (the first five books of the Old Testament). It is the second definition that is intended here.

³The Psalms of David.

⁴The narrator is here clearly referring to the New Testament only.

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forty camel loads.⁵ But what we have now is different from the original form. Philosophers changed it while writing it down. The Zebur was revealed to David, but it too was changed while it was being written down. The Bible /New Testament/ came to Jesus, but there was no one there to write it down at the time. It was written down several times after that, but of course it was changed several times. Each word and each verse of the Koran was written down at the time it was revealed by God, and not a word was changed. That is why the Koran will last until the end of the world. After David came forth with his revelation, Moses' words lost their great influence. When Jesus came along, then the revelation to David lost its importance. But when the Koran came down from heaven, all of those other books ceased having any influence."/

That pharaoh had only one child, a daughter, and Maside, the wife of the treasurer, used to look after her. One day

⁵Possibly a reference to the stone tablets which Moses supposedly brought down from Mount Sinai, tablets containing the laws of God. See Exodus 19.

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as she was washing the girl's hair, the comb fell from her hand. Maside picked up the comb and said, "Bismillah."⁶

Hearing this, the girl asked, "Maside, is there some greater than my father? You just mentioned some other

"Yes, there is a greater god," answered Maside.

The girl went directly to the pharaoh and said, "Father Maside mentioned a god who is greater than you are. Have killed before anyone else hears her mention that god, for otherwise people will no longer obey you."

The pharaoh called Maside to him at once and asked, "Maside, is there a god greater than I am?"

"Yes, there is a greater god who created both you and me." Upon hearing this, the pharaoh had all of the woman's fingernails and toenails pulled out. Maside cried out, "There is no god but God!"⁷ The pharaoh then had her hung from the ceiling by her hair and whipped. But as each blow of the whip struck her, she cried out, "There is no god but God!"

⁶Bismillah (In the name of Allah) is the first part of the expression with which the Koran opens, Bismillahirrahmanirrahim (In the name of Allah the Compassionate and Merciful). The full expression is used at the beginning of prayer services. Bismillah is usually uttered at the beginning of any undertaking in order to gain divine approval (or good luck) for that venture.

⁷The Arabic term for this expression throughout this tale is lailaheillallah.

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pharaoh then had her hands nailed to a tree trunk.

This woman had two children, one five years old and the other six. They brought the five-year-old child before her

said, "Maside, unless you say that the pharaoh is the supreme god, he will have this child's head cut off. You have suffered for many days. Why are you so stubborn about this matter?"

But all that Maside would say was, "There is no god but God!" By this time she was so weak that she could hardly see.

They then brought the six-year-old child before her and said, "Maside, don't be so stubborn. You have already suffered greatly and you have sacrificed the life of your five-year-old daughter. Say that the pharaoh is your god and save at least the six-year-old child."

Maside was about to say, "The pharaoh is my god," but the child sensed this and cried, "Mother, what are you thinking of doing? You have given up everything else, and you should give me up too, but don't give up God. Look at the horizon and see where God has prepared a corner for you in heaven." The woman looked at the horizon and gave up her spirit to God. They then killed her six-year-old daughter, too.

Then they brought her husband, the treasurer, to that

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place and said to him, "Don't be stubborn in the way that wife was. Say, 'For the love of the pharaoh!'"

But the treasurer answered, "There is but one God, and it was He who created you and me. There is no god but God."

The pharaoh therefore had the husband killed also. The pharaoh then had all four bodies placed in a large cauldron

boiled and boiled until they fell apart before they were buried. There was never any other man in this world as evil as that pharaoh.

/Ahmet Uysal: "When did this happen?"

Narrator: "It was during the time of Moses."/