

Story 694 (1981 Tape 4)

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The Wall Built Against Gog and Magog¹

According to one version of their story Gog and Magog² were offspring of Adam's children. A second version claims that they were descended from Yasef, a son of Noah. The conflict between these two versions is a subject of continuous controversy among religious thinkers. There were two tribes of them, one very tall and the other very short. The short one had very long and very wide ears, so large, in fact, that these people would lie on one ear when they slept and cover themselves with the other. They lived until they had 1,000 children apiece. They it was who tortured the people living between the land that lies between Azerbaijan and Armenia,³ and they also confiscated the goods and property

¹Gog and Magog are mentioned in at least three places in the Bible. In Ezekiel Gog comes from the land of Magog. A prophecy says that Gog will attack Israel but that God will stone him to death. In Revelation Satan summons Gog. Gog was said to be a giant whom Alexander walled out. --Sometimes, however, Gog and Magog are spoken of as two giants. In Turkish they are called Cuc ve Mecuc or Ye'cuc ve Me'cuc.

²It is clear that the narrator of this tale thinks of Gog and Magog as two living creatures, not one creature + his territory.

³The reference here is to the present-day Soviet Socialist Republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia.

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of those people.

When Alexander the Great arrived in that region, the people living there pleaded with him: "We shall give you anything you wish if you will just save us from those two."

"No," answered Alexander, "I cannot accept any such payment. All I want from you is the labor of your bodies working as I shall direct." He ordered that the land stretching between two mountains be dug down to the water level, making a huge and deep ditch 11 kilometers long and fifty paces wide. In the original version, the opening was said to be one zara wide, which would be the same as fifty paces, and one fersah long.⁴ And the height of this wall, when it was finished, was to be two zaras, or about 100 paces. He had the ditch filled with trees, and atop the trees he had placed a heavy layer of iron and of earthenware pipes. And on top of all that he had a layer of copper placed. Then he had the wood set afire and the flames blown by many bellows until the fire became so hot that it fused all of these materials together. It became bronze.⁵

⁴The narrator's understanding of these older units of measurement is faulty. A zara is not fifty paces. Zara is a dialectal pronunciation of zira, which is a cubit, an ancient measure that varied between 18 and 22 inches. A fersah is a league, and a league varied between two and four miles; therefore a fersah cannot be equated with 11 kilometers, which would be roughly six miles.

⁵Bronze is not an alloy of copper and iron, which have vastly different melting points, but of copper and tin.

Story

The people there called Alexander, after that, Alexander the Wall Builder

In order to penetrate this wall, Gog and Magog would have to lick it every day with their tongues. When only a little of the thickness was left, after many days of licking, Gog and Magog said, "We are tired now. Let us leave it for today now and return again tomorrow." But each time that they did this, the wall grew back to its original thickness overnight.

But the Prophet Ali predicted that there would come a day when God would permit them to penetrate the wall and come through. Then they will suck all the oceans dry, and they will eat everything except stones and trees, and there will be no one who will be able to stop them.