Story 1479 (1989 Tape 10)   Narrator: Mustafa Şahin, 40,
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Building of the Kaaba[1]

When the Prophet Solomon had the Kaaba built, there were

no human beings living in that immediate area. He therefore

ordered jinns[2] and birds[3] to do the necessary work for the

construction of that building. But while the jinns and birds

were at work, Solomon himself departed from this world to the

next world.[4] Just before he died, however, Prophet Solomon

propped himself up with a stick. As a result of this arrange-

ment, the workers did not know of his death. They thought that

he continued standing there to observe their work, and so

continued with the construction until the Kaaba was completed.

[1]The small square shrine that houses the Black Stone at
Mecca. That Black Stone is considered by Moslems to be the
most sacred object in İslam.

[2]The word jinn suggests two very different kinds of super-
natural creatures. The first is the huge supernatural being
who comes forth from a bottle or appears in response to some
signal, such as the rubbing of a magic lamp or ring. This
creature then proceeds to give the caller supernatural or magic
aid to achieve what he wishes. The other kind of jinn is never
seen. It is a spiritual force referred to in some Sufi beliefs
and in other mystical systems.

[3]Solomon reputedly understood the languages of both birds
and animals. His reputed conversations with birds appear in
several Turkish folktales.

[4]Here, as in his other tales, the narrator does not say

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It took the jinns and birds more than 100 years to build the Kaaba. Just as soon as the building was finally completed, the stick which had been supporting the body of Prophet Solomon collapsed, and the prophet then fell to the ground. The jinns and birds then realized that he had changed worlds many years earlier

literally that the deceased "departed from this world for the next." He says simply that "he changed worlds."