

An Account of Dhu'l-Qarnayn

Al-Qutb al-Rawandi mentions that his name was Ayaash, and that after Nuh he was the first ruler whose kingdom included (all) the countries of the east and west. It must be clarified that there is a difference of opinion among the historians and commentators whether Dhu'l-Qarnayn was same as Alexander of Rome. According to authentic traditions it wasn't so.

Whether he was a Prophet or not is another point of difference. Actually he was not a Prophet, he was an honorable personality who was guided by the Almighty.

Why he is referred to as Dhu'l-Qarnayn is another topic of contention. There are many opinions in this regard. The first explanation is that he is named Dhu'l-Qarnayn (one having two 'qarns') is because at first the people hit him on his right side (qarn) of the head and killed him but the Almighty raised him, and again they hit him on his left side (qarn) and killed. Again Allah gave him life.

Second: He lived for two epochs.

Third: He had a pair of horns on his head, or two projections from his head resembling a pair of horns.

Fourth: His crown had two projecting branches.

Fifth: Both the sides of his head were extra strong.

Sixth: He had conquered the earth fully and his dominion stretched to the two limits.

Seventh: He had locks of hair hanging from both the sides of his head.

Eighth: Allah had given him power over light and darkness.

Ninth: He had a dream that he has gone to the heavens and was clinging to both the sides of the Sun.

Tenth: 'Qarn' stands for strength. Hence Dhu'l-Qarnayn had two 'Qarns' – strength and power, and the possessor of great influence on his kingdom.

“And they ask you about Dhu'l-Qarnayn. Say: I will recite to you an account of him. Surely We established him in the land and granted him means of access to everything. So he followed a course. Until when he reached the place where the sun set, he found it going down into a Black Sea, and found by it a people. We said, O Dhu'l-Qarnayn! Either give them a chastisement or do them a benefit. He said, As to him who is unjust, we will chastise him, then shall he be returned to his Lord, and He will chastise him with an exemplary chastisement: And as for him who believes and does good, he shall have goodly reward, and We will speak to him an easy word of

Our command. Then he followed (another) course. Until when he reached the land of the rising of the sun, he found it rising on a people to whom We had given no shelter from It; Even so! And We had a full knowledge of what he had. Then he followed (another) course. Until when he reached (a place) between the two mountains, he found on that side of them a people who could hardly understand a word. They said, O Dhu'l-Qarnayn! surely Gog and Magog make mischief in the land. Shall we then pay you a tribute on condition that you should raise a barrier between us and them He said, That in which my Lord has established me is better, therefore you only help me with workers, I will make a fortified barrier between you and them; Bring me blocks of iron; until when he had filled up the space between the two mountain sides, he said, Blow, until when he had made it fire, he said, Bring me molten brass which I may pour over it. So they were not able to scale it nor could they make a hole in it. He said, This is a mercy from my Lord, but when the promise of my Lord comes to pass He will make it level with the ground, and the promise of my Lord is ever true.” (18:83-98)

According to an authentic report the people didn't have the knowledge of how to construct houses.

Some historians say that they lived in the nude, as shall be explained later.

As regards the location of the mountains mentioned in the above ayats, some scholars opine that they are the mountains of Armenia and Azerbaijan. The northern part of these mountains falls in Turkistan.

Details concerning Gog and Magog state that the two giants were man-eaters.

The translation of the above ayats is in consonance of the view held by commentators.

Shaykh Muhammad bin Masud al-Ayyashi has reported in his tafsir that Asbagh bin Nubatah quotes from Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali when people asked him about Dhu'l-Qarnayn that, Dhu'l-Qarnayn was an exalted servant of Allah. His name was Ayaash. The Almighty selected him after the Deluge of Nuh and gave him suzerainty over the surrounding areas of Northwest Africa in the two centuries. The people hit him on the right and he was martyred by it. Then after a hundred years the Almighty raised him to life in the areas of East. This time the people hit him on the left side of his head and he was martyred. The Almighty raised him again after a hundred years and the lieu of the strokes he had suffered granted him a pair of outgrowths with a space between them. And gave him Kingship, Prophethood and miracle.

Then summoned him to the first heaven. When the curtains were removed from his sight he beheld all that was in the earth, like the mountains, deserts and passes. Dhu'l-Qarnayn saw everything and the Almighty bestowed him complete knowledge and he could discriminate between right and wrong. Allah strengthened his horns with a part of a heavenly cloud that contained darkness, thunder and lightening. Then he was sent back to the earth and commanded through revelation,

“Roam in the east and the west, We made easy for you the travel between cities. And We made the people subservient to your commands and instilled your fear in their hearts.”

Dhu'l-Qarnayn departed for the West end of the earth. As he traversed the lands he raised a loud

scream like the roar of a lion. His horns emitted darkness, thunder and lightening and all those who were inimical to him and tried to oppose were instantly killed. In a single day he reached to the end of the earth before the Sun could reach the West. (Before Sunset). All the people of the East and the West became subservient to his command as mentioned by Allah:

“Surely We established him in the land and granted him means of access to everything.” (18:84)

When the sun reached west he saw that it was setting in a hot spring and 70000 angels are tugging at the Sun with fiery chains on the surface of the sea towards the lands of East, in the same manner as a boat is towed. He went to the rising place of the sun and it began to shine on the people of the East as described by the Almighty.

Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali says that he came across a people who were burnt by the Sun. Their bodies and skins were scorched by sunlight. From here he (Dhu'l-Qarnayn) proceeded towards darkness and desolation until he reached a place between two great walls as mentioned by the Holy Qur'an. The inhabitants of that area complained to Dhu'l-Qarnayn that Gog and Magog lived between the two mountains and had wreaked havoc in the land. When the crops and orchards are ready for cultivation they crossed the barriers and devoured everything.

The people offered Dhu'l-Qarnayn annual tithes if he could construct a barrier to prevent the mischief of the two giants. Dhu'l-Qarnayn said that he was in no need of their tithe, but they should provide him labor for constructing the barrier.

“Collect ingots of iron,” commanded Dhu'l-Qarnayn. The people mixed iron ingots from a mountain and with these iron bricks constructed a wall across the chasm. Dhu'l-Qarnayn was the first person to construct a wall. Then he spread firewood on the ingots and ignited fire and left it for some time. Then he began to blow at it and when the iron melted, Dhu'l-Qarnayn called for molten brass. The people brought copper from the mountains and spread it on iron. The copper melted and mixed with iron and the wall was ready. Neither Yajooj (Gog) nor Majooj (Magog) could scale it. They could not even make a hole in this wall.

Dhu'l-Qarnayn was a righteous servant of Allah who commanded a high position and status. He loved the Almighty and worshipped Him with sincerity. The Almighty assisted him and provided for him means in the cities and settled him there. He was able to extend his kingdom to the countries of east and the west.

An Angel by the name of Raqail had befriended Dhu'l-Qarnayn and used to visit him frequently. He used to converse with Dhu'l-Qarnayn and the two shared their secrets.

One day Dhu'l-Qarnayn asked him about the worship of the inhabitants of the heavens and in what way was it comparable to the worship of the inhabitants of earth. The angel said, “Dhu'l-Qarnayn! The worship of earth is not equivalent to the space occupied by one stop in heavens. There are some angels

in the heavens that stand for prayers, they continue to stand forever, and similarly the angels that are in ruku (genuflection) remain in that position and do not even go into prostration. The angels who prostrate do not raise their heads.”

Dhu'l-Qarnayn was moved with this description and said,

“Raqail! I wish to live for such a long time that I can worship Allah to the extreme limits and as He deserves to be worshipped.”

“There is a divine spring on the earth, known as Ainul Hayaat (the essence of life)”, said Raqail, “And the Almighty has made incumbent upon Himself not to send death to a person who drinks from this spring. Till the person himself wishes for death. If you can reach this spring and drink from it, you can live as long as you like.”

“Where is it located?” asked Dhu'l-Qarnayn.

“I don't know, but I have heard in the heavens that the Almighty has created a huge darkness on earth that neither men nor jinn ever crossed, and it is beyond that darkness,” replied Raqail.

“Where is this darkness?” persisted Dhu'l-Qarnayn.

“I don't know,” said the angel and departed for the heavens.

Dhu'l-Qarnayn was very sad because though Raqail had informed him of the spring and the area of darkness but had not told him where it was located. He summoned all the scholars and Fuqaha (Jurisprudents) who had studied the heavenly books and seen the relics of Prophethood.

“Have you come across in the books of past rulers the fact that Allah has created a spring known as the spring of life on this earth?” he inquired.

“And He has vowed that he will not cause to die anyone who drinks from the spring until the person himself desires death?” he added.

We have no knowledge of it.” confessed the Scholars.

Then he asked, “Have you studied in any book about a dark area impossible for the men and jinn to traverse?”

When the people still failed to provide any information he became sorrowful because he could not unravel the mystery of the spring of life.

There was among the people a son of one of the legatees of some Prophets. When he saw the grief of Dhu'l-Qarnayn he said, “O king! You are asking them about something they have no knowledge of. I have the knowledge of it.”

Dhu'l-Qarnayn has elated and he jumped from his throne in joy. He called the young boy towards him and said, “Tell me what you know.”

“Yes,” agreed the youth, “I have read about it in the scripture of Adam that was written on the day different objects of the earth like, the spring and the tree were named. It is mentioned therein that there is a spring called “Ainul Hayaat” (spring of life). It is related to the divine decree, in the sense that whoever drinks from this spring will not die until he requests the Almighty for death. The spring is located in darkness where neither men or jinn ever entered.”

Dhu'l-Qarnayn was pleased to gain this knowledge and said, "My lad! Come closer, tell me, do you know where this darkness is located?"

"I have seen in a book of Adam," replied the young man, "that the said spring is towards the east."

Dhu'l-Qarnayn was pleased and he issued a royal decree among the people and summoned the scholars, doctors of religion and wise men. Around a thousand doctors, scholars and Jurisprudents gathered. Dhu'l-Qarnayn prepared to begin his journey accompanied with these personages and carried vast quantities of goods and provisions. He began his journey in the direction of sunrise (east). Crossing the oceans, passing the mountain and cities, traversing the forests for 12 years they reached the first darkness. It was pitch dark, darker than night and smoke. It was surrounding both edges of horizon. Dhu'l-Qarnayn alighted at the edge of this darkness and summoned the best of his scholars and advisors and told them, "I wish to cross this darkness."

All of them bowed in respect to him and said, "You wish to undertake something no one has ever dared to do. Not even the Prophets and messengers or the kings and rulers. No one has attempted such a thing."

Dhu'l-Qarnayn told them that it was necessary for him to cross it and search for his aim. They said, "We agree that if you cross this darkness you will achieve your aim. But we fear if you are confronted with such an eventuality that will take away your rulership or cause your death, the people of the earth will fall into terrible misery."

"Apart from crossing this darkness, I don't have any other option," said Dhu'l-Qarnayn and the people fell down in prostration and prayed, "O Lord! We implore You to dissociate us from this intention of Dhu'l-Qarnayn."

Dhu'l-Qarnayn said, "O scholars, tell me which animal has the sharpest eyes?"

"The virgin mare!" replied the scholars.

Dhu'l-Qarnayn selected 6000 virgin mares from his huge army and gave them to 6000 of his best soldiers. He put al-Khidhr in charge of 2000 riders and told him to take the lead. Then he ordered the first contingent to enter the darkness.

He followed them at the head of the remaining 4000 troops after instructing the remaining army to wait for him for 12 years at the same spot. If he does not return by then, they can go back to their cities or wherever they wished.

al-Khidhr addressed Dhu'l-Qarnayn and said, "O king! We are traveling through darkness, what if some people lose their way? How shall we find them?"

Dhu'l-Qarnayn gave him a spinel ruby that shone brilliantly as a torch and said, "Whenever someone is lost, you must throw this ruby on the earth. A sound will emanate from it and one who has lost his way will be able to join you."

al-Khidhr took the spinel ruby and marched forward into the darkness. al-Khidhr was leading the way and whenever he moved ahead after a halt, Dhu'l-Qarnayn camped at that same place. One day al-

Khidhr entered a haze and told his companions to wait outside and not to move from that place. Then he stepped down from his mount and tossed the ruby in the mist ahead of him. As he had dropped it in water it didn't emit a sound and continued to drop through the layers of water. al-Khidhr was worried that it might not sound through the water. But when the gem touched the bottom it emitted a sound that al-Khidhr followed its light. He crossed the layers of water and suddenly came upon a spring. Its water was white as milk, clear as ruby and sweeter than honey. al-Khidhr drank the water, washed his clothes and bathed in it. After dressing up again, he threw the spinal ruby towards the companions. It released a sound and he followed it and joined his companions. Mounting the animal he proceeded to his army.

Dhu'l-Qarnayn passed the same spot but he did not encounter the spring. He continued to walk in dark for forty nights before reaching light. But it neither like the light of sun nor moonlight. It was one of the radiance of the Lord. Then he reached a red desert with soft sand and pebbles like pearls. Suddenly he saw a huge palace, almost a parasang (4 kms) wide. Dhu'l-Qarnayn halted his army near the palace and entered it alone. He saw a huge iron bar, its edges hiding both ends of the palace. A black bird hung from this iron like ababeel.

"Who is it?" asked the bird when it heard the footsteps of Dhu'l-Qarnayn.

"I am Dhu'l-Qarnayn," he replied.

"Was the earth insufficient for you that you had to leave it behind and travel right up to the gate of my palace?" asked the black creature. The scene and the words of the hanging bird terrified Dhu'l-Qarnayn.

"Do not fear!" said the bird. "Just reply to my questions."

Dhu'l-Qarnayn agreed and it asked if the quantity of bricks and arc has increased in the earth. When Dhu'l-Qarnayn replied in the positive, it shuddered and grew up one third of the length of the iron. Dhu'l-Qarnayn was frightened. The bird again assured him and inquired further. He agreed to reply and asked if the people of earth have made technological progress. When he said, 'Yes,' it shivered and shook and grew up two third the size of iron.

The fear of Dhu'l-Qarnayn increased but it told him not to be afraid and to keep replying the questions put to him. This time when Dhu'l-Qarnayn told it to proceed with its queries, it asked. "Tell me, have people become accustomed to giving false testimonies?"

"Yes," replied Dhu'l-Qarnayn and the bird shook terribly increased in size and covered the iron. Dhu'l-Qarnayn was horrified. Again the creature reassured him and told him to continue answering its questions. When he gave a go-ahead the bird asked, "Have the people discarded the belief in the Oneness of Allah? Have they stopped reciting '*Laa ilaaha illallaah?*'" "No," replied Dhu'l-Qarnayn and the bird reduced to two thirds its size.

Dhu'l-Qarnayn was fearful. It said, "Do not be afraid, tell me..." and Dhu'l-Qarnayn agreed. "Have people stopped praying?"

"No," replied Dhu'l-Qarnayn. The bird reduced to one-third in size. Again this frightened Dhu'l-Qarnayn. The bird told him not to fear. "Keep answering my questions," it persisted. "All right go ahead," said

Dhu'l-Qarnayn.

“Have people given up the practice of taking a ritual bath of Janabah (Discharge of Semen, intercourse, etc.)?” “No,” said Dhu'l-Qarnayn and the bird returned to its original size.

Then Dhu'l-Qarnayn looked and saw a staircase going up the palace. The bird told him to go up. Dhu'l-Qarnayn ascended the stairs with terror in his heart. When he reached the top he saw a ceiling that stretched as far as the eye could see. Suddenly he saw a handsome youth dressed in white. It was a man. He was in the form of a human being, holding his head high he peered at the sky and his hand covered his mouth.

“Who is it?” he asked when he heard the footsteps of Dhu'l-Qarnayn. “It is Dhu'l-Qarnayn.” “O Dhu'l-Qarnayn,” said the man, “Was the earth that you left behind not vast enough for you that you came here?” “Tell me why you are holding your hand against your mouth?” asked Dhu'l-Qarnayn. “Dhu'l-Qarnayn! I am the one who would blow the trumpet. The day of the Resurrection Day is near. I am waiting for Allah's Command to blow the trumpet.”

Then he extended his hand threw an object like a stone towards Dhu'l-Qarnayn. “Take it, Dhu'l-Qarnayn, when it is hungry you'll be hungry too and when it is satiated, you also be satiated. Now go back.”

Dhu'l-Qarnayn picked the stone and returned to his companions and related the whole episode to them. He also showed them the stone and told them to find its weight. They brought a weighing scale, put the stone in one pan and another stone of similar size in the other pan. When they added another stone on the other side yet the stone of Dhu'l-Qarnayn weighed down the scale. They went on adding stones to counter it but even after putting one thousand stones the mystery stone was heavier.

“We cannot understand the mystery of this stone,” confessed the people. al-Khidhr said, “O king! You are asking them something of which they have no knowledge. I am having the knowledge about the stone.”

“Inform me of it,” requested Dhu'l-Qarnayn, “What is the secret of this stone?” al-Khidhr picked up the stone and put it in the weighing scale, and on the other side he kept a similar stone. Then he took a handful of dust and laid it on Dhu'l-Qarnayn's stone. Immediately its weight decreased and it became equal to ordinary stone.

Seeing this astounding phenomenon the people fell down in prostration. They said, “O King! It is something beyond our understanding and we know that al-Khidhr is not a magician. Then how is it possible that we could outweigh the stone with a thousand stones, whereas al-Khidhr outweighed it by putting a handful of earth on it.”

Dhu'l-Qarnayn told al-Khidhr to explain the mystery.

al-Khidhr said, “O Great King! Indeed the Commands of Allah have been promulgated among the

people. And His kingdom is surely going to wreak havoc upon them. His command discriminates between right and wrong. And indeed Allah has tested some people by some others. He has put to test the scholar through another scholar, the ignorant through an ignorant, and the scholar through an ignorant and the ignorant one through a scholar. Indeed I have been tested through you, and you, through me.”

Dhu’l-Qarnayn addressed al-Khidhr, “May Allah bestow His Mercy upon you. You say that Almighty tested me through you because you are more knowledgeable than I am but you are under my command. Allah’s Mercy be upon you, tell me the secret of this stone.”

“O king! The Angel with the trumpet has given you this stone as a parable. It means that the parable of human beings is as this stone. That even if a thousand stones are brought to satisfy it, they will not suffice him. But when it was covered with dust, it became satiated and it became equal to ordinary stones. You are also like this stone. The kingdom bestowed to you by Allah is obvious. But you were not satisfied with it. You wished for something no one else had wished before. You entered the area no man or jinn had ever dared to enter. It is human nature not to be satisfied until he is buried.”

Dhu’l-Qarnayn wept at the words of al-Khidhr. “You are right,” he said, “The parable is for me. After this I shall not aim for further conquests.”

Again they stepped into the darkness and started on their return journey. The hooves of the horses made a noise as if they were galloping on pebbles. The people asked Dhu’l-Qarnayn the reason for the mysterious sound. Dhu’l-Qarnayn told them to pick up as many pebbles as they can. “Those who gather them will be sorry and those who do not will be sorry too,” said he.

Some people collected the pebbles, some did not. When they emerged from the darkness they found that the pebbles were actually emeralds. Thus those who had not collected any regretted that they had not, and those who had collected regretted they had not collected more.

Dhu’l-Qarnayn returned towards the city of Al Jundal and continued to reside there until his last moments.

After narrating the incident Amir al-Mu’minin ‘Ali said, “May Allah have mercy upon my brother Dhu’l-Qarnayn. He did not commit any sin on the journey that he undertook. He had passed the valley of emeralds while heading into darkness he could have carried off all the pebbles because at that time he was more attached towards earthly life. As he came across the emeralds on his way back, he was not inclined towards them because the world had lost all attraction for him.”

Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq is quoted through authentic chains that Dhu’l-Qarnayn had constructed a casket of crystal glass. Then he carried a large quantity of provisions and along with the box boarded a hatch and set out to the sea. Upon reaching a spot in the middle of the ocean he sat in the glass casket and ordered that he be lowered into the sea. He instructed his men to haul him back when he tugged at the connecting rope. He told them to continue releasing the rope if he did not signal, as far as the rope continues. He continued descending into the sea for forty days. Suddenly he felt someone knocking at

the side of his cage and saying, “Dhu’l-Qarnayn! Where are you heading to?”

“I wish to visit the kingdom of my Lord under the sea like I have seen His kingdom in the deserts.” The person said, “At this very spot Nuh had dropped his axe during the deluge. It is yet to reach the bottom.” On hearing this Dhu’l-Qarnayn tugged the rope and was hauled out.

In an authentic hadith Imam Muhammad al-Baqir says that Amir al-Mu’minin ‘Ali said that the spot where Dhu’l-Qarnayn witnessed the setting of the Sun in a hot spring is located at the Jabulqa.

In another hadith of Amir al-Mu’minin ‘Ali the Almighty had sent clouds for Dhu’l-Qarnayn. He created causes for him and made wide his sight. He could see at night just as well as he could see during the day.

An authentic tradition says that Dhu’l-Qarnayn was a righteous servant of Allah – causes were created for him, the Almighty bestowed him dominion of all territories. He was informed of the ‘Spring of Life.’ He was told that anyone who drinks from this spring does not die until the blowing of the trumpet. Dhu’l-Qarnayn set out in search of this spring. He reached a place having 360 springs. al-Khidhr was leading the army. He was selected by Dhu’l-Qarnayn from among all his companions. al-Khidhr was the favorite of Dhu’l-Qarnayn, and was summoned by him along with a large number of soldiers. Dhu’l-Qarnayn gave each of them a salted dry fish and told them to wash it in the springs. Each one of them was instructed to wash his fish in a particular spring and not to allow others to wash their fish.

They separated and each man went to a particular spring and began to wash the fish. al-Khidhr proceeded to his spring and as he washed it, it became alive, slipped from his hand and dived into the water. When al-Khidhr saw this, he was amused. He took off his clothes and stepped into the water. After washing the clothes he bathed in the spring and drank from it. Then he tried to catch the fish that had escaped from him but couldn’t lay his hands on it. He returned with his companions to Dhu’l-Qarnayn. Dhu’l-Qarnayn ordered all the fishes to be taken back from his men. When the fishes were collected al-Khidhr’s fish was missing. When al-Khidhr was summoned he reported that the fish became alive and escaped into the water. He said though he had dived into the spring a number of times to retrieve the fish, he had failed.

“Did you drink the spring water?” asked Dhu’l-Qarnayn.

“Yes,” replied al-Khidhr.

Dhu’l-Qarnayn tried all means to search for the spring but did not succeed. At last he said to al-Khidhr, “The spring was destined for you. All my efforts are in vain.”

In a number of traditions, Imams have said that they are people like Yusha‘ and Dhu’l-Qarnayn who were not Prophets but they were having knowledge and could hear the angels.

A number of traditions of ‘Ali state that people asked the Messenger of Allah whether Dhu’l-Qarnayn was a Prophet or a king, and whether his horns were of gold or silver.

The Holy Prophet said, “Dhu’l-Qarnayn was a king and not a Prophet. His horns were neither of gold nor silver. He was a righteous servant of Allah. He loved the Lord and was loved by Him. He performed

many tasks for the Almighty and the Lord helped him in return. He was named Dhu'l-Qarnayn because he invited the people towards Allah. The people slashed one side of his head and martyred him. But Allah made him alive and sent him for a community. He again called them towards the Lord. These people hit him on the right side of his head. Therefore he was named Dhu'l-Qarnayn.

According to authentic reports Aswad Qadi says that he went to Imam Musa al-Ka'im. "The Imam had not seen me before. He asked me if I was from the people of the well. I said I was from the followers of the door of the doors. Again Imam asked the same question and replied in the same way. When he asked for the third time, I said, "Yes."

"It is the same wall that Dhu'l-Qarnayn had constructed," he said.

In a separate tradition Imam said that Dhu'l-Qarnayn became a king at the age of twelve and ruled for thirty years. ¹

Authentic chain of narrators quotes the following hadith from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir, "Dhu'l-Qarnayn went to hajj with six thousand riders. When he entered the holy precincts some of his companions went to the Ka'bah. When they returned they told him that they had seen the most handsome personality. "It is Ibrahim, the Khalil (friend) of Allah," informed the people.

When Dhu'l-Qarnayn heard this he ordered them to fit saddles on 60000 horses as fast as it takes to fit one saddle. Dhu'l-Qarnayn said, "I would not ride, I will go to Ibrahim on foot. So he came on foot and met Ibrahim. Ibrahim asked him how he has spent his life and how he traveled until there. He replied,

"Subh'aana man huwa baaqe laa yaghnii. Subh'aana man huwa a'alaemun laa yansaa. Subh'aana man huwa h'aafez'un laa yasqut'. Subh'aana man huwa bas'eerun laa qaabo. Subh'aana man huwa malekun laa yaraamo. Subh'aana man huwa moh'tajebun laa yuraa. Subh'aana man huwa waaseu'n laa yutakallefo subh'aana man huwa qaaemun laa yalhuwa. Subh'aana man huwa daaemun laa yasuha."

The Messenger of Allah says in a reliable report that Dhu'l-Qarnayn was a righteous person whom Allah had appointed as His proof upon the people. He called the people towards the true faith. And told them to refrain from sins. They slashed one side of his head with a sword and he disappeared from among them until they began to think that he has died. Although he had gone into the wilderness. Then he appeared and returned to the people. Again the unjust people hit him on the other side of his head.

"Indeed there is a man among you like Dhu'l-Qarnayn," added the Prophet .²

Then he said, "The Almighty Allah settled him in the Earth and imparted him control on everything. He reached the east and west extremities of the earth. The Almighty would very soon give a similar power to one of my descendants, that is al-Qa'im. He would also conquer the east and the west, and would not leave unconquered a single field, desert or mountain that Dhu'l-Qarnayn had. The Almighty will reveal the hidden treasures and mines for him, and instill his fear in the hearts of people. He would fill the earth with justice and equity in the same way as it would be filled with injustice and oppression.

Authentic chains mention that Imam Muhammad al-Baqir said that Dhu'l-Qarnayn was not a Prophet.

He was an exalted servant of Allah. He revered the Almighty and was loved by Him. He used to obey the Divine commands therefore the Almighty helped and assisted him and gave him authority on the soft and hard clouds. He mounted the soft cloud and traveled on it. Wherever he went he passed the people he conveyed his message so that they do not consider him a liar.

Another authentic hadith says that Dhu'l-Qarnayn was given power between two clouds. He took for himself the soft cloud and left the hard one for Imam al-Mahdi. When Imam was asked to explain 'hard cloud', he said a hard cloud is the one that has lightening and thunderbolts. al-Qa'im will ride such a cloud and visit the seven heavens and penetrate the seven earths, five layers of whom are populated and two are uninhabited and useless."

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq says that when Dhu'l-Qarnayn was given authority, he took the soft cloud and could not take the rigid one because the Almighty had stored it for Imam al-Mahdi.

We have already mentioned in the chapter of Ibrahim that the first two people to shake hands in this world were Ibrahim and Dhu'l-Qarnayn.

Traditions also mention that two believer kings have ruled upon the whole world. One was Dhu'l-Qarnayn and the other Sulayman. Imam says that Dhu'l-Qarnayn was 'Abdullah the son of Zahaaka son of Sa'd.

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir says that the Almighty did not send any Prophet to rule the earth after Nuh except the following four: Dhu'l-Qarnayn – whose name was Ayaash, Dawud, Sulayman and Yusuf. Ayaash became the king of all East and west. Dawud had his kingdom between Shamaat, Astakhra and Fars. In the same way was Sulayman. But Yusuf ruled from Egypt and its desert regions. He could not exceed beyond that.³

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq says in reliable narrations that when Dhu'l-Qarnayn passed the 'barrier' and entered the darkness he saw an Angel standing atop a mountain. The Angel was mammoth, measuring five hundred hands. He asked Dhu'l-Qarnayn if there was no way he could have gone in the other direction. When Dhu'l-Qarnayn asked him who he was? He said that he was an angel and that the Almighty had posted him at that mountain. And the foundations (roots) of all mountains were connected to that one." When the Almighty desires to rock a particular city he commands me and I shake its foundations from here."

Ibn Babawayh has mentioned a report from Wahab bin Munabbah that he said, "I have read in some books that when Dhu'l-Qarnayn accomplished the construction of the barrier he returned with his army. On his way he saw an aged person busy in prayers. Dhu'l-Qarnayn halted near him with his army until he finished his prayers. Dhu'l-Qarnayn asked him, "Why were you not frightened of my army when it stopped near you?"

"I was supplicating the One who has a much more powerful army than yours. And One whose kingdom is much greater than your rule. And One who is much stronger than you. If I had turned my attention towards you I would not have been able to seek His favor."

Dhu'l-Qarnayn asked him if he would accompany them so that he can involve him in his administration and seek his help in some affairs. The worshipper agreed upon the condition that Dhu'l-Qarnayn will bestow him four things: "One, a bounty that is never destroyed, secondly, a physical condition that is not affected by any disease. Thirdly, a youth that will never transform into old age. Fourthly, a life that does not end in death.

"Who can have control over all this?" asked Dhu'l-Qarnayn.

He said, "I am with the One who is having power over all these things and controls all the affairs. You are also in His control."

Dhu'l-Qarnayn then passed by a scholar. He asked Dhu'l-Qarnayn, "Tell what are those two things that still exist from the time Allah created them. And two things that continue and two things that always come after one another. And those two things that are mutual enemies.

Dhu'l-Qarnayn said, "The two things that remain established are the sky and the earth. The two things in motion are the moon and the sun. The two things that follow each other are day and night. The two things that are enemies of each other are life and death."

"You may proceed on your way. You are a wise man," said the scholar.

Dhu'l-Qarnayn was going around the cities when he came across an old man. He had collected human skulls and was turning them around in two hands and inspecting them closely. Dhu'l-Qarnayn stopped with his army and asked him why he was turning the skulls around. He replied that by this action of his he wanted to know which of them had been noble, and which of them stylish, which were the rich ones and who were poverty stricken.

"I am studying these skulls for 20 years but still cannot make out the difference," he said. Dhu'l-Qarnayn moved ahead saying, "He only wanted to warn me that's all."

On his excursions around the earth he reached a community of Musa. These people practiced utmost justice. Dhu'l-Qarnayn said, "Tell me about yourself. For I have visited the east and the west, the deserts, mountains and plains, the light and darkness. But I have never seen people like you. Why have you made the graves of your dead right opposite the entrance of your houses?"

"So that we may never forget death," they replied.

"Why have you not fixed doors to your houses?" asked Dhu'l-Qarnayn.

"Because we have no thieves and cheats. All of us are trustworthy."

"Why didn't you have any officers and administrators?"

"We do not oppress each other," they said.

"Why are there no rulers amongst you?"

"Because we do not fight among ourselves."

"Why are there no kings among you?"

"Because we do not exploit each other."

"Why is there no disparity among the people as regards their economical condition?"

"Because we consider all people equal and we distribute equally all the excess profits. And we have

mercy upon each other.”

“Why are there no disputes and controversies among you?”

They said, “Because we are loyal to each other and we do not have corruption.”

“Why don’t people murder and imprison each other?”

“We have control over ourselves with correct intentions, we have guided ourselves with forbearance and self-respect.”

“How come you have the same opinion and correct way of doing things?”

“Because we never lie.” And we do not backbite and criticize each other.”

“How can you account for the complete absence to the poor and destitute among you?”

“It is so because we distribute our wealth equally.”

“Why are there no vicious and cruel people among you?”

“Because we have made humility and lowliness as our symbols.”

“Why are your life-span greater than ordinary people?”

“Because we fulfill the rights of each other and rule with justice. We do not oppress.”

“Why do you never experience famines?”

“Because we never forgo repentance.”

“Why are you never sorrowful or aggrieved?”

“We control ourselves during calamities and console ourselves in difficult times.”

“Why do disasters never strike you or your property?”

“Because we do not rely on anyone but Allah and we do not consider the stars as causes of calamities. We regard all affairs from our Lord.”

Dhu’l-Qarnayn asked them if they had seen their forefathers practicing the same things.

“Yes,” they replied, “Our elders were also kind to the destitute, behaved equitably with the beggars. If someone oppressed them, they forgave. If someone did evil to them, they responded with goodness. They did not pilfer the trusted property. They spoke the truth and refrained from lying. Because of all this, Allah improved their conditions.”

After having acquired all the information, Dhu’l-Qarnayn decided to settle among them. He remained there until the time his soul departed for the heavenly abode. His age was 500 years.

According to ‘Ali ibn Ibrahim, Imam Ja‘far as-Sadiq said, “The Almighty Allah sent Dhu’l-Qarnayn upon his people. The people hit the right side of his head with a sword. As a result of which the Almighty caused him to die but made him alive after 500 years and again sent him among the people. This time they hit him on the left side of his head. He was again martyred. Again after a period of 500 years, the Almighty gave him life and sent him to the same people. Allah bestowed him the kingdom that stretched from the East to the West. When he reached Yajooj and Majooj he constructed a barrier between them and the people (who were troubled by them). The barrier consisted of molten iron, copper, bronze and bitumen. It confined Yajooj and Majooj to the valley.”

“Neither Yajooj nor Majooj would have died until they each had produced a thousand sons each. They are the first to be created after the Angels. Then Dhu’l-Qarnayn followed a cause.

He followed a guide until he reached the place of the rising sun. He saw a community of nudes. They were ignorant of the method of wearing clothes.

Then he went with a guide and came at the mouth of a valley. The people petitioned him against the atrocities of Yajooj and Majooj and requested him to construct a barrier and confine them to the valley. Dhu'l-Qarnayn ordered them to collect slabs of iron and he raised a high wall of these iron bricks across the mouth of the valley. Then he ordered a fire to be lit below the wall that heated the iron pieces red. Then he ordered bronze to be melted and spread upon the wall. Thus the wall was complete. Dhu'l-Qarnayn said, "It is the mercy of my Lord. When His promise is fulfilled He shall raze the barrier to the ground. And the promise of my Lord is true."

Imam said that in the last period of time when the Resurrection Day would be near, Yajooj and Majooj shall emerge from the barred valley and devour human beings.

Then Dhu'l-Qarnayn proceeded towards the western extremity of the earth. He roared like a lion in every town and caused lightening, thunder, and darkness. All those who opposed him and were inimical to him were destroyed by these supernatural phenomena. He had yet to reach the western horizon when all the people of the east and the west accepted his suzerainty. Then he was told of a Divine Spring on the earth. It is known as 'Ainul Hayaan'. If a living being drinks from this spring he will remain alive until the blowing of the trumpet.

Upon getting this information Dhu'l-Qarnayn summoned al-Khidhr who was the best among his companions. He sent for al-Khidhr along with 359 of the best soldiers. He then gave each of them a dried salted fish, and told them to proceed to a designated place that had 360 springs. Each of them was ordered to wash his particular fish in a separate spring. They set for the place commanded by Dhu'l-Qarnayn and each one headed for one spring. When al-Khidhr dipped his fish in the spring it became alive and escaped into the water. al-Khidhr was amazed and stepped into the water in pursuit of the fish. He drank some of the spring water. When they all returned to Dhu'l-Qarnayn he said, "The water of that spring was in your destiny."

Ibn Babawayh has narrated from 'Abdullah bin Sulayman that he said, "I have come across the fact in some heavenly books that Dhu'l-Qarnayn belonged to Alexandria. His aged mother also belonged to the same place and that he was her only son. He was known as Iskandari. Since the time of his childhood, he was kind, well-mannered, good natured and a person with pure character. Till he reached adulthood. He dreamt that he had reached near the sun and both its edges (Qarn) were under his control. When he related the dream to his people they named him 'Dhu'l-Qarnayn' (Possessor of two 'Qarns') (Sides/edges).

After this dream he acquired more courage and became famous and powerful among his people. Since he was obedient to the Lord of the scholars and he was a Muslim, the first thing that he decided to do was to call the people towards Islam. The majority of the people accepted Islam due to his dominant personality. He ordered the people to build a Mosque. The people accepted his suggestion willingly.

Dhu'l-Qarnayn said that the length of the Mosque should be 400 hands and the breadth 200 hands. Each of the walls should be 22 hands thick and 100 hands high. The people asked him where they can obtain wood that can bear the weight of the walls. And the wood that shall serve as the foundation of these walls. The people also had no idea how they would be able to construct such a high ceiling. Dhu'l-Qarnayn told them that when they finish the construction of two wells they should fill it with mud and earth until the upper edges of the walls. Then they should collect gold and silver according to the capacity of people. The gold and silver (powder) should be mixed thoroughly with the earth filled in the Mosque.

After this the ceiling can be laid upon the walls. It may consist of copper or brass or any other material selected by the people. After the ceiling is complete the poor and needy people can be permitted to carry out the mud from within. Since it would contain gold and silver filings, the needy people will be eager to participate in the emptying of the mud.

Thus the people followed the directions of Dhu'l-Qarnayn. The Mosque was built and the ceiling constructed. The needy people earned gold and silver and became self-sufficient.

Dhu'l-Qarnayn divided his army into four battalions. Each battalion consisted of 10000 soldiers. Then he spread them in different towns and decided to visit the different places. When his people learnt of the intention they came to him together and said, "Dhu'l-Qarnayn! By Allah we assure you, you shall never be deprived of our service. So do not go and settle in some other city because we are more entitled to your company. You were born at this place and bred and brought up here. All our wealth and property is for your sake. Order us whatever you want. Your mother has also become aged. She has more rights on you than any other person. It is not appropriate that you disobey and oppose her."

"By Allah!" said Dhu'l-Qarnayn, "What you say is true. Your advice is reasonable. But my condition is that of a person whose heart, eyes and flesh have been possessed. Murder is in front of him and he is chased from behind. He does not know where he is being taken and for what purpose. But come! Let us all enter this mosque together and (you all) become Muslims. Do not oppose or you shall be destroyed." He summoned the villagers and the wealthy ones of Alexandria and advised them to frequent the Mosque, and consoled his mother on his separation.

After these requests and advices Dhu'l-Qarnayn departed from his city. His mother was aggrieved and wept much. Her weeping did not decrease even with the passage of time. A villager thought of a scheme to console the old woman. He organized a grand feast and commissioned a town crier to inform the villagers of it. All the people were invited. But on the appointed day it was announced that only those who have not suffered any grief can participate in the feast. Only those who are immune from every difficulty and distress may attend. The people stood up and said, "None of us are absolutely free of troubles and stress. All of us have suffered the sorrow of the death of some friend or relative. When the mother of Dhu'l-Qarnayn heard all these, she found it interesting but she was unaware of the intention of the villager who had organized the event.

After a few days the same villager organized a feast. This time he told the town-crier to announce that only those people can attend who have some problem or the other. Those who are free from troubles cannot attend the feast. And neither can those who are not aggrieved or sorrowful. Because one who has no trouble has no goodness.

When the people heard this announcement they remarked that the villager had previously acted miserly and that now he had regretted his mistake and wished to rectify himself and conceal his defect. The people gathered and this villager delivered a sermon. He said, "I have not called you for a feast. I wish to speak about Dhu'l-Qarnayn. And discuss the grief that we all experience due to his absence, and the fact that we are not able to serve him.

Remember Adam whom Allah created by his powerful hands and blew His spirit into him. Then He ordered the Angels to prostrate before him. He settled Adam in the Garden and bestowed him with the virtues not bestowed on any other creature. Then He subjected him to the most severe calamity and sent him out of the Garden. No difficulty is as serious as that of Adam. Then Ibrahim underwent the torment of being thrown into the fire and of obeying the command to slaughter his son – Ya'qub faced the sorrow – Yusuf bore the trouble of being enslaved – Ayyub was subjected to a terrible disease – Yahya was afflicted and Zakariyya martyred – 'Isa was arrested – Except Allah no one knows the number of people who have suffered something or the other. Come let us go and console the mother of Alexander. Let us see how much patience she has. Because she is the most aggrieved one due to her son's separation."

So all the people went to the old lady and asked if she had attended the gathering and heard the sermon. She said that she saw everything that had occurred and heard every word of the speech. "There was no one among you who was more aggrieved than me," she said. "Now Allah has given me patience and satisfied me. He has strengthened my heart. I have faith that my reward shall be proportionate to my grief. And also hope for your reward that you deserve in lieu of your sorrow for your brother. And I also hope for the reward that you have earned for consoling and comforting his mother, and hope that Allah would forgive me and you all and have mercy on you and me."

The people witnessed the formidable patience of this wise lady they returned to their homes. Dhu'l-Qarnayn continued to travel towards the west and had come quite far. Hence by this time his soldiers were weary and disheveled. The Almighty sent him a revelation that he was the Proof of Allah upon all the creatures of the east and the west. And that it was the interpretation of his dream.

"My Lord you wish to give me such a great responsibility and except for You no one is aware of its greatness," said Dhu'l-Qarnayn. "How can I face and vanquish the great army without proper manpower and equipment? How can I make them obedient to me? Where is the patience to bear their oppression? Where is the tongue to speak to them? How can I understand the various languages? Where is the hearing capability to listen to them? Where are the eyes to see them and where is the courage to confront them? Where is the perception to understand their desires? Where is the wisdom to solve their

problems? Where is the forbearance to bear their injustices and remain patient? Where is the justice to judge them? Where is the recognition (Ma'refah) to rule over them? Where is the army to conquer them? Verily! I do not possess a single quality.

Hence bestow me power over them. Certainly, you are a Kind Lord. You do not impose a duty beyond ones capacity. Neither do You impose a burden exceeding ones strength.”

The Almighty revealed to him that he would be given the strength and power soon to carry out the responsibility entrusted to him. The Lord said, “I shall expand your breast so that you can hear everything, and widen your understanding. So that you understand everything. I shall bestow the power to your tongue so that you can speak to everything. I shall make the affairs easy for you. You will not lose anything and I will guard your affair. So that nothing is hidden from you. I shall strengthen your back so that you are not fearful of any kind of danger. I wish to bestow such a personality that you will not fear anything. I will make your advice acceptable. So that you may not make a mistake. I shall subdue your body to you so that you can feel every type of emotion. I shall give you authority over light and darkness and they will serve you as two armies. The light shall guide you and show you the way. The darkness shall protect you and gather the communities from behind you and bring them in front of you.”

Thus Dhu'l-Qarnayn set out with the message of his Lord. The Almighty helped him and fulfilled all his promises. He set out towards the place where the sun sets. No community came in contact with him but that he invited them towards truth. Dhu'l-Qarnayn was satisfied with those who accepted faith but appointed darkness upon those who refused to believe. The darkness would darken their cities, villages, houses and buildings. It penetrated and filled their nose, mouth and bellies. They remained in a state of shock for sometime and then ultimately accepted invitation towards belief. They came in submission to him at last.

Finally, Dhu'l-Qarnayn reached the place where the sun sets. Here a group of people came to him then in the same way as he had with the people he had encountered before. Thus, he completed the conquest of the west. During his campaign he met so many different tribes that only Allah knows the magnitude. He was bestowed with such strength and splendor that no one can achieve except by the Grace of Allah.

His army become peopled with soldiers of different linguistic areas and various sensualities also struck his men. He traveled in the darkness for eight days and nights until he reached a large mountain that had covered a large area. Suddenly he sighted an Angel who clung to the mountain and recited:

Subh'aana rabbi minal aane ilaa muntahaddahare

Subh'aana rabbi min awwaliddunyaa ilaa aakherhaa

Subh'aana rabbi min mauz'le' kafee ilaa a'rshe

Subh'aana rabbi min muntahaz'a'olomate ilannoore.

When Dhu'l-Qarnayn heard these words he went into prostration and did not lift his head until the

Almighty gifted him the strength to see that world.

The Angel asked him how he had achieved such power that he reached the place where no man has ever stepped.

Dhu'l-Qarnayn said, "I have received the capability to reach this place from the same One Who has subdued this mountain to you. One Who surrounds all the earth."

"You are right," said the Angel, "If this mountain had not been there the earth would have shook with its inhabitants and smothered them. There is no mountain larger than this on the face of the earth. And this is the first mountain to have been created by Allah for this earth. The peak of this mountain touches the first heaven. Its roots reach up to the seventh layer below the earth and surround the whole earth like a circle. The root (foundations) of every city is connected to this mountain. When Allah desires to send an earthquake to a particular area He sends a revelation upon me and I shake the roots of that area. Thus the area has an earthquake."

Before returning Dhu'l-Qarnayn requested this Angel to give him some moral advice. The Angel said, "Do not be aggrieved for your sustenance. Do not postpone today's job for tomorrow. Do not shed tears on something that you have lost. Be helpful and hospitable. Do not be insolent. Do not be arrogant and oppressive."

After receiving this advice Dhu'l-Qarnayn returned to his companions. Then he directed his mighty splendor towards East. And whenever he came across people he invited them towards Allah and guided in the same way as he had guided the people of the West. He made them obedient like the inhabitants of the western region. After completing the mission of East and West he turned his attention towards the valley that finds a mention in the Holy Qur'an. He met a people who did not understand any language. Beyond the valley lived another community that was known as Yajooj and Majooj.

These creatures resembled the quadrupeds. They ate and drank and had children. They had females and males and their physical features resembled the human beings. But they were much smaller than human beings. Like children, they did not exceed five spans. All of them were created and wore neither clothes nor shoes. Each had a hump like camels. It protected them from cold and heat. They had two ears. One of the ears was covered with hair from the outside as well inside and the other ear had humps. Instead of nails they had claws like animals, and had fangs and jaws. When they slept they spread out one ear and covered themselves with the other from head to toe. Their food consisted of fishes that rained from a cloud every year. This enabled them to lead a comfortable life. When it was time for the fishes to rain they would wait in expectation like people await the rains. When they received the rain of fishes their conditions improved and they prospered.

They bred quickly and their population increased. The fishes lasted them a whole year and they did not feed on anything else. Their population increased so much that only Allah knows its magnitude. If they did not get fish in a particular year there was famine. They used to starve to death and their progeny perished as a result. They walked like the quadrupeds and mated wherever they went. In the year they

did not get rain of fish they would head towards the towns and wreaked havoc wherever they struck and did not spare anything. Their scourge was worst than that of locusts and hailstorms.

Wherever they attacked the inhabitants deserted their homes and fled from that area, because no one could confront them. When they attacked a particular area they covered it so completely that no one could stop them. No creature of Allah know their population. It was not possible to look at them or go near them because they were extremely dirty and despicable. That's why they could subdue the people. When they rushed towards a town they made a sound akin to a storm traveling at the speed of hundred parasangs and heavy rain. This was due to their sheer number. When they fell upon a city their buzzing resembled that of the bees or rather more intense that nothing could be heard beyond that din. All the animals fled the land ravaged by these creatures. For they filled the whole area and did not leave any space for other creatures. An astonishing fact was that each of them knew the time of their death. Because neither the male nor the female died until it had produced a thousand offspring. When the number of their offspring reached a thousand they knew they had to die. It used to leave the herd and spread out its hands and legs to die.

They appeared in the time of Dhu'l-Qarnayn and destroyed city after city. They aimed at each community and forced the people out of their homes. They did not turn from wherever they aimed and neither did they look left or right. When this particular community heard their sound approaching they came to Dhu'l-Qarnayn and petitioned him saying, "We have heard that whatever you have been bestowed by Allah is like rulership and kingship. You possess a forceful personality and have been helped by darkness and light and the armies of the earth. We happen to reside in the neighborhood of Yajooj and Majooj. Between us and them is a mountain and nothing else. Between the two mountains is a pass. If they attack us they will drive us out of our houses. We cannot withstand their attack. They have a teeming population. They look like humans but they move about here and there and graze. But they can attack and kill like carnivorous animals. They eat anything that has life, including snakes and scorpions. None of the creatures can equal their population. We know that one day they would cover the whole earth and purge it of its entire people. They would spread corruption in the earth. All the time we dread their attack through the mountain pass. The Almighty has given you strength and might, not given to any other person. Shall we collect some donations to offer you tithe? So that you may build a barrier between us?"

Dhu'l-Qarnayn said, "Whatever Allah has gifted me is better than your contribution. But you can help by providing manpower so that I can accomplish the task of constructing a barrier. Get me iron slabs."

"Where can we get so much iron and copper to build the wall?" they asked.

Dhu'l-Qarnayn informed them of iron and copper mines. When they asked him as to how they could cut the metal, Dhu'l-Qarnayn guided them towards another mine that produced a material called saamoor. Saamoor was extremely white and it melted any metal it came in contact with. The people made some mining tools with it and the same types of tools were used by Sulayman to cut the slabs of stone for construction of Jerusalem. The jinn had brought these instruments for Sulayman.

Thus the people brought to Dhu'l-Qarnayn all the iron and copper that was sufficient to build the barrier. The iron was melted and shaped like slabs. Instead of bricks the wall was raised with these iron slabs. In place of cement and mortar molten copper was poured between the iron slabs. There was a distance of one parasang between two parallel mountains.

Dhu'l-Qarnayn first commanded that a foundation be dug for building the wall. The people dug until they reached water. The thickness of the barrier was one mile. After laying the iron bricks they melted the copper into a thin liquid and poured it over the iron wall. It seemed as if it was a single piece. The barrier touched the mountains on either side. It shone like a red and black fabric due to iron and copper.

Yajooj and Majooj come near this wall every year because they tour different areas. But when they reach the barrier they could not traverse it and thus go back from where they had come. They will continue this practice every year until time for the Resurrection Day nears. One of the signs of the Resurrection Day is the reappearance of al-Qa'im of the Progeny of Muhammad. The Almighty will open the barrier. As mentioned in the Holy Qur'an:

“...when Gog and Magog are let loose and they shall break forth from every elevated place.”⁴

1. It is possible that he ruled for thirty years prior to his martyrdom or occultation. Or it might have been after that. It was during the time when he ruled over the world that is referred in this tradition. Thus, it does not contradict the other traditions.

2. He meant Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali

3. Dhu'l-Qarnayn is mistaken for a Prophet probably because he was an undisputed ruler and is always mentioned among Prophets. It is possible he had two names, Ayyashi and 'Abdullah.

4. After this is mentioned all that we have narrated in the tradition of Wahab. We have refrained from repeating it. However, we must know that all the things mention in these two narrations that do not match with the information of previous traditions are not reliable.

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