



*Introductory Salafi  
Themes in the  
Interpretation of  
Visions and Dreams*

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**SALAFĪ THEMES IN INTERPRETING VISIONS AND DREAMS<sup>1</sup>**  
**VOL.1**

# Introductory Salafī Themes in Interpreting Visions and Dreams<sup>2</sup>

*By Shaykh Abū ‘Ubaydah Mashhūr bin Hasan Āl Salmān  
and  
Shaykh Abū Talhah ‘Umar bin Ibrāheem Āl ‘AbdurRahmān*

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<sup>1</sup> This series will be based on: Abū ‘Ubaydah Mashhūr bin Hasan Āl Salmān and Abū Talhah ‘Umar bin Ibrāheem Āl ‘AbdurRahmān, *al-Muqaddimāt al-Mumahhidāt as-Salafiyāt fī Tafseer ar-Ru’yah wa’l-Manamāt* (Abu Dhabi: Maktabah Dār al-Imām Mālik, 1426 AH/2005 CE).

<sup>2</sup> Abridged and summarised from Abū ‘Ubaydah Mashhūr bin Hasan Āl Salmān and Abū Talhah ‘Umar bin Ibrāheem Āl ‘AbdurRahmān, *al-Muqaddimāt al-Mumahhidāt as-Salafiyāt fī Tafseer ar-Ru’yah wa’l-Manamāt* (Abu Dhabi: Maktabah Dār al-Imām Mālik, 1426 AH/2005 CE), pp.7-120.

## *Contents*

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 3   | Translator's Preface  |
| 20  | Introduction  |
| 31  | The Importance of the Science of Vision and Dream Interpretation and the Concern the Scholars have for it                                     |
| 40  | Examples of the Great Influence of Dreams and the Regulations and Benefits They Include   |
| 63  | The Linguistic and Divinely Legislated Definitions of 'Visions', 'Dreams' and 'Interpretation' and a Refutation of Those who Deny its Reality |
| 67  | The Difference between a 'Vision' and a 'Dream'   |
| 83  | The Imān of the Arabs in Visions, Dreams and Their Effects  |
| 87  | The Principles of the People of Knowledge in Interpreting Dreams  |
| 100 | The Ruling on Reading Books on Dream Interpretation and Relying on them for Interpretation  |

## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

Indeed, all praise is due to Allāh, we praise Him, we seek His aid, and we ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allāh from the evil of our actions and from the evil consequences of our actions. Whomever Allāh guides, there is none to misguide and whoever Allāh misguides there is none to guide. I bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship except Allāh and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and Messenger of Allāh.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

**“O you who have believed, fear Allāh as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims (in submission to Him).”**

{*Āli-ʿImrān* (3): 102}

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا

زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ

وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا﴾

**“O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women. And fear Allāh through whom you ask things from each other, and (respect) the wombs. Indeed Allāh is ever, over you, an Observer.”**

{*an-Nisā'* (4): 1}

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا﴾

يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ  
فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٣﴾

“O you who have believed, fear Allāh and speak words of appropriate justice. He will amend for you your deeds and forgive your sins. And whoever obeys Allāh and His Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.”

{*al-Abzāb* (33): 70-71}

To proceed:

This is a summary of the first three chapters of the outstanding book by our two Shaykhs from Jordan Abū 'Ubaydah Mashhūr bin Hasan Āl Salmān and Abū Talhah 'Umar bin Ibrāheem Āl 'AbdurRahmān, *al-Muqaddimāt al-Mumabhidāt as-Salafiyāt fī Tafseer ar-Ru'yab wa'l-Manamāt* [Well-Arranged Salafī Introductions in the Interpretation of Visions and Dreams] (Abu Dhabi, UAE: Maktabah Dār al-Imām Mālik, 1426 AH/2005 CE). Abū Hayyān Salāl bin 'AbdulGhafūr and myself are currently in the process of completing our translation of the chapters on ‘**The Regulations for Seeing Allāh in a Dream**’ and ‘**The Regulations for Seeing the Prophet (sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam) in a Dream**’ which hopefully, by Allāh’s permission, will be printed and published. There are only about two existing reliable works *by Muslims* on the topics of visions, dreams and interpretation in Islām which are available in English namely:

- ✓ Dr Muhammad bin Mustafa al-Jibāly - his work however, despite being the most detailed that exists in the English language which is available for Muslims still falls short in many aspects. For the first 100 pages of the book is nothing to do with visions and dreams and is rather focused on sleep etiquettes and so forth! It also left out much more in terms of the detailed academic background of the science and was a basic work for the average Muslim to digest. Yet with that, it is still by far the most detailed work in English on the topic by a Muslim.
- ✓ Dr Abū Ameenah Bilal Philips – his work was a somewhat brief general overview on the topic and merely covered some general topics, yet did not delve deep into the subject. The book was also devoid of referring to the wealth of books and views on the issue that was captured in Jibāly’s later book.

Anwār al-Awlakī<sup>1</sup> – produced a set of audio lectures of the subject of dreams and their interpretation. Again, it provides a much generalised look at some of the main themes yet does not refer to the depth that the 'Ulama highlighted. It is also evident that he is merely reading from other works such as Ibn Qutaybah and others as opposed to producing anything detailed or any research as a student of knowledge. He also fails to refer to the abundance of *abādeeth* on dreams, the works of the 'Ulama on the subject and as he is not a scholar, even though he has been propped up and made out to be one, he neglects mentioning some vital points in regards to the science.

The above three works also contain very little at all about how the Islamic Oneirocritic<sup>2</sup> tradition and method has attracted interest from all religions and societies and led to a wealth of academic study and research. This translation however hopes to fill that void by showing how there is a wealth of research into dreams all over the world and that the Muslim vision and dream tradition provides the most detailed and critical study of the phenomena from among humanity. Indeed, Dr Kelly Bulkeley<sup>3</sup> stated in

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<sup>1</sup> For a critique of him refer to this paper by the salafimanhaj.com research team: [http://www.salafimanhaj.com/pdf/SalafiManhaj\\_Awlaki](http://www.salafimanhaj.com/pdf/SalafiManhaj_Awlaki)

<sup>2</sup> A word used for the science of dream and vision interpretation.

<sup>3</sup> In terms of serious studies into dreams and their nuances then the most active Western writer and researcher on the topic is Dr Kelly Bulkeley who has praised the Islamic tradition of vision interpretation for its detail. Thus, there is evidently not many other Western researchers who have conducted as much study into visions and dreams as Dr Bulkeley. Among the works that Dr Bulkeley has authored are:

- ✓ *Dreaming in the Worlds Religions: A Comparative History* (New York University Press, 2008)
- ✓ *American Dreamers: What Dreams Tell Us About the Political Psychology of Conservatives, Liberals and Everyone Else* (Beacon Press, 2008)
- ✓ *Dreaming Beyond Death: A Guide to Pre-Death Dreams and Visions* By Kelly Bulkeley and the Rev. Patricia Bulkeley (Beacon Press, 2005)
- ✓ (editor), *Soul, Psyche, Brain: New Directions in the Study of Religion and Brain-Mind Science* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005)
- ✓ *The Wondering Brain: Thinking About Religion With and Beyond Cognitive Neuroscience* (Routledge, 2004)
- ✓ *Dreams of Healing: Transforming Nightmares into Visions of Hope* (Paulist Press, 2003)
- ✓ (Ed.) *Dreams: A Reader on Religious, Cultural, and Psychological Dimensions of Dreaming* (Palgrave, November 2001)
- ✓ *Visions of the Night: Dreams, Religion, and Psychology* (Albany, New York: State of New York University Press, 1999)
- ✓ *An Introduction to the Psychology of Dreaming* (Praeger, 1998)
- ✓ *Among All These Dreamers: Essays on Dreaming and Modern Society.* (Edited anthology) SUNY, 1996

*Meaning of Dreams in Islām: Reflections on the Dream Traditions of Islām* (California: Graduate Theological University, Santa Clara University, December 2001 – also in the journal *Sleep and Hypnosis*, vol.4, no.2, 2002):

**Nothing emerged in Judaism or Christianity to rival the breadth and sophistication of this tradition and it is an open question whether any civilisation from India, China or anywhere else ever matched the richness of classical Islamic dream knowledge...Islam has historically shown greater interest in dreams than either of the other two traditions...**

Professor Iain Edgar, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Anthropology at *Durham University* stated at the *Cheltenham Science Festival* on Friday 6 June 2009:

**Islam is probably the largest night dream culture in the world today. The night dream is thought to offer a way to metaphysical and divinatory knowledge, to be a practical alternative and accessible source of inspiration and guidance, to offer clarity concerning action in this world.**

Hence, the science of vision and dream interpretation in Islām has attracted research by non-Muslims and others of the Western academic tradition:

- ✓ Mohsen Ashtiany (ed.), *Dreaming Across Boundaries: Interpretation of Dreams in Islamic Lands* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008)
- ✓ Nathaniel Bland, “On the Muhammadan Science of Tabir or Interpretation of Dreams” in *The Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1856), vol.16, pp.118-171.
- ✓ Kelly Bulkeley, Kate Adams, and Patricia M. Davis (eds.), *Dreaming in Christianity and Islam: Culture, Conflict, and Creativity* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2009).
- ✓ Henri Corbin, “The Visionary Dream in Islamic Spirituality” in G.E. von Grunebaum and Roger Caillois (eds.), *The Dream and Human Societies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966).
- ✓ Iain R. Edgar (Senior Lecturer of Anthropology at the *University of Durham*), “Overtures of Paradise: Night Dreams and Islamic Jihadist Militancy” in the

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- ✓ *Spiritual Dreaming: A Cross-Cultural and Historical Journey* (Paulist Press 1995)
  - ✓ *The Wilderness of Dreams: Exploring the Religious Meanings of Dreams in Modern Western Culture* (SUNY, 1994)



- German journal *Curare: Journal of Medical Anthropology* (2008), vol.31, no.1, pp.87-97.<sup>1</sup>
- ✓ Iain R. Edgar, “The ‘True Dream’ in Contemporary Islamic/Jihadist Dreamwork: A Case Study of the Dreams of Mullah Omar”. In the journal *Dreamtime* (2008), vol.25, no.1: pp.4-6, 34-36.
  - ✓ Iain R. Edgar, “The Inspirational Night Dream in the Motivation and Justification of Jihad”. *Left Curve* (2008) no. 32, pp. 27-34.
  - ✓ Iain R. Edgar, “The ‘true dream’ in contemporary Islamic/Jihadist dreamwork: a case study of the dreams of Taliban leader Mullah Omar” in the journal *Contemporary South Asia* (2006), vol.15, no.3, pp.263-272.<sup>2</sup>
  - ✓ Iain R. Edgar, “Encountering the ‘true dream’ in Islam: A Journey to Turkey and Pakistan” in *British Academy Review* (2006), vol.9, pp. 7-9.
  - ✓ Iain R. Edgar, “A War of Dreams? Militant Muslim Dreaming in the Context of Traditional and Contemporary Islamic Dream Theory and Practice.” *Dreaming* (2004), vol.14, no.1, pp.21-29.
  - ✓ Robert Fisk, “Visions that come to men as they sleep” in *The Independent* (of London), Saturday 26 January 2008.<sup>3</sup>
  - ✓ Yehia Gouda, *Dreams and their Meanings in the Old Arab Tradition: Based on Classical Works of Ibn Sireen, Ibn Shaheen and Al Nabulsi* (New York: Vantage Press, 1991).
  - ✓ Nile Green (from the Department of History, UCLA), “The Religious and Cultural Roles of Dreams and Visions in Islam” in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (2003), vol.13, no.3, pp.287-313.
  - ✓ G.E. von Grunebaum, “The Cultural Function of the Dream as Illustrated by Classical Islam” in von Grunebaum and Caillois, *op.cit*, pp.3-21.
  - ✓ Marcia K. Hermansen (Professor in the Theology Department at Loyola University Chicago), “Dreams and Dreaming in Islam” in Kelly Bulkeley (ed.), *Dreams: A Reader in the Religious, Cultural and Psychological Dimensions of Dreaming* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p.73-92.

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<sup>1</sup>[http://www.agem-ethnomedizin.de/download/cu31\\_1\\_2008\\_S\\_087-097\\_Edgar.pdf?c309bd31734c35b99e5db589267fd36c=58f7db3f8ee816543cd78e6bb8b31248](http://www.agem-ethnomedizin.de/download/cu31_1_2008_S_087-097_Edgar.pdf?c309bd31734c35b99e5db589267fd36c=58f7db3f8ee816543cd78e6bb8b31248)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~db=all?content=10.1080/09584930601098000>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/fisk/robert-fisk-visions-that-come-to-men-as-they-sleep-774307.html>

- ✓ Leah Kinberg (ed.), *Ibn Abī al-Dunyā: Morality in the Guise of Dreams: A Critical Edition of Kitāb al-Manām with Introduction*, in the journal *Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science: Texts and Studies*, no.18 [Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994].
- ✓ Leah Kinberg, “The Legitimation of the Madhāhib through Dreams” in the journal *Arabica*, vol.32 (1985), pp.47-79 and her “Literal Dreams and Prophetic Hadeeths in Classical Islām: A Comparison of Two Ways of Legitimation” in the journal *Der Islam*, 70 (1993), pp.279-300. And her “The Standardization of Quran Readings: The Testimonial Value of Dreams” in K. Dévényi (ed.), *Proceedings of the Colloquium on Arabic Grammar, Budapest, 1991* (Budapest: Eötvös Lorand University Chair for Arabic Studies, 1991), pp.223-238.
- ✓ John C. Lamoreaux (Department of Religious Studies, *Southern Methodist University*), *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2002).
- ✓ Louise Marlow (Ed. Director of Middle-East Studies at Wellesley College), *Dreaming Across Boundaries: The Interpretation of Dreams in Islamic Lands* (Harvard University Press, 2008).
- ✓ John McBrewster, Frederic P. Miller, and Agnes F. Vandome (eds.), *Psychology in Medieval Islam: Nafs, Islamic Golden Age, Ulema, Avicennism, Philosophy of Mind, Dream Interpretation* (Alphascript Publishing, 2009)
- ✓ Elizabeth Sirriyeh (Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies at *Leeds University*, UK), “Dreams of the Holy Dead: Traditional Islamic Oneirocriticism Versus Salafi Scepticism” in the *Journal of Semitic Studies* (2000).
- ✓ Sara Sviri (from the Department of Comparative Religion, *Hebrew University*), “Dreaming Analyzed and Recorded: Dreams in the World of Medieval Islam” in Guy G. Strousma and David Shulman (eds.), *Dream Cultures: Toward a Comparative History of Dreaming* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp.261-269.

I also found that there are some works by fundamentalist and evangelical Christian missionaries which attempt to utilise dreams and visions as ways to propagate their religion to Muslims in particular.<sup>1</sup> Yet the futility of this is immediately noticeable from

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<sup>1</sup> For example, refer to this paper by “Barry Peters”: <http://www.stfrancismagazine.info/issue5/francis5006.pdf>

Also Bill Musk in his book *The Unseen Face of Islam: Sharing the Gospel with Ordinary Muslims* (Monarch Publishing, 2004), Musk notes that Christian missionaries should emphasise dreams and visions in order to propagate Christianity to Muslims. There is another paper here which deals with the same topic: [http://www.gnfcw.com/images/dreams\\_and\\_visions.pdf](http://www.gnfcw.com/images/dreams_and_visions.pdf)

the outset as they have little to offer Muslims in regards to vision and dream interpretation! In fact, Muslims have much more to utilise in calling them to Islām due to the wealth of material and immense detail found with the Islamic Oneirocritic tradition compared to the relatively scant importance, and dearth of guidance, given to it in Christianity. Hence, in history we find that Christian dream interpretation, such as works by Bar (i.e. Ibn) Bahlūl, were hugely based on what he had taken from Muslim writers such as Ibn Qutaybah (*rabimahullāb*) who came before him.

Elizabeth Sirriyeh, Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies at the *University of Leeds*, UK, has written “Dreams of the Holy Dead: Traditional Islamic Oneirocriticism Versus Salafi Scepticism” in the *Journal of Semitic Studies* (2000). This work is interesting as from the title it appears that it may be arguing that Salafīs are averse to “traditional Islamic Oneirocriticism” and interpretation. Such a conclusion would have been odd because Salafīs, as can be seen with this work which has been translated, view the tradition of vision and dream interpretation as being rooted in Islām and having been inherited from the *Salaf*. Indeed, it has been inherited from the Prophets (peace be upon them), so any insinuation that Salafīs are in some way opposed to vision interpretation in its totality would be incorrect. Some Western studies therefore demonstrate a gross misunderstanding of *Salafīyyah* and what it stands for, because they not only seem to confuse *Salafīyyah* with the modernist trend of Muhammad ‘Abduh but they also are oblivious to the fact that while *Salafīyyah* emphasises issues of the soul and spirituality – it does so with outlined principles and rules which this translation will highlight.

However, if there is any “scepticism” then this is definitely maintained if incorrect methods in vision interpretation have been used. This is where the “scepticism” would come into the picture, not that Salafīs are “sceptical” of the actual “traditional”<sup>1</sup> Islamic basis of vision and dream interpretation! Such dubious methods are mentioned by Shaykhs Mashhūr and Abū Talhah in this work. Professor Sirriyeh however has since clarified to me that she knows that Salafīs recognise the dream and vision tradition in Islām and that the Salafīs are opposed to the modernist views of Rasheed Ridā who her

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<sup>1</sup> Today, the term “traditional” is currently used in a polemical sense by those who attempt to show that *Salafīyyah* has diverged from original Islam. The reality is that if any Muslims deserve the right to promote the term “traditional” then it is the Salafīs! For they are the ones holding on to the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad and the early Muslims with neither addition nor subtraction, stringently adhering to what has been authentically transmitted from the early Muslim generations. However, the term “traditional” is used by some contemporary Muslims in a romantic idealistic way to refer to being: an ‘Ash‘arī or Māturīdī; a Sūfī and following a madhhab from the “four”.

paper deals with. However, Professor Sirriyeh still refers to Ridā et al. as being “Salafīs” and this is where confusion can be caused if it is not explained that they in fact represented modernism as opposed to *Salafīyyah*. So Shaykhs Mashhūr and Abū Talhah mention in their introduction when discussing Chapter 7:

**Many have been misguided in this issue such as the Sūfis and others who spend the night taking their deen from dreams and relying upon whatever is “unveiled” to them or “inspired” to them in order to obtain Divinely Legislated rulings. The correct understanding however from Allāh and His Messenger (sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam) that we mention and has been agreed upon by the people of knowledge past and present, is that visions do not establish a proof for anything in the deen, they are rather limited warnings or glad-tidings. They can be used to support what already agrees with the Shari’ rulings which the foundational Shari’ sources indicate.**

**This is the true balanced school of thought that is between the Sūfī extremism of relying upon dreams, “spiritual unveilings”, “inspiration”, ideas and knowledge perceived to be imparted directed from Allāh via Sūfī mystical intuition or via other spiritual sciences that they have; and between the neglect of the Mu’tazilah and the Qadariyyah who deny dreams totally and reject the evidences for it.**

This then leads us onto Dr Iain Edgar’s interesting recent work on the role of true dreams among the Takfīrī-Jihādī movement. Yet in Professor Edgar’s studies of the role of dreams as they relate to the likes of Talibān leader Mullah ‘Umar, Edgar seems to neglect that fact that the Tālibān are stringent Sūfis and entrenched in Sufism and it is known that the Sūfis utilise dreams so as to legislate things in the *deen*. Shaykhs Mashhūr and Abū Talhah ‘Umar in their book discuss how the Sūfis have justified some of their deviant practices based on what has appeared to them in dreams and have not been assessed in the correct Islamic Oneirocritical methodology as outlined by the *Salaf*. Hence, even though it may be the case that such Takfīrī-Jihādīs have vivid dreams in many cases they are not qualified to adequately interpret them due to the lack of fulfilling the principles for vision interpretation, which will be mentioned in this book. Also linked to this is the phenomenon of some Muslims becoming “specialists” in dream and vision interpretation merely on the basis of being imprisoned! This approach is *bātil*, for there is nothing which proves that those Muslims who are imprisoned have some sort of monopoly over others in vision interpretation. For example, Anwār al-Awlakī, a Takfīrī-Jihādī, who is neither a scholar nor one who should be referred back to for Islamic knowledge, insinuated at the end of his dream interpretation audio series that this is the

case, i.e. that those imprisoned have more “profound” and deeper meaning visions - and this view is utterly false.

There is also an issue in Professor Edgar, largely due to the socio-political context, trying to assert that dreams are only significant to the Takfirī-Jihādīs, or “Islamic Militants” as Edgar usually refers to them, when in fact all Muslims are concerned with them due to the strong tradition within Islām generally. Thus, to only pick out Takfirī-Jihādīs as those who attach importance to dreams is to merely single them out due to the contemporary context wherein there is interest in them.

Another issue which I found problematic in Professor Edgar’s research is that he insinuates that the Islamic vision and dream interpretation tradition has its roots in the Greco-Roman dream interpretation tradition! He states in his paper “Overtures of Paradise: Night Dreams and Islamic Jihadist Militancy” (in the German journal *Curare: Journal of Medical Anthropology* (2008), vol.31, no.1, pp.87-97)<sup>1</sup> that:

Dream interpretive theories are often developments of preceding societies’ theories, **as is the case in Islamic dream theory, which has strong roots in, particularly, the dream theory of the ancient Greeks**, notably contained in the *Oneirocritica* of Artemidorus (1992), **as well as from the dream traditions of Ancient Egypt and Assyria, and from Judaic and Christian theories of dreaming**. For example, Macrobius (Kruger 1992: 24), a late antique dream theorist, presents five different and hierarchically ordered categories of dreams ranging from the true and revelatory (*oraculum and vision*) to the false and mundane (*visum and insomnium*). Yet meditating this opposition of true and false dreams, Macrobius suggests a middle type of dream (*somnium*) in which truth is represented in fictional, allegorical and metaphorical form. **The Islamic theory of “true” and “false” dreams is congruent with, and possibly derived from, earlier dream interpretive theories**. Arguably then, what is most distinct about Islamic dream theory and practice is the Prophetic example, and its historical and cultural location in the Islamic worldview, and not because of its tripartite classification of dream imagery.

There are a number of points to append to this:

**First:** Edgar regards the Islamic Oneirocritic tradition as being a mere “theory” from among the range of other “theories” and this is a false notion which is based on the materialist denial of revelation. For the Islamic method and tradition of vision interpretation is not a “theory” which has been composed and invented by men via

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<sup>1</sup>[http://www.agem-ethnomedizin.de/download/cu31\\_1\\_2008\\_S\\_087-097\\_Edgar.pdf?c309bd31734c35b99e5db589267fd36c=58f7db3f8ee816543cd78e6bb8b31248](http://www.agem-ethnomedizin.de/download/cu31_1_2008_S_087-097_Edgar.pdf?c309bd31734c35b99e5db589267fd36c=58f7db3f8ee816543cd78e6bb8b31248)

theorising how the tradition should develop. Rather, there is the notion that one skilled in it has been blessed by Allāh with a talent in it and not that it is a “theory”.

**Second:** Where within the ancient Greek concept of vision interpretation is there any mention of the Prophetic role in interpretation?! Even though there is mention of the predictive nature of dreams there is nothing about the example of the Prophets within their vision interpretation theories. Furthermore, where in the writings of the ancient Greeks is there any mention of the etiquettes that a person should do upon seeing a vision or having a bad dream? This is a strong and emphasised feature within Islām yet there is nothing about this from the ancient Greeks!

This emphasis on the ancient Greeks demonstrates the European academic fascination with their philosophical forefathers yet even though all things may end with the Greeks for them the same cannot be applied to the Islamic tradition, for it has its own origin and methods which the ancient Greeks play no part in whatsoever. This is despite the desperate attempts to forge links between Islamic sciences and ancient Greek philosophies.

**Third:** Edgar also includes not only the Greeks as being the sources for the Islamic tradition of vision interpretation but he also proceeds to mention the Ancient Egyptian, Ancient Assyrian, Christian and Judaic traditions as being the roots of the Islamic “theory” of dream interpretation!?! All of this is mentioned yet no evidence of such a broad range of influence is given to substantiate this. Furthermore, how the Ancient Egyptian and Assyrian traditions, which are replete with *shirk* (associating partners in worship with Allāh) and *kufr* (disbelief) can be compared to the monotheistic-Prophetic foundations of the Islamic dream interpretation is beyond me! For these mythical beliefs of the ancients are based on *jibt* (superstition and sorcery) and *tāghūt* (false deities) and are totally contrary to the Islamic tradition which holds such beliefs as being in direct opposition to the basis of Islām itself. Edgar therefore neglects any mention of the fact that the Qur’ān mentions that a number of Prophets in Islām, such as Ibrāheem (Abraham) and Yūsuf (Joseph), peace be upon them, are noted for the visions that they experienced, yet Edgar tries to say that the Islamic tradition was “begun” by the Prophet Muhammad (*sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam*) without mentioning any more than this. As for the attempt to make the Judaic and Christian dream interpretation traditions as the roots of the Islamic tradition then this again is erroneous, for it was historically the other way around! Dr Kelly Bulkeley emphasised in his paper *Meaning of Dreams in Islām: Reflections on*

*the Dream Traditions of Islām* (California: Graduate Theological University, Santa Clara University, December 2001 – also in the journal *Sleep and Hypnosis*, vol.4, no.2, 2002):

**Here is the point where Muslim traditions begin to expand beyond their Christian and Jewish counterparts. Indeed, I would argue (without having the space to defend my claim fully) that during its medieval period Christianity effectively repudiated dreaming as a legitimate source of divine revelation by increasingly emphasizing the potential for demonic temptation in dreams.**

**...the attitude of theologians and church officials from Augustine through Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, and on into the present day has been generally hostile to dreams and dream interpretation.**

**...Nothing emerged in Judaism or Christianity to rival the breath and sophistication of this tradition and it is an open question whether any civilisation from India, China or anywhere else ever matched the richness of classical Islamic dream knowledge...Islam has historically shown greater interest in dreams than either of the other two traditions...**

Hence, I did not come across any other credible western academic who has conducted detailed studies into dreams and the Islamic tradition of vision interpretation, apart from Dr Edgar, who claimed that the Islamic tradition of dream interpretation has its fundamental roots with the Greeks, ancient Egyptians, ancient Assyrians, Christians and Jews- altogether like this!? Thus, some sort of evidence of these links need to be forthcoming prior to making such grandiose assertions as opposed to scant anecdotal evidence. In fact, this assertion by Edgar contains a blatant logical fallacy, that of *post hoc ergo propter hoc* – which is the fallacy of holding that just because A came before B, B occurred due to A. In our topic here then the fallacy is that because Macrobius and other ancient pagans wrote and theorised about dream interpretation this must have been the cause, origin and basis of the entire Islamic Oneirocritical tradition. Thus, the mere correlation, if there even is one as significant as implied by Edgar, does not confirm causation.

**Fourth:** As for there being a similarity between Islamic notions of true and false dreams and the views of the ancient Greek dream interpreters Artemidorus<sup>1</sup> and Macrobius<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Artemidorus Daldianus/Ephesius was an ancient Greek dream interpreter, author and diviner who lived in the second Century CE. He authored a famous five-volume work entitled *Oneirocritica* [Dream Interpretation] which is still extant. According to Artemidorus, the material for his work was gathered during lengthy travels through Greece, Italy and Asia, from diviners of high and low station. Another major source were the writings of Artemidorus' predecessors, sixteen of whom he cites by name. It is clear he built on a rich written tradition, now otherwise lost. Artemidorus' method is, at root, analogical.

then firstly the distinction that Macrobius arrived at, if indeed it is as Edgar outlines, then this shows that Macrobius, and Artemidorus for that fact, may have had a share of some knowledge which Allāh granted them to discover about dreams and visions. For it is acknowledged that pre-Islamic peoples did have a share of knowledge of vision and dream interpretation anyway as seen in the story of the two fortune-tellers Shiqq and Sateeh and their interpretation of the vision of King Rabee'ah of Yemen about the rule of the Ethiopians over Yemen, this is touched upon later in the translation. Shaykhs Mashhūr and Abū Talhah therefore state, which will be mentioned within this translation:

The likes of this within the history and biographical books are well known and famous and are of the clearest proofs for what we mentioned about people being affected by visions and the importance that people attach to them. **People have a natural inclination to understand the unseen realm and future occurrences and the realm of dreams is a part of this as one is able to know such hidden matters. Dreams and visions are areas which have been corroborated by the Divine Legislation as it has been corroborated by other sources.**

Therefore, Islām has corroborated the validity of the influence of visions about which some of the pre-Islamic peoples may have discussed within meagre writings on the subject, Islām however came and then provided much more clarity and answers. Shaykhs Mashhūr and Abū Talhah also state:

**...within absolutely all types of people it is a must for there to be questions about the wonders and secrets of dreams and visions. For that reason it has been one of the sciences in which the people of the scripture and others have participated in. Whoever reads through the book by al-Qādirī regarding vision interpretation will come across how much he referred to Jewish, Christian, Magian and other religious scholars, not to mention his transmitting from Indian (Hindu) and bygone Byzantine explanations. So this covered the Arab lands completely not to mention the lands between the two rivers, Persia, India and other places.**

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He writes that dream interpretation is “nothing other than the juxtaposition of similarities”. For an appraisal of Artemidorus’ views refer to this paper by Theochari and Papamichael: <http://www.psychiatryjournal.gr/ftpdire/200805/080709203230.pdf>

<sup>1</sup> Ambrosius Theodosius Macrobius was a Roman grammarian and Neoplatonist philosopher of African descent who flourished during the reigns of Honorius and Arcadius (395–423). The fact that Christianity is not mentioned in any of his writings, despite the predominance it now asserted in every aspect of Roman life, coupled with his vigorous interest in pagan rituals, has created doubt about his religion yet Macrobius was clearly pagan. His work *Saturnalia*, praises Rome's pagan past and is thus pagan. Macrobius was thus one of the last pagan writers of Ancient Rome.



So all nations and peoples have an interest in visions and dreams and hence we find that the ancients discussed them, Ibn al-'Arabī al-Mālikī stated in *al-Qabas* (vol.3, p.1135) under '*ar-Ru'yab*':

**It is a great subject about realities and is a matter that has been problematic for creation...Our 'Ulama have stated that it is truth, glad-tidings and an evidence from Allāh, the nations including the Arabs and non-Arabs are agreed on their reality and have comprehended this by experience.**

This is the reality of the matter, not that because of certain similarities with some peoples of the past Islām actively “copied” or “took” a whole science from other peoples some of whom worship *jibt* and *tāghūt*! Furthermore, without bringing even the slightest morsel of evidence to justify such a claim it remains anecdotal at best.

**Fifth:** The above point therefore, does not mean that Islām “took” or “borrowed from” Macrobius' differentiation. It is inconceivable that the Islamic vision interpretation method can be “derived” from a pagan-philosophical credo which is based on *jibt* and *tāghūt*. Moreover, by Edgar's own testimony **“Islam is probably the largest night dream culture in the world today”** so is this fantastic wealth of literature, knowledge and discussion of dreams and visions among Muslims over all these centuries simply based on what the Greek Macrobius theorised about!? It is nonsensical to deny Islām's own roots and sources and merely pass the buck of the whole tradition onto the Greeks for them to take credit for. What we see here is another materialistic means of denying the revelatory nature of the science from Allāh as imparted to His Prophets, peace be upon them.

Robert Fisk's article “Visions that come to me as they sleep” in the newspaper *The Independent* (of London) on 28 January 2008 initially makes the error of thinking that Islām holds all dreams as having a spiritual dimension. He stated:

**We westerners tend to regard dreams as a haphazard phenomenon wrought by the sleeping diminution of a still working brain, a coma of flotsam thrown up by our daily experiences. But for many extreme Muslims, dreams are a far more serious affair.**

This statement is a common essentialist view and contains a number of simplistic misconceptions:

**First:** Fisk states “we westerners” and this is oppositional from the outset and thus excludes Muslim “westerners”! Furthermore, Fisk says this as if all “westerners” “regard dreams “as a haphazard phenomenon wrought by the sleeping diminution of a still working brain, a coma of flotsam thrown up by our daily experiences.” This is a

simplistic assertion which is characteristic of journalistic writings, for the huge interest that people in the west have with dreams and visions clearly demonstrates that not all “westerners” share Fisk’s materialistic view of dreams. Bruce Bower reported in an article entitled *When Dreams Come True* in the magazine *Science News*, vol. 175, no.5 (February 28 2009):

In an effort to understand whether people take their dreams seriously, Carey Morewedge of Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh and Michael Norton of Harvard University surveyed 149 college students attending universities in India, South Korea or the United States about theories of dream function.

People across cultures often assume that dreams contain hidden truths, much as Sigmund Freud posited more than a century ago, Morewedge and Norton report in the February *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. In fact, many individuals consider dreams to provide more meaningful information regarding daily affairs than comparable waking thoughts do, the two psychologists conclude. Ideas that dreams come from the brain’s random output or are essential for daily problem-solving or for weeding out the routine clutter in one’s mind appeal to a minority of people, the scientists say.

In a series of experiments, the researchers also probed interpretations of various real and imagined dreams in a national sample of 270 people surveyed online, 656 commuters and pedestrians interviewed in Boston and Cambridge, Mass., and 60 college students. “Our results suggest that the dreams most likely to affect our daily lives and relationships are the dreams that accord with our existing beliefs and desires,” Morewedge says.

In one experiment, participants reported feeling closer to a personal friend after imagining a dream in which their friend defended them, versus imagining a dream in which that friend betrayed them. In considering actual past dreams about friends, volunteers deemed especially meaningful those dreams that had portrayed their friends positively. Dreams of disliked individuals were rated as particularly meaningful if those dreams showed them in a negative light.

Bower also mentions:

People regard thoughts that seem to “come from nowhere,” such as dreams and daydreams, as more meaningful than thoughts with a presumed external cause, Morewedge proposes. People tend to think these unbidden thoughts have been generated for some internal reason related to one’s actual intentions or attitudes, in his view. Still, the results don’t explain why cultures around the world regard dreams as highly meaningful, remarks psychologist G. William Domhoff of the University of California, Santa Cruz. In his studies, he finds that dreams are

experienced as real while they happen because they frequently simulate waking ideas and concerns. In some cases, a dream seems so real to dreamers that they can't shake the suspicion that it really happened. In the late 19th century, anthropologist Edward Tylor argued that the spirit world partly had its origins in such dreams. "For most cultures, dreams are the soul wandering at night, or other souls visiting us," Domhoff says. Further research needs to examine whether people sometimes experience genuine insights into waking life from dreams, thus encouraging a belief that dreams contain hidden meanings, Blagrove adds.

The materialistic, or "biological realist", western psychological perception of dreams is exemplified in the theories of scientists such as Ian Oswald from Manchester University (later professor of psychiatry at Edinburgh University) who also put forward a purely physiological explanation for dreams. He suggested that dreams are the result of the way in which the nervous system sets about repairing exhausted brain tissue. He argued that during non-REM (Rapid eye movement) sleep numerous growth hormones are released into the bloodstream to restore brain and muscle tissue after the labours of the day. Oswald proposed that a similar process went on in the brain and that dreams are no more than a by-product of this chemical activity.<sup>1</sup> A similar explanation was suggested by J. Allan Hobson and Robert McCarley of *Harvard Medical School*. They began to make use of micro-electrodes in order to detect the activity of the brain and in 1977 they developed the 'activation synthesis theory of dreaming' which argues that dreams have no meaning and are the product of the brain attempting to make sense of random neuronal firing in the cortex.<sup>2</sup> In 1988, Hobson published a revised theory acknowledging that dreams do reflect past memories, fears, hopes, and desires. Mark Solms questioned this theory and argued that REM sleep and dreaming are not directly related. Solms did not encounter cases of loss of dreaming with patients having brain stem damage. This observation forced him to question Hobson's prevailing theory which marked the brain stem as the source of the signals interpreted as dreams.<sup>3</sup> Francis Crick and Graeme Mitchison (1983) theorised that dreams are like the cleaning-up operations

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<sup>1</sup> Brian Innes, *The Book of Dreams: How to Interpret your Dreams and Harness their Power* (Kettering, UK: Index, 2000), pp.41-42.

<sup>2</sup> McCarley and Hobson, "The brain as a dream state generator: an activation-synthesis hypothesis of the dream process." *American Journal of Psychiatry*, December 1977, vol.134, no.12, pp.1335-48. Also: "The neurobiological origins of psychoanalytic dream theory." *American Journal of Psychiatry*, November 1977, vol.134, no.11, pp.1211-21

<sup>3</sup> Mark Solms, "Dreaming and REM sleep are controlled by different brain mechanisms" in journal *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, (2000) vol.23, no.6, pp. 793-1121.

of computers when they are turned-off, removing informational “junk” from the mind during a surge of activity that the sleeper perceives as a dream.<sup>1</sup> There are other theories on dreams that have been conjured up by western psychologists. Dr Jim Horne of the sleep research centre at Loughborough University states about dreams that: “They’re there to keep the brain entertained during the tedious hours of sleep and have very little significance beyond that.”<sup>2</sup> This claim that visions and dreams are merely “flotsam thrown up by our daily experiences”, despite the use of this notion by contemporary materialist-psychologists - it is in fact an old argument of the rationalists of yesteryear! Ibn ul-Qayyim (*rahimabullāh*) stated in his book *ar-Rūb*, p.44:

**The saying that the whole science and belief in visions are psychological due to the soul being unoccupied from bodily activity while asleep – is void. This view is the source of invalidity and schism, for the soul has absolutely no knowledge of the matters that a dead person informs about.<sup>3</sup> The soul neither thinks of these matters nor has any indication about these things.<sup>4</sup>**

We can immediately see the wisdom of Ibn ul-Qayyim (*rahimabullāh*) saying that this view is a source of schism from the western proliferation of more conjured up theories which develop from it.

**Second:** Fisk appears to hold that only “extreme Muslims” attach an importance to visions and dreams!? Yet the Islamic Oneirocritic tradition is well-rooted and not just an indication of “extreme Muslims”.

**Third:** Fisk’s article *does* take into consideration the fact that Islām holds there are different types of visions and dreams and not all are of the same level. However, the Western materialist and modern psychological view on dreams, asserts that religion including Islām, which has the strongest Oneirocritic tradition on earth, grants every single dream that one sees as having an underlying meaning or significance to it – and this is utterly incorrect. Dr Kelly Bulkeley states in *Visions of the Night: Dreams, Religion and Psychology* (Albany, New York: State of New York University Press, 1999), p.24:

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<sup>1</sup> Brian Innes, *op.cit.* p.42

<sup>2</sup> Alok Jha, “Experiences of stroke victim pinpoint brain’s dream zone” in *The Guardian* (of London), Friday 10 September 2004: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2004/sep/10/highereducation.science>

<sup>3</sup> Meaning when someone has a vision and sees someone who is dead yet the dead person informs the person about certain matters which the person had no knowledge of prior. This indicates that visions are real and have an impact and effect, showing the reality of the unseen realm. This phenomenon of meeting people who have died in dreams is found across cultures and religions.

<sup>4</sup> For the completion of these words refer to *Tareeq ul-Hijratayn*, p.428; *Hādī ul-Arwāh*, pp.39, 90 and 498; *Madārij us-Sālikeen*, vol.1, p.233

**To begin with, most of the world's religious traditions do *not* teach that *all* dreams have a divine or supernatural origin. On the contrary, these traditions generally recognize that the majority of our dreams are relatively trivial and mundane, the products of our ordinary, day-to-day worries and concerns.**

As we shall see within this translation, some dreams have no meaning to them whatsoever and are *Adghāth ul-Ablām*, while others are more profound visions (*Ru'yab*). Yet with this there is a dearth of credible works on the subject by Muslims with only the work of Dr Muhammad al-Jibāly which stands out as the most detailed book in the English language. While in the Arabic language there are a number of works on the topic, yet the most comprehensive contemporary study by far is this work by Shaykhs Abū 'Ubaydah Mashhūr bin Hasan Āl Salmān and Abū Talhah 'Umar bin Ibrāheem Āl 'AbdurRahmān. The only other contemporary work in Arabic which comes anywhere near to this work by the two Shaykhs— is the book by our Shaykh, Dr Khālid al-Anbarī and even Shaykh Khālid's work comes nowhere near to the detail, arrangement and contemporary application of this work.

The reader will have to be patient if some of the issues discussed in this translation are complex yet I have attempted to remain true to the subject-matter in the original Arabic which itself can be difficult to understand in some parts. I would like to thank my brothers in Islām Abū Luqmān al-Maghribī from Brixton (south London) for providing valuable assistance in translating this and Abū Hayyān Salāl bin 'AbdulGhafūr from East London for proof-reading and valuable suggestions.

**'AbdulHaq ibn Kofi ibn Kwesi al-Ashantī**

**London,**

**Dhu'l-Qa'dah 1430AH/November 2009**

## INTRODUCTION

Indeed, all praise is due to Allāh, we praise Him, we seek His aid, and we ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allāh from the evil of our actions and from the evil consequences of our actions. Whomever Allāh guides, there is none to misguide and whoever Allāh misguides there is none to guide. I bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship except Allāh and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allāh.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

**“O you who have believed, fear Allāh as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims (in submission to Him).”**

{*Āli-Imrān* (3): 102}

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا

زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ

وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا﴾

**“O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women. And fear Allāh through whom you ask things from each other, and (respect) the wombs. Indeed Allāh is ever, over you, an Observer.”**

{*an-Nisā* (4): 1}

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا﴾

يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ  
فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٣﴾

**“O you who have believed, fear Allāh and speak words of appropriate justice. He will amend for you your deeds and forgive your sins. And whoever obeys Allāh and His Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.”**

{*al-Abzāb* (33): 70-71}

To proceed:

The best speech is the Book of Allāh and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad (*sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam*). The worst of affairs are the newly invented matters, for every newly invented matter into the religion is an innovation, and every innovation (into the religion) is misguidance and all misguidance is in the fire, we seek refuge in Allāh from it (the fire).

This book contains important regulations and clear benefits which are connected to dreams which we have compiled from the statements of the trustworthy people of knowledge and the interpreters from the different places and throughout the ages who were upon the trustworthy *manhaj*. It is based upon what is found within the sources of the *sunnah* and its explanations, the books of *tafseer*, the books of *fiqh* and the books of dreams. These are important regulations which are connected to issues of *'aqeedah* and practical knowledge-based regulations which the common people need to know, not to mention the student of knowledge, along with addenda, a detailed presentation of the evidences and a clarification of how our righteous predecessors (*salaf*) dealt with the issue.

There is no doubt that ignorance of these regulations is the greatest reason for the circulation of innovation and superstitions which corrupt the beliefs of people and deviate them away from sincere *tawheed*, not to mention their entry into corrupted rulings for (Islamic) practice, as will be manifest to you when the time and place necessitates. The knowledge of this issue is an affair related to the sciences of the realm of the unseen and as a result the student of knowledge needs to understand its general rulings and its major principles. This work therefore is our effort in laying down the foundations and clarifying the pitfalls and dangers of this knowledge with broad explanation, and all praise is due to Allāh with as with His blessing righteous actions are completed.

Our concern is to arrange the rulings under the form of introductory themes which will all be entitled according to the topic of the introduction. Maybe we have extended some of the introductions in accordance with its importance and the people's need to understand its sciences. We have arranged these introductions into sixteen sections which are:

- ❖ **Introductory theme 1 – The importance of the science of vision and dream interpretation and the concern the scholars have for it.**
- ❖ **Introductory theme 2 – The linguistic and Divinely Legislated definitions of visions and dreams and interpretation and a refutation of those who deny its reality.** We establish here, after defining a 'vision' and a 'dream' and the differences between the two, that visions are true and are from the *'aqeedah* of the people of *sunna* and *jamā'ah* as opposed to the atheists and rationalists from the *Mu'tazilab* and their offshoots, and we bring the texts that indicate that to you.
- ❖ **Introductory theme 3 – which is very important: The Principles of the People of Knowledge for Interpreting Dreams.** This is probably the most important introductory theme of the book and it contains much in the way of benefit for the students of the *deen* who wish to be familiar and conversant in this particular science of the Divine Legislation, and keep in accordance with the assessment of the people of truth and correctness. We speak about digression from the principles and foundations which the people of experience have laid down and the concern for this noble art which many people are in need of and which some people wish to study to know its secrets and its regulations. This has been based on what has been contemplated upon in the texts with regards to this science and what we have enclosed from the understandings of the *Salaf* and their stipulations. It will be hard to stop at the general rules for all views yet if it is said (by a so-called dream interpreter): **“whoever sees in a dream such and such, then its explanation is such and such”** – then this resembles that which is cautioned against in their practice. The intent then is not to leave off these issues here without restrictions, principles and Divinely Legislated rules. Rather, there has to be consideration and knowledge of all aspects of the specific indicators derived from the desired meanings of dreams. The science of vision interpretation is a very noble science and its rules have been based upon the *sunna* of the Prophet (*sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam*). **“It is not befitting for anyone to pay attention to what has been written by the late-comers (in this**



science) such as Freud in his book *Dream Interpretation* written in 1900 CE. Freud, who was Jewish,<sup>1</sup> put forth a sexual theory and thus put forth his book on dreams propagates his sexual theory and thus explains all affairs in the matter (of dreams) with a sexual explanation thereby degrading the humanity of people and their nobility.”<sup>2</sup> We mentioned under the title ‘**The Ruling on Reading Books of Dream Interpretation and Relying on them for Interpretation**’ a clarification of the errors of those who rely solely on such ‘**dictionaries of dreams**’ that have been published, without knowing the rules of this science, without an awareness of the states of the people who had the dreams and visions and devoid of physiognomy<sup>3</sup> and acumen, not to mention being devoid of *taqwā*. Another important piece of research within this introductory theme is ‘**The Different Types of Indicators for Interpretation According to the Interpreters (of Visions and Dreams)**’. These indicators are the key to the knowledge of vision and dream interpretation with which the vision interpreter is guided and enlightened, especially if it is in accordance with the first stage of learning this art.

- ❖ **Introductory theme 4 – Who Possesses the Right to Interpret Dreams?** We demonstrate within this theme that this knowledge, as with all other Islamic sciences, or rather more so in the case of this science (interpretations of dreams and visions), as it requires more specific conditions, that being hasty in

<sup>1</sup> **Translator’s note:** For more on the relevance of this see:

- ✓ Yoram Bilu, “Sigmund Freud & Rabbi Yehudah: Jewish Mystical Tradition of ‘Psychoanalytic’ Dream Interpretation” in *Journal of Psychological Anthropology*, no.2 (1979), pp.443-463
- ✓ Miriam Huttler, “Jewish Origins of Freud’s Interpretation of Dreams” in *Journal of Psychology and Judaism*, 23:1 (1999), pp.5-48.

<sup>2</sup> Hishām Muhammad ‘Alī, *al-Manāhij fī Naḥs wa’l-Hayāh* [Methodologies of the Soul and of Life] p.107. Also see the statements of Freud in *al-Ahlām Bayna ad-Deen wa ‘Ilm an-Naḥs* [Dreams Between Knowledge and Psychology], p.96 by Muhammad Ridā, a *Shi‘ī* student, and others who follow the idea of imposing sexual explanations on the symbolism in dreams and go overboard in this regard. As a result, according to them, everything that is circular in shape represents the woman’s vagina! For example, a cave, a circle, a box, a ring etc. whilst everything that is of a rectangular shape represents the male penis! Such as a stick, a pen or a sword. Likewise, according to them, all movement in dreams represent sexual activity, such as running, climbing, swimming etc. this is a vile theory even according to psychologists, see *Manhaj Ahl us-Sunnah wa’l-Jamā‘ah fī’r-Ru’yah wa’l-Ahlām* [The Methodology of the People of Sunnah in Visions and Dreams], pp.14-17, by brother Khālid al-Anbarī (*hadīfhahullāh*).

<sup>3</sup> **Translator’s note:** the assessment of a person’s character or of an object or terrain, in this case however it is the assessment of a dream or vision.

interpretation is from ignorance. This has magnified in this era especially in regards to women, and there is no power or movement except with Allāh.

❖ **Introductory theme 5 – The Regulations for a Vision in which Allāh is seen.** We explain well the statements concerning this as opposed to the confusion that has surrounded this issue past and present. Some of the gullible have transgressed the bounds of some of the firmly grounded truthful scholars due to it. Yet becoming acquainted with what we have gathered about it will make it apparent to you that it is true and what we have noted will be clear to anyone who has eyes. The intent of it is truthfulness and all praise is due to Allāh with Whose blessing righteous actions are completed.

❖ **Introductory theme 6 – A Warning Against the Errors that Befall Some Interpreters (of Visions and Dreams).** Within this theme some errors are recounted entitled with the following:

- The interpreter’s task in understanding the vision and its interpretation.
- The interpreter’s consideration of days of good fortune and misfortune.
- Their consideration of many vision and dream interpreters to issues of time and period in assessing the truthfulness of a vision.
- The prevention of women from interpreting visions.
- Interpreting visions via the medium of wordings.
- Sleep and its affects on dreams.
- The symbolism in dreams.

❖ **Introductory theme 7 – The Ruling on Depending on Dreams to Extract Divinely Legislated Regulations.** This is one of the most important introductory themes and it contains much in the way of benefits. Many have been misguided in this issue such as the *Sūfīs* and others who spend the night taking their *deen* from dreams and relying upon whatever is “unveiled” to them or “inspired” to them to obtain Divinely Legislated rulings. The correct understanding however from Allāh and His Messenger (*sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam*), that we mention and has been agreed upon by the people of knowledge past and present, is that visions do not establish a proof for anything

in the *deen*, they are rather limited warnings or glad-tidings. They can be used to support what already agrees with the *Shari'* rulings which the foundational *Shari'* sources indicate. This is the true balanced school of thought that is between the *Sūfi* extremism of relying upon dreams, “spiritual unveilings”, “inspiration”, ideas, knowledge perceived to be imparted directed from Allāh via *Sūfi* mystical intuition or via other spiritual sciences that they have; and between the neglect of the *Mu'tazilab* and the *Qadariyyah* who deny dreams totally and reject the evidences for it. When we mention the evidences we explain our full comprehension of the transmitted texts which make that clear, along with putting forth parables. We also mention the influence of Shaytān in this issue and how he plays with some of the aesthetics (*Zubhād*) and worshippers (*Ubbād*) and we present the comments of Shaykh ul-Islām (Ibn Taymiyyah) which contains that which will amaze and cure, by the permission of Allāh.

- ❖ **Introductory theme 8 – Regulations for Visions of the Prophet (sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam) in Dreams.** We have branched out this introductory theme into seven important issues and we overlooked ourselves in the last part of it and we mentioned some examples from the lives of the scholars past and present. What precedes this is treatment for the common and widespread errors which have a connection to what is believed and this has an influence in the lives of the Muslims. Our treatment for these destructive elements of superstition and falsehood is thus considered.
- ❖ **Introductory theme 9 – The Ruling on Dishonesty in Dreams.** This includes some important matters such as:
  - The definition of ‘dishonesty (lying)’ in regards to dreams and a warning against it.
  - Is a false vision to be interpreted and will it take place if it is interpreted?
  - How can dishonesty and lying take place in something which is a part of Prophecy?
- ❖ **Introductory theme 10 – It is a Must for a Righteous Vision to Occur.** We mention within this theme precious gems of benefit from the states of people who have had visions and interpreters that have been mentioned in the biographical literature.

- ❖ **Introductory theme 11 – A True Vision Arrives in Many Appearances and Forms.** We mention within it numerous samples such as the visions of al-'Azeez the King of Egypt, the vision of Umm Habeebah and Sawdah, the vision of Ibn 'Abbās of the blood of Husayn, the account of Hamdiyyah the timber merchant, the dream of the just king Nūruddeen about the deviants digging up the grave of the Messenger of Allāh (*sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam*) and other accounts are mentioned, ending with further dreams and examples.
- ❖ **Introductory theme 12 – A Disbeliever Can See a True Vision.** We mention the evidence for this and we detail numerous examples of it.<sup>1</sup>
- ❖ **Introductory theme 13 – A Vision Occurs According to how it is Interpreted.** It follows up from some of the rulings and issues that have

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<sup>1</sup> **Translator's note:** John William Dunne was an Irish aircraft designer who built the first British military aeroplane in 1906 and he was also fascinated by the predictive dreams that he experienced. In 1902 while Dunne was serving as a soldier with the British Army in South Africa during the Boer War, he dreamt that he was standing on the upper slopes of a mountain which he recognised as an island volcano. Jets of vapour were spouting out of it and he realised that it was going to erupt yet the people of the island were unaware. Then he found himself on another island and tried to persuade the local French officials to send ships to save the people but they refused. When he awoke he shouted "four thousand people will be killed!" Later in the day a bundle of newspapers arrived from England for the British forces and the Daily Telegraph was among the papers. A headline read **'Volcano disaster in Martinique. Town swept away. An avalanche of flame. Probable loss of over 40,000 lives.'** This was the terrible volcanic explosion of Mount Pelee on the French island of Martinique in the Caribbean on 8 May 1902. As for the number of fatalities, Dunne said it was 4000 according to his recollection but fifteen years later it was confirmed to be 40,000 fatalities. Dunne had other such dreams which he mentioned in his book *An Experiment with Time* (1927).

British psychologist Keith Hearne had a lucid dream 18 months after conducting research into the topic and noted: "I was walking along the beach, which seemed to be Mediterranean perhaps, I looked down at the sand and saw some gold and silver coins. As I knelt down and started to dig them out, they expanded to become as big as plates. My immediate thought was 'This can't be real. This is a dream!' with that, I stood up and with total clarity looked around at the scenery. It was so astonishingly real, my vision was perfect – I could see individual grains of sand. Children were playing nearby and everything was so relaxed. I could feel the warmth of the sun on me, yet I knew that everything I saw, heard and felt was completely artificial. After a short while, I decided to conduct an experiment, and so attempted to conjure up a dream companion whom I 'willed' to appear behind a stack of deck-chairs that was present. I walked over to the stack, looked down at the incredibly detailed sand, and as I raised my eyes I saw a young woman walking towards me. She was short, with black hair, markedly green eyes, and had a very pretty face. She approached directly, and said, 'Hello, my name's Jane.' We became quite close in the dream. Believe it or not, I actually met that same woman in waking life two weeks later, and we were together for two years. Her name was Jane and she was identical to the dream woman."

See Innes, *op.cit*, pp.98-100, 121-122.

preceded (mainly the fourth introductory theme) and we appropriate it with extra importance and with new meanings which have not yet preceded.

- ❖ **Introductory theme 14 – Etiquettes when Seeing a Bad Vision.** We mention within this theme all of what we have arrived at and we distinguish that which the evidence indicates and what it does not. We also touch upon the rulings and wisdoms behind some of the etiquettes.
- ❖ **Introductory theme 15 – The Meaning of a True Vision Being a Part of Prophecy.** We mention the texts concerning this along with its verification and the comments of the people of knowledge in documenting its clarification. We define precisely its meaning and make evident that if a disbeliever's vision is true then it does not reach the level of being a part of Prophecy.
- ❖ **Introductory theme 16 – the last – Etiquettes of Relaying (Visions and Dreams) and Interpreting (them).** We detail within this theme the etiquettes of relaying visions and we pinpoint seven etiquettes. We then highlight the etiquettes of the interpreter and assign eleven mannerisms that he should have. With this is the end of the book and may Allāh seal for us goodness and keep away from us destruction, mounting desires and what He is not pleased with.

Our study is distinct in covering the following issues:

- ✓ It combines between what is firmly rooted along with examples.
- ✓ It combines between the original and the contemporary.
- ✓ It includes most of the transmitted texts in interpretation from the Prophetic *abādeeth* and *Salafī* narrations, in accordance with what our investigation has discovered, traced back to the codices of the Sunnah and the narrations.
- ✓ It is not limited to benefiting solely from the books of those who are associated with its affair (i.e. vision and dream interpretation). Rather, it also refers to the books of *tafseer*, *hadeeth*, *fiqh*, literature, history and biographies which make the compilation of this topic difficult unless there is maximum focus and safeguarding the limits in cataloguing, research and study.
- ✓ It does not overlook the errors that are conducted in the name of this science and the contrary actions that those who claim it fall into. Therefore, our effort in these introductory themes is to compile them and clarify the warnings that come with it, and Allāh brings success.

- ✓ Within it is a strong concern for presenting verified themes of research and understanding them even from those who have not authored anything regarding it, especially from the explainers of hadeeth and the top scholars.
- ✓ We give particular concern to including the topics and covering all of its theoretical research and we do not undermine the limits of our knowledge except two matters, which both need a separate work each<sup>1</sup>:
  1. Presenting the efforts of the Jews<sup>2</sup> and Christians in dream interpretation and the idea that they were the most likely source from which Muslim scholars took, such as al-Qādirī in his book *at-Ta'beer*, Ibn Ghanām in *al-Ma'lam*<sup>3</sup>. This will also show that their later experts in this science transmitted much from the Muslims, such as Hasan bin Bahlūl<sup>4</sup> in *Ta'beer ur-Ru'yah*. It also includes a clarification of their

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<sup>1</sup> Perhaps some commendable and serious students of knowledge will do this, from those who possess knowledge of classification and patience upon the enormity of assessment and detailed listings. Who possess the ability to make good connections between information along with ease in presentation along with a comprehension of the efforts of those prior and along with a collection of the most likely locations of this and stopping at that which serves the topic incidentally not on purpose.

<sup>2</sup> For example, a modern Jewish scholar, M.J. Kister, gives particular concern to this topic and this has been spread in the English language in the '*Journal of Israel Oriental Studies*' (vol.4, 1974, pp.222-225 – an annual journal that appears under the auspices of the Faculty of Humanities at *Tel Aviv University*), wherein he claims in some of them that the science (of dream and vision interpretation) originated with the Jews! As is usual from them in falsification and lies. See our previous refutation of him in our introduction to the book *Ta'beer ur-Ru'yah* of Ibn Qutaybah (p.46-50).

<sup>3</sup> The title of his book is *al-Ma'lam 'alā Hurūf al-Mu'jam* [Features of the Letters of the Alphabet] and I have completed my verification of it three copies of it and it will be published and distributed soon *inshā'Allāh*.

**Translator's note:** Kister is used by demythologiser Orientalists such as Rippin and has been referenced by anti-Islām writers such as Andrew G. Boston (in a *Front Page Mag* article which claimed that the Prophet Muhammad massacred Banū Quraydhah as an anti-Jewish move). Kister is the author of:

- ✓ *Studies in the Jahiliya and Early Islam* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1980)
- ✓ "Legends in Tafsir and Hadith Literature: The Creation of Adam and Related Stories" in Andrew Rippin (ed.), *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'an* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), pp.117-138.
- ✓ "The Song of Khadija" in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, vol.16, 1993, pp.59-95.

<sup>4</sup> He transmits much of the statements of Ibn Qutaybah and the examples and parables that he brings are those of Ibn Qutaybah and he done this in more than one chapter of his book. Indeed, none of the book is his own work at all except for taking out the verses of the Qur'ān, taking out hadeeth, poetry and leaving out the original content as it was (from Ibn Qutaybah's work). To the extent that he did not even

tire himself to change the chapter headings and sections, so it will be comprehended by whoever reads his book will find his intense reliance upon the examples of the author (i.e. Ibn Qutaybah) and his methodology. This book has been published in the 'Iraqi journal *al-Mawrad* (vol. 14, no.1, 1404 AH, pp.127-162) under the auspices of Dr. Yūsuf Habbi (Rev. Joseph Habbi, former head of the Catholic Chaldean Church of 'Iraq) and it is a part of his book *ad-Dalā'il* which was published by Fu'ad Sezgin who produced a copy of the manuscript.

**Translator's Note:** Ibn Bahlūl, also known as Bar Bahlūl, was a tenth century Nestorian who spent most of his life in Baghdad. He is known for his lexicon of the Syriac language. In the early 1970s Fu'ad Sezgin discovered in Istanbul a work by Ibn Bahlūl entitled *Kitāb ud-Dalā'il* (*The Book of Signs*). This text presents a chronological synopsis of the various feasts and festivals of the Eastern Christian churches, as well as of the Muslims, Jewish peoples, the Harranian pagans and others. Thus, the text is similar to a contemporary almanac yet it also includes other issues such as how to determine the health of slaves, knowledge of poisons, physiognomy, dream interpretation etc. J.C. Lamoureaux has also made an assessment of Ibn Bahlūl *Kitāb ud-Dalā'il* entitled "New Light on the Textual Tradition of Bar Bahlul's Book of Signs" in *Le Musèon* journal, (vol.112, issue 1-2, 1999 CE, pp.187-190). John Lamoureaux in his book *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2002), p.158 corroborates exactly what Shaykhs Mashhūr and Abū Talhah did:

**Bar Bahlūl's main source was none other than the dream manual of Ibn Qutaybah. This is clear both from the structure of his dream manual and from the specific interpretations that he assigns to the individual dream symbols. Indeed, so closely does Bar Bahlūl follow his source that his chapter on dreams must be considered as basically an abridgement of Ibn Qutaybah's dream manual. Nonetheless, as will be argued, Bar Bahlūl was deliberately crafting his source, seeking to make of it a work that was neither Muslim nor Christian, but one that was generically monotheistic, and thus usable by Muslims, Jews, and Christians alike.**

Lamoureaux then states on page 163:

**In his dream manual, there is only one passage that might indicate that Bar Bahlūl's religious convictions affected his strategies as a compiler. It will be recalled that he omitted the whole of Ibn Qutaybah's chapter on dreams of the Koran, the call to prayer, and the building of mosques. It is imprudent, however, to suppose that such materials were removed as a result of Bar Bahlūl's Christian sensibilities. He was not out to craft a Christian dream manual. There is not one passage in his chapter on dreams that is explicitly Christian: no Bible verses are cited, for example, nor are any specifically Christian dream symbols interpreted. If it was not a Christian dream manual that he was crafting, what sort of manual was it? Let me suggest that Bar Bahlūl's goal as a compiler was to create from Ibn Qutaybah's dream manual a text that was generically monotheistic, one that would have been usable by Muslims, Jews, and Christians alike. To accomplish this purpose, the first thing he did was take from his source everything that smacked of the culture of the ulema and their theological methodology: prophetic traditions and the beloved isnād both fall by the wayside.**

void interpretations and their underlying motivations and some of its oppositions to the *fiṭra* (natural disposition), along with a clarification of its deficiencies in fundamentals considering the false interpretations of their criteria for the sciences of dream interpretation.

2. A thorough investigation mentioning an autobiographical compendium of vision interpreters along with an elaboration of their efforts which have been published or are in manuscript form. This includes the locations of such manuscripts and their different types and a mention of the historical facts that can be derived from them and a clarification of the benefits that can also be derived from each of them.

And finally, it is hoped that our effort that is in your hands now our noble readers, will fill the void that it is in Islamic bookstores and provide an evaluation of the correct route to take for this important science which has been neglected by many of the students of knowledge who are thus ignorant of its principles. As a result, the students of knowledge do not have any awareness of this science except that which comes to their attention via scattered pieces of information which has not been thoroughly examined or verified. It has thus been completed, and all praise is due to Allāh, with a close investigation of its essential themes and reliant upon proofs and evidence which have been agreed upon and settled by the deductions of the Imāms of insight and the people of verification. So what we hope for is for benefit to be derived from this work and may Allāh make it a reward for us and record it as something that was sincerely for His Gracious Face and may prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muhammad, upon his family and companions.

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Maimonides the Andalusian Jewish scholar also relied much on Muslim sources, for more on this refer to Alan Bill, “The Phenomenology of True Dreams in Maimonides” in the journal *Dreaming* (2000), vol.10, no.1, pp.43-54.



## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SCIENCE OF VISION AND DREAM INTERPRETATION AND THE CONCERN THE SCHOLARS HAVE FOR IT

There should be no doubt, when one contemplates, that in the Noble Divinely Revealed texts is a considerable importance attached to the knowledge of (vision and dream) interpretation in the Divine Legislation. Allāh manifested this in His magnificent Book especially in the Sūrah of Yūsuf (*alaybi salām*).<sup>1</sup> So just as the books of *hadeeth*, historiography, biographies, *seerah*, literature, *tafseer* etc. were all disseminated there also exists, based on the information from the Prophet (*sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam*) and his companions (*radi Allāhu ‘anhum*), a concern to this science (of vision interpretation). Alongside this is particular attention given to its regulations and the wisdom that is contained within it. In the two *Sabeehs* the *hadeeth* from Samurah bin Jundub (*radi Allāhu ‘anhu*) who stated: From what the Messenger of Allāh (*sallAllāhu ‘alayhi wassallam*) used to say a lot to his companions was “Have any of you seen a vision?” and then anyone who Allāh willed would relate (his vision).<sup>2</sup> In the wording of Imām Muslim (*rahimabullāh*) (vol.15, p.35 of the explanation of Imām an-Nawawī), Samurah (*radi Allāhu ‘anhu*) stated: If the Prophet (*sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam*) prayed *Fajr*, he would turn and face his companions after and ask them “did any of you see a vision?” also in Bukhārī (1158) from the *hadeeth* of Ibn ‘Umar (*radi Allāhu ‘anhumā*) who said: “They used to (i.e. the companions) relate visions that they had to the Messenger of Allāh (*sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam*).” Ibn ‘Umar (*radi Allāhu ‘anhu*) also stated: “The men during the epoch of the Prophet (*sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam*) used to have visions and would inform the Prophet (*sallAllāhu alayhi wasallam*) of them, who would then say whatever Allāh willed him to say about them.”

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Ibrāheem al-Adham mentioned in his book *Tafseer ul-Ahlām* (p.17) that sleep, interpretation, and visions have been mentioned in 22 Sūrahs of the Noble Qur’ān, then he noted the particular Sūrahs until he had documented all of them on pages 17-22 of his book. Yet much of what he noted has no actual relation to visions and interpreting visions, rather they are related to sleep states only. Similar to what ‘AbdulJabbār Mahmood Sāmīrā’ī wrote in his long article in the Iraqi journal *al-Mawrad* (vol.20, no.2) entitled *ar-Ru’yah fi’l-Qur’ān il-Kareem* [Visions in the Noble Qur’ān], (p.5).

<sup>2</sup> Reported by al-Bukhārī (*rahimahullāh*) (14/479) and entitled the chapter “**The Chapter of Interpreting Visions After Salat us-Subh.**”

**Translators Note:** volume 9, book 87 in the English translation.

These narrations indicate the importance of this science, in particular his (*sallAllāhu alayhi wasallam*) asking about visions every morning. Ibn 'AbdulBarr (*rahimahullāh*) stated in *al-Istithkār* (vol.27, pp.121-122):

**This hadeeth indicates the nobility of the science of visions, as the Prophet (sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam) did not depart from the prayer without asking “did any of you see a vision last night?” except that one should tell him about it and he would interpret it. This was in order to teach his companions discussing the interpretation of visions, which shows the noble position of interpreting visions and its knowledge. You only need to look at the good example of Yūsuf (alayhis-salām) and what Allāh gave him from the knowledge of vision interpretation, from information from Allāh, may the prayers and blessings of Allāh be upon them.**

Al-Hāfidh stated in *al-Fath* (vol.14, p.390)<sup>1</sup>:

**These ahādeeth show a concern for visions and asking about them, and the noble position of interpreting visions and that this is preferable after Salat us-Subh as that is the time when people are gathered.**<sup>2</sup>

Al-Ubbī noted in his explanation of *Sabeeh Muslim* (vol.7, pp.521-522):

**Within it is (a mention of) interpreting after Salat us-Subh, at the beginning of the day, in following of the action of the Messenger (sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam) due to the blessings that are found in the early mornings, as that is the time when one is free from the work of the day and is closer to the time when one saw a vision, and there is nothing that can be mixed into the vision.**

**The Prophet (sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam) safeguarded teaching his companions (radi Allāhu ‘anhum) the regulations for visions as they can be true if they are from Allāh and a part of Prophecy, therefore affirming them is the truth and they also contain the Wisdom of Allāh and His Benevolence which increases a believer in imān and obedience...**<sup>3</sup>

It is as if the Prophet (*sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam*) was saying to his companions via his many questions regarding dreams and due to his safeguarding of teaching the knowledge of interpretation to them in congregation in gatherings and in *masājid* that: these dreams have fine meanings and their explanations cannot be perfected except by those people who are skilled in the science who have good cognizance and acquaintance with it. It is not for everyone to interpret dreams and it is not for anyone to immerse themselves in

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<sup>1</sup> Published by Dār ul-Fikr.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Munāwī transmitted this in *al-Fayd* (vol.5, 187) and compare with *Sharh al-Ubayy ‘alā Muslim* (vol.7, pp.480 and 522) and *Sharh al-‘Aynī ‘alā’l-Bukhārī* (vol.16, 325) and *Murāqat ul-Mafātih* (vol.8, pp.339-340) of al-Qārī.

<sup>3</sup> From Ibn 'AbdulBarr (*rahimahullāh*), *at-Tamheed*, vol.1, p.285.

this skill if they are inexperienced. It has an important aim in the life of the one who practices it and it has a strong bond in his life.

A vision is from the wonders that Allāh has created and from the marvels in His creation and is from the clearest evidences of the Realm of the Kingdom and creation. Some are heedless of them (visions)... due to their heedlessness of other wonders of the heart and of the worlds. For that reason, speaking about the reality of this science is from the most precise sciences which have to be safeguarded.<sup>1</sup>

Abū'l-Waleed al-Bājī (*rahimabullāh*)<sup>2</sup> stated:

For that reason, the Prophet (sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam) used to say “There is no Prophecy after me except righteous visions”<sup>3</sup>, inciting them to learn them (visions) and to take an interest in them so that a part of prophecy would remain with them which would bring them happiness and help them towards rectification and prevent them from disobedience.<sup>4</sup>

Al-Qādī 'Iyyād said:

The meaning of these wordings, the Prophet's (sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam) saying “did any of you see a vision?” - is what he done often as if it was from his affair. Also the hadeeth is an exhortation to the knowledge of visions, asking about them and interpreting them. The scholars have stated: their questions were on account of him (sallAllāhu alayhi wasallam) teaching them the interpretations and explanations (of visions) in accordance with what Allāh willed from information from the unseen realm.<sup>5</sup>

Abu'l-'Abbās al-Qurtubī (*rahimabullāh*) added to this by explaining the noble Prophetic question, saying in *al-Mufhim* (vol.6, 29):

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<sup>1</sup> From the speech of al-Ghazālī in *al-Ihya* (vol.4, p.730) and al-Munāwī transmitted it in *al-Fayd* (vol.1, p.448)...compare with *Miftāh Dār is-Sā'adah* (vol.3, pp.177. 202-203) verified by al-Halabī (*hafidhahullāh*).

<sup>2</sup> **Translator's Note:** Abu'l-Waleed Sulaymān bin Khalaf bin Sa'd bin Ayyūb at-Tujaybī al-Bājī was born in Badjos (Batalyas) in Muslim Spain in 403 AH/1012 CE but then his family moved to Beja hence his *nisba* 'al-Bājī.' He died in 494 AH/1101 CE. He was a scholar of *fiqh* and was well versed in the Māikī madhhab, he was also a judge and wrote books concerning *fiqh*, *tafsīr*, *hadeeth*, *'ilm ur-Rijāl* and poetry. He had many disagreements with Ibn Hazm and some of al-Bājī's students went on to become jurists themselves, such as Abū Bakr at-Tartūshī who settled and died in Alexandria, Egypt.

<sup>3</sup> Related by Imām Mālik in *al-Muwatta'* (vol.9, p.415) and *al-Muntaqā* (1726) and al-Bukhārī (vol.14, p.401) *Fath ul-Bari*, (6990) and others.

<sup>4</sup> *Al-Muntaqā* (Dār ul-Kutub al-'Ilamiyyah, vol. 9, p.415).

<sup>5</sup> *Ikmāl ul-Mu'allim* (vol.7, p.228) and Imām an-Nawawī transmitted it in his *Sharh 'alā Muslim* (vol.15, 30-31) and al-'Aynī in *Umdat ul-Qārī* (vol.16, p.323) and al-Ubbī in *Sharh Saheeh Muslim* (vol.7, 501-502).

The Prophet (sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam) used to ask them about their (visions) due to their goodness and truthfulness they traversed. He therefore knew that their visions were authentic and were worthy of being studied in order to figure out a lot of knowledge of the unseen realm. He also wanted to clarify to them having concern for visions and extracting their benefits in order to teach them the manner of vision interpretation and to increase the study of the unseen realm.”

“It carries the meaning, and Allāh knows best, that a direct vision to him (sallAllāhu alayhi wassallam) and to the Muslims is anticipated and he thus asked them about it as there may have been some revelation contained within it. And it shows that he wanted to teach them through that way.<sup>1</sup>

All of this indicates the nobility and dangers of this science as it contains “some aspects of the unseen realm that Allāh has manifested.”<sup>2</sup> For this reason, Ibn Qutaybah (*rahimahullāh*) stated in *Tbārat ur-Ru’yab* (p.72), which we have checked and verified:

Within all the sciences that the people indulge in, and in the different sources of wisdom that they practice, there is none more obscure, more subtle, more magnificent, nobler, more difficult and more problematic than visions. This is because it is a type of revelation and a portion of Prophethood.

Ibn ul-Qayyim (*rahimahullāh*) said in his book *Aqsām ul-Qur’ān* (p.208) when discussing the levels of the pen of revelations with which Allāh divides:

The ninth pen: the pen of interpretation which writes the revelation of sleep.....and its explanation and interpretation and what it wants from it. It is a noble and magnificent pen which translates the revelation from sleep and uncovers it, it is from the pens which rectify the worldly affairs and the deen, it is reliant upon the purity of its beholder, his uprightness, his trustworthiness, his striving for the truth, his praiseworthy manners and methodology, along with firmly grounded knowledge, inner purity and a feeling which is aided by Divine Light and knowledge of the states of the creation and their inclinations and ways. It is also from the finest of pens.....the broadest in behaviour, the sternest in persistence of all that exists in the higher (‘Ulwī) and lower (Sufli) realms of existence, the past, present and future. Therefore, the behaviour of this pen within dreams is the place of its command, its chair and its authority.<sup>3</sup>

The intent here is to highlight that the sciences of interpretation and what it satisfies from rulings and meanings which the people of knowledge attach importance to, is based

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Bājī, *Al-Muntaqā* (vol.9, 415).

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Shaheen ath-Thāhirī (*rahimahullāh*), *al-Isharāt fī ‘Ilm il-Tbārāt* (Dār ul-Fikr, p.603).

<sup>3</sup> Inshā’Allāh we will work on gathering the statements of Imām Ibn ul-Qayyim in regards to visions based on all of his works for a separate book, may Allāh ease the completion of this.

upon these noble texts and the rulings and other related matters of which are found in the books of *tafseer* and in the books of *hadeeth* in the well-known classifications. You almost will not find any book except that its author has placed within it a section entitled ‘The Book of (Vision and Dream) Interpretation’ as Imām al-Bukhārī and the likes in *Sabeeh Muslim*, the four Sunans and others. If you were to combine all of the *hadeeth* that are related to it along with the narrations from the *Salaf* that are connected to it and the explanations of the people of knowledge, that in itself would be a huge and massive thing. This is not strange in the Divine Legislation which speaks to the soul, the intellect, the natural inclination (*fitrah*) so that nothing is formed except that it has been explained and any fearful matters are put off.

When the world of the dreams is from the great strange realms that have perplexed human beings and have a strong effect on them, and it took precedence in influencing and controlling many people before Islām, until the issue became clarified and corrupted beliefs became mixed with the light of Prophetic Revelation; the clarity of its regulations mentioned in the Book and Sunnah came to be from one of the blessings that Allāh has blessed upon His servants. It is an independent world that has its own rulings and mysteries; the mind works and is filled with imaginary things and bodily sensitivities become associated with all kinds of incidents and happenings. This originates from the direction of the soul, rather indeed, it is its world in origin along with all images, forms, places, characters that are in it. Perhaps the people of dreams (interpretation) know this and thus live it all the time and maybe you will see that they place particular importance to what is seen in the obscure world of dreams due to the intense affect that it has upon them. What is also truly amazing is what was said by Abū Muhammad ibn Hazm (*rahimahullāh*) in his book *Tūq ul-Hamīmah* [Ring of the Dove] (pp.19-20)<sup>1</sup>:

“One day I went to visit Abū ‘s-Sirrī ‘Ammār bin Ziyād, one of our companions and helpful servants. I found him reflecting on something which concerned him so I asked him what the matter was. Then he waited for an hour and then said to me: ‘How wondrous! This has not been heard at all before!’ I asked: ‘What is it?’ He said: ‘I saw a slave-girl in my dream last night, when I awoke my heart was still thinking of her and I was in an intense state of love for her and even after several days to over a month after the dream I grieved (over her).’ I said to him: ‘This is a great mistake that you concern yourself with something that is not real and you become concerned with something that does not exist. Do you know what she is?’ He said: ‘By Allāh, I don’t.’ I said: ‘By Allāh it’s just a vision and an affliction of the eye, it’s

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<sup>1</sup> **Translator’s note:** refer to pp.24-25 of A.J. Arberry’s translation of the book translated as *Ring of the Dove* in the chapter entitled ‘Falling in Love While Asleep’.

as if you love something that is not of this world. If you were to love a picture of something which is real and palpable that would be more excusable, but you have loved something which is not real.' He continued to be in this state until he got better and he almost did not.<sup>1</sup>

A group of scholars were concerned with the science of dreams and their regulations to the extent that it is said that one of them preserved 10,375 papers regarding the science of vision interpretation. This is mentioned by al-Hāfidh Ibn 'Asākir in *Tāreekh Dimishq* (vol.15, p.382, Dār ul-Fikr print) reporting from Abu'l-Manjī Haydarah bin Abī Turāb 'Alī bin al-Husayn al-Antākī:

**I added 375 papers to those collected by my teacher Abu'l-Qāsim 'Abdul'Azeez bin 'Alī ash-Shahrūzī al-Mālikī, for he had preserved and collected 10,000 papers on the science of visions.**

This is amazing and wondrous! Due to the importance of this science, 'Umar bin al-Khattāb (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) instructed the people to learn this science. Abū 'Ubayd recorded in *Fadā'il ul-Qur'ān* (pp.349-350, Dār Ibn Katheer Print) as did Ibn ul-Anbārī in *Īdāb ul-Waqf* (vol.1, p.31) and it was also ascribed to al-Anbārī in *Kanz ul-'Amāl* (vol.2, p.332), from Muhammad bin Sayf who said:

**I asked al-Hasan about the Mus-haf with Arabic letters in it and he said 'Has not the letter of 'Umar reached you? Where he said "Gain understanding of the deen, learn how to interpret visions properly and learn Arabic."'**<sup>2</sup>

This chain of transmission is weak (*da'eef*). From that which indicates to us the exalted status of this science is the fact that it is glorified in all the Heavenly Books, as ar-Rāghib said: **"Physiognomy contains the science of dreams and visions and Allāh has exalted it within all of the revealed books."**<sup>3</sup> For that reason, within absolutely all

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<sup>1</sup> Compare this to what is found within his treatise *al-Akhlāq wa's-Siyar*, p.103.

<sup>2</sup> This is what as-Samarqandī transmitted in *Tanbeeh ul-Ghāfileen* and *Bustān ul-'Ārifeen*, that 'Umar (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) used to exhort the people to study the science of dream and vision interpretation and to attach importance to it, refer to p.322 of the Dār Kutub ul-'Ilmiyyah print. For further benefit refer to Ibn Qutaybah, *Ghareeb ul-Hadeeth*, vol.1, p.325; al-Muqrī, *al-Fādil*, p.4 and *Akhhbār un-Nahwiyyeen*, p.24; al-Khattābī, *al-Ghareeb*, vol.1, p.60; al-Qastalānī, *Mahāsin ut-Ta'weel*, vol.4, p.346-347, *al-Mawāhib al-Laduniyyah*, vol.3, p.553; al-Hindī, *Shu'b ul-Īmān*, vol.2, pp.540-541 and *Kanz ul-'Āmāl*, vol.15, p.517; Abū Bakr Muhammad bin 'AbdulMālik al-Andalūsī ash-Shantarīnī, *Tanbeeh ul-Albāb 'ala Fadā'il il-Trāb*, p.70; Yāqūt al-Hamawī, *Mujam ul-Udabā'*, vol.1, p.77; Abu'r-Rabī Najmuddeen Sulaymān bin 'AbdulQawwī bin 'AbdulKareem at-Tūfī as-Sarsarī al-Hanbalī, *as-Sa'qat ul-Ghadabiyyah fī Radd 'ala Munkarī il-'Arabiyyah*, pp.243-244.

<sup>3</sup> *Adh-Dhiree'ah ilā Makārim ish-Sharee'ah* (Dār ul-'Ilmiyyah Print), p.110 and al-Qāsimī (*rahimahullāh*) transmitted this from him in *Mahāsin ut-Ta'weel*, vol.4, p.345. Also compare with the as-Sāmīrā'ī's article entitled *ar-Ruy'ah fī'l-Qur'ān il-Kareem* within the journal *al-Mawrad* (vol.20, no.2, p.4).

types of people it is a must for there to be questions about the wonders and secrets of dreams and visions.<sup>1</sup> For that reason it has been one of the sciences in which the people of the scripture and others have participated in. Whoever reads through the book by al-Qādirī regarding vision interpretation will come across how much he referred to Jewish, Christian, Magian and other religious scholars,<sup>2</sup> not to mention his transmitting from

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<sup>1</sup> **Translator's note:** The studies of the topic within the West for example is a further proof for this, for example:

- ✓ G.E. Von Grunebaum & R. Caillois (eds.), *The Dream and Human Societies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966).
- ✓ Kelly Bulkeley (ed.), *Dreams: A Reader in the Religious, Cultural and Psychological Dimensions of Dreaming* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).
- ✓ Kelly Bulkeley (ed.), *Dream and Dreaming: A Reader in Religion, Anthropology, History and Psychology* (Hampshire, UK: Palgrave-St Martin's Press, 2001)
- ✓ Barbera Tedlock (ed.), *Dreaming: Anthropological and Psychological Interpretations* (Cambridge University Press, 1987).

<sup>2</sup> **Translator's note:** for example refer to:

- ✓ Yoram Bilu, "In Search of the 'Saddiq': Visitation Dreams Among Moroccan Jews in Israel" in *Psychiatry*, vol.48, no.1 (1985), pp.83-92
- ✓ Yoram Bilu, "Sigmund Freud & Rabbi Yehudah: Jewish Mystical Tradition of 'Psychoanalytic' Dream Interpretation" in *Journal of Psychological Anthropology*, no.2 (1979), pp.443-463
- ✓ Joel Covitz, *Visions of the Night: A Study of Jewish Dream Interpretation* (Boston: Shambhala and Random House, 1990).
- ✓ Yākov Elman and Soloman Ben Jacob Almoi, *Dream Interpretation from Classical Jewish Sources* (Hoboken: Ktav, 1998)
- ✓ Monford Harris, *Studies in Jewish Dream Interpretation* (New York: J. Aronson, 1994)
- ✓ Jean-Marie Husser (trans. Jill M. Munro), *Dreams and Dream Narratives in the Biblical World* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999)
- ✓ Miriam Huttler, "Jewish Origins of Freud's Interpretation of Dreams" in *Journal of Psychology and Judaism*, 23:1 (1999), pp.5-48.
- ✓ Richard Lee Kalmin, "Dreams and Dream Interpreters" in Richard Kalmin (ed.), *Sages, Stories, Authors and Editors in Rabbinic Babylonia* (Atlanta: Scholar's Press, 1994), pp.61-80
- ✓ Morton T. Kelsey, *God, Dreams and Revelation: Christian Interpretation of Dreams* (Minneapolis: St Augsburg Press, 1991).
- ✓ Sandor Lorad, "Dream Interpretation in the Talmud: Babylonian and Graeco-Roman Period" in the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, (vol.38, no.1, 1957) pp.92-97.
- ✓ Sandor Lorad, "Dream Interpretation in the Talmud" in R.L. Woods & H.B. Greenhouse (eds.), *The New World of Dreams* (New York: MacMillan, 1974), pp.150-158.
- ✓ A. Leo Oppenheim, "The Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near-East: With a Translation of the Assyrian Dream Book" in *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol.46, no.3 (1956).
- ✓ J.F. Priest, "Myth and Dream in Hebrew Scripture" in J. Campbell (ed.), *Myths, Dreams and Religion* (New York: Dutton, 1970), pp.48-67

Indian (Hindu) and bygone Byzantine explanations.<sup>1</sup> So this covered the Arab lands completely not to mention the lands between the two rivers, Persia, India and other places. Ibn al-'Arabī al-Mālikī stated in *al-Qabas* (vol.3, p.1135) under '*ar-Ru'yah*':

It is a great subject about realities and is a matter that has been problematic for creation...Our 'Ulama have stated that it is truth, glad-tidings and an evidence from Allāh, the nations including the Arabs and non-Arabs are agreed on their reality and have comprehended this by experience.

Ad-Damīrī stated similar in *Hayāt ul-Hayawān*, as did Ibn Shāheen, Abū Sa'eed al-Wā'idh, an-Nāblusī in *Ta'teer ul-Anām*<sup>2</sup> and a group of other scholars.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, al-Qādirī transmitted in *at-Ta'beer* (vol.1, p.216) that Hishām bin 'AbdulMālik saw in a dream, before he became the Caliph, that he gained 19 and a half apples. He relayed the dream to a Jewish scholar known as Ibn al-Maghāyarī who said to Hishām: "If your dream is truthful then you will remain in power for 19 and a half years." He did not remain long until he then assumed the Khilāfah and it is well known that he ruled for this period after which he died.<sup>4</sup> This is an evidence of the spread of this science among all peoples, as we

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- ✓ Guy Gedaliahu Stroumsa, "Dreams and Visions in Early Christian Discourse" in David Shulman and Guy G. Stroumsa (ed.), *Dream Cultures: Explanations in the Comparative History of Dreaming* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp.189-212.

<sup>1</sup> **Translator's note:** for example refer to:

- ✓ Maria Mavroudi, *A Byzantine Book in Dream Interpretation: The Oneirocriticon of Achmet and Its Arabic Sources* (E.J. Brill: Leiden, 2002).
- ✓ John S. Hanson, "Dreams and Dream Visions in the Graeco-Roman World & Early Christianity" in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Romischen Welt*, vol.2, 23:2 (1980), pp.1395-1427.

<sup>2</sup> **Translator's note:** 'AbdulGhanī bin Ismā'eel an-Nāblusī, *Ta'teer ul-Anām fī Tafseer il-Manām* (Beirut: Dār ul-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2004 CE)

<sup>3</sup> See for example:

- ✓ Al-Qādirī, *Ta'beer ur-Ru'yah*, vol.1, pp.127, 167, 209, 261, 263, 364, 391, 459, 473, 476, 485, 571, 590 and vol.2, pp.40, 55, 62, 169, 203, 416.
- ✓ *Hayāt ul-Hayawān*, vol.1, pp.43, 121
- ✓ An-Nāblusī, *Ta'teer ul-Anām*, pp.16-17, 22, 63, 67, 101, 237, 422
- ✓ Ibn Shāheen, *al-Ishārāt*, pp.43, 171, 267, 309, 461
- ✓ Also refer to Dr Jaleel Abu'l-Hubb and his study of the book *Hayāt ul-Hayawān* by ad-Damīrī as he mentions some examples of vision interpretation and the behaviour of animals in regards to their dreams within the journal *al-Mawrid*, vol.20, no.2, pp.46-48.

<sup>4</sup> This report is found in *Tafseer ul-Ahlām Ibn Sīrīn* (!), p.228, which is strange from Hishām bin 'AbdulMālik (*rahimahullāh*). If this report is affirmed from Hishām then it opposes the Sunnah in regards to relaying visions to a beloved scholar, for this is neither to be referred to a Jewish scholar nor a Christian!



have mentioned prior, to the extent that Ibn Khaldūn (*rahimahullāh*) stated in his *Muqaddimah*:

As for visions and interpreting them then it was present during the time of the *Salaf* as it was with the *Khalaf* and was possibly found among the kingdoms and nations before. Except that what reached us was not sufficient enough from the statements of the interpreters from the Islamic peoples. Visions exist among absolutely all types of peoples along with the must for there to be those who interpret them. Yūsuf as-Siddeeq (*'alayhi-salām*) interpreted visions as is mentioned in the Qur'ān and likewise it is affirmed in the Saheeh from the Prophet Muhammad (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) and from Abū Bakr (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*), that the Prophet when he would finish the *Fajr* prayer would say to his companions: “*Did any of you see a vision last night?*” Asking them about it in order to give them glad tidings of what would occur as a result in regards to manifesting the deen and honouring it. This science did not cease to be transmitted among the *Salaf* and Muhammad bin Sīrīn is of the most scholars in this regard along with his books<sup>1</sup> in regards to this legislation (of dream and vision interpretation). Then the people in later periods authored in this regard such as al-Karmānī who authored his works after Ibn Seereen did and then later the Mutakallimeen and the later scholars authored many books related to this science.<sup>2</sup>

This continued during the time of *Salaf* and when certain events occurred which increased them in insight and knowledge of the necessity of understanding vision interpretation and its principles and studying the science with those people specialised in it. These events were nearly not accounted for except by immense hardship in spreading the science within books of hadeeth and their explanations, the books of *Adab*, history, biographies and many other works. We will mention a small portion of this in order to make the reality of its importance apparent to the reader and the reason why the *Salaf* were concerned with it.

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<sup>1</sup> Pay attention to Ibn Khaldūn's words here “his books”, rather it is the case that these books (of Ibn Sīrīn) have been merely printed and published with his name on it, all that it affirmed from Ibn Sīrīn is that he made some interpretations of dreams and visions and the later scholars transmitted these in books attributed to Ibn Sīrīn! For these books contain reports of those who came after him such as the report of Hishām bin 'Abdul-Mālik which has been mentioned! For Imām Ahmad bin Hanbal stated in *'Ilal ul-Hadeeth* (p.109, checked by as-Sāmīrā'ī): “**The madhhab of Ibn Sīrīn, Ayyūb and Ibn 'Awn was that they did not write anything down.**” More on this will be mentioned and Allāh brings success.

<sup>2</sup> *Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldūn* (Dār ul-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah print), vol.1, pp.475-476, 478; al-Qanūjī also transmitted this from him in *Abjad ul-'Ulūm*, vol.2, pp.167-170 as did al-Qāsimī in *Mahāsin ut-Ta'weel*, vol.4, p.345.

## EXAMPLES OF THE GREAT INFLUENCE OF DREAMS AND THE REGULATIONS AND BENEFITS THAT THEY INCLUDE

Jābir bin Samurah (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) said: “One of the companions of the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) saw in a dream that he met some Jewish people and their forms pleased him, he said to them: “You would be a (good) people, if you would not say that 'Uzayr is the son of Allāh!” They replied: “And you would be a (good) people if you would not say ‘what Allāh and Muhammad wills.’” Then he said: “he met some Christian people and their forms please him and he said to them “You would be a (good) people if you would not say that the Messiah is the son of Allāh!” They replied: “And you would be a (good) people if you would not say ‘what Allāh and Muhammad wills.’” When the companion awoke he relayed the dream to the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) who said: “*I used to hear it from you and it harmed me so do not say “Whatever Allāh and Muhammad wills.”*” This is what was recorded by Ibn Hibbān in his *Saheeb* (vol.13, pp.32-33) and by Ibn Mājah in his *Sunan* (hadeeth no.2118). It was relayed from more than one noble companion that the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) from the hadeeth of Ibn 'Abbās, at-Tufayl, Hudhayfah, 'Ā'ishah, Ibn 'Abbās and a group of companions. In some narrations the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) added: “*However, you should rather say ‘Whatever Allāh wills and then what Muhammad wills.’* In the report of Hudhayfah within the *Musnad* of Imam Ahmad (vol.5, p.393) and an-Nasā'ī in *'Amal ul-Yawm wa'l-Laylah* (p.544): “*However you should rather say: whatever Allāh wills and then what you will.*” The *isnād* is authentic as stated by an-Nawawī in *Riyādh us-Sālibeen* (no. 1745) and others and also refer to some narrations in *Mushkil ul-Āthār* (vol.1, pp.218-220) by at-Tahāwī (*rahimahullāh*).

I say: within the narration of at-Tufayl bin Sakhbarah (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) said: “*Tufayl saw a vision and has informed of it to whoever of you he has informed and that you are saying a word which is not befitting for those alive of you to say.*” Then he mentioned the hadeeth. This is reported by Ibn Abī Shaybah (vol.2, pp.165-166, no.652), Imām Ahmad in his *Musnad* (vol.5, p.82); al-Bukhārī in *at-Tāreekh ul-Kabeer* (vol.4, p.363); Abū Dāwūd (hadeeth no. 4980); ad-Dārimī (vol.9, p.2864, *Fath ul-Manān*); Ibn Mājah in his *Sunan* (hadeeth no. 2118); Ibn Abī 'Āsim, *al-Ābād wa'l-Mathbānī* (vol.5, p.213, hadeeth no.2743); Ibn Qāni', *Mu'jam us-Sabābah* (vol.8, p.2818-2823, hadeeth nos. 854, 855, 856); Abu'l-Qāsim al-Baghawī, *Mu'jam us-Sabābah* (vol.3, pp.430-431, hadeeth nos. 1367, 1368); al-Hākim, *al-Mustadrak* (vol.3, pp.462-463); at-Tabarānī, *al-Kabeer* (vol.8,

pp.324-325, hadeeth nos. 8214 and 8215); Abū Nu'aym, *Ma'rifat us-Sabābah* (vol.2, pp.1565-1566) – and all the men in the chain of transmission are *thiqāt* based on the conditions of al-Bukhārī, as stated by al-Busayrī.

So as you can see this shows that the visions of the righteous Sahābah, such as Hudhayfah, Jābir, at-Tufayl, affirmed important rulings and that the source of the true dream was revelation and that it contained important and beneficial Shari' knowledge. Our Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) took from these visions whatever agreed with what was correct and what Allāh taught him and Allāh knows best and is much wiser. Shaykh 'AbdurRahmān bin Hasan, the grandson of the Imām (Muhammad bin 'AbdulWahhāb), stated in *Fath ul-Majeed* (vol.2, pp.706-707):

This is a true vision and the Messenger of Allāh (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) and acted upon what they were based on. He also forbade them from saying 'whatever Allāh and Muhammad wills' and instructed them to just say 'whatever Allāh wills.'" This hadeeth: wherein he instructed them to only say "whatever Allāh wills" shows that there is no doubt that this is more complete in terms of sincerity and further from shirk. And then to say "and then whatever so and so wills" because this shows clear tawheed and negates associating partners in all aspects, so the All-Seeing chooses for Himself the highest level of perfectness in *tawheed* and *ikhlās*. As for the Prophet saying "it was more befitting to say so and so and I forbid you from it." It is mentioned in some routes of the transmission that he forbade those alive from the companions from saying that.<sup>1</sup> Then after this is the hadeeth of at-Tufayl wherein he mentioned his dream and the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) sternly forbade them from saying that and the Prophet remained informing them of this until Allāh perfected the deen for him and completed it with His Blessing and clearly conveyed it. May prayers and peace be upon the Prophet, his family and all of his companions. As for the meaning of his saying (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*): "A righteous vision is one 46<sup>th</sup> of Prophethood." Then I say: if a sleep vision is revelation, then it affirms what revelation does in terms of commanding and forbidding and Allāh knows best.

Also from this is the saying of 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar (*radi Allāhu 'anhuma*): A man from the companions of the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) saw *Laylat ul-Qadr* in his dream and that it would occur within the last seven days (of Ramadān). The Messenger of Allāh (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) said: "It seems that your vision agreed that *Laylat ul-Qadr* is one of the last seven nights, so whoever wants to seek it, let him seek it in the last seven nights."

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<sup>1</sup> Yet it is perhaps the case that this wording is *shādh*, so reflect.

As you can see this is from Allāh’s success to this purified group and the trust, purity, happiness and truthfulness that they were upon, to the extent that their visions agreed with the clarification of important rulings. Al-Hāfidh Ibn Hajar (*rabimabullāb*) stated:

Within this hadeeth is an evidence for the glorified status of the vision and that it is permissible to refer to it when deducing evidences for present matters with the condition that they do not oppose Shari’ principles.<sup>1</sup> ‘Abdullāh bin Zayd bin ‘AbdurRabbih (*radi Allāb ‘anhu*) stated: When the Messenger of Allāh (*sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam*) gathered the people a bell was used to call them yet he disliked this due to the resemblance to the Christians. While I was asleep I saw a man wearing two green *thobes* and in his hand was a bell which he was carrying. I said to him “O ‘Abdullāh will you sell this bell to me?” The man said: “Shall I not show you something which is better than this?” I said “Sure.” The man said: “Say:

*“Allāhu Akbar, Allāhu Akbar, Allāhu Akbar, Allāhu Akbar.*

*Asb-hadu an la ilaha il-Allāh, Asb-hadu an la ilaha il-Allāh.*

*Asb-hadu anna Muhammadan Rasoolullāh, Asb-hadu anna Muhammadan Rasoolullāh. Hayya*

*‘ala’s-Salah, Hayya ‘ala’s-Salah.*

*Hayya‘ala-l-Falāh, Hayya‘ala-l-Falāh.*

*Allāhu Akbar, Allāhu Akbar, la ilaha il-Allāh.””*

Then the man retreated not far and said: “Then you should say when you are ready to establish the Salah:

*“Allāhu Akbar, Allāhu Akbar,*

*Asb-hadu an la ilaha il-Allāh, Asb-hadu anna Muhammadan Rasoolullāh.*

*Hayya ‘ala’s-Salah, Hayya‘ala-l-Falāh.*

*Qad Qāmatis-Salah, Qad Qāmatis-Salah.*

*Allāhu Akbar, Allāhu Akbar, la ila il-Allāh.””*

‘Abdullāh bin Zayd said: When I awoke I went to the Messenger of Allāh and informed him of what I had seen (in the vision) and the Messenger of Allāh (*sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam*) said: “Indeed this is a true vision, *inshā’Allāh.*” Then he instructed that the call be given and Bilāl, the freed slave of Abū Bakr, gave this call.” In another narration the Prophet (*sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam*) said: “Go with Bilāl to the Masjid and tell him what you have seen (in the vision) and let him use that to make the call to prayer because he has a stronger voice than you.” ‘Abdullāh bin Zayd said: “So I went to the Masjid with Bilāl and I taught him what I had seen in the vision and he made the call to prayer by it.” ‘Umar bin al-Khattāb heard

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Fath*, vol.4, p.787

the call (while he was in his house) and came out saying “O Messenger of Allāh! By the One who has sent you with the truth, I have (also) seen the very like of this in a vision!” The messenger of Allāh (*sallallāhu ’alayhi wassallam*) said: “Unto Allāh is praise for that.”

Imām Ahmad reported it in his *Musnad* (vol.4, pp.42-43), al-Bukhārī in *Khalq Af’āl ul-’Ibād* (p.340); Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan* (vol.2, p.132, no.499); at-Tirmidhī, *Sunan* (189) via the route of Ibn ul-Atheer in *Asad ul-Ghābah* (vol.3, p.248); Ibn Mājah (hadeeth no.706); ’AbdurRazzāq, *Musannaf* (vol.1, pp.460, 455, 1787, 1774); ad-Dārimī (hadeeth no.1191); Ibn Khuzaymah (vol.1, p.189, hadeeth no. 363); Ibn Abī ’Āsim, *al-Ābād wa’l-Muthannī* (vol.3, p.475, hadeeth no.1937); at-Tahāwī, *Sharh Ma’ānī il-Āthār* (vol.1, pp.131-132); Ibn ul-Mundhir, *al-Awsat* (vol.3, pp.12-14, hadeeth no.1162); Ibn ul-Jāwarad, *al-Muntaqā* (vol.1, p.156, hadeeth no.158); ad-Dāraqtunī, *Sunan* (vol.1, p.241); Ibn Hibbān, *Sabeeh* (hadeeth no.1679); al-Bayhaqī, *Sunan* (vol.1, p.391) and *ad-Dalā’il un-Nubuwah* (vol.7, pp.17-20). Within the report of Abū Dāwūd is an addition: “Umar said: “I have (also) seen the very like of this in a vision that he saw but he preceded me and I am ashamed!” Al-Hāfidh an-Nawawī (*rahimabullāh*) stated in his *Sharh* of Saheeh Muslim (vol.4, p.76):

**The Prophet (sallallāhu ’alayhi wassallam) legislated it (i.e. the adhān) either by revelation or by his own ijtihād, sallallāhu ’alayhi wassallam and based on the madhhab of the majority that it is permissible for his ijtihād. This is not acting by a mere dream and there should be no doubt about this and no differing, and Allāh knows best.**

Likewise is mentioned within *Adwā ul-Bayān* (vol.8, p.207) by ash-Shanqītī (*rahimabullāh*). Within this is further evidence which is that of the Prophet’s important concern for his Ummah and the benefit he imparted to them after in regards to the dreams of the righteous and truthful people. So by Allāh look at the effect of these visions in the legislation of the Muslims’ most dignified symbols. To the extent that Ibn ul-Mundhir (*rahimabullāh*) stated in *al-Awsat*, vol.3, p.12:

**The Prophet (sallallāhu ’alayhi wassallam) used to pray in Makkah with neither an adhān nor an iqāmah, and likewise when he arrived in Madeenah. This was up until ’Abdullāh bin Zayd saw a vision of the call (to prayer) while asleep.**

**BENEFIT:**

So if it is said: **“what is the wisdom in the Adhān being seen by a companion and not the Prophet (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam)?”** The answer is what was stated by as-Suhaylī<sup>1</sup> when he mentioned:

**The wisdom in that is that it alludes to the exalted status of the Prophet (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam) as the Adhān came bearing witness to him after bearing witness to Allāh on the tongue of someone else in exaltation of his status, and Allāh knows best.<sup>2</sup>**

Abū Umāmah al-Bāhili (radi Allāhu ‘anhu) stated:

The Messenger of Allāh (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam) sent me to my people to call them to Islām, so I went to them while they were watering and milking their camels and they were drinking. When they saw me they said: “Welcome as-Suday bin ‘Ajlān!” Then they said: “It has reached us that you have left your religion and joined that man.”<sup>3</sup> I said: “No, however I believed in Allāh and in His Messenger and the Messenger of Allāh sent me to present Islām and its regulations to you.” We explained that introduction and then they came with a large bowl of blood, placed it down gathered around it and ate from it. They said: “Come join in O Suday!” I said: “Woe to you! I came to you from the one who has prohibited this upon you based on what has been revealed to him from Allāh.” They said: “And what is that?” I said: “This has been revealed to him:

**“Prohibited to you are dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine...”**

Up until where Allāh says,

**“...except what you [are able to] slaughter [before its death]...”**

{*al-Mā'idah* (5): 3}.”

So I began to call them to Islām and they rejected it so I said to them: “Woe to you! Give me some water because I am very thirsty.” They said: “No, rather we will pray that you die of thirst!” So I made *tayammum* and placed my head into the *Imāmab* and went to sleep in the intense heat on the sun-baked ground. In a dream I was given a glass goblet, the like of which the people have not seen, and there was a drink in the goblet which had a taste that the people have not seen the like of and I drank it. When I finished it I woke up and by Allāh I was neither thirsty nor did I have the feeling of thirst after that drink (in the dream). I then heard them (my people) saying “a man came to us who was from our people and we did not even give him a taste of al-Maj’a.”<sup>4</sup> So then they offered me some

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<sup>1</sup> In *ar-Rawdh ul-Unuf*, vol.2, pp.253-254

<sup>2</sup> See *Sharh al-Ubbi ‘ala Muslim*, vol.7, pp.493-494; also see *ar-Ru’yā*, p.108 by al-Ghumārī.

<sup>3</sup> **Translator’s note:** i.e. the Prophet Muhammad (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam).

<sup>4</sup> Al-Maj’a is made from *laban* (natural yogurt) and dates, refer to *an-Nihāyah*, vol.4, p.300.

of it to drink and I said: “I have no need of it, for Allāh, Blessed and Exalted, gave me drink!” I showed them my belly and they embraced Islām.”

Reported by al-Hākīm (*rabimahullāb*) in his *Mustadrak*, vol.3, pp.641-642 and he authenticated it! Adh-Dhahabī (*rabimahullāb*) stated: **“In the isnād is Sadaqah bin Hurmuz and Ibn Ma’een declared him to be weak.”**<sup>1</sup>

**I say**<sup>2</sup>: a group of scholars relied on him as found in at-Tabarānī’s *al-Kabeer*, vol.8, pp.335-36, 343-344, nos.8073, 8074, 8099; also Ibn ’Asākir in *Tāreekh Dimishq*, vol.24, p.62 (Dār ul-Fikr Print) – they reported the hadeeth via a number of narrators from Abū Ghālib from Abū Umāmah himself. Ibn Mardawayh also reported the hadeeth as did Ibn Abī Hātim in *ad-Durr al-Mantbūr*, vol.2, p.453.

I say: Abū Ghālib is *Sudūq* but he makes errors so the *isnād* is *da’eef*.<sup>3</sup> In a narration, if it is authentic, there is mention of the status and virtues of Abū Umāmah (*radi Allāhu ’anhu*) and it mentions the great impact of a vision in his people embracing Islām. And if it did not have any impact or virtue then they would not have followed what came to them via him from Allāh’s Messenger (*sallallāhu ’alayhi wassallam*). Also Abū Hurayrah (*radi Allāhu ’anhu*) stated:

Two men from Balī, a neighbourhood in Qudā’ah, embraced Islām. One of them was martyred and the other lived for one more year (until he then also died). Talhah ibn ’Ubaydullāh saw in a dream that the man who lived for one more year entered Paradise before the martyr, and he was surprised to see this. When Talhah awoke he told the Prophet (*sallallāhu ’alayhi wassallam*) about his dream. The Prophet (*sallallāhu ’alayhi wassallam*) said: “Why should you be surprised? Didn’t he fast one more Ramadān and pray more than six thousand Raka’h, or the likes, in this one year?”

Reported by Ahmad in his *Musnad*, vol.2, p.333 via the route of Muhammad bin ’Amru who said: “Abū Salamah narrated to us: Abū Hurayrah narrated to us...” and its *isnād* is *hasan*. It has supporting evidence from the hadeeth of Talhah bin ’Ubaydullāh which contains the Prophet’s saying:

“Which of them do you find more amazing?” They (i.e. the companions) said: “O Messenger of Allāh, this one from the two exerted himself more in the way of Allāh as he was martyred yet entered Jannah after the other?” The Prophet (*sallallāhu ’alayhi wassallam*) said: “Did he (the one who entered Jannah first out of the two) not live for one more year after him (the one who was martyred)?” They said “Yes.” The Prophet said: “And did he not complete one more Ramadān and

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<sup>1</sup> See Ibn Hibbān, *ath-Thiqāt*, vol.8, p.319; *al-Mīzān*, vol.2, p.313 and *al-Lisān*, vol.3, p.187.

<sup>2</sup> **Translator’s note:** i.e. Shaykh Mashhūr

<sup>3</sup> Al-Haythamī deemed it to be *hasan* in *al-Majma’*, vol.9, pp.386-387, it is also one of the routes of at-Tabarānī yet he was heedless of it being defective due to Abī Ghālib.

*fast?*” They (i.e. the companions) said: “Yes.” The Prophet (*sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam*) said: “And did he not pray such and such prostrations in a year?” They said: “Yes O Allāh’s Messenger!” The Prophet (*sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam*) said: “*Thus between the two of them is that which is further than what is between the heavens and the earth.*”

The hadeeth is Saheeh<sup>1</sup> insha’Allāh and was reported by Imām Ahmad in his *Musnad*, vol.1, pp.161-162, 163 and vol.2, p.333; Abū Ya’lā, *Musnad*, no.648; ash-Shāshī, *Musnad*, no.27; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, no.3925; Ibn Hibbān in his *Sabeeh*, vol.7, pp.248-249, no.2982 (al-Ihsān Print); at-Tahāwī, *Mushkil ul-Athār*, vol.6, pp.76-78; al-Bayhaqī, *ad-Dalā’il*, vol.7, pp.15-16 and in his *Sunan*, vol.3, pp.371-372 – all of them via the route of Muhammad bin ‘Amru from Abū Salamah. The narrators are *thiqāt* yet it is *Munqati’* as Abū Salamah did not hear from Talhah as stated by Ibn al-Madīnī, Ibn Ma’een and al-Bazzār. Ash-Shāshī transmitted from Ibn Abī Khaythamah: “Ibn Ma’een was asked about this hadeeth and he said: ‘It is Mursal, for he did not hear from Talhah.’”<sup>2</sup>

From ‘Abdullāh bin Shaddād (*radī Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said:

“Three men from Bani Udhrāh came to the Prophet (*sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam*) and they embraced Islām. The Prophet (*sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam*) said: “Who will protect them?” Talhah said: “I will.” They then stayed with Talhah and the Prophet (*sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam*) then sent out an expedition and one of the three went and was martyred. Then another expedition was sent out and another of the three went and was martyred. As for the last of the three he died on his bed. Talhah said: ‘I saw the three men in a dream and they were in Jannah and the one who died on his bed was their leader while the one who was the second to be martyred was after the one who died on his bed, while the one who was martyred first was at the end of them all. This troubled me so I went to Allāh’s Messenger and mentioned that dream to him and he replied: *‘And what of that should I deny? None is more virtuous with Allāh than the believer who lives longer in Islām so as to make tasbeeh, takbeer and tableel of Allāh.’*”

Reported by Ahmad in his *Musnad*, vol.1, p.163; ‘Abd bin Humayd, *al-Muntakhab min al-Musnad*, vol.1, p.154, no.104; al-Bazzār, no.954; Abū Ya’lā, *Musnad*, no.634 – via the route of Talhah bin Yahyā from Ibrāheem ibn Muhammad bin Talhah from ‘Abdullāh bin Shaddād. The narration of Ahmad in his *Musnad* is *Mursal* for Talhah gets confused and at times says “from Ibrāheem bin Muhammad...” and at other times says “from Ibrāheem our freed slave...” And he is *majhūl*, so the narration before suffices from this. In another chapter the hadeeth is reported by Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqās in *Musnad Ahmad*,

<sup>1</sup> See *Majma’ uz-Zawā’id*, vol.10, pp.124, 204; *Saheeh at-Targheeb wa’t-Tarheeb*, nos. 3365 and 3366.

<sup>2</sup> See *Jāmi’ ut-Tahseel*, p.260 and *as-Siyar*, vol.4, p.287



vol.1, p.177 and ad-Dūraqī in *Musnad Sa'd* (40; Ibn Khuzaymah in his *Saheeh* (310), al-Hākīm who authenticated it in *al-Mustadrak*, vol.1, p.200; Ibn 'AbdulBarr in *at-Tamheed*, vol.24, p.221 – and the *isnād* is Saheeh according to the conditions of Muslim. Within this hadeeth is a clear proof of the Sahābah being greatly influenced by dreams and asking about their meanings.

Zayd bin Thābit (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) stated: “They (i.e. the companions) were ordered to make after every Salāh: *tasbeeh* (to say SubhānAllāh) thirty-three times, *tabmeed* (to say Alhamdulillāh) thirty-three times and *takebeer* (to say Allāhu Akbar) thirty-four times.” Then a man from the Ansār visited Zayd in a dream and said to him: ‘Allāh’s Messenger instructs you to make *tasbeeh* thirty-three times, to make *tabmeed* thirty-three times and to make *takebeer* thirty-four times - after every Salāh?’ Zayd replied: ‘Yes.’ The man said: ‘Say them twenty-five times each and also add *tableel* (saying La ilaha il-Allāh) to them too.’ When Zayd awoke he went to the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) and mentioned the dream to him, the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) said: “*Make it so.*” Reported by Ahmad in his *Musnad*, vol.5, p.184; via al-Mizzī in *Tabdbeebe ul-Kamāl*, vol.24, p.106; an-Nasā'ī in *as-Sunan al-Kubrā*, vol.1, pp.401-402, nos.1273 and 1274; an-Nasā'ī, *'Amal ul-Yawm wa'l-Laylah*, p.157; an-Nasā'ī, *al-Mujtabā*,<sup>2</sup> vo.3, p.76; at-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi'*, no.3413; ad-Dārimī, no.1354; Ibn Khuzaymah, *Saheeh*, no.752; Ibn Hibbān, *Saheeh*, no.2017; at-Tabarānī, *al-Kabeer*, no.4898 and in *ad-Du'ā*, no.731; at-Tahāwī in *al-Mushkil*, no.4097; al-Bayhaqī, *ad-Dalā'il un-Nubumwah*, vol.7, p.23 – the *isnād* is Saheeh.<sup>3</sup> As-Sindī (*rabimahullāh*) stated in his *Hāshiyat 'ala Sunan an-Nasā'ī*, vol.3, pp.76-77:

**This is not to be regarded as acting in accordance with a vision other than that of the Prophets, rather it is from acting on the statements of the Prophet as he possibly knew the reality of the vision due to revelation or (Divine) inspiration or another way.**

The Mother of the Believers Khadeejah (*radi Allāhu 'anbā*) stated: I asked Allāh’s Messenger (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) about Waraqah Ibn Nawfal and I said that ‘he believed in you yet died before you emerged (as a Prophet).’ The Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) said: “*I saw him in a dream and he was wearing white garments and if he was from the people of Hellfire he would be wearing something else.*” Reported by Ahmad in *al-Musnad*, vol.6,

<sup>1</sup> **Translator’s note:** Thus still making the total 100.

<sup>2</sup> **Translator’s note:** also known as *as-Sunan as-Sughrā* and *al-Mujtana*.

<sup>3</sup> Imām al-Albānī authenticated the hadeeth in *Silsilah Ahādeeth as-Saheehah*, no.101

p.65; Ibn Ishāq in his *Seerah*, p.113 (Hameedullāh Print)<sup>1</sup>; at-Tirmidhī, no.2288; and via the route of Ibn al-Atheer in *Asad ul-Ghābah*, vol.5, pp.447-448; al-Bazzār, vol.3, p.281;

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<sup>1</sup> **Translator's note:** i.e. the print of Muhammad Hamidullah was printed in 1979. Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah was born in 1908 (Feb 19, 1908 / 16 Muharram 1326). In Hyderabad, Dr. Hamidullah was educated at *Darul-Uloom* secondary school, *Nizam College* and *Osmania University* from where he obtained his MA and LLB degree in International Law. From 1933-35 he studied at several universities in Europe and obtained a doctorate from Bonn University in Germany. In 1936, he obtained a degree from the Sorbonne University, France. From 1936-46 he served on the faculty of *Osmania University* teaching International Law.

In 1946, he was appointed as member of the delegation sent by the Nizam of Hyderabad at the League of the Nations. After the 1948 invasion of Hyderabad by the Indian army, Hamidullah chose to live in exile in France. In 1948, he founded the Hyderabad Liberation Society to get Hyderabad recognized as an independent state. He decided to stay as a stateless person as long as the question of Hyderabad was still open in the United Nations.

In 1985, he was awarded the *Hilal-e-Imtiaz*, the highest civilian award of Pakistan that includes a substantial monetary amount. He donated the award money to *Islamic Research Academy*, Islamabad. He stayed in France till 1996, when he was forced to move to the USA because of illness. The professor never married. During the last few years of his life, he was being taken care of by the grand-daughter of his brother, Sadeedah who left her job to devote herself to his care. He died aged 96 years of age in Jacksonville, Florida in December 17 2002.

Professor Hamidullah was fluent in 22 languages including Urdu, Arabic, French, English, etc. He learned Thai at the age of 84. He translated the Qur'ān into French and many other languages. He also translated a number of other important Islamic books in many European languages. He gave lectures in various universities around the world, some of which have been published. His works on Islamic science, history and culture number more than 250 and his books have been translated in many languages.

One of his great contributions to the hadeeth literature was the discovery of the *Saheefah* of Hammām bin Munabbih, the earliest hadeeth manuscript still extant today. Two copies of it were discovered; one in a Damascus library and the other in a library in Berlin. Dr. Hamidullah published it after carefully comparing the two manuscripts. This was an important discovery for the hadeeth scholars. It also proved, as has always been held, that the earliest manuscripts had been absorbed in the much bigger later compilations. Hammām bin Munabbih was a student of Abū Hurayrah (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*). It was generally known that the *Saheefah Hammām bin Munabbih* had been completely included in the *Musnad Ahmad*. After the publication of the *Saheefah* by Dr. Hamidullah, hadeeth scholars searched *Musnad Ahmad* for the presence of the *āhadeeth* from the *Saheefah*. They found all 138 *āhadeeth* of the *Saheefah* in the *Musnad*.

He authored:

- *The Muslim Conduct of State* by Muhammad Hamidullah (1941)
- *Introduction to Islam* by Muhammad Hamidullah (1969)
- *Battlefields of the Prophet Muhammad* by Muhammad Hamidullah (Dec 1992)
- *Die Rezeption Europaischen Rechts in Haiderabad* by Muhammad Hamidullah (1953)
- *Emergence of Islam* (Publication) by Muhammad Hamidullah (Dec 1993)
- *Islam in a Nutshell* by Muhammad Hamidullah (Sep 1996)

al-Hākīm, *al-Mustadrak*, vol.4, p.393; Ibn 'Asākir, *Tāreekh Dimishq*, vol.64, pp.24-25 – from the hadeeth of 'Ā'ishah (*radi Allāhu 'anhā*) and the *isnād* is Hasan<sup>1</sup> as mentioned in

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- *Le Coran - Et la traduction française du sens de ses versets* by Muhammad Hamidullah (Sep 5, 2001)
- *Le Saint Coran: Traduction Et Commentaire de Muhammad Hamidullah Avec La Collaboration de M. Leturmy* by Muhammad Hamidullah (Aug 1989)
- *Embassy of Queen Bertha of Rome to Caliph al-Muktafi Billah in Baghdad* by Muhammad Hamidullah (1953)
- *The First Written Constitution in the World* by Muhammad Hamidullah (Sep 1986)
- *The first written constitution in the world;: An important document of the time of the Holy Prophet* by Muhammad Hamidullah (1975)
- *Introduction to Islam* by Muhammad Hamidullah and Alan Leiner (1969 - various editions)
- *Islamic notion of conflict of laws* by Muhammad Hamidullah (1945)
- *Islam, a General Picture* by Muhammad Hamidullah (Dec 1980)
- *Islam, Philosophy and Science: Four Public Lectures Organized By Unesco June 1980* by Muhammad (editor) Hamidullah (1981)
- *Kur'ân-, Ker ,m tarihi: Bir deneme (Ilmi eserler)* by Muhammad Hamidullah (1991)
- *Le "Livre Des Genenologies" [D'al-Baladuriy by al-Baladuri]* by Muhammad Hamidullah [Ahmad Ibn Yahya] (1954)
- *The life and work of the Prophet of Islam* by Muhammad Hamidullah (1998)
- *Muhammad Ibn Ishaq, the biographer of the Holy Prophet* (Pakistan Historical Society. Publication) by Muhammad Hamidullah (1967)
- *Muhammad Rasulullah: A concise survey of the life and work of the founder of Islam* by Muhammad Hamidullah (1979)
- *Muslim conduct of state: Being a treatise on Siyar (Siyar), general introduction* by Muhammad Hamidullah (1953 - numerous editions)
- *The prophet of Islam: Prophet of migration* by Muhammad Hamidullah (1989)
- *The Prophet's establishing a state and his succession* by Muhammad Hamidullah (1988)
- *Why Fast?: Spiritual & Temporal Study of Fast in Islam (Centre Culturel Islamique Paris Series)* by Muhammad Hamidullah (1982)

<sup>1</sup> The hadeeth has a supporting proof reported by Abū Ya'lā (no.2047) and al-Bazzār, vol.3, p.282 – from the hadeeth of Jābir (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*). Ibn Hajar in *al-Isābah*, vol.3, p.635 ascribes it to Ibn as-Sakan and 'Uthmān bin Abi Shaybah in his *Tāreekh*. It is also relayed in a *Mursal* form in a chapter by az-Zuhrī and this was also reported by 'AbdurRazzāq in his *Musannaf*, vol.5, p.324, no.9709 and al-Bazzār in his *Musnad*, vol.3, p.281.

Dr 'Uwayyad al-Matrafi has conducted a good academic study which has been printed entitled *Waraqah bin Nawfal fī Butnān il-Jannah*. In the Dhāhiriyyah Library Conservatory under manuscript no.3733 is *Badhal un-Nus-h wa'sh-Shafaqah li't-Ta'reef bi's-Suhbat is-Sayyid Waraqah* by al-Baqā'ī (d. 885 AH) – this was mentioned by our Shaykh, Imām al-Albānī in *Fahrus Makhtūtāt Dār ul-Kutub idh-Dhāhiriyyah*, p.322 – with my review.

Ibn Katheer, *al-Bidāyah wa'n-Nihāyah*, vol.3, p.9 and his *Seerah*, vol.1, p.397; also in *Mishkāt*, no.3623 edited by our Shaykh, the Muhaddith of the era, Imām al-Albānī (*rahimahullāh*). Al-Haythamī stated in *al-Majma'*, vol.9, p.419: **“Its men are Saheeh.”** Al-Mubārakfūrī (*rahimahullāh*) stated in *at-Tuhfab*, vol.6, p.479:

The Prophet's saying about Waraqah that **“I saw him in a dream”** means: **“Allāh showed him to me”** and this is a station of revelation granted to the Prophets. And the answer from the Prophet (sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam) means: neither clear revelation about him came to me nor did decisive evidence about him but I saw him in a dream and he was wearing white and if he was of the people of Hellfire he would have been wearing something else. The hadeeth also indicates that: if a Muslim sees in a dream a Muslim who has died and he is wearing white garments in the dream – then the dead Muslim is in a good condition and will be from the people of Jannah.

Khārijah bin Zayd (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) stated:

Umm al-'Alā, an Ansārī woman who had given a pledge of allegiance to Allāh's Messenger, told me: **“The Muhajireen (emigrants) were distributed amongst us by drawing lots, and we got 'Uthmān bin Madh'ūn in our share. We made him stay with us in our house. Then he suffered from a disease which proved fatal. When he died and was given a bath and was shrouded in his clothes. Allāh's Messenger came, I said, (addressing the dead body), 'O Abā as-Sā'ib! May Allāh be Merciful to you! I testify that Allah has honoured you.' Allāh's Messenger said, 'How do you know that Allah has honoured him?' I replied, 'Let my father be sacrificed for you, O Allāh's Messenger! On whom else shall Allāh bestow? His honour?' Allāh's Messenger said, “As for him, by Allāh, death has come to him. By Allāh, I wish him all good (from Allāh). By Allāh, in spite of the fact that I am Allāh's Messenger, I do not know what Allāh will do to me.”**, Umm al-'Alā added, **“By Allāh, I will never attest the righteousness of anybody after that.”** She said **“and then I saw in a dream a flowing spring for 'Uthmān bin Madh'ūn, and I told Allāh's Messenger about that. He said, “That symbolises his (good) actions flowing.”**<sup>1</sup>

Reported by al-Bukhārī and others. Jābir bin 'Abdullāh (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) said:

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**Translator's note:** the above book by Imām al-Albānī can be referred to in the SOAS library, University of London. It was published in 2001 by Maktabat al-Mārif li'n-Nashr wa't-Tawzi' in Riyadh, KSA, it is 652 pgs.

<sup>1</sup> For an explanation of the hadeeth refer to *al-Fath*, vol.14, pp.444-445 and al-Baghawī, *Sharh us-Sunnah*, vol.12, pp.243-244.

Tufayl bin 'Amru ad-Dawsī went to Allāh's Messenger (sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam) saying 'O Allāh's Messenger! Do you need strong, fortified protection? The tribe of Daws had a fort in the pre-Islamic days.' Allāh's Messenger (sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam) declined this offer, since it (the privilege of protecting the Prophet) had already been reserved for the Ansar. When the Prophet (sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam) migrated to Madeenah, Tufayl bin 'Amru also migrated to that place, and there also migrated along with him a man of his tribe. But the climate of Madeenah did not suit him, and he fell sick and felt very uneasy. So the man took hold of an iron arrow head (Mashāqis) and cut his finger-joints. The blood gushed forth from his hands, till he died. Tufayl bin 'Amru saw him in a dream and he was in good condition with his hands wrapped. He (Tufayl) said to him: 'What treatment did your Allah accord to you?' He replied: 'Allāh granted me pardon for my migration to the Messenger (sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam)'. He (Tufayl) again asked: 'What is this that I see you wrapping up your hands?' He replied: 'It was said to me: We would not set right anything of yours which you damaged yourself.' Tufayl narrated this (dream) to the Messenger of Allāh (sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam). Upon hearing this he prayed: "O Allāh forgive even his hands."

Reported by Imām Ahmad in his *Musnad*, vol.3, pp.370-371; Muslim in his *Sabeeh*, vol.2, pp.130-131, no.116 (Imām an-Nawawī's *Sharh*); al-Hākim in his *Mustadrak*, vol.4, p.76; at-Tahāwī in *al-Mushkil*, vol.1, p.185 and reported by a group of other scholars. So contemplate O reader on this noble narration as you learn from it the influence that visions and dreams had on the lives of the *Salaf us-Sālih*. If this was not so, how could this companion get the reward of the Prophet's *du'ā*, without this dream? Rather indeed, how could he gain the blessings of this *du'ā* and these noble words if not for this truthful dream? Then look at what Tufayl did (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) as he immediately informed the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) of the dream because he knew that it was a true vision which contained immense good for his companion that he saw in it.

Also from this is what was reported by Abū Ya'lā in his *Musnad*, vol.2, p.330, no.1069 and by at-Tabarānī in *al-Awsat*, no.4904 with a Hasan chain of transmission as is mentioned in *as-Silsilah as-Sabeehah* (no.2710) from Abū Sa'eed al-Khudrī (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) who said: "I saw within that which is seen by one asleep (i.e. a dream), as if I was under a tree. It was as if the tree recited Sūrat Sād and when the tree came to where there was a *Sajdah* in the Sūrah the tree made *sajdah*. The tree said while in its *sajdah*: 'O Allāh write for me a reward for it, take away sins from me, make this as thanks for me and accept it from me just as You accepted your servant Dāwūd's *sajdah*.' Then in the late morning I went to the Messenger of Allāh (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) and I informed him

of that. He said (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*): 'Did you make *sajdah* *yā Abā Sa'eed*?' I said: 'No.' Then the Prophet said (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*): 'You were more deserving of making *sajdah*.' Then Allāh's Messenger (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) recited *Sūrat Sād* and when he came to the *sajdah* he mentioned in his *sajdah* what the tree mentioned in its *sajdah* (in my dream).'' In another report<sup>1</sup> which is recorded by Imām Ahmad in his *al-Musnad*, vol.3, pp.78, 84 and al-Hākim in *al-Mustadrak*, vol.2, p.432; al-Bayhaqī in *as-Sunan al-Kubrā*, vol.2, p.320 and also in *ad-Dalā'il*, vol.7, p.20:

**He saw a vision and within it he wrote *Sūrat Sād* and when he got to the *sajdah* in it he said: 'I saw the ink, pen and everything which was there begin to prostrate. I told this to Allāh's Messenger (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) and after that he did not cease making *sajdah* when coming to that point in the *Sūrah*.'**

This great narration resembles what has been documented from 'Ā'ishah bin Talhah bin 'Ubaydillāh (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*): "She saw her father Talhah in a dream and he said to her:

**'O my daughter, transport me from this place because the damp is harming me.' So 33 years or so later I took him out of that grave and transported him from that place, and his body was still fresh and he had not changed an iota. He was buried in a room in Basra."**

In another narration it mentions: he complained about the cold (in his dream) so his body was exhumed and between the ground and his body (within the grave) was green grass...so they purchased a house for him which was of the houses of Abū Bakrah and buried him in there instead.<sup>2</sup> Of these narrations also, is that which has been reported by as-Sā'ib bin al-Aqra' (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*):

**When the Muslims conquered Nahāwand they took tremendous spoils of war which included a treasure trove of precious gems and jewels which glistened like a shining star. As-Sā'ib gave the people their rights from the spoils of war and he took the treasure to Umar. When Umar looked at as-Sā'ib he began to cry and then when he got nearer he said to as-Sā'ib: "Woe to you and what is that behind you?"**

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<sup>1</sup> From which it is apparent its *isnād* is Saheeh except that it has the defect of *Irsāl*, refer to: *as-Silsilah as-Saheehah*, no.2710

<sup>2</sup> Reported by: Ibn Abī Shaybah, *Musannaf*, vol.7, pp.262-263, no.37759; 'AbdurRazzāq, *al-Musannaf*, vol.5, p.277, no.9603; Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqāt*, vol.3, pp.223-224; Ibn Abī Dunyā, *al-Manāmāt*, nos.184, 185, *al-Qubūr*, no.88 (my edit); Abū Bakr ad-Dīnawārī, *al-Majālisah*, vol.4, pp.87-88, no.155 (my edit); Ibn 'AbdulBarr, *al-Istī'āb*, vol.2, pp.768-769; Ibn 'Asākir, *Tārīkh Dimishq*, vol.25, p.123 (Dār ul-Fikr Print); Abū Nu'aym, *Ma'rīfat us-Sahābah*, vol.1, p.99-100 – via a number of routes of transmission some of which are Hasan. This was mentioned by a group of scholars including Ibn Qutaybah (*rahimahullāh*) in *Mukhtalif ul-Hadeeth*, p.177; *al-Ma'ārīf*, p.134; adh-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, vol.1, p.40; Ibn Rajab, *Ahwāl ul-Qubūr*, p.247 and others.

What have you done? What have the Muslims done?” As-Sā’ib said: ‘Good O leader of the believers! Allāh has defeated the Mushrikeen and helped the Muslims conquer.’ ’Umar said: ‘Woe to you O as-Sā’ib! By Allāh, Allāh’s Messenger did not remain with us a night wherein the amount who died reached the level of what happened yesterday (at Nahāwand)! What did an-Nu’mān bin Muqrin do?’ As-Sā’ib said: ‘He was martyred O Ameer ul-Mumineen.’ ’Umar cried and then said three times: ‘May Allāh have mercy on an-Nu’mān.’ Then ’Umar emphasised his grief. As-Sā’ib said: ‘No one who I knew was killed after an-Nu’mān.’ Then ’Umar cried profusely and said: ‘They were weak but Allāh made them noble with martyrdom and granted it to them. Did you bury your brothers? You may have trampled over their bodies or left their flesh to be devoured by dogs and wild animals! I fear that their bodies would have become mere waste for the earth.’ As-Sā’ib responded: ‘Go easy on yourself O leader of the believers! For Allāh blessed them with martyrdom and granted it to them.’ Then ’Umar said: ‘Did you give each one his due right (from the spoils of war)?’ As-Sā’ib said: ‘Yes.’ Then ’Umar brushed his clothes and began to cry and then as-Sā’ib took him by his garment and said: ‘Sit down O leader of the believers! For I need something from you.’ ’Umar replied: ‘What do you need? Did you not just tell me that you gave each his due right?’ As-Sā’ib said: ‘Of course.’ ’Umar said: ‘Then what do you want from me?’ Then as-Sā’ib presented to him the two treasure troves of gems and jewels and they appeared as if they were shining stars. ’Umar said: ‘Call ’Ali, ’AbdurRahmān ibn ’Awf, Ibn Mas’ood and ’Abdullāh bin al-Arqam for me.’ When they all gathered with ’Umar, as-Sā’ib said: ‘I do not have any concern except if ’Umar obligates me, so I mounted by ride and went to Kūfah and by Allāh I had not even prepared the saddle of the ride when a letter was given to me by a messenger from ’Umar. The letter said: ‘If you are sitting then do not stand and if you are standing then do not sit except if you are on your ride. Then make haste, make haste!’ I said to the messenger who delivered the letter: ‘Has something occurred in Islām?’ He replied: ‘No.’ I said: ‘Then what does he need from me?’ He said: ‘I do not know.’ I mounted my ride and went to ’Umar and when he saw me he approached me...and he said: ‘What is it with you and me O Ibn Maleekah? Do you take me away from my deen or wish me to go to the Fire?’ I said: ‘Do not kill me O Ameer ul-Mumineen.’ ’Umar said: ‘When you left me I later went to bed and some angels came to me from my Lord and dragged me to these two troves which when I tried to hold were burning. I tried to stay away from them but the angels were dragging me to them until I was obligated in this by my Lord and He left me to awake and divide the treasure among whomever Allāh gave it to as

booty. So take them away from me (i.e. the two treasure troves) for I have no need of them.’

The report is mentioned by Ibn Hibbān in *ath-Thiqāt*, vol.2, pp.230-234 and Ibn Katheer in his *Tāreekh*, vol.6, pp.222-223. There is also the statement of ‘Ā’ishah bint Talhah (*radi Allāhu ‘anhu*):

‘Ā’ishah the Mother of the Believers killed a jinn and then she saw it (in a dream) saying to her: ‘By Allāh you killed a Muslim!’ ‘Ā’ishah said: ‘Why did you come into the presence of the wives of the Prophet (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam)?’ He said to her: ‘I did not go into your presence while you were undressed.’ ‘Ā’ishah awoke taken aback (by the dream) and gave twelve thousand in the path of Allāh.”

Reported by Ibn Abī Shaybah in his *Musannaf*, vol.7, p.243 (Dār ul-Fikr Print) or vol.6, p.182, no.30505 (Dār ‘Ilmiyyah Print); ‘Abdullāh bin Muhammad Ibn Abī Dunyā, *Makā'id ush-Shaytān* as mentioned in *Ākām ul-Marjān*, p.65; Ibn Abī Shaybah, *al-Hawātif ul-Jinān*,<sup>1</sup> pp.114-115, no.159; Abū Nu‘aym, *al-Hilyah*, vol.2, pp.49-50; Abu’sh-Shaykh, *al-Udbmah*, vol.5, pp.1654-1655; mentioned by adh-Dhahabī (*rahimabullāh*) *as-Siyar*, vol.2, pp.196-197 but with the wording:

“A Jinn used to come into the presence of ‘Ā’ishah and she warned it time after time yet it refused to go so she got a blunt instrument and killed it. It came to her in her dream and said to her: ‘Did you kill fulān even though he was martyred at Badr? While he did not come into your presence while you were either naked or taking your clothes off, and only (came into your presence) to listen to the hadeeth of Allāh’s Messenger (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam)?’ Then it mentioned things which happened in the past and present. She mentioned this to her father and he said to her: ‘Give as charity twelve thousand as blood-money.’”

Adh-Dhahabī (*rahimabullāh*) stated:

It was reported by ‘Abdullāh bin Ahmad from ‘Afeef and he is *thiqab*, yet Ibn al-Mu‘ammal is in the chain of transmission and within him is *da’f* (weakness), so the first *isnād* is more authentic. And I do not know of anyone today who said that it is *wājib* to give blood-money for the likes of this.

What also indicates that the *Salaf* gave importance to dreams is that:

Qudāmah bin Ma’dhūn (*radi Allāhu ‘anhu*) when he drank *kbamr* based on his interpretation of when Allāh says,

<sup>1</sup> **Translator’s note:** this book has been edited by Majdī as-Sayyid Ibrāheem (Cairo, Egypt: Maktabat ul-Qur’ān, 1988). It was also edited by Mustafā ‘AbdulQādir ‘Atā (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Kutub at-Taqaifiyyah, 1413 AH/1993). Ibn Abī Dunyā’s book *Hawātif ul-Jinān* was edited by Muhammad Zaghālī (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1416 AH/1995 CE).



لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا طَعَمُوا

**“There is not upon those who believe and do righteousness [any] blame concerning what they have eaten [in the past]...”**

{*al-Mā'idah* (5): 93}

'Umar ibn al-Khattāb (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) had Qudāmah whipped and establish the Hadd punishment on him saying: 'You made a wrong interpretation O Qudāmah! If you truly feared Allāh you would have stayed away from what Allāh has prohibited.' Qudāmah was angered by being whipped while Umar was pleased with this and he was expelled to Makkah wherein he made Hajj and remained. When Qudāmah returned to Madeenah he stayed at as-Suqyā and (when news reached that Qudāmah was in town) 'Umar said: 'Bring Qudāmah to me, for by Allāh I saw during sleep (i.e. in a dream) someone saying to me: 'Make peace with Qudāmah for he is your brother' so bring Qudāmah to me.' When Qudāmah was sent for Qudāmah refused to go saying: 'Either he comes to me or he will be dragged him to me.' So he went to him and made peace with him and sought forgiveness from him, this was their first reconciliation.

Reported by 'AbdurRazzāq in *al-Musannaf*, vol.9, p.240, no.17075; Ibn Shaybah, *Tāreekh ul-Madeenah*, vol.2, pp.36-37; al-Bayhaqī, *Sunan*, vol.8, p.316; Ibn 'AbdulBarr, *al-Istī'āb*, vol.3, pp.1277-1278; Ibn ul-Atheer, *Asad ul-Ghābah*, vol.4, p.395. Likewise, 'Awf bin Mālik (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) said:

I saw a vision during the time of Abū Bakr and it was as if something was descending from the heavens and the people were growing taller, with 'Umar being three cubits above the others. I said: 'Why is that?' It was said: 'He is a Khaleefah of Allāh on the earth, he does not fear the blame of the blamers and he will be martyred.' I went to Abū Bakr and relayed the vision to him and then Abū Bakr sent for 'Umar (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) and wished him glad tidings. Abū Bakr said: 'Relay the vision to him.' When 'Awf began to relay the vision when he got to the part about being the Khaleefah on the earth 'Umar stopped 'Awf and silenced him. When 'Umar assumed the Khilāfah he left for Shām one time and gave a sermon and saw 'Awf bin Mālik so he called him and said: 'Your vision O 'Awf!' 'Awf replied: 'Do you have any need for my vision? Did you not halt me?' 'Umar said: 'I disliked announcing the death of the Khaleefah of the Allāh's Messenger (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) – (i.e. Abū Bakr, *radi Allāhu 'anhu*).' Then 'Awf began relaying the vision.

Reported by Ibn Shabbah in *Tāreekh ul-Madeenah*, vol.2, pp.51-52; Ibn Sa'd in *at-Tabaqāt*, vol.3, pp.331-332; al-Balādhurī in *Ansāb ul-Asbrāf*, p.334 (Akhhbār ash-Shaykhayn); Ibn 'AbdulBarr in *al-Istī'āb*, vol.3, p.1156; Ibn 'Asākir in *Tāreekh Dimashq*, vol.37, p.39 (Dār ul-

Fikr Print). Likewise, Imām Ahmad in *Musnad*, vol.1, p.241 and Muslim in his *Sabeeh*, vol.8, p.277 (Sharh an-Nawawī) from Abī Jamrah ad-Dubbī who said:

“I made Hajj at-Tamattu’ and some people forbade me from that, so I went to Ibn ‘Abbās and he instructed me to do it saying. Then I left and went home where I slept, I dreamt that someone came to me saying “May your Hajj and ‘Umrah be accepted.” I went to Ibn ‘Abbās and told him about the dream that I saw and he said: ‘Allāhu Akbar, Allāhu Akbar! This is the Sunnah of Abu’l-Qāsim.”

The hadeeth was reported by al-Bukhārī (1567) but without mention of the *takbeer*:

Ibn ‘Abbās said to him: ‘Stay with me and I shall give you a portion of my prophets.’ I (i.e. Shu’bah) asked ad-Dubbī: ‘Why (did he offer that)?’ He (Abū Jamrah) replied: “Because of the vision I saw.”

Al-Hāfidh stated in *al-Fath*, vol.4, p.219:

What can be taken from this is the joy of a scholar for agreeing with the truth and familiarity with visions for agreeing with the evidence, along with presenting a vision to a scholar (for him to interpret it).

Also what ‘AbdurRazzāq relayed in his *Musannaḥ*, vol.11, pp.370-371 from Ma’mar (*rabimahullāb*):

Our Shaykh reported to us that: a woman came to some of the wives of the Prophet (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam) and said to them ‘supplicate to Allāh for my hands to be freed (i.e. cured).’ They said to her: ‘Why? What’s wrong with your hands?’ She said ‘My parents, for my father had much wealth, was well-known, had much nobility and gave much charity. Yet my mother had no part of that at all and I did not see her give anything as charity, except for a cow that we slaughtered and she gave its fat to a poor person and she also gave him a cloak to wear. My mother died and so did my father, I saw my father (in a vision) giving people water to drink from a river. I said to him: ‘O my father! Have you seen my mother?’ He replied: ‘No, or she has died.’ I said: ‘Yes of course!’ So I went to see her and I found her naked with no clothes on except for that cloak (that she had given to the poor person). She was holding the cow fat in her hand, while she was beating it with her other hand and biting it (in order to quench by licking the remains of cow fat) saying: ‘O the thirst!’ So I said to her; ‘O mother! Shall I give you something to drink?’ She said: ‘Yes, of course.’ So I went to my father and mentioned that to him and I got a vessel (filled with water) from him and gave it to my mother to drink from. Some of those standing with her said: ‘Who gave her something to drink? May Allāh paralyse the hand of the one who gave her something to drink!’ Then when I woke up my hand was paralysed.

'Abdullāh bin al-Mubārak mentioned in *aḥ-Zuhd*, vol.2, p.447, no.830 from 'Atiyyah bin Qays from 'Awf bin Mālik (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) that:

He was made a brother to a man from Qays who was called Muhlim upon whom death came. 'Awf went to see him when Muhlim was on his death-bed and said to him: 'O Muhlim if you are able then come back to us and inform us of what happened.' Muhlim said: 'If that is possible then I will do just that.' Then Muhlim was taken (in death) and then a year later 'Awf saw Muhlim in a dream and said to Muhlim: 'O Muhlim! What happened? Or what happened with you?' Muhlim replied: 'We were given our reward.' 'Awf said: 'All of you?' Muhlim replied: 'All of us apart from some particular people who were pointed out and destroyed. By Allāh my reward was recompensed fully even the reward for a stray cat that came to my family's possession a night before I died.' 'Awf woke up and went to see the wife of Muhlim and when he arrived there she said: 'Welcome to the visitor who has not been seen after Muhlim (passing away)! 'Awf said to her: 'Have you seen Muhlim since he died (i.e. in a vision or dream)?' She replied: 'Yes! I saw him just yesterday and my daughter argued with me to go with him.' 'Awf informed her of what he had seen (in his dream) and mentioned the stray cat to her but she remarked: 'I have no knowledge of that, my servants will know more about that.' So she called her servants and asked them and they informed her that a stray cat came into their possession a night before Muhlim died.

The story is relayed by al-Fariyābī in *ar-Ru'yab*, in al-Ghumārī's *ar-Ru'yab* and also mentioned by as-Suyūṭī in *Sharḥ us-Sudūr*, p.263.

Ibn ul-Qayyim (*rahimahullāh*) stated in *ar-Rūh*, pp.24-25:

It is authenticated from Hammād bin Salamah from Thābit from Shahr bin Hawshab that as-Sa'b bin Jathāmah and 'Awf bin Mālik were made brothers and Sa'b said to 'Awf: 'Ay akhī! Whichever of us dies first has to appear to the other.' 'Awf said: 'Is that possible?' Sa'b said: 'Yes.'<sup>1</sup> Sa'b died first and 'Awf saw him in that which is seen by the one asleep (i.e. a vision) as if he came to him saying: 'Ay akhī! Sa'b replied: 'Yes.' 'Awf said: 'What did Allāh do with you?' Sa'b said: 'He forgave us after calamities.' 'Awf said 'I saw a black spangle around his neck.' 'Awf said to him: 'Ay akhī! What's this?' Sa'b said: 'Ten dīnārs I

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<sup>1</sup> This text in regards to the belief of the Sahābah that it is possible for the living to meet the dead via dreams and for the souls to meet, as Ibn ul-Qayyim affirmed in *ar-Rūh*.

Ibn Hazm (*rahimahullāh*) stated in *Risālat ul-Akhlāq wa's-Siyar*, pp.102-103:

**My amazement increases about death as I accompanied some people....and when they died I saw some of them at sleep (i.e. in a vision) yet I did not see some. I agreed with some of them during life that they visit me in dreams after they die, if that is possible...**

borrowed from a Jewish person, and they are in my pouch (Qaranī)<sup>1</sup> so give them to him. And know my brother, nothing happens to my family except that I know about it.’ ‘Awf said ‘When I awoke I went to Sa’b’s family and they found the dīnārs in his pouch and then I gave these to the Jewish person. I asked him: ‘Does Sa’b owe you anything from this?’ The man said ‘These are them exactly.’

Ibn ul-Qayyim (*rabimabullāb*) stated after relaying the narration:

**This was from the fiqh of ‘Awf (radi Allāhu ‘anhu) and he was of the Companions who fulfilled the advice of as-Sa’b bin Jathāmah after his death and knew the accuracy of what he stated regarding his wallet. This fiqh is for the most understanding of people and the most knowledgeable of them, these are the Companions of Allāh’s Messenger (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam).**

The aforementioned story was relayed by Ibn Abī Dunyā (*rabimabullāb*) in *al-Manāmāt*, no.25; Ibn ul-Jawzī in *‘Uyūn ul-Hikāyāt* with his chain of transmission as mentioned in *Sbarb us-Sudūr*, p.26; also relayed by Abū Bakr bin Lāl<sup>2</sup> in his book *al-Mutāhibeen* as noted by al-Ghumārī in *ar-Ru’yab*, pp.129-130; al-Ma’āfi an-Nahrawānī (*rabimabullāb*), *al-Jalees as-Sālib* (Ālam ul-Kutub Print), vol.3, p.274. This resembles the narration that was relayed by at-Tabarānī (*rabimabullāb*) in his *Mu’jam ul-Kabeer*, as reported in *Majma’ uz-Zawā’id*, vol.9, pp.222-223 and *Tabdheeb ut-Tabdheeb*, vol.2, p.12 from Bint Thābit bin Qays (*radi Allāhu ‘anbu*) that she said:

**When Abū Bakr mobilised the Muslims to fight the people of Riddah and Musaylamah al-Kadhāb, Thābit bin Qays went to fight against them. The Banū Haneefah defeated the Muslims on three occasions and Thābit bin Qays and Sālim the freed slave of Abū Hudhayfah said ‘What’s this when we used to fight with Allāh’s Messenger?’ The two of them dug themselves in and fought until they were killed. Then a Muslim man saw Thābit bin Qays (in a dream) saying ‘When I was killed last night, a Muslim man with a tall horse in the latter ranks of the army passed by me and took a precious shield from me. He placed a ceramic pot over the shield and then put a dish above the pot. So go to Khālid ibn al-Waleed for him**

<sup>1</sup> Al-Qarān with two *fathas* is a type of pouch made from leather, refer to *al-Masābih al-Muneer*, p.501.

<sup>2</sup> **Translator’s note:** He is Abū Bakr Ahmad bin ‘Ali al-Hamadhānī, the Imām and Shāfi’ī Faqeeh, he was born in 308 AH and heard much. He travelled greatly, memorised, he was a polymath (*mutafannin*) and authored a number of classifications in hadeeth science even though he was famed in *fiqh*. He also has a *Sunan* and a *Mu’jam us-Sahābah* [Compilation of the Companions]. Imām an-Nawawī said about him in *at-Tahtheeb*: **“Lāl: with an alif on the lām and then another lām on the scale of “Māl”.”** Al-Isnawī said: **“Lāl: with two lāms between the alif and it means: akhras (‘mute’), he died in 398 AH.”** For his biography see *Tāreekh Baghdād*, vol.4, p.318; *Tabaqāt ul-Isnawī*, vol.2, p.363; *Tahdheeb ul-Asmā’*; an-Nawawī, *al-Lughāt*, vol.2, p.195; adh-Dhahabī, *as-Siyar*, vol.17, p.75; *Shadharāt udh-Dhahab*, vol.3, p.151.

to send a man to get my shield and if you see the Khaleefah of Allāh's Messenger (sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam) inform him that I have such and such debt to pay off and a slave to free. And beware of saying "this is just a dream" thus forgetting about it.' The man (who had the vision of Thābit) went to Khālid bin al-Waleed and directed him to the shield and it was as described. The man also went to Abū Bakr and informed him (of the vision). Abū Bakr executed the will (i.e. paid off Thābit's debts with the precious shield and freed his slave) after death and we do not know of anyone who fulfilled their will after death except for Thābit bin Qays bin Shamās.

The narration was relayed by Abu'l-Qāsim at-Tabarānī with another chain of transmission via Anas bin Mālik (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*), and its men (i.e. the narrators) are authentic as in *al-Majma'*, vol.9, pp.222-223. Also relayed by al-Hākim in his *Mustadrak*, vol.3, p.235; Abu'sh-Shaykh, *al-Wasāyā* – as in as-Suyūṭī, *Sharh us-Sudūr*, p.264; Ibn 'AbdulBarr, *al-Istī'āb*, vol.1, pp.201-203; al-Baghawī, *Mu'jam us-Sabābah* – as in *al-Isābah*, vol.1, p.394-395; al-Farīyābī, *ar-Ru'yab* as in al-Ghumārī's *ar-Ru'yab*, p.127. Also mentioned by al-Hāfidh Ibn ul-Qayyim in his book *ar-Rūb*, pp.25-26 and he stated:

**Khālid, Abū Bakr as-Siddeeq and the Companions with them agreed on acting by this vision and implementing the advice mentioned within it and taking the shield that was in his hand, this is pure fiqh.**

Of such narrations which indicate the importance that the *Salaf* attached to visions is what was mentioned by Sālim bin 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar bin al-Khattāb (*rahimahullāh*) when he was narrating from his father (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) from Ka'b al-Ahbār that a man said to him:

**'I saw in a dream that the people had been gathered to be held to account and then the Prophets were called and with each Prophet were two lights which he was walking with. Each of their followers from their nations had a light with them too, and then the Ummah of Muhammad (sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam) was called and each hair of his head, along with his face, was illuminated for all to see. Each of his followers from his Ummah had two lights as the Prophets had.' Ka'b asked the man to swear by Allāh who there is no god but He that he truly saw such a dream and the man replied 'yes, Wallāhi! I saw that!' Ka'b said 'By the One who sent Muhammad with the truth, this is the characteristic of the Prophets and the nations! As if it is something which is found within the Tawrah (Torah).'**

Reported by al-Khattālī (*rahimahullāh*) in *ad-Dībāj*, pp.99-100 (Dār ul-Bashā'ir Print) and also by al-Bayhaqī in *Dalā'il un-Nubunnwah*, vol.7, pp.38-39.

These narrations and dream are the closest proof of the accuracy of what we intend in this introduction regarding the Salaf's occupation with this science and their concern for it in general and in order to understanding in depth. These narrations about dreams inform us about *tawbeed*, the unseen realms of existence and other things which are of concern to the Muslim in his worship and obedience (to Allāh). Nasr bin Ya'qūb stated al-Qādirī stated in his book *at-Ta'beer fi'r-Ru'yah*, vol.1, p.104:

The Muslim vision interpreters say that: the knowledge of visions is the first knowledge that has been around since the world began, and the Prophets and Messengers, peace be upon them, always acted on them. To the extent that most of their Prophetic messages were based on visions from Allāh, Glory unto Him, which He revealed to them in dreams. This is based on when Allāh says,

**“Those who believed and were fearing (their Lord). Unto them are good tidings in the worldly life and in the Hereafter. No change is there in the words of Allāh. That is what is the great attainment.”**

{*Yūnus (10): 63-64*}

They said: ‘the glad tidings’ are true visions and the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) said: “Prophethood has gone and now just glad tidings remain.” So the nobility of visions is less in times of Prophetic revelation when the revelation was being revealed directly and specifically to the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*). So before the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) there was no science more noble than that of vision science and for this reason Allāh blessed Yūsuf (*'alayhis-salām*) and his father when he said

**“And thus, We established Joseph in the land that We might teach him the interpretation of events.”**

{*Yūsuf (12): 21*}

This is why Yūsuf thanked his Lord and said,

**“My Lord, You have given me [something] of sovereignty and taught me of the interpretation of dreams.”**

{*Yūsuf (12): 101*}

Al-'Allāmah 'AbdurRahmān as-Sa'dī (*rahimahullāh*) stated in *Bahjat Qulūb al-Abrār*, pp.164-167 (Maktabah al-Ma'ārif Print):

**The Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) informed that ‘a righteous vision is from Allāh’ meaning: (a vision) which is free from Shaytanic meddling and confusion. This is because a person, if he sleeps, his soul leaves and the laws of nature are suspended and he obtains much knowledge and understanding which are tempered with what Allāh has inspired thus making matters clear to him which before that were unknown or merely mentioned. Contemplate on the vision of 'Abdullāh bin Zayd and 'Umar bin al-Khattāb (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) regarding the**

adhān and iqāmah and how it became a reason for legislating this great symbol which is of the greatest symbols of deen. The visions of the Anbiyā', Awliyā' and Sāliheen, indeed of the generality of believers and others, are well-known and famous for the innumerable important benefits and good outcomes that they include. They are generally to be considered as Allāh's blessings upon His servants, glad-tidings for the believers, warnings for the heedless, reminders for those who turn away and they establish proofs upon the stubborn.<sup>1</sup> As for dreams which are mixed-up and confused dreams then they are to be regarded as Shaytanic meddling with a person's soul in order to confuse a person and strike terror into a person so as to incite worry and grief. Or, they can bring about joy and amusement or incite the soul toward evil, corruption and harm. As a result, the Prophet (sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam) instructed the servant to take the means to avert this by not speaking about such dreams to anyone. Also of the means to invalidate and fester such dreams is to lightly spit three times to the left and right three times, and to seek refuge in Allāh from the accursed Shaytān who was the cause of the dream. At this point, a person's heart should be assured that the bad dream will not harm him fully believing in the statement of Allāh's Messenger, trusting in the salvation from the means to avert such (bad) dreams. As for a righteous vision then: it is obligatory to praise Allāh when one experiences one and ask about it being fulfilled and speak about it to one whom he loves and is known for love so as to happy for him and for it (i.e. the vision) to occur and he should supplicate for that (good to occur). He should not mention such a vision to one whom he does not love so that the person does not cause disturbance by giving an interpretation that merely agrees with his desires – out of hasad (envy) for the person (who had the righteous vision), so as to remove the blessing from the person. For this reason, when Yūsuf ('alayhis-salām) saw the sun, moon and eleven stars prostrate to him, he told his father about the vision and his father said to him:

“O my son, do not relate your vision to your brothers or they will contrive against you a plan. Indeed Satan, to man, is a manifest enemy.”

{*Yūsuf* (12): 5}

For this reason, hiding the blessing from the enemies, if possible, takes precedence if there is an assured benefit in this in doing so. And know that a true vision is seen by the servant in its external form such as the adhān and other things and at times it features sensory parables which are similar or take the form of tangible or non-abstract things, such as the vision of the King of Egypt and the likes, and they

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<sup>1</sup> For a confirmation of this refer to Ibn ul-Qayyim (*rahimahullāh*), *Miftāh Dār us-Sa'ādah*, vol.1, p.521, vol.2, p.170 and *al-Fawā'id*, pp.61-62.

**differ depending on the people, time and customs, and also depending on different states.**

These transmissions and narrations are sufficient for every seeker of guidance who wants to understand this important science, its effect on people and the 'Ulama's safeguarding of authoring works on the subject.



## DEFINITION OF 'VISIONS', 'DREAMS' AND 'INTERPRETATION' LINGUISTICALLY AND SHARI' – WITH A REFUTATION OF THOSE WHO DENY ITS REALITY

Al-'Allāmah Ibn Mandhūr (*rahimabullāh*) stated in *al-Lisān*, vol.9, pp.16-17 (under "abara"):

'Abara ar-Ru'yā, ya'buruhā, 'abran and 'ibāran, and 'abbarahā means 'fassarahā' (he interpreted it and informed of its explanation). In the Qur'ān it is mentioned:

إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لِلرُّؤْيَا تَعْبُرُونَ

“...if you should interpret visions.”

{Yūsuf (12): 43}

Meaning: if you are those who interpret then do so, and it has a *lām*, as when Allāh says,

رَدِفَ لَكُمْ

“Say, “Perhaps it is close behind you...”

{an-Naml (27): 72}

Means, as az-Zajjāj<sup>1</sup> stated: the *lām* is added to the *maf'ūl* of *tabyeen* and means “if you interpret and are interpreters.”

“**Ist'barahu iyyāhā**” (he sought its interpretation) means “he asked about its interpretation” and “**al-'Ābir**” is “one who looks into the book and interprets it”. “Faya'buruhu” (then he interpreted it) means “he considered it all together until he understood it”, for that reason it is said “**abara'r-Ru'yah**” (he interpreted the vision) and “**a'tabara fulān kadha**” (so and so considered this) and it is said “**ukhidha hadha kulluhu min al-'Ibr**” (all of this was taken from the example). It also means the riverside: “**Ibr ul-Wādī wa 'Abruhu**” a river's coast. An-Nābighah adh-Dhubyānī<sup>2</sup> stated in praise of an-Nu'mān:

<sup>1</sup> **Translator's note:** The Imām of *nahw* Abū Ishāq Ibrāheem bin Muhammad as-Sārī az-Zajjāj (d. 311 AH/923 CE), he authored *I'rāb ul-Qur'ān* (Cairo, 1963) and *Ma'ānī ul-Qur'ān wa I'rābihi*.

<sup>2</sup> **Translator's note:** an-Nābighah adh-Dhubyānī is Ziyād bin Mu'awiyah (535-604 CE) was a famed Arab Christian poet and one of the last of the pre-Islamic era of Jāhiliyyah. His tribe was Banū Dhubyān were from Makkah but largely frequented the courts of Hirah and Ghassān. In Hirah he was under the authority of Mundhir the Third and later he was under the authority of an-Nu'mān the Third, about whom this excerpt of poetry is about. Later however he fled to Ghassān because he had written some poetry about the Queen. His poetry indicates that he neither heard of nor knew about Islām due to him

*What benefit is the agitation of the Euphrates,  
if its waves bring up scum and froth to the surface (al-'Ibrayn)?<sup>1</sup>*

It is also said “**fulān fī dhālik al-'Ibr**” meaning fulān is on that side. It also means “**ubūr**” (a fording);<sup>2</sup> it is also said that the one who interprets a dream or vision is known as an “**Ābir**” (vision interpreter) because he contemplates the sides of the vision, thinks about its different angles, reflects on all of it and extends his thoughts on it from the first of what the sleeper saw to the end of what he saw (in the dream or vision). It is reported from Abū Razeen al-'Uqaylī that he heard the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) say “*A vision is on a bird's foot and if it is interpreted it occurs so do not relate it except to one whom is beloved or possesses insight.*” For the beloved does not wish to greet you except with that which you love and if he is not a scholar of interpretation he will not make you grieved, not that his interpretation will remove the vision from what Allāh has put in it. As for “**Dhu'r-Ra'y**” (“the one who possesses insight”) then this means: the one who possesses knowledge of its interpretation and he thus informs you of the reality of its interpretation or of the closest of what he knows about it. It maybe that its interpretation contains an admonition preventing you from any evil that you are doing or it could contain glad-tidings which are for you to praise Allāh for the blessing within them. The 'Ābir is: the one who looks into a matter and al-Mu'tabir is: the one who uses something in order to indicate something else. In *Basā'ir Dhumi't-Tamyeez*, vol.4, pp.14-15 by al-Fayrūzabādī:

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being around before the Revelation and his poems consist of eulogies and satirical poems. He is one of the six eminent pre-Islamic poets whose poems were collected before the middle of the 2nd century of Islam, and have been regarded as the standard of Arabic poetry. Some writers consider him the first of the six. His poems have been edited by Wilhelm Ahlwardt in the *Diwans of the six ancient Arabic Poets* (London, 1870), and separately by H. Derenbourg (Paris, 1869, new edition from the *Journal asiatique* for 1868).

<sup>1</sup> The stanza is from *Dīwān un-Nābighah* (al-Hitti's edit), p.58 and the source of it is

<sup>2</sup> **Translator's note:** A “ford” (derived from the Northern European word “fjord”) is a place in a watercourse (most commonly a stream or river) that is shallow enough to be crossed by wading, on horseback, or in a wheeled vehicle. A ford is mostly a natural phenomenon, in contrast to a low water crossing, which is an artificial bridge that allows crossing a river or stream when water is low. The names of many towns and villages are derived from the word ‘ford’, for example Oxford (a ford where oxen crossed the river: see the Oxford coat of arms), or Stratford (a ford on a Roman road). Similarly, the German word *Furt* (as in Frankfurt and Klagenfurt) and the Dutch word *voorde*, (as in Vilvoorde, Coevorden, Zandvoort, or Amersfoort) are cognates and have the same meaning. Towns such as Maastricht, Dordrecht, and Utrecht also formed at fords but the ending *tricht*, *drecht*, or *trecht* is derived from the Latin word *traiectum*, meaning “crossing”. A ford is a much cheaper form of river-crossing than a bridge but it may become impassable after heavy rain or during flood condition. A ford is therefore normally only suitable today for very minor roads. Most modern fords are shallow enough to be crossed by cars and other wheeled or tracked vehicles, however fords overflow in wet weather.

The basis of al-'Abr is: to cross from one state to another; as for *al-'Ubūr* (a fording)<sup>1</sup> then it is particular to crossing water either by swimming, by ship, by camel or by bridge.

Ibn al-'Arabī stated in *Qanūn ut-Ta'weel* (p.140), after lengthy speech:

It is confirmed, and visions are a *Qanūn* (canon) of interpretation from the side of representation which is a science of the unseen that proves the realities of creation, the existence of the Creator and His Attributes.

Ibn al-Akfānī (*rahimabullāh*), who is well-known for the science of vision interpretation, stated in *Irshād ul-Qāsīd* (p.136):

It is a knowledge which is known for its deduction of evidences from the imaginative realm of dreams that have been witnessed by the soul during sleep, thus it is from the knowledge of the unseen realm.....And it has arrived that: *"A true vision is one forty-sixth of Prophethood"* and this proportion for visions is known from the length of the Prophetic message and the period of the revelation before it. It is possible that a vision's indications can be applied without interpretation and possibly what is imagined can be sensory as in the case of wet-dreams. The results of the interpretation differ according to the person and their conditions.

Its use: glad-tidings of good for a person and to caution the person from evil and to inform of events before they occur.

As for the definition of a dream ('al-Hulm') then it is, as Ibn Mandhūr stated in *Lisān ul'-Arab*, vol.3, p.305, under 'Halama':

Halama: al-Hulmu and al-Hulum: a vision and the plural of 'Ahlām'; it is said 'halama, yahlumu' if he sees something while asleep. Ibn Sayyidah stated: 'halama fī Nawmihi', 'yahlumu, huluman, ihtilama, inhalama'. Bishr bin Abī Khāzīm stated: 'is it true what you have seen or was it a dream (ihtilām)?' And 'did he have a vision or inhilām or did he claim to have seen a dream ("tahallama al-Hulma")?' In a hadeeth it is mentioned *"Whoever claims to have seen a dream which he did not see, will be ordered to make a knot between two barley grains"*<sup>2</sup> – meaning: whoever says that he saw in his sleep that which he did not see. So it is said 'halama' if one actually sees a dream and 'tahallama' when one falsely claims to see a dream yet in reality did not see such a dream. It is also mentioned in a hadeeth: *"a vision is from Allāh while a dream is from Shaytān."* A vision and a dream are expressions for what the

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<sup>1</sup> **Translator's note:** see above

<sup>2</sup> Reported by al-Bukhārī (7042) from Ibn 'Abbās with his wording: *"Whoever claims to have seen a dream which he did not see, will be ordered to make a knot between two barley grains which he will not be able to do; and if somebody listens to the talk of some people who do not like him (to listen) or they run away from him, then molten lead will be poured into his ears on the Day of Resurrection; and whoever makes a picture, will be punished on the Day of Resurrection and will be ordered to put a soul in that picture, which he will not be able to do."*

sleeping person sees however a vision (Ru'yah) is more likely to be good things that are seen while a dream (Hulum) are those things evil and horrible things that are seen, and of them are the type which Allāh says are

أَضَعْتُ أَحْلَامًا

“...a mixture of false dreams”

{Yūsuf (12): 44}

Each of them can be used in place of the other (i.e. Hulum or Ahlām). Al-Jawharī<sup>1</sup> stated: al-Hulumu: with a dhamma, is what is seen by the person who is asleep, ‘halamtu kadha (I dreamt such and such)’, also ‘halamtuhu (I dreamed it).’ The poet said:

*I dreamt of it as did Banū Rujfaydah,  
The image of what was dreamt of was not distant*

Al-Qurtubī (*rahimabullāh*) stated in his *Tafseer*, vol.9, p.132:

Ahlām is the plural of *Hulum*, and *al-Hulum* (with a dhammah) is what is seen by the person who is asleep. The origin of ‘*hilm*’ is: patience as opposed to ‘*taysh*’ (rashness and recklessness), so it is said about what is seen during sleep that it is a ‘*hulum*’ because the sleeper is in a state of patience, forbearance and tranquillity.

Siddeeq Hasan Khān stated in *Abjad ul-'Ulūm*, vol.2, p.166:

And this can even reach sensory perception within sleep such as when one experiences the state of *ibtīlām* (wet-dreams).

As for its *Shari'* definition then it is: an expression of things which Allāh creates in the imagination of the sleeper which is then seen, experienced and has an influence. They are amazing riddles and a strange realm which indicate Allāh’s Glory, His Creation and His Ability, glory unto Him. Al-Munāwī (*rahimabullāh*) stated in *Fayd ul-Qadeer*, vol.4, p.62:

People are in two states: sleep and wakefulness and Allāh set for each state comprehension of things. Visions are an expression of experiences which Allāh has created for one who is asleep and his inner mind. The person lives with them with his soul, heart, feelings and even body. It is of varying types as the *Shari'* texts indicate.

Al-Hakeem at-Tirmidhī states:

The basis of visions are true as they emanate from truth and inform us of the unseen realm, they can either bring glad-tidings, warnings or serve as observations. The main affairs of those before were interested in visions and then the interest weakened during

<sup>1</sup> In his *Sahhāh*, vol.26, under ‘*halama*’, also compare with Ibn ul-Qayyim (*rahimabullāh*), *Badā'ī' ul-Fawā'id* (Maktabah al-Mu'ayyad), vol.1, p.323

this Ummah due to the greatness of what the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) came with.<sup>1</sup>

In al-Qushayrī's *ar-Risālah*, pp.365-366 he stated:

**The correct definition of a vision is: a thought which enter the heart and the state that takes shape in the imagination (al-Khayāl) when sleep does not totally repress perception. When people are awake they think that it is a real vision when rather they were just visual forms and imaginings which were residing in their hearts. When apparent sensations are removed those imaginings are stripped of sensory and necessary information and then this state of the seer becomes stronger. If he awakes these states which he visualised become weakened compared to his state of perception of visions and attainment of necessary knowledge. His similitude is like the one who uses the light of a lamp when it becomes very dark, when the sun rises it outshines the light of the lamp for the light of the lamp is negligible in comparison to the sunlight. Therefore, the similitude of sleep is like one who uses the light of the lamp, while the similitude of one who is awake is like one upon whom the day breaks.**

## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A DREAM AND A VISION

The 'Ulama differentiate between a dream (*hulum*) and a vision (*ru'yah*) based on the saying of the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*): "*A vision is from Allāh while a dream is from Shaytān.*"<sup>2</sup> The intent of the differentiation is out of ascribing good to Allāh and evil to Shaytān as mentioned in another narration: "*If any of you sees a vision that he likes it is from Allāh, but if any of you sees other than this that he detests it is from Shaytān.*"<sup>3</sup> 'Īsā bin Deenār stated:

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<sup>1</sup> Mentioned by al-'Irāqī in *Tarh ut-Tathreeb*, vol.8, p.206; al-Qastalānī, *al-Mawāhib ul-Laduniyyah*, vol.3, pp.517-518 and ash-Shanawānī, *Hāshiyat 'ala Mukhtasar Ibn Abī Jamrah*, p.22

**Translator's note:** Ahmad bin 'Ali al-Qastalānī's *al-Mawāhib ul-Laduniyyah* [Exposition of Talents] was printed in Cairo by al-Matba'ah al-Azhariyyah.

Ash-Shanawānī is Muhammad bin 'Ali ash-Shāfi'ī ash-Shanawānī (d.1817 CE), his *Hashiyat 'ala Mukhtasar Ibn Abī Jamrah li'l-Bukhari* was printed in Egypt by Dār Ihyā al-Kutub al-'Arabiyyah and also by Dār ul-Fikr of Beirut.

<sup>2</sup> Reported by al-Bukhārī (3292); Muslim, vol.9, p.417 and others from the hadeeth of Abū Qatādah (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*).

<sup>3</sup> Reported by al-Bukhārī (6985); an-Nasā'ī in *'Amal un-Nawm wa'l-Laylah* (896); at-Tirmidhī (3453) from the hadeeth of Abū Sa'eed al-Khudrī (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*).

**A vision (ru'yah) is what is seen and is able to be interpreted as being good, while a dream (hulum) is an unknown horrible thing that Shaytān makes the believer see so as to cause grief and constrict a person's life.<sup>1</sup>**

The intent therefore is: both are names for internal thoughts that are presented in the mind of the sleeper in the form of images and imaginings, thus “a dream has the same meaning as a vision but in most cases ‘vision’ is used for that which is good and beloved while ‘dream’ is used for that which is bad and disliked.”<sup>2</sup> For this reason Ibn ul-Atheer (*rahimahullāh*) stated in *an-Nibāyah*, vol.1, p.417:

A vision (ru'yah) and a dream (hulum) are both expressions for the things that the sleeper sees while asleep. However, in most cases ‘vision’ (ru'yah) is applied to good things which are seen while in most other cases a ‘dream’ (hulum) is for evil and horrible things which are seen. Yet each can be used in place of the other...<sup>3</sup>

What is best therefore is that it is said:

**According to the Arabs ‘hulum’ (a dream) is used for a ‘vision’ (ru'yah) and the distinction between the two Shari' terminologies has neither been made by one who is eloquent (in the Arabic language) nor was it arrived at by a wise person—but rather it stems from the owner of the Shar' (i.e. the Prophet, sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam) so as to distinguish truth from falsehood. It is as if he disliked using the same word for that which came from Allāh and that which comes from Shaytān.<sup>4</sup>**

For this reason al-'Aynī stated in *Umdat ul-Qārī* (Dār ul-Fikr Print), vol.16, p.269:

**A vision is attached to Allāh and is not called ‘a dream’ and whatever is linked to Shaytān is not to be called a ‘vision’, this is a Shari' procedure as if not they would all be deemed as being ‘visions’.**

Also 'Ā'ishah bint 'AbdurRahmān, well-known as Bint ash-Shātī',<sup>5</sup> stated in her book *al-Ijāz al-Bayānī fī'l-Qur'ān* (Dār ul-Ma'ārif Print), pp.215-216, when she was discussing synonymous Arabic terminologies:

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<sup>1</sup> Transmitted from him by al-Bājī in *al-Muntaqā*, vol.9, p.417, compare with *al-Fath* (Dār ul-Fikr Print), vol.14, p.470.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Shāheen, *al-Ishārāt* (Dār ul-Fikr Print), p.604; likewise in ash-Sharqāwī, *Fath ul-Mubdī*, vol.3, p.622 and Mullah 'Ali al-Qārī, *Marqāt ul-Mafāteeh* (Dār ul-Ilmiyyah Print), vol.8, p.428.

<sup>3</sup> Refer to *Sharh az-Zurqānī 'ala'l-Muwatta'*, vol.4, pp.480-481; Ibn 'Allān, *al-Futuhāt ar-Rabbāniyyah*, vol.3, p.187; *ad-Dībāj (tahqeeq of al-Huwaynī)*, vol.5, p.280; *Majallat ul-Hikmah*, vol.15, pp.395-396; *Kitāb ur-Ru'yah*, pp.20-22 and *Fath ul-Mubdī*, vol.3, p.622.

<sup>4</sup> Refer to *Fayd ul-Qadeer*, vol.4, p.59 and *Mahāsin ut-Ta'weel*, vol.4, pp.368-369.

<sup>5</sup> **Translator's note:** 'Ā'ishah bint Muhammad bin 'Ali bin 'AbdurRahmān (1913-1999 CE), may Allāh have mercy on her. She was born in Dumyāt to a religious family and she studied and memorised the Qur'ān from an early age. She obtained a B.A. in Arabic Language and Literature from Cairo University

In two verses of Sūrah Yūsuf for example when mentioning the vision of the king of Egypt,

**O eminent ones, explain to me my vision, if you should interpret visions.” They said, “[It is but] a mixture of false dreams, and we are not learned in the interpretation of dreams.”**

{*Yūsuf* (12): 43-44}

The dictionaries explain ‘hulum’ as being a ‘vision’ (ru’yah): so were the Arabs during the time of the message using one term for the other when the Qur’ān challenged them to bring a verse like it? So was it said for example “explain to me my dream, if you should interpret dreams”? This was not said by any Arab who had any innate and comprehensive sense of his language. We therefore extrapolate that when the two terms are used in the Qur’ān they are not synonymous. The Qur’ān uses “al-Ahlām” three times and its context testifies that it is applied to the confused mixture of false dreams. The term is mentioned in the plural form which indicates the muddled-up nature of a ‘dream’ (hulum) which applies to all ‘dreams’. In arguing with the Mushrikeen, it is mentioned in the Qur’ān:

**But they say, “[The revelation is but] a mixture of false dreams; rather, he has invented it; rather, he is a poet. So let him bring us a sign just as the previous [messengers] were sent [with miracles].”**

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and obtained a Ph.D. in the same field in 1950 CE. Bint al-Shāt’ held various academic posts in Egypt. She was the Chair of the *Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies* at *Ayn Shams University*, an academic inspector for the Egyptian Ministry of Education, and a visiting professor in several Arab universities such as *Khartoum University* in Sudan and *Qarawiyyin University* in Morocco. She also taught in Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and the United Arab Emirates.

She started writing articles for Egyptian women’s magazines and when she began publishing in widely circulated journals and daily papers in 1933, she adopted her pen name Bint ash-Shātī’ (“daughter of the coast”) in order to hide her identity from her father, a well-known religious scholar at that time, Shaykh Muhammad bin ‘Ali bin ‘AbdurRahmān. Her father, guessing her pen name - which refers to her birthplace, Dumyāt, where the waters of the Nile and the Mediterranean meet - and recognizing her style, later encouraged her to keep writing. In addition to writing in academic and scholarly journals, she wrote for the prestigious newspaper *al-Ahram* until her death. A prolific writer, she authored more than forty books and one hundred articles to her credit. Although she published some fiction and poetry, she is best known for her social, literary, and Islamic studies. Her first two books, which appeared in 1936 and 1938, deal with the difficulties facing Egyptian peasants. Her other books deal with Arabic literature (1961), contemporary Arab women poets (1963), Abu’l-Ala al-Ma’arrī (1968 and 1972), and a new reading of *Risalat al-Ghufran* (1972).

She excelled in the field of Qur’anic studies, in which she published more than fifteen books, including *The Immutability of the Qur’an* (1971), *With the Chosen* (1972), *The Qur’an and Issues of Human Condition* (1972), and *Islamic Character* (1973). She published several biographies of early Muslim women, including *The Daughters of the Prophet* (1963), *The Mother of the Prophet* (1966), and *The Wives of the Prophet* (1959), which was translated into English. Her autobiography, *On the Bridge* (1986), provides important information about the different stages of her life.

{*al-Anbiyā* (21): 5}

On the tongues of the eminent ones of al-'Azeez's people, when he asked them about his vision,

مِمَّنْ قَالُوا أَضْغَثُ أَحْلَمٍ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِتَأْوِيلِ الْأَحْلَمِ بَعْدِ

**“[It is but] a mixture of false dreams, and we are not learned in the interpretation of dreams.”**

{*Yūsuf* (12): 43-44}

As for *Ru'yab* (vision) it is mentioned seven times in the Qur'an all in regards to true visions and it is only used in the singular form which indicates that it is distinguished, clear and pure. Within the seven occurrences five of them are in regards to visions of the Prophets and truthful inspiration from revelation:

The vision of Ibrāheem (*'alaybis-salām*) in *as-Sāffāt*:

**We called to him, “O Abraham, you have fulfilled the vision.” Indeed, We thus reward the doers of good.**

{*as-Sāffāt* (37): 104-105}

The vision of Yūsuf (*'alaybis-salām*) when his father said to him:

**“O my son, do not relate your vision to your brothers or they will contrive against you a plan. Indeed Satan, to man, is a manifest enemy.”**

{*Yūsuf* (12): 5}

In following the context of the *Sūrah* the vision was true and took place:

**And he raised his parents upon the throne, and they bowed to him in prostration. And he said, "O my father, this is the explanation of my vision of before. My Lord has made it reality.**

{*Yūsuf* (12): 100}

The vision of al-Mustafā (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) in *Sūrat ul-Isrā'*:

**And [remember, O Muhammad], when We told you, “Indeed, your Lord has encompassed the people.” And We did not make the sight which We showed you except as a trial for the people...**

{*al-Isrā'* (17): 60}

And his vision in *Sūrat ul-Fath*:

**Certainly has Allāh showed to His Messenger the vision in truth. You will surely enter al-Masjid al-Harām, if Allāh wills, in safety, with your heads shaved and [hair] shortened, not fearing [anyone]. He knew what you did not know and has arranged before that a conquest near [at hand].**

{*al-Fath* (48): 27}



These are the five times that the Qur’ān mentions ‘visions’ of the Prophets and the other two times when the term ‘vision’ (Ru’yah) is used are in regards to the vision of al-’Azeez (the king of Egypt) which came true. Within the verses the term ‘vision’ is mentioned twice on the tongue of al-’Azeez (the king of Egypt) due to its clarity, magnificence and purity in his sleep. Even though to the eminent ones of his people it appeared to be a medley of confused imaginings and mixed-up dreams:

**And [subsequently] the king said, “Indeed, I have seen [in a dream] seven fat cows being eaten by seven [that were] lean, and seven green spikes [of grain] and others [that were] dry. O eminent ones, explain to me my vision, if you should interpret visions.” They said, “[It is but] a mixture of false dreams, and we are not learned in the interpretation of dreams.”**

{*Yūsuf* (12): 43-44}

The story goes on in its Qur’anic context to demonstrate that the king’s vision was a true imagining and it was not as how it appeared to the eminent ones of his people who thought that it was nothing but a mixture of false and muddled-up dreams.

These definitions from people of knowledge make it apparent that visions and dreams both have a reality and existence that have been created in the minds of the seer and sleeper. They are not non-existent (and made-up) as Ahl ul-Bida’ claim in their denial of their realities. Rather Allāh, Glory unto Him, has mentioned them in His Book and a group of Prophets (peace be upon them) have also informed of them. So it is obligatory to hold the statements as being Divinely Legislated realities and this is what the people of knowledge understood, because they refuted those who denied them and mentioned that those who denied dreams and the sciences of (dream and vision) interpretation are from Ahl ul-Bida’ such as the *Mu’tazilab*, the *Qadariyyah* and others. To the extent that this issue was mentioned by a group of those who have written on creed and belief and they transmitted the statements of the senior people of knowledge in regards to it. Imām Ahmad bin Hanbal (*rahimabullāh*) stated:

**A vision is truth from Allāh and if a person sees one in his sleep, and it is not a mixed-up dream, it is to be relayed to a scholar and its scholarly interpretation based on its authentic interpretation is to be trusted and not distorted. When a vision is interpreted it is true and when the Prophets had them they were revelation, so who is more ignorant than the one who defames visions and claims that they are nothing? It has reached me that there are some who say this (i.e. that visions and dreams mean nothing) and thus they do not deem it correct to make ghusl after a wet-dream! It has been narrated from the Prophet (sallallāhu ’alayhi**

wassallam) that he said: “The vision of a believer is Speech of the Lord to His servant.” And the Prophet (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam) also said: “A vision is from Allāh.”<sup>1</sup>

Ibn ‘Asākir transmitted in *Tabyyeen Kadhib al-Muftarī*, p.162 from Abu’l-Hasan al-‘Ash’arī (*rahimahullāh*) that he said: “We believe in the hadeeth of al-Mi’rāj and we authenticate many visions which are seen during sleep and we say: they need explanation.” Abu’l-Hasan al-‘Ash’arī also said in his book *Maqālāt ul-Islāmiyyeen*, p.212:

And they view that du’ā be made for the leaders of the Muslims for their rectification; and that they (the leaders) are not to be rebelled against; and that there should be no fighting during fitnah; and they believe in the emergence of the Dajjāl and that ‘Isā Ibn Maryam will fight him; and they believe in Munkar and Nakeer; and they believe in visions during sleep.

Abū Tayyib stated in *Qatf utb-Thamar*, pp.111-112:

A vision is from Allāh and a true revelation, its interpretation is true, so who is more ignorant than the one who defames visions and claims that they are nothing?

‘Uthmān bin Sa’eed ad-Dānī (d. 444 AH), may Allāh have mercy on him, stated in *ar-Risālat ul-Wāfiyah li-Madhbhab Ahl us-Sunnah fī’l-I’tiqādāt wa Usūl id-Dīyānāh*, pp.190-192:

Of their sayings, meaning Ahl us-Sunnah wa’l-Jama’ah, is that it is obligatory to confirm visions and that it is binding to affirm them and that they are a part of Prophethood as relayed in narrations from the Messenger of Allāh (*sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam*) and as narrated from some people. Abū Hurayrah (*radi Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated from him that he (*sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam*) said: “A good vision of a righteous man is one forty-sixth of Prophethood.” This means: the Prophets, peace be upon them, are informed of what will occur and a vision indicates what will occur. Allāh said

الْآخِرَةَ وَفِي الدُّنْيَا فِي الْبَشَرِ لَهُمْ

“For them are good tidings in the worldly life and in the Hereafter.”

{Yūnus (10): 64}

And it has arrived from the Prophet (*sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam*) and from more than one of the Sahābah and Tābi’een that: “A righteous vision is seen (by a believer) or others see it for him.”<sup>2</sup>

Allāh stated when informing about Yūsuf (*‘alayhis-salām*):

<sup>1</sup> Mentioned by Ibn Abī Ya’lā in *Tabaqāt ul-Hanābilah*, vol.1, pp.28-29 and Ibn ul-Qayyim (*rahimahullāh*) in *Hādī ur-Rūh*, pp.493-494 and he said: “**Harb transmitted it from Imām Ahmad in his famous book Masā’il.**”

<sup>2</sup> Reported by a group as stated by ad-Dānī and it has been abridged from two hadeeths:

**The hadeeth of Abu’d-Dardā’ (radi Allāhu ‘anhu):** reported by at-Tirmidhī in the chapters: ‘ar-Ru’yah’, vol.4, pp.534-535, hadeeth nos. 2278 and 2280; ‘Tafseer’, vol.5, p.286, hadeeth no.3115, vol.4,

[Of these stories mention] when Joseph said to his father, “O my father, indeed I have seen [in a dream] eleven stars and the sun and the moon; I saw them prostrating to me.”

{*Yūsuf* (12): 4}

And then it is mentioned:

And he raised his parents upon the throne, and they bowed to him in prostration. And he said, "O my father, this is the explanation of my vision of before. My Lord has made it reality.

{*Yūsuf* (12): 100}

Likewise, what Allāh informed about in regards to Ibrāheem (*alayhis-salām*):

p.119, hadeeth no.2273, vol.5, p.184, hadeeth no.3106 – refer to edition of Bashhār; Ahmad, *Musnad*, vol.6, pp.452, 447, 445; at-Tayālisī, p.131, hadeeth no.976; al-Humaydī, *Musnad*, vol.1, p.193; Ibn Abī Shaybah, *Musnad*, vol.1, pp.42-43, hadeeth nos. 26; Ibn Abī Khuthaymah, *Akhbār ul-Makki'een*, pp.421-422, hadeeth nos. 447, 448; at-Tabarī, *Tafseer*, vol.15, pp.134-135, hadeeth nos. 17722, 17717-17724, 17734, 17737, 17738, 17741, 17743; at-Tahāwī, *Sharh Mushkil ul-Athār*, vol.5, p.420, hadeeth no.218; al-Hākim, *Ta'beer ur-Ru'yah*, vol.4, p.433, hadeeth no.8180; Ibn 'AbdulBarr, *at-Tamheed*, vol.5, pp.58-59; al-Bayhaqī, *ash-Shu'b*, vol.4, p.185, hadeeth no.4735; Ibn al-Bukhārī, *Mashāyikh*, p.473; Ishāq, *Musnad* as mentioned in az-Zaylāī, *Takhreej ul-Kashhāf*, vol.2, pp.132-133. At-Tirmidhī stated “the hadeeth is hasan”, Ibn 'AbdulBarr stated: “**the hadeeth is hasan and if taken to be marfū' then it is saheeh according to the transmission of Ahl ul-Madeenah.**”

**The hadeeth of 'Ubādah bin as-Sāmit (radi Allāhu 'anhu):** reported by at-Tirmidhī in the chapter 'ar-Ru'yah', vol.4, p.534, hadeeth no.2280 and vol.4, p.120, hadeeth no.2275 – (Bashhār edition); Ibn Mājah, *Ta'beer ur-Ru'yah*, vol.4, pp.298-299, hadeeth no.3898; Ahmad, *Musnad* (Bashhār edition), vol.5, pp.315, 321, 325; at-Tayālisī, p.79, hadeeth no.583; ad-Dārimī, *Sunan* (Dahmān Print), vol.2, p.123 and vol.1, p.559, hadeeth no.2060 – of the al-Baghā Print; at-Tabarī, *Tafseer*, vol.15, p.125, no.17718-17721, 17725, 17730, 17731, 17739, 17740, 17756; ash-Shāshī, *Musnad*, vol.3, pp.142-144, hadeeth nos.1216, 1217; Ibn Qānī, *Mu'jam us-Sahābah*, vol.2, p.191; Ibn 'Adiyy, *al-Kamāl*, vol.4, p.4216; al-Hākim, *al-Mustadrak*, *Kitāb ut-Tafseer*, vol.2, p.370, hadeeth no.3302 and in chapter 'Ta'beer ur-Ru'yah', vol.4, p.433, hadeeth no.8179; al-Bayhaqī, *Shu'b ul-Īmān*, vol.4, p.185, hadeeth nos.4751, 4752; Ishāq, *Musnad*; Ibn Mardawayh, *Tafseer*; Abū Ya'lā, *Musnad* – as mentioned in az-Zaylāī, *Takhreej Ahādeeth al-Kashhāf*, vol.2, pp.132-133. The hadeeth is Saheeh like the one before it and al-Hākim deemed the hadeeth as saheeh and adh-Dhahabī agreed with him, this was also concurred by our Shaykh al-Albānī in *as-Saheehah*, vol.4, p.391, hadeeth no.1786.

As for what has arrived from the companions: then is has arrived from Abu'd-Dardā' as reported by Ibn Abī Khuthaymah in *Akhbār ul-Makki'een*, p.422, hadeeth nos.447 and 448; Abū Bakr ash-Shāfi'ī, *al-Ghīlānīyāt*, vol.1, p.584, hadeeth no.758. It has also arrived from a group of other Sahābah, refer to: *Tafseer at-Tabarī*, vol.5, p.138, hadeeth no.17448, 17751, 17752.

As for what has arrived from the Tābi'een: then it has been relayed from 'Urwah bin az-Zubayr and reported by Mālik in *al-Muwatta'* (Bashhār's edit), *Kitāb ur-Ru'yah*, vol.2, p.729 and vol.2, p.547, hadeeth no.2751; at-Tabarī, vol.15, p.137, nos. 55, 45, 17744 - likewise from 'Urwah, refer to *Tafseer at-Tabarī*.

**“And when he reached with him [the age of] exertion...”**

{*as-Saffāt* (37): 102}

Meaning: action, so he reached the age of behaving with that which will benefit him:

**“...he said, "O my son, indeed I have seen in a dream that I [must] sacrifice you...”**

{*as-Saffāt* (37): 102}

To the end of the *ayah*; and the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) said: “*A vision is from Allāh while a dream is from Shaytān.*”<sup>1</sup>

I say: their statements here were relayed in regards to matters of creed and belief in refutation of the Ahl ul-Bida’ who deny the reality of visions and reject them with neither *Shari’* proofs nor intellectual evidences. Unto to you now are the words of the people of knowledge and understanding in regards to this:

Ibn ‘AbdulBarr (*rahimabullāh*) stated in *at-Tambeed*, vol.1, p.285:

**I do not know from among the people of knowledge, deen and truth, and from the people of opinions and narration, that there is any difference of opinion regards visions as I have described them to you. They do not deny visions except for the people for Ilhād and the Mu’tazilah.**

He also said in *at-Tambeed*, vol.1, p.49:

The knowledge of vision interpretation is from the sciences of the Prophets and Ahl ul-Īmān and sufficient for you is what Allāh informed of in regards to Yūsuf (*'alayhis-salām*), what has been mentioned in the authentic narrations from the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) and what the Imāms of guidance from the Companions, Tābi’een and the Muslim scholars of Ahl us-Sunnah wa’l-Jama’ah after them have agreed upon and have faith in as having utmost wisdom and as being a blessing from Allāh to whomsoever he wills. Visions are glad-tidings which remain after the time of the Prophet Muhammad (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*).

Ibn al-‘Arabī al-Mālikī stated in *‘Aridat ul-Abwadhi*, vol.5, p.109:

**None reject (the reality of) visions except for a group from the Qadariyyah who say “visions have no reality to them whatsoever.”<sup>2</sup>**

Al-Ubbī (d. 828 AH/1424 CE)<sup>1</sup> stated in his *Sharh* of Saheeh Muslim, vol.7, pp.481-482 (Dār ul-‘Ilmiyyah Print):

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<sup>1</sup> Reported by al-Bukhārī, vol.6, p.390, hadeeth no.3292 and also nos. 5747, 6984, 6986, 6995, 7005; Muslim, *Kitāb ar-Ru’yah*, vol.15, p.21, hadeeth no.2261; at-Tirmidhī, *Kitāb ur-Ru’yah*, vol.4, p.535, hadeeth no.2282 and vol.4, p.121, hadeeth no.277 – Bashhār Print; Abū Dāwūd, *Kitāb ul-Adab*, vol.5, p.178, hadeeth no.5021; an-Nasā’ī, *Amal ul-Yawm wa’l-Laylah*, p.507, nos.896-901; Ibn Mājah, *Ta’beer ur-Ru’yah*, vol.4, p.302, hadeeth no.3909; Ahmad, *Musnad*, vol.5, p.303-305 – from Abū Qatādah.

<sup>2</sup> Transmitted from him by al-Hāfidh, *Fath ul-Bārī*, vol.14, p.412 and al-Qastalānī, *al-Mawāhib ul-Laduniyyah*, vol.3, p.553; al-Qāsimī, *Mahāsin ut-Ta’weel*.

Sālih al-Mu'tazilī stated “visions are what the eyes see” while others of them said “they are seen with the eyes which Allāh creates in the heart and heard by the ears which Allāh has created” and most of the Mu'tazilah stated “visions are imaginings which have no reality to them and they do not mean anything.”

This is denial of perceived senses.<sup>2</sup> Al-'Ash'arī stated in *Maqālāt ul-Islāmiyyeen*, vol.2, p.120:

In regards to the issue of visions the people have differed into six views: (1) an-Nidhām, and those who shared his view based on what was relayed by Zurqān, claimed that visions are mere thoughts; (2) Mu'tamar said “visions are natural occurrences but are not from Allāh”; (3) as-Sūfastā'iyyah (the Sophists)<sup>3</sup> say that “the way the one asleep sees things is

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<sup>1</sup> **Translator's note:** Muhammad bin Khaleefah bin 'Umar al-Washtatī al-Ubbī at-Tūnisī (*rahimahullāh*), the author of *Ikmāl ul-Ikmāl*, a commentary of *Saheeh Muslim* based on Qādī Iyyād's *Ikmāl ul-Mu'lim*.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Haytamī al-Faqeeh transmitted it from al-Ubbī in *Ashraf ul-Wasā'il*, pp.597-598 and al-Ghumārī, *Kitāb ur-Ru'yah*, p.7 – compare with al-Qarāfi, *adh-Dhakheerah*, vol.13, p.271; Usāmah al-'Awdī, *Ahkām ut-Tafseer ur-Ru'yā wa'l-Ahlām*, pp.6-8, 24-27; Khālid al-'Anbarī, *Manhaj Ahl us-Sunnah fī'r-Ru'yah*.

<sup>3</sup> **Translator's note:** Sophism can mean two very different things: In the modern definition, a sophism is a confusing or illogical argument used for deceiving someone. In Ancient Greece, the *sophists* were a group of teachers of philosophy and rhetoric. The term *sophism* originated from Greek *sophistēs*, meaning "wise-ist", one who "does" wisdom, one who makes a business out of wisdom (*sophós* means "wise man").

The Greek words 'sophos' or 'sophia' had the meaning of “wise” or “wisdom” since the time of the poet Homer, and originally connoted anyone with expertise in a specific domain of knowledge or craft. Thus a charioteer, a sculptor, and a warrior could be *sophoi* in their occupations. Gradually the word came to denote general wisdom and especially wisdom about human affairs (in, for example, politics, ethics, or household management). This was the term given to the Greek Seven Sages of 7th and 6th Century BC (like Solon and Thales), and this was the meaning that appeared in the histories of Herodotus. At about the same time, the term 'sophistes' was a synonym for “poet”, and (by association with the traditional role of poets as the teachers of society) a synonym for one who teaches, in particular through the performance of prose works or speeches that impart practical knowledge.

In the second half of the 5th century BC, particularly at Athens, “sophist” came to denote a class of roaming intellectuals who taught “excellence” and “virtue,” speculated about the nature of language and culture and employed rhetoric to achieve their purposes, generally to persuade or convince others. Sophists claimed that they could find the answers to all questions. Most of these sophists are known today primarily through the writings of their opponents, specifically Plato and Aristotle.

Many of them taught their skills for a price and because of the importance of such skills in the litigious social life of Athens, practitioners often commanded very high fees. The practice of taking fees, along with the sophists' practice of questioning the existence and roles of traditional deities and investigating into the nature of the heavens and the earth prompted a popular reaction against them. Their attacks against Socrates (in fictional prosecution speeches) prompted a vigorous condemnation from his followers, including Plato and Xenophon, as there was a popular view of Socrates as a sophist.

like the one who is awake and all of that is mere fancy and conjecture”; (4) Sālih Qubbah said, as did those who shared his view, that “visions are true and what the sleeping person sees is authentic just as what the person who is awake sees. If a person sees in his sleep that he is in Ifrīqiya (North Africa)<sup>1</sup>, while he is actually in Baghdād, then Allāh has made him be in Ifrīqiya at that time.” (5) Some of the Mu’tazilah stated that “visions are of three kinds: that which is from Allāh as in the kind wherein Allāh warns a person in his sleep from an evil or encourages him to do good; that which is from people (i.e. from their own minds) and that which is from the soul and thoughts”; (6) Ahl ul-Hadeeth say “a true vision is authentic and some can be just mixed-up confused dreams (Adghāth).”

Ibn al-’Arabī stated in *Qānūn ut-Ta’weel* (pp.138-140), while speaking about visions (ar-Ruā):

The ignoramus probably thinks that sleep is a state of imagination, this is utter ignorance! We have explained in our book, and especially in the treatise *Mabāsīn ul-Ihsān fī Jawābāt Abl Tilmisān*, that what is seen (in a vision) rebuts this ignorant view. For when a person sees a

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Their attitude, coupled with the wealth they obtained, eventually led to popular resentment against sophist practitioners and the ideas and writings associated with sophism. Protagoras is generally regarded as the first of the sophists. Others include Antiphon, Callicles, Cratylus, Gorgias, Hippias, Lycophron and Thrasymachus.

In comparison, Socrates accepted no fee, instead embracing a modest attitude, typified by Socratic questioning (i.e. the ‘Socratic method’, although Diogenes Laertius wrote that Protagoras—a sophist— invented the “Socratic” method). His attitude towards the Sophists was by no means oppositional; in one dialogue Socrates even stated that the Sophists were better educators than he was, and he sent one of his students to study under a sophist. W.K.C. Guthrie associated Socrates with the Sophists in his *History of Greek Philosophy*.

Plato, the most illustrious student of Socrates, depicts Socrates as refuting the sophists in several *Dialogues*. These texts depict the sophists negatively, and it is unclear how accurate or fair Plato’s representation of them may be; however, it is also suggested that such criticism was often ironic. Another contemporary, the comic playwright Aristophanes, criticizes the sophists as pedantic wordsmiths, yet suggests that Socrates was one of their number.

Plato is largely responsible for the modern view of the “sophist” as a greedy instructor who uses rhetorical sleight-of-hand and ambiguities of language in order to deceive, or to support fallacious reasoning. In this view, the sophist is not concerned with truth and justice, but instead seeks power. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle all challenged the philosophical foundations of sophism. It seems that some of the sophists held a relativistic view on cognition and knowledge. Their philosophy contains criticism of religion, law and ethics; though many sophists were apparently as religious as their contemporaries, some held atheist and agnostic views, as can be seen with Protagoras and Diagoras of Melos.

For more on the Sophists refer to the G.B. Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

<sup>1</sup> **Translator’s note:** Ifrīqiya was the name used for the coastal regions of what is today western Libya, Tunisia and eastern Algeria. This area had been the Roman province of Africa.

vision while asleep the person will then see its explanation while awake. This is what the pious person understands and it applies to the disbeliever as it does the believer.

What is also amazing is that one time we were surrounding a Roman land and there was a (Roman) Dhimmī Mu'āhad (from that land) present with the army due to a covenant of protection that he previously had with us. We fought against the land until we almost lost hope that we would even conquer the country. Early in the morning one day (during the siege) the Dhimmī boy came to me and spoke to me about the conquering the Roman country. He said to me "I think we will conquer the place! Because I saw (in a vision) yesterday a large snake biting people, so I took it and split open its stomach and some small children came out of it and I threw them into the canal (Kidhāmah)."<sup>1</sup> I said to our translator: "A true vision and I'll see." The disbeliever (i.e. the Dhimmī boy) said: "I have interpreted it as follows: the snake which was biting people is this (Roman) land and it will be taken and its people will be thrown out and will return to their (original) land. This vision is against us (as Romans) but for you." I was surprised by the truthfulness of his vision and his explanation of what he had seen, as it came about as interpreted and we conquered the place two days later. The leader was kind and allowed the people who were in the land to leave to go to their land.

The intelligent from every religion have concurred (the reality of visions) for there is decisive and conclusive proof, based on the intellect and the *Shar'*, that indicates their authenticity. The Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) utilised visions and informed about them and on one occasion stated: "I saw my Lord" and on another occasion stated "I saw myself", on a third occasion stated "I saw my companion", on a fourth time "I saw my Ummah", on a fifth time "I saw the Dunyā" and on a sixth occasion stated "I saw the other abode". And on a number of occasions the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) stated "I saw such and such conditions..." This is affirmed and such states are correct. This is the canon of interpretation based on representation for it is a hidden science from the proofs of authentic realities of creation and the existence of the Creator and His Attributes.

Al-Ālūsī (*rahimabullāh*) stated in *Rūb ul-Ma'ānī*, vol.5, pp.207-209:

The Mutakallimeen and Hukamā' (wise ones) from the notables and Sūfis differed over the reality of visions and are in different madhhabs in regards to the issue. The madhhab of the Mu'tazilī and the majority of Ahl us-Sunnah from the Mutakallimeen<sup>2</sup> hold visions to

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<sup>1</sup> **Translator's note:** Ibn ul-Atheer stated in *an-Nihāyah: Kidhāmah* (pl. *Khadhā'im*) are wells dug into the earth.

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Qabas*, vol.3, p.1135. Ibn al-'Arabī states:

**The Mu'tazilī in their blatant rejection of the basis of visions is in fact a rejection of all that the *Shar'* acknowledges about the basis of visions. It is also akin to the rejection of the Jinn and the ahādeeth related to them and like rejecting the belief in the angels.**

be false imaginings. The Mu'tazilah believe that sleep is a state of loss of awareness. As for the Jama'ah (of Ahl us-Sunnah) then they do not make these conditions whatsoever. Awareness during sleep is not like that of other usual times as sleep is contrary to awareness and the two are not to be combined. Visions do not have real awareness. Professor Abū Ishāq stated: visions have a true comprehension as there is no difference between what the sleeper encounters of hearing, tastes and other (sensory) perceptions and the perceptions that a person who is awake encounters. So if it is permitted to doubt what the sleeper experiences- it would also be permitted to doubt what the one awake also experiences.

Abu'l-'Abbās al-Qurtubī (*rahimahullāb*) stated in *al-Mufhim limā Ashkala min Talkhees Kitāb Muslim*, vol.6, p.6-7:

People past and present have differed over the 'how' of visions; the non-*Sharee'ah* scholars have many different views and thus became contradictory madhhabs which are devoid of evidences and irrational. This was on account of major confusion and turning away from the straight-way that the Prophets came with. The reality of visions is based on perceptions of the soul and the knowledge of its reality and its awareness has disappeared from us, rather we say: we do not know the reality of much which has been uncovered to us via the sensory perceptions of hearing, seeing and the likes. We only know general matters which are not detailed...but the way of the intellectual is to not be enticed by that which cannot be affirmed by either logical proofs or tangible senses, or a composite of both. Except if a truthful person informs of this, a person about whom there is decisive proof of his truthfulness – and these are the Prophets (peace be upon them) because there are miraculous proofs which testify to their truthfulness.

With this it becomes clear to us that the view which affirms the reality of visions is correct and authentic proving the possibility of them occurring. Visions from Allāh are true and truthful as Allāh has created them in the soul of the one who sees them as he sleeps. Believing in visions is from the creed of Ahl us-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah and is far from the nonsense of the Mu'tazilah and Ahl ul-Kalām. Rather, one should stop at the texts and act accordingly:

If you were to give the *Sharee'ah* texts their due right most of the disputes in the world would be removed. However, if the texts are hidden and then understood in a way which is contrary to what they intend, along with following void opinions, the matter will become even more disastrous leading to more ignorance, intensifying tribulation and aggravating void discussion. All of this is due to ignorance of what the Messenger (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) came with and intended, for a servant has nothing more beneficial than hearing what the Messenger (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) came with and



understanding its meaning. As for one who neither listens to him nor understands him (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) then he will be from those about whom Allāh said

**And they will say, “If only we had been listening or reasoning, we would not be among the companions of the Blaze.”**

{*al-Mulk (67): 10*}<sup>1</sup>

Shaykh ul-Islām Muhammad bin 'AbdulWahhāb (*rabimahullāh*) in *Majmū' Mu'allifāt*, vol.5, p.143:

**Vision interpretation is an authentic science which Allāh mentions in the Qur'ān and for this reason it is said: a vision is not to be interpreted except by one who is specialised in this science and its interpretation, because it is from the types of revelation.**

Ibn ul-Qayyim (*rabimahullāh*) stated in *ar-Rūb*, p.44:

**The saying that the whole science and belief in visions are psychological due to the soul being unoccupied from bodily activity while asleep – is void. This view is the source of invalidity and schism, for the soul absolutely has no knowledge of the matters that a dead person informs about.<sup>2</sup> The soul neither thinks of these matters nor has any indication about these things.<sup>3</sup>**

Al-Hāfidh Ibn Mandah stated in *Juz' Tarjumah at-Tabarānī*, vol.25, p.342 (at the end of *al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer*):

Whoever rejects (the reality of) visions and claims that they have no reality is a person who rejects Prophethood. We ask Allāh for *īmān* in the *ghayb* and we seek refuge in Him from *shakk* and *ar-Rayb*.

Al-Qastalānī (*rabimahullāh*) stated in *al-Mawāhib al-Laduniyyah* (Maktabah al-Islāmī Print), vol.3, pp.516-517:

It is said: “*abartu ar-Ru'yah*” lightly, and if one explains it is said “*abbartuhā*” with emphasis (*tashdeed*) and this refers to what a person sees in a dream.

Al-Qādī Abū Bakr ibn al-'Arabī stated:

Visions are reflections that Allāh creates in a person's heart, upon the hand of either an angel or a devil. They represent things, either explicitly or metaphorically, or are mixed-up.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn ul-Qayyim, *Miftāh Dār us-Sa'ādah*, vol.2, pp.392-393; Ibn ul-Qayyim, *Tareeq ul-Hijratayn*, p.428; Ibn ul-Qayyim, *Badā'ī ul-Fawā'id*, vol.1, p.187; Ibn ul-Qayyim, *al-Furūsiyyah*, pp.342-343 (my *tahqeeq* – i.e. Shaykh Mashhūr).

<sup>2</sup> **Translator's note:** meaning when someone has a vision and sees someone who has died yet the dead person informs the person about certain matters which the person had no knowledge of prior. This indicates that visions are real and have an impact and effect, showing the reality of the unseen realm of existence.

<sup>3</sup> For the completion of these words refer to *Tareeq ul-Hijratayn*, p.428; *Hādī ul-Arwāh*, pp.39, 90 and 498; *Madārij us-Sālikeen*, vol.1, p.233

Thus, they are similar to thoughts that occur during wakefulness, which may either be arranged, like in a story, or scattered into fragments.

Al-Māzarī stated:

People have spoken much about the reality of visions and those who are not Islamic have held many rejected views about them due to them trying to stop at realities which can neither be understood with the intellect nor can the intellect establish any proof against. For they do not believe in what is heard (within visions) and their views are confusing, so those who are involved in medicine consider all visions to be merely confused and mixed up thoughts in the head. Those involved in medicine will say “whoever has excess mucus will see himself swimming in water and the likes which are related to water” and “whoever has excess bile will see fire and see himself going up in the air” and the likes. So if it was allowed to let the intellect have a role like this then Allāh would have allowed this to commonly be the case, yet reliance on the intellect does not establish a proof and cannot be applied generally, so it is an error to decisively rely on it.

Whoever is associated with philosophy will say “the images that take place on earth have parallels that are found in the ‘higher world’ like inscriptions.” This is more corrupt than the first view because it is a judgement without proof and inscription is an attribute of bodily forms and most of what take place within the ‘higher world’ are accidental occurrences and substances (A’rādh) which are not inscribed.

What is correct is what Ahl us-Sunnah follow, which is that: Allāh creates believable things which the sleeper sees just as He creates them in the heart of one who is awake. He makes them signs (in the vision) for other matters that He created or has created them in a second state. Whatever happens (within visions), even if it goes against tangible credence (al-Mu’taqad), it is the same as what is experienced by one who is awake. It is like when Allāh has created clouds as a sign that rain will pour down, yet this (rainfall) may not occur. Similarly the things that a sleeper sees can take place with the presence of an angel and these things can please him, yet at other times they can be in the presence of Shaytān and such things will harm him, and true knowledge is with Allāh.

Al-Hāfidh Abū Muhammad bin Hazm (*rahimabullāh*) stated in *al-Fīsal* (al-Jeel Print), vol.5, pp.123-124:

The student of an-Nidhām, Sālih Qubbah, believed that “whatever visions we see are true as seen, so if one sees that he is in China, when he is actually in Andalusia, then at that point Allāh has created him to be in China.” This is an immensely corrupt view because the eye and the intellect prove the falsity and invalidity of this saying. As for the eye then we clearly see that the person is sleeping even though he sees that he is in China. As for the intellect then this is our knowledge that what the sleeper sees are states which are like one who sees that his head has been chopped off even though he is still alive and the likes.

It has been authenticated from Allāh's Messenger (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) that a person informed him of a certain vision and replied to him "Do not inform of Shaytān's playing about with your mind."<sup>1</sup>

The correct view on visions is that: they are of types: some which are from Shaytān and these are confused and hotchpotch dreams; that which is from the soul wherein a person during the day is working on something or thinking about something and thus sees that during sleep, such as fear of an enemy or meeting a beloved person; that which is natural like for instance one always experiences blood (which is red in colour) he will see (in dreams) lights, flowers, wine and happiness. And like the one who experiences the colour yellow often then he will see (dreams) of fire, while the one who is thirsty will see snow and water. And like the one who is in a dark environment he will see caves, darkness and horror. Also that which Allāh shows the soul of the dreamer when it is free from bodily influences and corrupt ideas, at this point Allāh will honour a person with many unseen matters which can only occur after the soul has been purified, for what he sees will be truthful.

It has been narrated from the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) that no Prophethood will remain after him except glad-tidings which are righteous visions that a man sees or that are shown to him (in a vision). These visions range from a twenty-sixth to a forty-sixth to a seventieth of Prophethood. This is a clear text regarding what we have mentioned about visions being comprised of truth, clarity and purity, devoid of confusion. The Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) intended by this type of vision that which was seen by the Prophets as some of their visions were a twenty-sixth part of Prophethood and its special characteristics and virtues, and some of these visions are a seventieth of Prophethood. This is what is apparent and Allāh knows best. As for visions seen by other than the Prophets then these can be lies at times and true at other times, and nothing is to be deemed as correct except after the emergence of it being correct. Except for the visions of the Prophets for all of that is revelation and to be deemed as authentic such as Ibrāheem's vision (*'alayhis-salām*), if one who is not a Prophet were to see that and implement that while awake he would be sinful or mad, this all indicates that there is no doubt about the distinction (between Prophets and others). For a vision can be credible yet it may neither be a part of Prophethood nor from glad-tidings, or it could be a warning to the person or to someone else and an admonition. And with Allāh is success.

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<sup>1</sup> Reported by Imām Ahmad, vol.2, p.344; Muslim, vol.15, p.27; an-Nasā'ī, *'Amal ul-Yawm wa'l-Laylah*, no.1913; Ibn Mājah, vol.2, p.451 and others – from the hadeeth of Abū Hurayrah (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*).

## CONCLUSION

The science of dreams and the affirmation of it is a very lengthy topic and if you do not allow yourself to affirm them and say “these dreams are infallible” then contemplate on those who have seen their companions, friends, relatives and others and informed them of things which only the person having the vision could have known about! Such as telling him about money that he has buried or warning him from something that is about to happen or giving him glad-tidings of something - and then these things have taken place as mentioned in the vision. Or someone in a vision informs a person about his death or the death of someone from his family and then these things have happened as mentioned in the vision. Or someone in a vision informs a person about fertility, sterility, an enemy, something about to happen, an illness or something that he needs – and then these occur just as seen in the vision. The reality is that these are matters which only Allāh can know about yet people can also be made aware to participate in this, for we and others have seen such amazing things.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn ul-Qayyim’s words (*rahimahullāh*) in *ar-Rūh*, p.44

## THE ĪMĀN OF THE ARABS IN VISIONS, DREAMS AND THEIR EFFECTS

The Arabs and all of the people of the past held visions and dreams in high estimation and held them to be true. Of the most apparent examples of this are the following:

What the biographers mention about Rabee'ah bin Nasr al-Lakhmī (King of Yemen):

He had a vision which frightened him so he gathered all of the fortune-tellers and astrologers and said to them: "I have had a vision which has frightened me so inform me of its interpretation." They said "Tell it to us." He said: "I will not believe its interpretation except from one who knows about visions before I tell it." They said "If you want that then send for Sateeh and Shiqq (fortune-tellers)." So they were sent for them and Sateeh<sup>1</sup> firstly arrived and approached King Rabee'ah who said to Sateeh "I have seen a vision which has terrified me. I saw a fire (Humamah)<sup>2</sup> emerge from Dhulamah<sup>3</sup> and then land in Tahimah and devour everything which had a skull (Dhāt Jumjumah).<sup>4</sup> So what do you have to say about his O Sateeh?" Sateeh replied: "I swear by the Hanash (snake)<sup>5</sup> which is between the stones that your land will be attacked and conquered by the Ethiopians and they will possess what is between Abyan and Jurash<sup>6</sup>." King Rabee'ah said to him: "By your father! This is a painful occurrence for us, when will this happen? During my time or after me?" Sateeh said: "Shortly after your time, maybe sixty or seventy years after." King Rabee'ah asked: "Will their sovereignty continue or come to an end?" Sateeh said "It will come to an end after about sixty to seventy years. Then they will leave it to fight." King Rabee'ah asked "Who will be their (i.e. the Ethiopian) leader at that time?" Sateeh replied: "Iram bin Dhī Yazin, for he will go to them from Aden and none of them will remain in Yemen." King Rabee'ah asked: "Will that remain?" Sateeh said "No it will come to an end." Rabee'ah asked "who will bring it to an end?" Sateeh said "a purified Prophet upon whom revelation will descend from the Most High." Rabee'ah asked: "Who is this

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<sup>1</sup> Rabee'ah bin Mas'ūd bin Māzin bin Dhī'b bin 'Adiyy bin Māzin bin Ghassān.

<sup>2</sup> *Humam* (plural), referring to a coal with a fire in it.

<sup>3</sup> The origin of the word is *Dhulmah* which was a place, as-Suhayli stated: "That is because Humamah is a piece of fire and its emergence from Dhulamah resembles the emergence of an army from the lands of the black people."

<sup>4</sup> Skull (*jumjumah*) and he did not say "Dhī'l-Jumjumah" because the intent is every living thing and is thus more general and not just applied to human beings.

<sup>5</sup> He swore by a snake which indicates that the Jinn take the form of snakes.

<sup>6</sup> Two places in Yemen.

**Translator's note:** the Abyan region is in Southern Yemen and its capital is the city of Zinjibār. Jurash is a mountainous area which overlooks the Red Sea in southwest Saudi Arabia/northern Yemen. In the past it was a fortified city.

Prophet?” Sateeh said: “a man from the descendents of Ghālib bin Fihr bin Mālik bin an-Nadr. He will be a king among his people up until the end of time.” Rabee’ah asked “Will this end?” Sateeh said: “Yes, the day when the first and last will be gathered, when the good people will be pleased and the evil people will be grieved.” Rabee’ah then asked: “Is what you are telling me the truth?” Sateeh replied: “Yes, I swear by the twilight glow! I swear by dusk! I swear by dawn when it becomes full! What I inform you of is the truth.” So when King Rabee’ah had finished with Sateeh Shiqq<sup>1</sup> then arrived and Rabee’ah said to him: “I have had a vision so inform me of what you think about it.” Shiqq told Rabee’ah exactly the same as Sateeh did, he told him about kingdoms being conquered and overpowered as Sateeh stated, up until Shiqq stated: “...and then a Messenger will come with truth and justice, he will be a king among his people up until the Day of Judgement (“Yawm ul-Fasl”).” Rabee’ah said: “And what is the “Yawm ul-Fasl” (Day of Judgement)?” Shiqq replied: “The day when people will be rewarded and people will be gathered at stationed places.”

This was narrated by Ibn ul-Atheer, *al-Kamāl*, vol.1, p.320; Ibn ul-Jawzī, *al-Muntadham* (Dār ul-’Ilmiyyah Print), vol.2, pp.70-72; Ibn Ishāq, *as-Seerah* as mentioned by Ibn Hishām in *Seerah Ibn Hishām*, vol.1, pp.14-18 – via Khaleefah bin Khayyāt and Abū Sa’eed an-Nuqqāsh in *Qanūn ul-’Ajā’ib* (no. 70, my edit); Ibn ’Asākīr, *Tāreekh*, Ibn ’Arabī, *Muhādīrat ul-Abrār*, vol.2, pp.64-65 as mentioned in *Subul ul-Hadī wa’r-Rashād*, vol.1, p.117; and transmitted via Ibn Ishāq by a group of scholars such as at-Tabarī (*rahimabullāh*) in his *Tāreekh*, vol.2, pp.112-113. The narration is *mu’dal*.<sup>2</sup> Ibn Khaldūn stated in his *Muqaddimah*, p.108:

**Of the most famous stories is that of Sateeh and Shiqq and their interpretation of Rabee’ah bin Nasr’s vision wherein they informed him of the Ethiopian conquest of Yemen, the King Mudarr who would come after Rabee’ah, and the emergence of Muhammad’s Prophethood among the Quraysh. Also the vision of al-Mawbidhān<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Shiqq bin Sa’ab bin Yashkir bin Rahm bin Afrak bin Nadheer bin Basheer.

<sup>2</sup> Reports about Sateeh have been transmitted by al-Hasan bin Ya’qūb and Ahmad bin ’Abdullāh ar-Rāzī (d. 460 AH) in *Tāreekh Madeenat San’ā*, p.240. Al-Qādī al-Ma’āfi an-Nahrawānī stated in *al-Jalees as-Sālih*, vol.4, p.8: **“The narrations of Sateeh are many and more than one person from Ahl ul-’Ilm has compiled them.”**

I say: for some of these narrations refer to *Subh ul-’Ashā*, vol.1, pp.454-455; *al-Aghānī*, vol.4, pp.301 and vol.17, p.308 and *Bulūgh ul-Arab fī Ma’rifat Ahwāl ul-Arab*, vol.3, p.281.

**Translator’s note:** A Mu’dal narration is a narration wherein two or more consecutive narrators are missing from the chain of narration.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Mawbidhān was a Magian judge as mentioned in *an-Nihāyah*. Vol.4, p.369; Ibn Jareer, *at-Tāreekh*, vol.2, pp.166-167; al-Kharā’itī, *Hawātif ul-Janān*, p.16; al-Azharī, *Tahdheeb ul-Lughah*, vol.4, pp.276-278; al-Khattābī, *al-Ghareeb*, vol.1, pp.622-624; al-Bayhaqī, *ad-Dalā’il*, vol.1, pp.126, 129; Abū Nu’aym,

which was interpreted by Sateeh when Kisrā asked for al-Mawbidhān to be sent to him. He then informed him of Prophethood and the destruction of the Persian Empire and all of this is famous.

I say (i.e. Shaykh Mashhūr): Yes, the story is famous and mentioned in the books of Arabic linguistics and literature, see for example: *al-Aẓminah wa'l-Amkinah*, vol.2, pp.196-198; *at-Tadbkīrat ul-Hamdūniyyah*, vol.8, pp.10-12; *Nihāyat ul-Arab*, vol.3, pp.128-130; *Lisān ul-'Arab* (under 'kahana'); *al-'Iqd ul-Fareed*, vol.1, p.294; Ibn Durayd,<sup>1</sup> *al-Ishtiqāq*, p.487;

*ad-Dalā'il*, vol.1, p.173, no.82; Abu'l-Qāsim al-Hanā'ī, *Fawā'id*, vol.7, no.199, my edit; Ibn Abī Dunyā via Ibn ul-Jawzī, *al-Muntadham*, vol.2, pp.249-250; Ibn as-Sakan, *Ma'rīfat is-Sahābah* as relayed in *al-Isābah*, vol.6, p.524; *Fath ul-Bārī*, vol.6, p.584; Abū Sa'eed an-Nuqqāsh, *Funūn ul-'Ajā'ib*, no.69, my edit; and via at-Taymī in *ad-Dalā'il un-Nubuwwah*, nos. 193, 194; Ibn 'Asākir, *Tāreekh Dimishq* (Dār ul-Fikr Print), vol.10, 309 'bā' and vol.37, pp.361-363 – via 'Ali bin Harb from Ya'lā bin an-Nu'mān al-Bajalī from Makhzūm bin Hanī' al-Makhzūmī from his father. Abu'l-Qāsim al-Hanā'ī commented saying:

**This hadeeth is hasan ghareeb and we do not know of it except of it via the hadeeth of Makhzūm bin Hanī' al-Makhzūmī from his father. Abū Ayyūb Ya'lā bin 'Imrān al-Bajalī solely reported it and we have not documented it except in this way, and it is included within the Dalā'il un-Nubuwwah of our Prophet (sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam).**

Al-Azharī also stated: **“the hadeeth is hasan ghareeb.”**

**Attention:** some of them stated “Ya'lā bin an-Nu'mān” while others said his name was “Ya'lā bin 'Imrān” and “Ibn an-Nu'mān” and there is a biography of him in *al-Jarh wa't-Ta'deel*, vol.4, p.2, no.304 and *Tāreekh ul-Kabeer*, vol.4, p.2, no.418 – Ibn Ma'een deemed him as credible as noted in his *Tāreekh*, no.1478 (the narration of ad-Dūrī). The ruling on it being hasan could be due to supporting evidences, yet adh-Dhabībī stated in *as-Seerah an-Nabawīyyah* (al-Qudsī Print), pp.11-14, for he stated **“the hadeeth is munkar ghareeb.”** See *al-Khasā'is al-Kubrā*, vol.1, p.129.

<sup>1</sup> **Translator's note:** Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ibn Durayd al-Azdī, born in Basra in 837 CE and he died in Baghdād in 933 CE/321 AH. He was an Arabic philologist and poet with a strong memory who authored a large dictionary entitled *Jamharat ul-Lughah* (published in Hyderabad, India, 4 vols. 1926-30). He also authored *Kitāb ul-Malāheen* (Beirut: Maktabah Lubnān li'n-Nāshireen, 1996, Abdullah Nubhān, ed.); *al-Ishtiqāq* [Etymology] (Cairo: Mu'assasat al-Khanjī, 1958 CE, AbdusSalām Hārūn, ed.), it was also edited by Ferdinand Wüstenfeld, (Göttingen Print) in 1854. The book was written in opposition to anti-Arab elements to show the etymological connection of the Arabian tribal names. *Al-Maqsurah*, a poem praising 'Abdullāh bin Muhammad Ibn Mikal and his son (the governors of Persia where Ibn Durayd fled to from Oman), has been edited by A. Haitzma (1773), E. Scheidius (1786), and N. Boyesen (1828). He also authored *Kitāb as-Sihāb wa'l- Ghayth* [The Book of Clouds and Rain]; *Kitāb as Sarj wa'l-Lijām* [The Book of the Saddle and the Rein]; *Kitāb Khayl al-Kabeer* [The Big Book of Horses] and *Kitāb Khayl as-Sagheer* [The Small Book of Horses].

Ibn Hawqal states in *Kitāb Sūrat ul-'Ard* (Leiden, BGA, 1939, J.H. Kramers, ed.), p.271:

“Ibn Durayd claims in his anthology that they [the Kurds] are bedouins and that most of them come from Kurd Ibn Mard bin 'Amrū bin 'Āmir's [...]. People considered his sayings as proof and shared his opinion on those matters as they did for others. [The Kurds] are sheep and mare owners, but few of them possess camels. None of them own thoroughbred horses except the

*Jamharat Ansāb ul-'Arab*, pp.374-375; *Tāj ul-'Urūs*, vol.2, p.163 (under 'sataha'). Az-Zujjājī in *al-Amālī*, pp.39-41 and Ibn 'Asākir in *Tāreekh Dimishq*, vol.64, pp.294-295 from Zayd bin Aslam from his father, relay in a long story:

**A Christian monk before Islām had a vision about 'Umar bin al-Khattāb (radi Allāhu 'anhu) and that he would rule and possess much good. The monk was thus anticipating him and waiting for the vision to occur as interpreted, and it occurred as seen.**

The likes of this within the history and biographical books are well known and famous and are of the clearest proofs for what we mentioned about people being affected by visions and the importance that people attach to them. People have a natural inclination to understand the unseen realm and future occurrences and the realm of dreams is a part of this as one is able to know such hidden matters. Dreams and visions are areas which have been corroborated by the Divine Legislation as it has been corroborated by other sources. Ibn ul-Qayyim states in *Miftāh Dār us-Sa'ādah* (the edit of al-Halabī, *hafidhahullāb*),<sup>1</sup> vol.3, p.241:

The science of foreknowledge is not specific to what the astrologers have mentioned about it. Rather it has a number of reasons wherein one can be either correct or incorrect and its interpretation can either be judged to be truthful or a lie. This includes fortune-telling (Kihānah), dreams, omens, palm-reading, geomancy, numerology, intuition, hypnosis, literomancy (based on letters) and other matters which include slight portions of fortune-telling.

Then Ibn ul-Qayyim (*rabimahullāb*) stated (vol.3, p.241):

As for the followers of the Messengers then Allāh sufficed them with the beneficial knowledge that the Messengers came with and based on their following of the Messengers they have their fair share of truthful intuitive knowledge, authentic righteous dreams, corresponding uncovering and the like.

Also refer to the treatise of al-'Allāmah Ibn Rushd in *aḏ-Zajār bi'l-Khatt* which has been printed with my edit.

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Mazāndjān living on the outskirts of Isfahān [...] Their "madhāhib" (schools of thought) are the same as the Bedouins".

<sup>1</sup> **Translator's note:** i.e. Shaykh 'Ali Hasan al-Halabī al-Atharī (*hafidhahullāh*).



## THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PEOPLE OF KNOWLEDGE IN INTERPRETING DREAMS

It is possible that this important introductory theme is of the most important issues which has the most benefit for the student of knowledge who wants to understand this *Shari'* science. We discuss herein the principles and foundations which the experienced scholars (Ahl ul-Khibrah) have laid down, and we also discuss the concern with this noble art which many people need and the secrets and regulations of it which people desire to understand. So whoever contemplates on the transmitted texts, the Salaf's understanding of them and the narrations of the *Salaf* will find it hard to stop at an established principle for all things which are seen in visions. Like it being said: "whoever sees in a dream such and such, then its explanation is such and such" rather this is prohibited according to them.

So the intent here is not to leave matters open without any principles, rules or *Shari'* guidelines as these have to be elicited in order to know the aspects of specific indications when extracting the desired meanings of visions and dreams. This is because the science of vision interpretation is a very noble science and principles based on the Sunnah of the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) have been put in place. It is not appropriate for anyone to turn to the books of the latecomers such as Freud and his book *The Interpretation of Dreams* which he authored in 1900. Freud, who was Jewish,<sup>1</sup> put forth a sexual theory and thus his book on dreams propagates his sexual theory and thus explains all affairs in the matter (of dreams) with a sexual explanation thereby degrading the humanity of people and their nobility.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> **Translator's note:** For more on the relevance of this see:

- ✓ Yoram Bilu, "Sigmund Freud & Rabbi Yehudah: Jewish Mystical Tradition of 'Psychoanalytic' Dream Interpretation" in *Journal of Psychological Anthropology*, no.2 (1979), pp.443-463
- ✓ Miriam Huttler, "Jewish Origins of Freud's Interpretation of Dreams" in *Journal of Psychology and Judaism*, vol.23, no.1 (March 1999), pp.5-48.

<sup>2</sup> Hishām Muhammad 'Alī, *al-Minhāj fi'n-Nafs wa'l-Hayā*, p.107; for the speech of Freud refer to *al-Ahlām Bayna'd-Deen wa 'Ilm an-Nafs*, p.96 by Muhammad Ridā ash-Shīrī which he relayed. Those who follow this ideology interpret symbolism in dreams with an excessive sexual explanation, thus they interpret everything seen in a dream which is round as being a symbol of the vagina, such as: the cave, circle, box, ring etc. Likewise, they interpret everything which is straight as being a symbol of the male penis, such as: a stick, a pen, a sword and the likes. They also interpret every movement in a dream as being a symbol of sexual intercourse, such as: running, climbing, swimming etc. This is a fallen and weak theory even according to psychologists; attention was brought to this earlier on in the introduction.

As for the Muslims then they say what Allāh and His Messenger say that visions have a firm connection with the lives of those who see them or to whom they are relayed. The skilful ones from the interpreters and the people of intuition (Fīrāsah) are the ones who sense the meaning of visions based on the reality and characteristics of those who see them. This does not exclude the fact that visions can resemble each other yet their meanings will differ as the *fiqh* of the *Salaf us-Sālih* (*radi Allāhu 'anhum*) indicates. For a man went to Muhammad bin Sīrīn, the Imām of the vision and dream interpreters, and asked him about a vision saying:

“I saw in my sleep as if I was making the call to prayer.” Ibn Sīrīn said to him: “You will make Hajj this year.” Then another man said to Ibn Sīrīn: “I saw in my sleep as if I was making the call to prayer.” Ibn Sīrīn said to him: “Your hand will be chopped off for theft.” When Ibn Sīrīn was asked regarding these two different interpretations, he said: “I saw in the first person a good character so I interpreted based on the saying of Allāh,

وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ

“And proclaim to the people the Hajj [pilgrimage]...”

{Hajj (22): 27}

The form of the second person did not please me, so I interpreted it based on the saying of Allāh,

تُهَا الْعِيرُ إِنَّكُمْ لَسَارِقُونَ ثُمَّ أَدْنَىٰ مُؤَذِّنٌ أَيُّ

“Then an announcer called out, “O caravan, indeed you are thieves.””

{Yūṣuf (12): 70}

Ibn Qutaybah mentioned this *Ibārat ur-Ru'yah*, p.133 (our edit); as did al-Baghawī,<sup>1</sup> *Sharh us-Sunnah*, vol.12, p.224; Abū Sa'eed al-Wā'idh, pp.72, 41 (ascribed to Ibn Sīrīn); al-

<sup>1</sup> Something to be aware of is that al-Baghawī in his transmissions of vision interpretations mainly follows Ibn Qutaybah even though he does not explicitly mention this. Al-Hasan bin Bahlūl also does this in *Ta'beer ur-Ru'yah* which has been printed within the Irāqi journal *al-Mawrad*, no.13. Indeed, Ibn Bahlūl transmits the entire book of Ibn Qutaybah word for word long with its sections and chapters and changes some terms of expression from it and omits the Qur'anic verses, *ahādeeth*, narrations and poetry. He also transmits the exact same quotes from Ibn Sīrīn in the same three instances that Ibn Qutaybah did in his book. This certifies how widespread this book (of Ibn Qutaybah's) is and how people

Qādirī, *at-Ta'beer*, vol.2, p.23; ath-Tha'ālabī, *al-Iqtibās min al-Qur'ān al-Kareem*, vol.2, p.62; al-Khaleel bin Shāheen, *al-Ishārāt*, p.633; at-Tuwayjurī, *Kitāb ur-Ru'yah*, p.168; al-Halāwī, *Mukhtasar Ibn Sīrīn*, p.17 and others. Ibn Shāheen stated:

**Ja'far as-Sādiq said: the vision of the adhān has twelve aspects to it: Hajj, a true word, an instruction, ability, leadership, travelling, death, averting bankruptcy, treachery, spying, a lack of deen and nifāq.**

He (i.e. Ibn Shāheen) stated before this:

Interpretations change their foundations according to the different conditions of the seer (of the vision), so seeing handcuffs during sleep is disliked but if a righteous person sees them it can mean stopping the hands from evil. Ibn Sīrīn said about a man who saw himself giving a sermon from the minbar: “he will achieve authority and if he is not from the people who have any kind of authority it means that he will be crucified.”

Al-Qādirī stated in *Ta'beer ur-Ru'yah*, vol.1, p.194:

A man came to Ibn Sīrīn (*rahimabullāh*) and said to him: I saw a lot of hair growing on my face.” Ibn Sīrīn stated: “hair signifies wealth and you work in something which is contrary.” Another man who had seen the same vision went to him and Ibn Sīrīn stated: “you are a man who has a debt to pay so seek Allāh’s help to pay it.”

All of this affirms what was mentioned prior about the different interpretations for visions based on: different people who see them, time, customs, different states and other considerations. Also from this is:

**A man went to Abū Bakr as-Siddeeq (radi Allāhu 'anhu) and said to Abū Bakr “I saw (in a dream) that I was given seventy leaves from a tree.” Abū Bakr said to him: “you will beat seventy skins” and not much time passed until this actually occurred exactly as mentioned. Then a year later the man saw the same vision and went to Abū Bakr and told him about it. Abū Bakr said: “you will gain seventy thousand Dirhams.” The man said to Abū Bakr: “I saw the dream last year and you interpreted it as seventy skins and that was true. This year however you have interpreted it as seventy Dirhams?” Abū Bakr responded: “What is this?! Last year the trees were losing their leaves and today your vision is at a time when the trees are blossoming with leaves!” The man did not wait long until the Dirhams came to him (as interpreted by Abū Bakr as-Siddeeq, radi Allāhu 'anhu).<sup>1</sup>**

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have benefited from it. Ibn Ghannām also transmits from Ibn Qutaybah in his book *ar-Ru'yah* as does al-Wā'idh and others. We noted all these within the notes to our edit of Ibn Qutaybah’s book, and all praise is due to Allāh.

<sup>1</sup> Mentioned by al-Qādirī, *Ta'beer fi'r-Ru'yah*, vol.2, p.411; Ibn Shāheen, *al-Ishārāt*, p.872; an-Nāblusī, *Ta'beer ul-Anām*, p.282; *Muntakhab ul-Ahlām*, p.99 – this book is attributed to Ibn Sīrīn (*rahimahullāh*) however upon inspection the author is Abū Sa'eed al-Wā'idh, and with Allāh is success.

This from as-Siddeeq (*radi Allābu 'anbu*) highlights the considered principles according to the 'Ulama of vision interpretation. Many of the scholars document that:

At times a tree symbolises its fruits and at other times its leaves and at other times its shade and at times its wood and then at other at times its firewood and at times its beauty and at times its totality. Likewise, those whom we have mentioned prior are people who find benefit for what befits people at all times – so understand that.<sup>1</sup>

The intent, as has preceded, is to take into consideration these different states of the seers (of visions) depending on their customs and conditions. Whoever has even the least amount of contemplation on the books of dream interpretation will comprehend this with ease. For if they documented in “dictionaries of dream interpretation” that the intent of a certain thing seen in a dream is such and such an interpretation - then this does not mean that such an interpretation is generalised to all who see a particular thing. Rather, they mention the (varying) sides of intended interpretations along with taking into consideration different states of those (people) mentioned earlier. This is a beneficial view to note in regards to vision interpretation and its most famous: to take into consideration these differences which we have mentioned here. Also from this for example is the statement of Shihāb ul-'Ābir in his book *al-Badr ul-Muneer fī 'Ilm it-Ta'beer*, p.187:

**A person said to me: “I saw as if I was the Angel of Death.” I said: “Are you a butcher?” The man replied: “Yes.” I said: “Then this is due to the amount of animals that die at your hands.” Another man saw the same and I said to that man: “You’re a murderer and highway robber, so repent from that.” Another man saw the same and I said to that man: “You cause division among your companions, so repent from that.” The King of Egypt saw the same and I said to him: “You destroy many lands and then after that you conquer other lands and destroy them too.”**

He stated on pages 189-190:

**A person said to me: “I saw (in a vision) that I became the angel Isrāfeel.” I said to him: “Do you blow into sweets which are in cake pans so as to make different shapes?” The man said: “Yes, correct.” Another person saw the same and I said to him: “Do you rhapsodize about women?” The man said: “Yes.” This connection is because Isrāfeel blows into a trumpet. Another man saw the same and I said to him: “Are you a doctor”, because the blow of the angel Isrāfeel rectifies bodies. Another person saw the same and I said to him: “Are you a grave-digger?” The**

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<sup>1</sup> From the words of Shihāb ul-'Ābir (*rahimahullāh*) in *al-Badr ul-Muneer*, p.243.

man said: “Correct.” The King of Egypt saw the same and I said to him: “The hour when you will gather the people for a great event and free a group of prisoners.” And this happened, for Isrāfeel blows so as to gather people and those in the graves will come out.

He stated on page 215:

The moon (in a vision) depends on the state of the one who sees it, because a person said to me: “I saw that I was eating the moon.” I said to him: “Did you sell a plate or mirror and consume the profits of this?” The man replied: “Yes.” Another person saw the same and I said to him: “Someone who honours you will die and you will consume the inheritance.” Then the man’s son died. Another person told me “I saw that a person’s face turned into the moon.” I said to him: “We fear for him that he will be afflicted with leprosy or its symptoms in his face.” Then this happened. Another said: “I saw that it was as if I fell on the moon and I was distressed.” I said to him: “Stop gambling.” Another person saw the same and I said to: “You will drown.” Then some time later the person died by drowning.

These transmissions and the like of them are famous within the books of dream interpretation and the increase our trust in this point of consideration (of varying interpretations for various people) which is hidden from many of the common people, especially those who ascribed themselves to explaining dreams via mere reference to “**dream dictionaries**”!! In doing so they turn away from these variations and differences (in interpretation) based on the states of those who relay them. For there are differences which at times are due to the seer, time, place and other things which affect the seer: So based upon this a righteous vision and a confused muddled-up dream are not on the same level, because the righteous person may have a vision which includes honey and this is interpreted as the sweetness of the Noble Qur’ān and *dhikr*. Yet for someone who is corrupt and for the one who has a mixed-up dream it could signify the sweetness of the worldly life and being enchanted by it.<sup>1</sup> So one thing seen in a dream or vision can have over one hundred possible meanings, and for a woman there can be over a thousand meanings, these have been compiled by ‘Alī bin Abī Tālib al-Qayrawānī into poetic form.<sup>2</sup> Ibn Juzayy stated in *al-Qawāneen ul-Fiqhiyyah*, p.182:

It is not befitting for a vision to be interpreted except by someone who understands them. its interpretation has various aspects some of which are derived from terms, its opposites, its letters, from the Qur’ān, hadeeth, poetry, parables, similarities in meanings and from

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<sup>1</sup> *Ta’teer ul-Anām*, p.379; the likes are to be found in as-Sa’dī, *Bahjatu Qulūbil-Abrār*, p.167; al-‘Awdī, *Ahkām Tafseer ul-Ahlām* (intro.).

<sup>2</sup> Noted by Ibn al-‘Arabī (*rahimahullāh*) in *‘Aridat ul-Ahwadhī*, vol.9, p.157.

other things. The vision of one person may be interpreted in a certain way yet for another person be interpreted in another way depending on their states.

Shaykh 'AbdulGhanī an-Nāblusī (*rahimabullāh*) stated in *Ta'teer ul-Anām*, p.379:

Visions can differ based on people's different forms, jobs, status and religions. So for one person it (i.e. a vision) could signify mercy yet for another person indicate punishment.

Abu'l-'Abbās al-Qurtubī (*rahimabullāh*) state in *al-Mufhim*, vol.6, p.22:

**In conclusion: what is considered as the greatest principle of the vision interpreter is: to look at the states of the seer and their differences. For two people could see the same thing which could be true for one of them yet not for the other and vis-a-versa.**

Ath-Tha'ālabī (*rahimabullāh*) stated in *al-Iqtibās*, vol.2, pp.61-62:

**The vision interpreters have concurred that vision interpretation can differ based on the various states of those who see them, and in consideration of their forms, levels and religion. For something can symbolise mercy for one person yet signify punishment for another person.**

Some precious foundational words on this issue were uttered by Mulā 'Ali al-Qārī (*rahimabullāh*) in *Murqāt ul-Mafāteeh* (Dār ul-'Ilmiyyah Print), vol.8, pp.433-434:

In brief, visions differ with different seers, each person has an interpretation which befits him and suits his condition and status and this is a matter which is unregulated. For this reason, the *Salaf* did not a complete, separate and comprehensive work covering all types of visions. They only spoke about some of what they experienced. Thus, you will not find two vision interpreters agreeing in their interpretation.

So based upon this the vision interpreter is to have the utmost acumen in safeguarding these aforementioned variations. It is not befitting to merely grab a “dictionary of dreams” to rely upon without safeguarding these rulings, as this opposes the regulations which those who compiled such “dictionaries” intended when they authored them. Siddeeq Hasan Khan (*rahimabullāh*) superbly mentioned in *Abjad ul-'Ulūm* [Alphabet of Sciences], vol.2, p.170:

**The science of vision interpretation is a science of all of the laws upon which the interpreter bases what he interprets. As they say: “the ocean symbolises authority” yet in another instance they say “the ocean symbolises anger” and at other times they say “the ocean signifies concern and something unpleasant.” For example, they say “a snake symbolises an enemy”, yet in another instance they say “it signifies one who keeps secrets” and in another instances they say “it signifies shyness”. The vision interpreter therefore has to preserve these complete regulations at all instances wherein there are similarities as related to visions. For**

the similarities can be while awake, within visions or within the soul of the interpreter due to the particularity that he was created within him and everyone traverses the way for which he was created.

These are very precious words indeed and these aforementioned variations are famously found in the words of Abu't-Tayyib and others within the books of dream interpretation, so whoever refers to any of that will comprehend that immediately. Al-Qādirī states in *Ta'beer ur-Ru'yab*, vol.2, pp.279-280:

**A pregnant woman who was imprisoned saw (in a vision) that she gave birth to a dragon and she gave birth to a son who was a glorious speaker who had two names and a sharp-tongue. This is because a dragon has two tongues just as a Khateeb has two tongues. The daughter of a fortune-teller saw (the same vision) and she gave birth to a son who became a diviner. Another woman saw the same vision and she gave birth to a son who became a fortune-teller, because a dragon is of the animals of the fortune-teller.<sup>1</sup> This woman herself was the wife of a fortune-teller. A sinful, immoral and adulterous woman saw the same vision and gave birth to a sinful and immoral son who committed adultery and illicit sexual intercourse with many women. A poor but intelligent woman saw the same vision and gave birth to a son who became a thief and was later executed in adulthood, because a dragon cannot be killed unless its head is cut off. A slave woman had the same vision and gave birth to a son who became a crafty fugitive, because a dragon does not just take one route. A sick woman had the same vision and she gave birth to a son who was chronically ill, because a dragon drags its tail like a person chronically ill.**

These transmissions are very famous within *Musannaf al-Qādirī* and others, for this reason he says towards the beginning of the book (vol.1, p.107):

**The vision of each person is to be interpreted on its own level because visions are a type of knowledge and each type has a specific value for the one who sees it.**

He also said (vol.1, p.109):

**For example, a vision which contains meat is seen by a poor person and also by a rich person. If the poor person sees that it means that he will gain some meat or be able to buy some, so he will actually get some meat. Yet if a rich person sees such a vision then it means for him that a calamity will befall him or that he backbites people.**

Also the statement of Abū Sa'eed al-Wā'idh in *Kitāb ut-Tafseer li-Ablām*, pp.21-22 (a book attributed to Ibn Sīrīn) wherein he mentioned:

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<sup>1</sup> **Translator's note:** In many mythological traditions of the *kufir* and *mushrik* world dragons are connected to esotericism and the occult.

People's levels can differ when it comes to some interpretations based upon their different fortunes even if the vision is the same. It is not necessary to interpret what is seen by different people in exactly the same way because there are broad meanings and varying sides. For example, if a pomegranate is seen by a leader it can possibly be interpreted as a village or town that he possesses, the skin representing the places walls while the core represents its people. For a business person the pomegranate could signify his house and his people inside, or his baths, hotel or ship in the middle of the sea which has people and wealth on board; or his shop which has customers inside, or his schools filled with students, or a money bag filled with Darāhim and Danāneer. For a scholar or pious worshipper a pomegranate could symbolise his book, the skin representing the pages of the book and the core representing the content of the book which contains the rectification. For a single man a pomegranate could signify a wife who has beauty and wealth or the virginity of a servant girl that he takes. For a pregnant woman it could signify a daughter who is shielded by her virginity, womb, shame and blood, and like this.

When he mentions the manners of the vision interpreter he says (p.43):

**Such as: distinguishing between people who see visions, so the vision of a leader is not the same as that of his subjects because visions differ with the different states of those who see them.**

Due to this important basis the 'Ulama of vision interpretation emphasise the necessity of asking about the condition, understanding, knowledge, occupation, country, custom, and other things, of the person who has a vision. This is in order to accurately ascertain the vision externally and internally and extract the intended meanings from its main factors based upon what is acknowledged from the one who saw the vision and his understanding and level. Ibn Shāheen (*rahimabullāh*) stated in *al-Ishārāt*, p.379:

The vision interpreter should not be hasty to interpret a vision until he understands its sides, parts and the amounts of what was seen. The person who had the dream should also be asked about his self, condition, people, occupation and his standard of living. There should be nothing neglected which can be used to infer knowledge of the matter except that he does it.

For this reason, al-Mansūr, the leader of the believers, saw (in a vision) as if a venerable mule was carrying two sacks of straw while he, al-Mansūr, was riding on top of it. He asked a blind vision interpreter about it and he replied: "Let me first ask you about your origin, tribe and condition." When the blind vision interpreter gained what he needed to know and discovered that he was the leader of the believers he interpreted it to mean that al-Mansūr will leave a successor, and that happened.<sup>1</sup> There are also precious words

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Qādirī, *Ta'beer*, vol.2, p.273; compare with the words of Abū Sa'eed al-Wā'idh, pp.31, 41, 43.



from Abū Sa'eed al-Wā'idh (*rahimabullāh*) in discussing the manners of the vision interpreter (p.32):

**Solidify your investigation and verification of an issue until you know it correctly and deduce, via the principles, from the words of the person who had the vision and his outlets and topics in order to summarise and determine it. This is of the most difficult aspects of the science of vision interpretation as they themselves claim, due to the knowledge of certain principles that it involves with which the interpreter uses in extraction.**

Thus, the science of vision interpretation requires broad investigation and deep understanding from the interpreter, al-Munāwī (*rahimabullāh*) stated in *Fayd ul-Qadeer* (Dār ul-'Ilmiyyah Print), vol.4, p.65:

**Every science has principles and established scales which do not change, except for vision interpretation because it differs in accordance with the different states, forms, occupations, levels, intents, religions, sects and customs of people. The vision interpreter has to investigate all sciences and know the religions, sects, groups, rites and customs that exist among nations and also know parables, rarities and linguistic derivatives. The vision interpreter must also be clever, intelligent, possess good means of extracting rulings, well-informed of the knowledge of foresight and intuition, know how to make deductions from creation for qualities<sup>1</sup> and preserve the issues which differ in accordance with different visions and their interpretation.<sup>2</sup>**

Ibn Qutaybah stated in *Ibārat ur-Ru'yab* (our edit), pp.72-73:

**Within all the sciences that the people indulge in, and in the different sources of wisdom that they practice, there is none more obscure, more subtle, more magnificent, nobler, more difficult and more problematic than visions. This is because it is a type of revelation and a portion of Prophethood. Every science that is sought has principles and standards which do not change, the path to which is**

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to research on these qualities and the necessity of observing them, and others within: *at-Turuq al-Hakeemah*, pp.10, 11, 19, 37, 39 and 51; *as-Simā'*, p.372; *Tareeq ul-Hijratayn*, p.671; *al-Manār ul-Muneef*, p.44; *Miftāh Dār as-Sa'ādah*, vol.2, p.179, vol.3, pp.250, 326; and also within that which will be transmitted from Ibn ul-Qayyim in *I'lām ul-Muwaq'een*.

<sup>2</sup> Dr Adham in his book *Tafseer ul-Ahlām* (pp.209-210) goes overboard and falls into excess when he includes as qualities that a vision interpreter should have the following: mature; married; a scholar the different types of crops; have knowledge of trade and its particularities; knowledge of occupations and the characteristics of people within these different careers; knowledgeable of different species of animals; knowledgeable of different species of stones; have knowledge of various beverages and drinks; have knowledge of the precious metals; have knowledge of the revelation of the Qur'anic verses and the *nāsikh* and *mansūkh* etc. Etc. Etc..

direct and easy and the indicative reason is one without interpretation. Visions differ in their principles in accordance with the varying states of people in their forms, occupations, levels, religions, yearnings and desires, and their different times and eras. So at one time something can be interpreted in one way yet at another time interpreted in a different way. And at other times it could just be a mixed-up dream. Every specialist scholar of an art or science can dispense with tools for that knowledge due to his (own accrued) knowledge – except for the vision interpreter who needs to have knowledge of: Allāh’s Book; the hadeeth of the Messenger (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam), and their explanations when interpreting; the Arab parables; rare poetic verse; linguistics derivatives and words common among the general masses. With this he should also be a literary writer, subtle, intelligent, understanding of peoples different conditions, have knowledge of analogy and preserve the Usūl. An understanding of Usūl will not suffice him unless Allāh grants him success in using its rulings to know the truth, and uses his tongue to say that which is correct. He should also hope for Allāh’s reward so that he relishes good. He should also be pure from immoralities and free from sin, if he is like this- that Allāh has granted him success from sins – then Allāh will make him of the inheritors of the Prophets.

Whoever considers these principles and rules knows that the reason for the differences and distinctions when interpreting one vision. For this reason, our respected brother Shaykh Khālīd al-Anbarī (*bafidbabullāh*) stated in *al-Qāmūs*, pp.10-11:

I heard some people malign dream interpretation books with neither proof nor evidence even though they are very important indeed due to the benefit in Usūl ut-Ta’beer and rules that are found within them. It is not a problem if they differ in interpreting a vision as this is something natural within the science of vision interpretation, because a vision differs in its interpretation in accordance with different people, terms, times and places. Every person has a vision which suits him and every vision has an interpretation which suits it. Thus, interpreting dreams is not from knowledge of the unseen realm rather it is merely ijtihād and differs with different Mujtahids and their various intellects and methods in interpretation.

From here then you know the great error of the type of people who have no other concern except to depend on “dream dictionaries” which are found in bookstores.<sup>1</sup> Then

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<sup>1</sup> **Translator’s note:** This is an important observation, for one will find in many bookstores, books in English which also claim to be “dictionaries of dreams” or “dream symbols” and they will always contain generalised statements that “if you see such and such in a dream then it means such and such”. As we have seen in this chapter about the detail involved in vision interpretation, such an approach is naive

after reading such “dream dictionaries” these people view themselves as being fully qualified people and major experts of vision interpretation!! These interpreters resemble diviners and fortune-tellers, who people, mainly women, go to in order to know the secrets of dreams. You should know that these people have no share whatsoever of *Sbari*’ knowledge whatsoever, nor of the *Usūl* of *Ta’beer* and its universals nor of the reality of the questioners and their states, such interpreters merely make claims with neither truth nor justice and just make random tries, la hawla wa la quwwata ila billāh! Does it make sense in Allāh’s *Sbar* to make, in this precious art, the scholar and the one who recognises that the *Salaf* attached a specific importance and serious concern to it - the same as the ignoramus? It was mentioned prior that the people of knowledge stated that in one vision alone there can much difference:

**It is possible for there to be difference in interpretation; and there could be difference on account of a difference in two languages. Like for example: Safarjal, which means ‘honour’, ‘beauty’ and ‘comfort’ to whoever knows the Persian language. For it means ‘beauty’ in their language. Yet to the Arabs, and those who live with them, it signifies ‘Safar’ (travelling) and al-Jalā’ (glory). The interpretation can also differ according to different religions, like the one who sees that he is eating dead flesh, it symbolises that he is eating harām wealth, or it signifies hardship to the one who views that dead flesh is prohibited. Yet it can symbolise sustenance and benefit to the one who deems it as being permissible. The interpretation can also differ in accordance with different times... and it can also differ in accordance with different occupations....<sup>1</sup>**

So if a common person, or the likes, does not know these differences and does not understand its value, s/he will cause harm to her/his own self and to the person who had the vision due to ignorance. Ash-Shihāb ul-’Ābir noted in *al-Badr ul-Muneer*, pp.149-150 when discussing guidance for different considerations with visions and dreams:

**One dream can differ due to differences between two languages, like Safarjal, which means ‘honour’, ‘beauty’ and ‘comfort’ to whoever knows the Persian**

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and incorrect, as these “dream dictionaries” mention nothing of the variation and differentiation that visions come with in accordance with different people and their conditions. These books are thus money-making scams authored by pseudo dream experts, refer to this list of the top 100 books on dreams in the English language, for many of them are based on conjecture, some of such books can be seen in this list here: <http://www.human-nature.com/odmh/dreamsb.html>

In terms of serious studies into dreams and their nuances then the best Western writer and researcher on the topic is Dr Kelly Bulkeley who has also praised the Islamic tradition of vision interpretation for its detail. There are also a few other researchers who have more serious studies.

<sup>1</sup> *Ta’teer ul-Anām*, pp.380-381

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The interpretation can also differ in accordance with different times, getting warmth from a fire or the sun, winter clothing, using hot water and the likes if seen by one who has a cold, or within a cold period, symbolises good comfort. Yet if seen during the summer signifies illness or adversity. Just as using expensive cloth in a vision or using cold water if seen during the summer symbolises comfort and benefit, yet if seen in winter signifies the opposite.

It can also differ in accordance with different occupations, so wearing armour or equipment if seen by a brave soldier symbolises service, if seen by a fighter signifies victory and if seen by a pious worshipper signifies the invalidity of his worship. If seen by others it signifies tribulation and argumentation.

It can also differ with different places, so nudity in the bath and within other usual places for bathing is good for most people. Yet if seen in other places where people congregate then it symbolises debasement and lowliness, especially if the person is exposing his ’Awrah.

It can also differ with people’s different customs, so shaving the beard off, or shaving the head, to those who regard it as being good symbolises good and the removal of adversity. Yet it can signify adversity and loss to those who dislike shaving the beard.

It can also differ with difference in livelihood and provision, thus wearing dirty, tattered or old clothing if seen by cooks and stokers can symbolise the productivity of their livelihood because they do not wear such clothing except when working. Yet if this is seen by others can signify lowliness. In the same way, wearing clean clothes indicates the invalidity of their livelihood because they do not wear such clothes except when they are not working. If seen by others, (clean clothes) can signify a pleasant smell can indicate good and a good heart.

It can also differ with different illnesses, so for example sweets if seen by those suffering from hot diseases can symbolise the longevity of illness and hardship. Yet if seen by people suffering from cold diseases it signifies goodness.

It also differs with life and death, for example wearing silk or gold is disliked if seen being worn by (living) men who should not wear it. Yet if seen being worn by a dead person then this indicates that he will have the silk of Jannah.

**It also differs with different seasons, for a tree at the beginning of a season symbolises goodness and a future benefit, as does the shade of a tree during hot weather. Yet the shade of a tree during other weather signifies adversity.**

Then he said (*rahimabullāh*): “Based on this: one thing is interpreted in accordance with the different conditions of those who see it.”<sup>1</sup> Al-Qādirī (*rahimabullāh*) stated in *at-Ta’beer*, vol.1, pp.107-108:

**Each person’s vision is interpreted based on its level** because visions are types of knowledge and each type has a value for the one who sees it. Each vision is to be interpreted based on the situation of the one who sees it and on the rank of their grandparents and jobs...if any issue (in a vision) comes to you and you do not know how it is to be interpreted then ask about the mind of the one who saw it. If he saw that he was praying then ask about his mind: “was it the obligatory prayers you were performing or the *nāfilah*?” If it was the obligatory prayers then this symbolises paying back a debt, giving back a trust, witnessing a testimony or returning a promise and likewise.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to al-Baghawī, *Sharh us-Sunnah*, vol.12, pp.224-225; *Fath ul-Bārī*, vol.14, pp.127-129; *Badā’i’ ul-Fawā’id*, vol.2, p.208; also found in other books of *Shurūh* of the Sunnah.

<sup>2</sup> Ahl ut-Ta’beer attach importance to the issue of considering the conscience of the one who had a vision, this is mentioned in al-Qādirī, *Ta’beer ur-Ru’yah*, vol.1, p.98, 108-109 and vol.2, p.313

## THE RULING ON READING BOOKS ON DREAM INTERPRETATION AND RELYING ON THEM FOR INTERPRETATION

The conclusion which we will acknowledge here is that: reading books on “dream interpretation” and relying on them and then dropping these onto people’s heads to interpret for them without knowledge of this art – is impermissible in the Divinely Legislation. This is due to the corruption that will be caused to the common people and their beliefs hence Ahl ul-’Ilm have documented this. In *Sharh Zarrūq ‘ala’r-Risālah*, vol.2, p.420 it is mentioned:

“It was said to Mālik: ‘Is a vision to be interpreted by one who has no knowledge?’ Mālik replied: ‘Is Prophethood to be played about with?!’ Then he mentioned the aforementioned hadeeth.”

Shaykh ‘Ali as-Sa’īdī stated in his *Hāshiyat ‘ala Sharh Kifāyat it-Tālib ir-Rabbānī li’r-Risālah Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī*, vol.2, p.465:

It is not permitted for him to interpret visions via merely referring to books of dream interpretation **as is done today – this is harām**, because interpretation differs with different people, conditions, times and types of seers.

Ahmad bin Ghunaym an-Nafrāwī stated in *al-Fawākih ad-Dawānī*, vol.2, p.457:

It is not permissible for him to interpret visions via merely looking at books of dream interpretation as some of the ignoramuses do - **this is harām, because interpretation differs with different people, conditions, times and types of seer**. So its science is precise as it needs extra knowledge of mutual congenialities.

In *Sharh Aqrab ul-Masālik*, vol.5, p.285 by Shaykh ad-Dardeer:

The science of vision interpretation is not taken from books as happens with people who use the interpretations (ascribed to) Ibn Sīrīn – **it is harām to interpret based on this**, as rather there has to be understanding of the conditions, times, *firāsab* (intuition) and Ilm ul-Ma’ānī (semantics).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Ghumārī transmitted this in *ar-Ru’yah*, pp.47-48 from at-Tāzī (*rahimahullāh*) in *Sharh ur-Risālah* and said:

**“If it is said: ‘the one who looks at the branches of what has been authored on dream interpretation such as by Ali bin Abī Tālib al-Qayrawānī and others will find a text about what he saw and an answer!’ Then it should be said to him: this is like a Muqallid in the furū’ who looks at a text for an issue and its answer yet errs in understanding what he saw.”**

He commented on this saying:

Ibrāheem al-Adham stated in *Tafseer ul-Ablām*, pp.220-221 when describing popular dream interpretation works:

This (reliance on such popular books) is a very naive method as it depends upon fixed, stationary and solid interpretations.

An example of this: we find within the dream interpretation books which are widespread among people and on the shelves of bookstores, which are almost found in every home, that under a letter from the alphabet are words which begin with that letter. Such as with the letter ‘alif’: Arnab (rabbit); Aswad (black); Asad (lion) – and then these dream interpretation books will say: “If a rabbit is seen in a dream it symbolises many children; if black is seen in a dream it symbolises grief and hardship and if a lion is seen it symbolises the bravery of the one who see it” and the likes. This method is useless and cannot possibly be a sound authentic method for interpreting dreams and visions. For both the brave person and the coward can see a lion a dream then how can we possibly describe a coward as having bravery and courage just because he sees a lion a dream?! A sick person could see black in a dream and popular dream interpretation books could interpret that as being the person’s death and grief, yet another person could also see black in a dream too and yet obtain gardens and many farmlands! So where is the truthfulness in these books? Every person has to have their dreams interpreted based on her/his condition, status, and medical, psychological, social and economical situation. Also based on place, time and age, also women’s dreams are to be interpreted differently from men and children.<sup>1</sup> What we

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**“Based on this, whoever looks at the books of dream interpretation and finds it most likely that he will not err in what he reads - then it is not prohibited for him to interpret visions according to what is apparent to him.”**

<sup>1</sup> **Translator’s note:** Interestingly, this is an aspect of vision and dream interpretation that serious Western researchers into the science have also highlighted. An article in a Welsh newspaper, the Western Mail, on 19 August 2006 mentioned:

**Dr Mark Blagrove, a reader in psychology at Swansea University, has studied 100,000 people's dream experiences as part of a nationwide survey. It showed that a typical married couple sleeping side by side would have completely different types of dream, often at the same time.... Veronica Tonay, says the Swansea research confirms long-held suspicions that men and women dream differently. She said, "Most of us have heard that women are more comfortable with their emotional life than are men. There is actually an emotional problem called male Alexithymia which describes how difficult it is for many men to express their feelings in words. Women are raised in the world of emotion, and if self-esteem for them comes from relationships, then being able to express feelings is very important.**

Dr Patricia Garfield, a serious American researcher into dreams, has also authored a book on this topic entitled *Women’s Bodies, Women’s Dreams* (Ballantine Books, 1988), a paper based the second chapter of the book can be referred to here: [http://www.patriciagarfield.com/publications/wbwd\\_compare.pdf](http://www.patriciagarfield.com/publications/wbwd_compare.pdf) - note that some of her findings are inaccurate in light of the Islamic Oneirocritic tradition.

have explained here is the utter shallowness and futility of these popular dream interpretation books. These types of interpretation books are very popular in various societies and are printed and sold. These are books which most visitors to book-fairs or libraries look for and such books are printed merely because of the profits that are to be gained.<sup>1 2</sup>

Shaykh 'Uthaymeen (*rahimabullāh*) also has a contribution in this important topic. He was asked, as found in *Fatāwā Nūrun 'ala'd-Darb*, vol.2, pp.483-484:

**“I have an enquiry about the authenticity of dream interpretation books, such as the book Tafseer ul-Ahlām [Interpretation of Dreams] by Ibn Sīrīn, especially as dreams are linked to issues of sustenance, good and evil. So what is the ruling on trusting these books and dealing with them, with the knowledge that they contain verses of the Qur’ān and ahādeeth from the Prophet (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam)?”**

Answer from Imām 'Uthaymeen (*rahimabullāh*):

I advise my Muslim brothers to neither refer nor study these books because they are not revelation rather they are opinions which could be either correct or incorrect. Furthermore, visions can differ in their reality depending upon the seer, time and place. So if we see visions which have a specific image it does not mean that every time we see with this image it has the same interpretation as the first time, rather it differs.

If this is the case, then I advise my Muslim brothers to neither be convinced by these books nor refer to them and I say: if a person has a vision then he should seek guidance from what the Prophet (*sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam*) did, so if he sees a good vision which he loves then its interpretation is good and he should inform one he loves about it. For example, if you see someone saying to you “Glad tidings of Paradise” or the likes then one should inform those he loves about it. Yet if you see something you dislike then say “I seek refuge with Allāh from Shaytān and from the evil that I saw” and do not tell anyone

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- ✓ Lucy Goodison, *The Dreams of Women: Exploring and Interpreting Women’s Dreams* (Berkeley, 1997)
  - ✓ Karen A. Signell and Riane Eisler, *Wisdom of the Heart: Working with Women’s Dreams* (Fromm International, 1998)
  - ✓ Brenda Mallon, *Women Dreaming* (London: Fontana Press, 1987)

<sup>1</sup> Compare with what is found in the journal *al-Mawrad*, vol.20, no.2, pp.28-30, 1413 AH.

<sup>2</sup> **Translator’s note:** books are thus money-making scams authored by pseudo dream experts, refer to this list of the top 100 books on dreams in the English language, for many of them are based on conjecture, some of such books can be seen in this list here: <http://www.human-nature.com/odmh/dreamsb.html>

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about it whether an interpreter or anyone else. Also upon seeing it one should sleep on the other side until waking up. If a person does what Allāh's Messenger (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) instructed to do upon seeing something disliked then it will not harm him by Allāh's permission. For this reason, the companions (*radi Allāhu 'anhum*) saw dreams that they disliked which made them feel uneasy and then Allāh's Messenger (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) mentioned the hadeeth to them. The companions acted in accordance with the guidance of Allāh's Messenger (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) and they were protected from the evil.

Shaykh Fawzān (*hafidhabullāh*) was also asked:

**“The knowledge of dream interpretation is a talent what Allāh has blessed whomever He wants from His servants. Allāh blessed His Prophet Yūsuf (‘alayhi salām) with this knowledge and there are also many books which have been authored on the subject. We hope to benefit from the best books on the topic and the most trustworthy works.”**

Answer from Shaykh Sālih al-Fawzān:

**There is no doubt that with visions some are true and amazing signs from Allāh, vision interpretation requires intuition, intelligence and inspection of the condition of the seer. It is a talent which Allāh gives whoever He wants, yet I do not know a specific book in this science. However, Ibn ul-Qayyim (*rahimahullāh*) made some good statements on this topic within the first volume of his book *I'lām ul-Muwaqqi'een*.<sup>1</sup>**

At-Tuwayjurī (*rahimahullāh*) stated in the book *ar-Ru'yab*, pp.169-171:

A number of books have been authored on the science of dream interpretation such as what has been ascribed to Ibn Sirīn and others. Yet there is no good in being preoccupied with these books because they can cause confusion and even cause worry and irritation if one has seen a disliked dream. Those who have no knowledge may call to interpret dreams based on what is merely found within these books yet the interpretation could be totally opposite to the true interpretation. In doing this (such pseudo-vision interpreters) are dumb people who speak without knowledge, if every single thing said in these dream interpretation books was correct and applied to all people there would be loads of vision interpreters today all over the place! The science is (actually conducted) with examination and keeping track of the past narrations from the scholars of vision interpretation of this Ummah who themselves are very few, indeed they are very rare among the 'Ulama let alone those who are not 'Ulama. For vision interpretation is of the sciences which Allāh

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Muntaqā min Fatāwā al-Fawzān*, vol.2, pp.305-306; the lengthy words of Ibn ul-Qayyim will soon come.

specifies to whoever He wills from His servants as Allāh said when informing about Ya'qūb (*'alayhis-salām*) that he said to Yūsuf (*'alayhis-salām*):

وَكَذَلِكَ يَجْتَبِيكَ رَبُّكَ وَيُعَلِّمُكَ مِنْ تَأْوِيلِ الْأَحَادِيثِ

**“And thus will your Lord choose you and teach you the interpretation of narratives...”**

{*Yūsuf* (12): 6}

And Allāh said when informing about Yūsuf (*'alayhis-salām*) that he said to the two who were in prison with him:

**“He said, “You will not receive food that is provided to you except that I will inform you of its interpretation before it comes to you. That is from what my Lord has taught me.”**

{*Yūsuf* (12): 37}

Allāh also said when informing about Yūsuf (*'alayhis-salām*),

الْأَحَادِيثِ رَبُّ قَدْ آتَيْتَنِي مِنَ الْمُلْكِ وَعَلَّمْتَنِي مِنْ تَأْوِيلِ

**“My Lord, You have given me [something] of sovereignty and taught me of the interpretation of dreams.”**

{*Yūsuf* (12): 101}

The intent of “ta’weel ul-ahādeeth” is vision interpretation as more than one Qur’anic commentator has affirmed. Al-Qurtubī stated: ‘They concurred that this was in regards to vision interpretation.’ Al-Baghawī stated: ‘it was called ‘ta’weel’ because he interpreted what was seen in dreams.’ Ibn ul-Jawzī stated the same and al-Qurtubī said: ‘By ‘ahādeeth’ it means what people see in dreams and they were his miracle as he did not err in them.’<sup>1</sup> Yūsuf (*'alayhis-salām*) had the most knowledge of vision interpretation and our Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) was like him in that, as-Siddeeq (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) was also specialised in vision interpretation and Ibn Sīrīn also had great proficiency in it. Sa’eed ibn al-Musayyib was close to him in this science as has been mentioned.

Due to all of this Ahl ul-’Ilm disputed over the visions that were interpreted by the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) if they are to be regarded as considered foundations for all visions which are the same and act as guidelines for all dreams or not? Al-Munawī (*rabimahullāh*) stated in *Fayd ul-Qadeer*, vol.4, pp.64-65:

<sup>1</sup> **Translator’s note:** Interestingly, I found that some Jewish Rabbis believe that the vision of Yūsuf (*'alayhis-salām*) “contained inaccuracies”!? Hereby demonstrating the trait of mockery of the Prophets and considering themselves as wiser than them.

**The interpretations of the Prophet (sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam) even though they are a magnificent foundation are not to be merely applied to all. Rather, the one who is deft in this art deduces proofs based on his view.<sup>1</sup>**

Ibn Battāl (*rabimabullāb*), who was precise in this science as evident from his *Sharh* of al-Bukhārī, stated in his *Sharh*, vol.9, pp.547-548:

It (vision interpretation) is preserved from the Prophets, and even though (their interpretations) are a foundational basis, people who see visions are not to be generalised. The one who is adept in this science must deduce based on his sound outlook and he refers that which has no textual basis back to that which is like it (*tamtbeel*) and is judged with a correct semblance (*tasbbeeh*) and this is made a basis from which an analogy can be derived as is done within the subsidiary branches (*furū'*) of *fiqh*.<sup>2</sup>

For this reason, the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) explained *laban* (natural yogurt) in a dream as symbolising knowledge as is found in al-Bukhārī (hadeeth nos. 7006 and 7007) and others.<sup>3</sup> The companions explained *laban* as signifying the *fitrah* as is found in Sunan ad-Dārimī, vol.2, p.128 and others and this is a well-known explanation of a group from the *Salaf*. In the same way it has been transmitted by Ibn Shāheen, an-Nāblusī and others from Ibn Sīrīn (*rabimabullāb*) that the *tafseer* of *laban* is justice, safety and more. All of these aspects which are mentioned for one interpretation and the multiple explanations, which are, with their vast amount, if out of possibility, can increase clarity, light and guidance.<sup>4</sup> Abu'l-'Abbās al-Qarāfī (*rabimabullāb*) stated in his book *al-Furūq*, vol.4, p.423-425 (Dār ul-'Ilmiyyah Print):

Attention: One should know that the restrictions of dream interpretation can be widened, its particulars broadened and its definitions varied when a person is unable to rely on mere transmitted statements due to the many particular states of the seer. This is as opposed to *tafseer* of the Qur'ān, discussions on *fiqh* in the Book and Sunnah and other sciences which have restricted or semi-restricted principles. Dream interpretation however is very broad and does not have any (restrictive) principles thus there is no harm in the interpreter

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<sup>1</sup> Contrast with *Fath ul-Bārī*, vol.14, p.444; *al-Mufhim*, vol.6, pp.14-15 and *Kitāb ur-Ru'yah*, p.48 by al-Ghumārī.

<sup>2</sup> Transmitted by al-Hāfidh in *al-Fath ul-Bārī* (Dār ul-Fikr Print), vol.14, p.455 and ash-Sharqāwī in *Fath ul-Mubdī bi'sh-Sharh Mukhtasar az-Zabīdī* (Dār ul-'Ilmiyyah Print), vol.3, pp.624-625. Also compare with *'Umdat ul-Qārī*, vol.16, pp.363-364; *Sharh al-Ubbī 'ala Muslim*, vol.7, p.512 and *Fayd ul-Qadeer*.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn al-'Arabī stated in *'Aridat ul-Ahwadhī*, vol.9, pp.135-136:

**From the ways in which *laban* is explained as being knowledge is because Allāh produced *laban* as good from that which is bad, from excretion and blood which is like knowledge which is a light Allāh manifests among darkness.**

<sup>4</sup> Refer to the *hāshiyat al-Badr ul-Muneer*, p.281.

making use of intuition and investigating unseen matters in his principles and indications. Herein, he assesses matters and almost never errs due to the power that Allāh has created in his soul which allows access to the unseen. It was said about Ibn 'Abbās (*radi Allāhu 'anhumā*) that “he used to look at unseen matters from behind a fine cover.”<sup>1</sup> This indicates the power that Allāh bestowed upon him which allowed him to view matters due to the purity, transparency, mercy and subtlety that Allāh placed in him. There are some people who are like this and Allāh can bestow the talent of dream interpretation only upon someone or the science of *ar-Raml* (geomancy)<sup>2</sup> only or the science of palm-reading only or anything else....whoever does not possess strength in this type of attitude which is suitable for the science of visions it is not correct for him to interpret visions and will rarely be correct in his interpretations. It is not befitting for such a person to turn to interpreting visions, but whoever possesses strength in soul will bring benefit with his interpretations. I have seen those who possess such strength along with these principles and such people speak with many amazing and strange things about subtle dreams and extract from them many things and clear states with which he would inform of the past, present and future. A simple dream can end up with about a hundred amazing and strange regulations, to the extent that one who possesses no knowledge of the condition of having a strong soul will say “this is from the Jinn or from Mukāshafah or the likes” - when the reality is not as he says. Rather, the strong soul which has intuition discovers these states when faced with dreams and this has nothing to do with *kashf* (Sūfī metaphysical “unveiling” of spiritual realities) or the Jinn or the likes. I myself have seen a group of these types of people (who possess intuitive souls) and I tested them. So whoever does not obtain a strong intuitive soul it is difficult for him to get involved in the science of dream interpretation and it is not befitting for you to merely attempt to obtain knowledge of the

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<sup>1</sup> The statement was made by 'Ali which he relayed from Ibn 'Abbās (*radi Allāhu 'anhumā*) ad-Dīnawarī provided a chain of narration for it in *al-Majālīṣah* (no.599 – in my edit) and Ibn Hajar ascribed it to him in *al-Isābah*, vol.4, p.64. The chain of narration is *da'eef* due to it being severed. The report is also mentioned in *'Uyūn ul-Akhhbār*, vol.1, p.91 (Dār ul-'Ilmiyyah Print) and vol.1, p.35 (Dār al-Misriyyah Print); *at-Tadhkirat al-Hamdūniyyah*, vol.3, p.305; *Ghareeb ul-Hadeeth*, vol.1, p.312; *al-'Iqd ul-Fareed li'l-Malik as-Sa'eed*, p.45. 'Ali made the statement about his uncle al-'Abbās and not 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās, it is mentioned in *Rabī' ul-Anwār*, vol.2, p.807.

<sup>2</sup> See *Miftāh Dār us-Sa'adah*, vol.1, p.336; *Kashf udh-Dhunūn*, vol.1, pp.912-913; al-Khattābī, *Ghareeb ul-Hadeeth*, vol.1, p.648; *Ikmāl ul-Ikmāl*, vol.2, p.240; *Sharh us-Sunnah*, vol.12, pp.183-184; *Tafseer ul-Qurtubī*, vol.16, p.180; *Fath ul-Mulhim*, vol.1, p.135; *Bulūgh ul-Arab*, vol.3, p.323; *Fatāwā Ibn Rushd*, vol.1, pp.249-261.

**ATTENTION:** adh-Dhahabī stated in his treatise *Masā'il fī Talab il-'Ilm wa Aqsāmihī*, pp.214-215 which is within *Sitt Rasā'il li'dh-Dhahabī*: “**Of the prohibited sciences are: magic...astrology and geomancy, some of these sciences are clear kufr.**” Also refer to *Siyar A'lām un-Nubalā'*, vol.10, p.604.

science via learning it or reading and memorising books. If you do not possess a strong intuitive soul you will never find that you will (understand the science of dream interpretation). As soon as you possess a strong intuitive soul then you will obtain knowledge of the science of dream interpretation with the slightest of effort and control. So you should know about this precise detail because it has been hidden from many people.

Within this quote are very precious issues which the people of knowledge have given credence and priority to. Al-Hāfidh Ibn Rajab (*rahimabullāh*) transmitted some of al-Qarāfī's words in his book *adb-Dhayl 'ala Tabaqāt il-Hanābilah*, vol.2, pp.337-338 and then concluded by saying: **“I saw that Abu'l-'Abbās al-Qarāfī al-Mālikī wrote some good words in regards to dream interpretation so I viewed it apt that I mention it here.”**

Then Ibn Rajab relayed some of al-Qarāfī's words. The following also transmitted these words of al-Qarāfī: al-Qāsim bin 'Abdullāh al-Mālikī (also well-known as “Ibn ash-Shāt”) in his book *Idrār ush-Shurūq'alā Anwā' il-Burūq*, vol.4, pp.425-426 which is a *Hāshiyah* to the book *al-Furūq*; al-Ubbī, *Sharh 'ala Muslim*, vol.7, p.500 (Dār ul-'Ilmiyyah Print); as-Sanūsī, *Hāshiyat ul-Ubbī*, vol.7, pp.499-500; ash-Sharqāwī, *Fath ul-Mubdī*, vol.3, p.625 (Dār ul-'Ilmiyyah), also see at-Tuwayjurī, *Kitāb ur-Ru'yah*, pp.167-169.

Within these words is an important clarification for whoever wants to learn the science of vision interpretation, for it is a science, which even though is acquired, it is possible for the one who learns it to obtain knowledge of some hidden and secret things. This is just as the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) strived to teach the science to his Companions (*radi Allāhu 'anhum*). However, the science contains tremendous secrets as mentioned by al-Qarāfī when he used the expression “strong intuitive soul”. Because a servant (of Allāh) can be blessed by Allāh to have strength in his soul which gives him ability in interpretation and to speak with a special authority about the hidden aspects of this art. Thus, you will see such a person from a young age interpreting visions and be correct in most of his interpretations and rarely erring in his interpretation of dreams which are presented to him. For this reason, Imām adh-Dhahabī said about Ibn Sīrīn (*rahimabullāh*) the Imām of the vision interpreters that “he had divine support in vision interpretation”. This signifies a strong soul and divine blessing as Ibn ul-Qayyim (*rahimabullāh*) stated:

**It relies on the purity of the interpreter, his uprightness, his trustworthiness, his truthfulness and praiseworthy ways and correct methods. This is along with firmly**

**grounded knowledge, inner purity and sensation supported by Divine Light and knowledge of the states of creation and their forms and ways.<sup>1</sup>**

As for whoever has not been provided with this blessing they will not reach precision and accuracy as reached by the first type. The vision and dream interpreters are divided into three different categories:

### **FIRST CATEGORY**

These are the ones who have been blessed with special authority and Divine Light which supports their lucidity, pure souls and spirits to the extent that they comprehend a level and part of Prophethood. These are the highest level of interpreters such as Abū Bakr and 'Umar (*radi Allāhu 'anhumā*); Sa'eed bin al-Musayyib and Muhammad bin Sīrīn from the Tābi'een; 'Ali bin Abī Tālib al-Qayrawānī, Shihāb ul-'Ābir and others from Ahl ul-'Ilm past and present.<sup>2</sup> This category of interpreters rarely err in vision and dream interpretation and their accuracies are much more than their errors, indeed it is as if they do not err at all except for rarely. If the servant knows a man that has been blessed by Allāh with this knowledge and has assumed a great status within it then no one should turn away from him when he wants to relay visions and dreams. This category is the first who should be referred to for the interpretation of visions.

### **SECOND CATEGORY**

These are the ones who understood and obtained different types of *Sharee'ah* sciences such as *tafseer*, hadeeth, language, literature, strong comprehension, knowledge of the states of the creation and their lives and they utilised their sciences in order to analyse the personalities and souls of many people. Yet with this they were prolific and devoted to investigating the interpretations of the *Salaf* and the means of the vision interpreters from the first category and others to the extent that they were able to strive to present similitudes and safeguard the art of considered analogy within this art. This led them to obtain a type of authoritative speciality which helped them in many instances to understand the intents of visions.

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<sup>1</sup> *Aqsām ul-Qur'ān*, p.208

<sup>2</sup> We do not doubt that Ibn Qutaybah is from them as he was of the religious people known for *zuhd* and *wara'*, all who read his *Wasiyyah* to his son will comprehend that. Not to mention if one contemplates on his book *'Ibārat ur-Ru'yah* which is based on broad investigation of this art, its principles and secrets, we have published and printed this work based on own copy.

This category of all is what many of Ahl ul-'Ilm who discuss the acquired science of vision interpretation fall into. Al-'Allāmah Ibn Muflih (*rahimahullāh*) stated in *al-Ādāb ush-Sharē'ah*, vol.3, p.427: **“Visions are not to be interpreted by those who have knowledge of them.”** Al-Hāfidh Ibn Hajar stated in *al-Fath*, vol.14, p.471: **“Whoever does not practice the science of visions and interpretation it will not be legislated for him to interpret visions.”**<sup>1</sup> Imām Muhammad bin 'AbdulWahhāb (*rahimahullāh*) stated: **“Visions are not to be interpreted except by one who is from those who have knowledge about them.”**<sup>2</sup> The likes of these statements from Ahl ul-'Ilm indicate their consideration of the issue of practice and training in regards to visions. This category of interpreters depend on their knowledge of comparisons, analogies and parables and for this reason their errors are more than that of the first category who are aided by Noble Divine Light. Ibn ul-Qayyim (*rahimahullāh*) mentions much about this category and their methods to decipher the intended meanings of visions, he stated in *Zād ul-Ma'ād*, vol.3, pp.614-616 (Mu'assasat ur-Risālah Print):

Abu'l-'Abbās Ahmad bin 'AbdurRahmān bin 'AbdulMun'im bin Ni'mat Ibn Surūr al-Maqdisī, well-known as “Shihāb ul-'Ābir” informed us saying: “A man said to me: ‘I had a vision wherein I saw that I had anklets on.’ I said to him: Your feet will go through pain – and that happened. Another man said to me: ‘I had a vision wherein I saw that a gold ring was through my nose and it had within it a nice red centre.’ I said to him: you will have a severe nose bleed – and this happened. Another man said to me: ‘I had a vision wherein I saw dogs attached to my lip.’ I said to him: You will have a pain which will need blood-letting of your lip – and that happened. Another man said to me: ‘I had a vision where I saw that I had a bracelet in my hand and people were looking at it.’ I said to him: you will marry a good and gentle woman.”<sup>3</sup> I say (i.e. Ibn ul-Qayyim): he interpreted the bracelet as a woman due to being hidden and covered from people and he described her with goodness due to the nice look of gold and its gleam, he derived the gentleness from the shape of the bracelet. Jewellery in visions to men can have a variety of meanings and can symbolise a single man getting married due to jewellery being items of marriage. It can also possibly symbolise slaves, prisoners, wealth, girls, servants or equipment – all depending on the state of the seer and what is connected to him/her. Abu'l-'Abbās al-'Ābir stated: “A man said to me: ‘I saw in a

<sup>1</sup> Qādi 'Iyyād, *Ikmāl ul-Mu'lim*, vol.7, pp.227-228

<sup>2</sup> *Majmū' Mu'allifāt*, vol.5, p.143

<sup>3</sup> **Translator's note:** When another man had the same vision Shihāb ul-'Ābir (*rahimahullāh*) interpreted it as something else.

vision as if there was an inflated bracelet around my hand which people did not see.’ I said to him: You have a wife who has dropsy.”<sup>1</sup> So contemplate on how he interpreted a bracelet as a woman and then judged that she will have a sickness due to the yellowness of the bracelet which indicated dropsy which inflates the stomach. Then Shihāb ul-’Ābir stated: “Another man said to me: ‘I saw in a vision as if there was an anklet (Khalkhāl) in my hand and as I was holding it another man was also holding it so I shouted at him saying: let go of my Khalkhāl (anklet), and then he let go of it.’ I (i.e. Shihāb ul-’Ābir) said to him: did the Khalkhāl feel smooth when it was in your hand? The man replied: ‘No, rather it was coarse with trefoils (Sharāreef) on it.’ I contemplated on this for some time and said to him: Your mother and maternal uncle (Khāl) were both nobles (Shareefān) while you yourself are not noble (Shareef). Your name is ’AbdulQāhir and your uncle (Khāl) has a vile tongue and he speaks about your honour, he also takes what is in your hand. The man replied: ‘Yes.’ I said (i.e. Shihāb ul-’Ābir): Your uncle has fallen into the hands of a transgressive oppressor and seeks your protection and defence. You will be stern with this oppressor and say to him: Khal Khālī (“leave my uncle alone”) – and this happened.” I say (i.e. Ibn ul-Qayyim): contemplate on his interpretation of “Khāl” (uncle) from the word “Khalkhāl” (anklet) and then he referred this back to the complete words which were mentioned in the vision “Khal Khālī” (“leave my uncle alone”). Shihāb ul-’Ābir also extracted the nobility (Sharaf) from the Sharāreef (trefoils) of the Khalkhāl which symbolised the nobility (Sharaf) of his mother who was the sister of his uncle (Khāl). He (i.e. Shihāb ul-’Ābir) ruled that he who had the vision was not a noble (Shareef) and that the Sharafāt (trefoils) of the Khalkhāl indicated the Sharaf (nobility) derived from something external from him himself. He (i.e. Shihāb ul-’Ābir) derived from the coarseness of the anklet which hurt his hand in the vision- the vile tongue of his uncle who was speaking about his honour. He (i.e. Shihāb ul-’Ābir) extracted from the other man in the vision who was trying to hold onto the anklet which was in his hand – that his uncle (Khāl) will fall into the hands of an oppressor who will demand from the uncle that which the uncle did not have. He (i.e. Shihāb ul-’Ābir) extracted from the man’s shouting in the face of the other man in the vision by saying “Khal Khālī” (“leave my uncle alone”) – that the man will help his uncle against the oppressor and be stern against the oppressor. He extracted from the man’s dominance (Qahr) over the other man in the vision that the man was therefore the “Qāhir” and that his name must be ’AbdulQāhir.

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<sup>1</sup> **Translator’s note:** Dropsy (aka Oedema) is the swelling of soft tissues due to the accumulation of excess water. It can occur in different parts of the body such as the feet or eyes.



**This was how our Shaykh (i.e. Shihāb ul-ʿĀbir) was which shows how firmly grounded he was in vision interpretation science. I heard a number of parts of the science from him yet I was unable to read with him books on the science due to my young age at the time and the destiny of his death (rahimahullāh).**

This quote from the Imām is clear in emphasising the dependence on comparisons and similitudes and drawing analogies from their likenesses so as to extract the intended meanings from them. This is in addition to his knowledge of other sciences. All we can say in regards to this category of vision interpreters is that their errors are possibly more than the first category of vision interpreters because it is more based on *ijtihād* and *istinbāt* (derivation) – as opposed to those who have been blessed with authority in vision interpretation (as in the case of the first category of vision interpreters) wherein the intent of the vision is within the heart of the interpreter as soon as he hears it relayed. For that reason you will find among the ʿUlama of vision interpretation those who have more understanding than others and over those who base their interpretations on *ijtihād*. Al-Hāfidh Ibn Hajar as-Suhaylī (*rahimahullāh*) commented on the Prophet (*sallallāhu ʿalayhi wassallam*) saying: “I saw in a dream that my sword *Dhu’l-Fiḡār* was broken and that this was a calamity and I saw a cow being slaughtered and this was also a calamity”<sup>1</sup> :- “A cow in vision interpretation means armed men fighting each other.” In *Fath ul-Bārī*, vol.7, p.336 and vol.8, p.128 Ibn Hajar mentioned:

**There is some doubt about this, for the king of Egypt (during the time of Prophet Yūsuf, *alayhis-salām*) saw cows and Yūsuf interpreted that to signify “years”. The word “Baqrūn” is the stomach being cleft asunder – and this is one of side of interpretation, that a suitable meaning can be derived from the word. It is also possible for there to be other interpretations and Allāh knows best.**

As you can see this is an example of their comprehension of each other’s interpretation within this type of interpretive *ijtihād* of visions,<sup>2</sup> even if what as-Suhaylī stated is strong and to be taken into consideration by Ahl ut-Taʿbeer. Ibn ul-Qayyim (*rahimahullāh*) stated in *Badāʾi ul-Fawāʾid* (al-Muʿayyad Print), vol.2, pp.208-209:

**It has been said that: “one interpretation is that the word “al-Baqr” and “an-Nafir” are associated in terms of their written letter structure (so therefore in vision interpretation the two can be compared) even though they both differ in how they**

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<sup>1</sup> This is what al-Hāfidh relayed in *al-Fath*, vol.7, p.336; at-Tabarānī relayed it in *al-Kabeer*, vol.11, p.311, no.121 and in *al-Awsat* (Dār ul-ʿIlmiyyah Print), vol.4, p.125, no.5437; the origin of this report is in *Saheeh Muslim*, hadeeth no.2272, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, hadeeth no.3921 and others. Refer to what will be mentioned later.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Shāheen (*rahimahullāh*) objects to this type of interpretation in his book *al-Ishārāt*.

are pronounced, this is still one aspect of interpretation.” This is a very corrupt view because neither the Prophet (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam) comprehended visions merely by how the words of what are seen in them are written, nor is this an accurate way of interpretation. For “an-Nard” (backgammon) is not interpreted as “al-Bard” (cold) nor is “az-Zabad” (froth) to be interpreted as “az-Zanad” (a stick used to start a fire), nor “al-’Ayn” as “al-Ghayn”, nor “al-Hayyah” (a snake) with “al-Jannah” (Paradise) and so on.

It is also said: “the comparison is because a cow has weapons which it fights with, in the form of its horns and the Arabs used to use lances and horns as spears when they did not have any blades or sharp points.” This is more accurate than the first way of interpretation (via the letters) however this is shared by both Muslims and kuffār as each use it as a weapon. What is more valuable as an interpretation than these two explanations is that it is said: the similarity is in that land is neither prosperous nor productive except with cows which are the guardians of the land and due to them the world is rectified and people’s livelihoods remain – in the same way the believers rectify the earth and its people and the believers are the adornments of the earth and the most beneficial to humanity just as cows are the most beneficial of animals to the earth. From another angle: cows prepare the land to accept seeds and plants and this is like what Ahl ul-’Ilm wa’l-’Imān are like as they prepare the hearts to accept the seeds and plants of guidance, and Allāh knows best.<sup>1</sup>

Of the examples of this type of interpretation based on *ijtihad* is that which was mentioned by al-Ubbī in *Sharh Saheeb Muslim* (Dār ul-’Ilmiyyah Print), vol.7, p.513 when he commented on the hadeeth: “*I saw that I was brandishing a sword and its top part (i.e. the blade) broke. It symbolised the afflictions that the believers would suffer on the Day of Uhud...*” (hadeeth nos. 7041 and 2272)<sup>2</sup> :-

He (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam) derived the top part of the people (i.e. the believers from the Companions who are the highest pinnacle of people) from the top part (i.e. the blade) of the sword and he interpreted the sword breaking as a break in the lives of those who were to die. This vision is different from the first one because the first appeared as it actually was while this one had to be interpreted and he interpreted it as has been mentioned. A

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<sup>1</sup> This quote from Ibn ul-Qayyim was transmitted by al-Munāwī in *al-Fayd*, vol.3, p.482 yet he did not ascribe it to him; as-Sa’dī transmitted its meaning in his book *Qasas ul-Anbiyā’*, pp.180-181.

<sup>2</sup> **Translator’s note:** narrated by Abū Mūsā al-’Ash’arī (*radi Allāhu ‘anhu*) in Saheeh Bukhārī, the Prophet (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wassallam) stated towards the end of the hadeeth “*I (also) saw cows in the dream, and what Allāh does is always beneficial. Those cows appeared to symbolize the faithful believers (who were martyred) on the day of Uhud.*”

man's sword symbolises his helpers with whom he attacks just as he attacks with his sword. A man's sword in a vision can also signify his son, his father, his brother, his uncle, his wife and can symbolise allegiance and a trust. A sword can signify a tyrannical leader and all of this depends on comparisons which are extracted from the vision and indicate any of these angles – as the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) here interpreted it as meaning his companions due to the comparison with their war against his enemies.<sup>1</sup> Ibn ul-Qayyim (*rahimahullāh*) also discussed<sup>2</sup> the issue of taken similitudes and comparisons into consideration when interpreting visions as he relayed in *I'lām ul-Muwaqqi'een*, vol.1, pp.323-329 (my edit)<sup>3</sup> which we will relay despite its length due to its importance. Ibn ul-Qayyim stated after discussing at length the parables within the Qur'ān<sup>4</sup>:

These are some of the comparisons, analogies, similarities, differences, variations and meanings that the Qur'ān contains which are linked to its rulings when deduced. They say “Allāh put forth parables and explained them via Divine Decree, Divine Legislation, during wake time and in dreams so as to lead His servants to take all of that into consideration and this helps them cross from one thing to its like and their deduction of a thing for its like.”

Then Ibn ul-Qayyim stated immediately after this:

Rather, this is the basis of interpreting visions which is a part of Prophethood and a type of revelation. It is based on analogy, comparisons and taking into consideration that which is perceived through the senses. Do you not see that clothes within vision interpretation symbolise *deen*? Whatever the long length, shortness, cleanliness or dirtiness of the clothes then it is to be compared with the *deen* (of the seer). Just as the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) interpreted clothes with the *deen* and knowledge<sup>5</sup> and the level of association

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to Ibn Hajar, *Fath ul-Bārī* (Dār ul-Fikr Print), vol.14, p.465; *Sharh Ibn Battāl*, vol.9, pp.553-554; *Fayd ul-Qadeer*, vol.3, p.222 and Ibn ul-'Imād, *Shadharāt udh-Dhahab*, vol.7, p.100.

<sup>2</sup> Previously we mentioned Shaykh Sālih al-Fawzān's praise of these words of Ibn ul-Qayyim; also refer to the praise of at-Tuwayjurī in his book *ar-Ru'yah*, pp.162-165 of Ibn ul-Qayyim's words. A group of later scholars transmitted Ibn ul-Qayyim's words and also praised Ibn ul-Qayyim for what he stated, scholars such as: 'Abdullāh al-Jārullāh in his book *ar-Ru'yah wa ma yata'llaq bihā* [Visions and What are Connected to Them], p.37; Mustafā az-Zuhwaylī, *Tafseer ul-Ahlām*, p.199 and Khālid al-'Anbarī, *Manhaj Ahl us-Sunnah fi'r-Ru'yah* [The Methodology of Ahl us-Sunnah in Vision Interpretation], pp.63-72.

<sup>3</sup> **Translator's note:** i.e. Shaykh Mashhūr's (*hafidhahullāh*)

<sup>4</sup> Al-Ālūsī relayed and copied it out in one volume and in my own acquisitions I have a copy of it in his handwriting as many did (i.e. copy it out into one book) before al-Ālūsī.

<sup>5</sup> Reported by al-Bukhāree, hadeeth no.23 in *Kitāb ul-Īmān*, “Bāb: Tafādul Ahl ul-Īmān fi'l-A'māl”; hadeeth no.3691 in *Kitāb Fadā'il us-Sahābah*, “Bāb: Manāqib 'Umar bin al-Khattāb; hadeeth no.7008 in *Kitāb ut-Ta'beer*, “Bāb: al-Qumus fi'l-Manān” [Clothes in Dreams]; hadeeth no. 7009, “Bāb: Jar al-

between the two is that both cover a person and beautify the person among people, clothes cover a person's body while knowledge and *deen* covers a person's soul and heart and beautify the person among people.

Of these (comparative) interpretations is *laban* (yogurt) with the *fitrah* (natural predisposition) due to the nutrition for life and perfect origins that is found in both. If a child is left on his *fitrah* he will not abstain from yogurt as he is naturally predisposed to it over other things like it, just like the *fitrah* of Islām which Allāh created people with.

Of these (comparative) interpretations is that of the cow with people of *deen* and goodness who safeguard the earth just as cows do and are devoid of evil yet have much good because the earth and people are in need of them. For this reason, when the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) saw a cow being slaughtered he interpreted this as being the slaughter of his companions.<sup>1</sup>

Of these (comparative) interpretations is that of cultivation with action, because the one who does an action cultivates good and evil and it is a must for what he has sown to grow just as a farmer sows seeds. The *dunyā* is like an allotment while those in the *dunyā* are like those who sow seeds and the Day of Judgement is like the day when all that the farmer sowed will arise.

Of these (comparative) interpretations is that of broken and propped up blocks of wood with the *Munāfiqūn*. The association between the two is because the *Munāfiq* has no soul, shade nor beneficial fruits and is merely like a piece of wood which is also like this. For this reason, Allāh compared the *Munāfiqūn* with propped up pieces of wood because the *Munāfiqūn* have bodies which are devoid of *īmān* and good. There is also another anecdote (*nukta*) in regards to being *musannadab* ("propped up") in that wood is beneficial when it is actually used whether in roofing, the walls or in any other beneficial way, yet as long as wood is merely left without being used in a beneficial way then wood blocks will just be propped up against each other. So Allāh compared the *Munāfiqūn* with wood when it is not being used in a beneficial way (i.e. useless).

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Qamees fi'l-Manām"; Saheeh Muslim, hadeeth no.2390 in *Fadā'il us-Sahābah* [Virtues of the Companions], "Bāb: min Fadā'il 'Umar" – from the hadeeth of Abū Sa'eed al-Khudrī however within the hadeeth it is interpreted only as the *deen* (and not knowledge).

<sup>1</sup> Reported by al-Bukhārī, hadeeth no.3622 in *Manāqib*, "Alamāt un-Nubuwwah" [Signs of Prophethood]; hadeeth no.4081, *Kitāb ul-Maghāzī*, "fī man Qutila min al-Muslimeen Yawm ul-Uhud"[Regarding Those Muslims Who Were Killed on the day of Uhud]; hadeeth 7035, *Kitāb ut-Ta'beer*, "Bāb: idhā ra'a Baqaran tunhar" [If a Cow is Seen Being Slaughtered]; Saheeh Muslim, hadeeth no.2272, *Kitāb ur-Ru'yah*, "Bāb: Ru'yah an-Nabī (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*)" – from the hadeeth of Abū Mūsā al-'Ash'arī and in another chapter from Ibn 'Abbās as reported by Ahmad in his *Musnad*, vol.1, p.281 and also reported by others.

Of these (comparative) interpretations is that of fire with *fitnah* (tribulation) due to the harm of each other them, one of which burns furniture, goods and bodies (Abdān) while the other burns hearts, religion and faith (īmān).

Of these (comparative) interpretations is that of the stars with the 'Ulama and Ashrāf (nobles) due to the guidance for the people of the earth of each of them possess and also due to the highness of the nobles among people like the highness of the stars.

Of these (comparative) interpretations is that of rain with mercy, knowledge, the Qur'ān, wisdom and rectification of people's condition.

Of this is blood coming out of the body which in vision interpretation symbolises wealth coming out and the association between the two is that each of them give strength to a person. Of this is something new which in vision interpretation which symbolises adding something new into the *deen*. A small newly invented matter is a minor sin while a major newly invented matter is a major sin. Of this is the deens of *Yahūdiyyah* and *Nasrāniyyah* which in vision interpretation symbolise innovating into the religion, for *Yahūdiyyah* symbolises corrupt intent and following other than truth while *Nasrāniyyah* symbolises corrupt knowledge, ignorance and misguidance. Of this is iron (*hadeed*) and different types of weaponry which in vision interpretation symbolise strength and victory depending on the condition and quality of the weapon. Of this is a nice smell which symbolises good praise and good words and actions, while a horrible smell symbolises the opposite. Scales symbolise justice; locusts symbolise soldiers, troops and riffraff (*al-Ghowghā'a*) that flock together.<sup>1</sup> Bees symbolise one who eats good and does righteous actions; a cockerel symbolises a man who has high aspirations and fame; a snake symbolises an enemy or a person of innovation who destroys via his poison; insects symbolise wretched scoundrels (*al-Awghād*);<sup>2</sup> moles (*al-Khuld*)<sup>3</sup> symbolise a blind man who begs from people; a wolf symbolises an iniquitous, tyrannical, treacherous and sinful man; a fox symbolises a treacherous, deceitful and sly man who dodges the truth; a dog symbolises a weak enemy who shouts a lot and has evil speech, or it can symbolise a man who is an innovator and follows his desire and affects the person's *deen*; a cat symbolises a slave or servant who goes around the people of the household; a mouse symbolises an

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Ghowghā'a* (True Midge): a type of locust which after growing wings or shedding its colour, turns red, it resembles a flea and does not bite due to its weakness, hence it is a word used for a certain type of people (i.e. the riffraff).

<sup>2</sup> The plural of "Wagd" it means "a lowly, vile and foolish man who serves the food of his body."

<sup>3</sup> *Al-Khuld*, with a dhammah, is a blind mouse. With a *fatha*, i.e. *al-Khald*, is a blind mammal which lives underground and likes the smell of onions and leeks. If these vegetables are placed by its hole it will come out to get it.

**Translator's note:** i.e. a mole

evil, wicked and immoral woman; a lion symbolises a powerful and authoritative man and sheep symbolise a man who follows.

Then Ibn ul-Qayyim mentioned some very nice words which explain the main principles of vision interpretation:

Of the main principles of vision interpretation is that all that is a receptacle for water symbolises furniture, while all that is a receptacle for money such as a box, bag or pocket symbolises the heart. Everything that enters into another thing and becomes intermixed with it symbolises association, co-operation or marriage. Every fall or forced descent from high up symbolises censure; while every ascent and elevation is praiseworthy as long as it does not surpass what is usual and is befitting to the person. All that is burnt with fire is ruinous and there is no hope that the thing will be fixed or brought back to life again. Likewise, all vessels that are broken cannot be replaced. All that is snatched or stolen wherein the one who steals or snatches it cannot be seen then the item is lost and there is no hope of finding it again. But if the one who seized or stole it is known, or was seen by the owner of the thing taken – then it is hoped that the thing will return (and be found). Every praiseworthy increase of a man’s body, size, tongue, penis, beard or feet symbolises a beneficial increase; yet an increase which surpasses the bounds is censured, evil and shameful. All that is seen of clothing being worn on parts of the body that they are not intended for is disliked: such as an *’Imāmah* on the feet, socks on the head or a necklace around the shin. All who make demands, grants succession, makes orders, burdens people or gives a speech yet is not befitting to do any of this – this symbolises a calamity in the *Dunyā*, evil, shame and vile desires. All disliked clothing which is worn out symbolises a less harm than if he is wearing such clothing as new. A coconut symbolises a wealth of treasure, yet if it is seen split open then this signifies something horrible and evil.

Whoever has feathers or wings in a vision will have wealth and if he flies then he will travel. Exiting out of narrow doors symbolises salvation and safety from evil and from the constriction that he is in, it also symbolises *tawbah* (repentance) especially if the exit is to a wide open space – this signifies absolute good. Travelling and moving from place to place symbolises moving from one condition to another depending on the condition of the two places moving between. Whoever has a dream wherein one returns to a previous condition that one was in before during wake-time will return to left whether good or evil. A man dying in a vision can possibly symbolise his *tawbah* or his return to Allāh because death is returning back to Allah, Allāh said

ثُمَّ رُدُّوْا إِلَى اللَّهِ مَوْلَهُمْ الْحَقُّ

“Then they [i.e. His servants] are returned to Allāh, their true Lord.”

{*al-An’ām* (6): 62}

Also, a sick person bidding farewell to his family symbolises his death. Then Ibn ul-Qayyim (*rahimahullāh*) outlined the principles which some of what has been mentioned depends on:

Generally, the Qur’anic parables that have been mentioned prior are all principles and foundations for the science of vision interpretation for whoever has mastered how to make deductions from them. Likewise, whoever understands the Qur’ān and utilises it to interpret visions will make the best interpretations, for the principles of accurate vision interpretation are taken from Qur’anic niches. So a ship for example is interpreted as symbolising salvation, based on Allāh saying

فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُ وَأَصْحَابَ السَّفِينَةِ

**“But We saved him and the companions of the ship...”**

{*al-Ankabūt* (29): 15}

Trade and wood are interpreted as symbolising the Munāfiqūn; stone signifies hardness of the heart; an egg symbolises women as does clothing; drinking water signifies tribulation; eating a man’s flesh symbolises *gheebah* of the person; keys signify profit, treasures and wealth; conquest can at times be interpreted as symbolising supplication and at other times as signifying victory, such as a king who sees in a vision that a place does not come into his control then this is interpreted as symbolising the humiliation of the people of the place and the corruption of the place. A rope is interpreted as signifying a trust, truth and support; tiredness can be interpreted as symbolising a trust; green vegetables, onions, garlic and lentils are interpreted, for the one who sees that he is taking them within a vision, as signifying exchanging something lowly for something which is better, be that money, provision, knowledge, a wife or a house. Sickness is interpreted as symbolising *nifāq*, doubt, desire and *riyā’*; a baby is interpreted as signifying an enemy based on when Allāh says,

**“And the family of Pharaoh picked him up (out of the river) so that he would become to then an enemy and a [cause of] grief.”**

{*al-Qasas* (28): 8}

Ewes are interpreted as symbolising women; ashes (*Ramād*) signify null and void actions, based on when Allāh says:

**“The example of those who disbelieve in their Lord is [that] their deeds are like ashes which the wind blows forcefully on a stormy day...”**

{*Ibrāheem* (14): 18}

Light is interpreted as signifying guidance while darkness symbolises misguidance. From here then, al-Hābis bin Sa’d at-Tā’ī, who had assumed a position as a judge, said to ‘Umar bin al-Khattāb (*radi Allāhu ‘anhu*): “O leader of the believers, I saw (in a vision) that the sun

and the moon were fighting each other and the stars were split in between them.” ‘Umar said to him: “Which side were you on?” Al-Hābis replied: “I was with the moon against the sun.” ‘Umar said: “You were with one of the signs that gets erased.<sup>1</sup> Go and do not do any more work for me! You will not be killed except that you were uncertain about the matter.” Al-Hābis would later be killed on the Day of Siffēen.<sup>2</sup>

It was said to a vision interpreter: “I saw the sun and the moon enter into my stomach.” The vision interpreter said: “You will die.” The interpreter made reference to when Allāh says

**“So when vision is dazzled, and the moon darkens, and the sun and moon are joined, man will say on that Day “Where is the [place of] escape?””**

{*al-Qiyāmah* (75): 7-10}<sup>3</sup>

A man said to Ibn Sīrīn: “I saw in a vision that I had four loaves of bread rolls with me when the sun rose.” Ibn Sīrīn said to him: “You will die in four days time.” Then Ibn Sīrīn recited where Allāh says:

**“Then We made the sun for it an indication. Then We hold it in hand for a brief grasp.”**

{*al-Furqān* (25): 45-46}<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Translator’s note:** For Allāh says:

**“And We have made the night and day two signs, and We erased the sign of the night and made the sign of the day visible that you may seek bounty from your Lord and may know the number of years and the account [of time]. And everything We have set out in detail.”**

{*al-Isrā* (17): 12}

<sup>2</sup> Reported by Ibn Abī Shaybah, *al-Musannaf* (Dār ul-Fikr Print), vol.7, p.241 and vol.6, p.206, no.30696 (Dār ul-Ilmiyyah Print); Ibn Qutaybah, *Ibārat ur-Ru’yah*, pp.143-144, no.73; Ibn Abī’d-Dunyā, *al-Ishrāf ‘ala Manāzil il-Ashrāf*, pp.221-222, no.255; Abū Ya’lā, *Musnad* – as mentioned in Ibn Katheer, *Musnad ul-Fārūq*, vol.2, p.548; Ibn ul-Atheer, *Asad ul-Ghābah*, vol.1, p.376. The report was also mentioned by: Ibn ‘AbdulBarr, *Bahjat ul-Majālis*, vol.3, pp.145-146 and in *al-Istī‘āb*, vol.1, p.279; Ibn ul-Jawzī, *Manāqib ‘Umar*, pp.117-118; Ibn ul-Mabrad, *Mahd us-Sawāb*, vol.2, pp.516-517; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt ul-A’yān*, vol.3, p.466; Ibn Shāheen, *al-Ishārāt*, p.867; al-Qādirī, *at-Ta’beer*, vol.2, pp.26 & 34; as-Suhaylī, *ar-Rawd ul-Unuf*; - which was in turn transmitted from him by: al-Munāwī, *Fayd ul-Qadeer*, vol.6, p.474; and as-Suyootee, *ad-Durr al-Manthoor*, vol.4, p.303. Both of them ascribe the original report back to Ibn Abī Shaybah and Abū Sa’eed al-Wā’idh in *Tafseer ul-Ahlām*, p.28 (ascribed to Ibn Sīrīn). The report is also mentioned by: al-Ubbī, *Nathr ud-Durr*, vol.7, p.241; al-Halāwī, *Mukhtasar Ibn Sīrīn*, p.29 and at-Tuwayjurī, *Kitāb ur-Ru’yah*, p.145.

<sup>3</sup> Mentioned by: al-Qādirī in *at-Ta’beer* (Ālam ul-Kutub Print), vol.2, pp.34-35; Abū Sa’eed al-Wā’idh, *Tafseer ul-Ahlām*, p.118; Ibn Ghannām, *ar-Ru’yah* (folio no.19 of the manuscript); ath-Tha’alabī, *al-Iqtibās*, vol.2, p.62; al-Munāwī, *Fayd ul-Qadeer*, vol.4, pp.61-62; Ibn Shāheen, *al-Ishārāt* (Dār ul-Fikr Print), p.787; al-Halāwī, *Mukhtasar Ibn Seereen*, p.28; at-Tuwayjurī, *Kitāb ur-Ru’yah*, p.145.

<sup>4</sup> Refer to al-Qādirī, *Ta’beer ur-Ru’yah* (Ālam ul-Kutub Print), vol.2, pp.390-391; an-Nāblusī, *Ta’teer ul-Anām*, pp.130-131; Abū Sa’eed al-Wā’idh, *Tafseer ul-Ahlām*, pp.92-93.



He made this interpretation based on the man holding onto four days worth of provision, Ibn Sīrīn said to another man: “I saw in a vision that my bag was filled with earth”, Ibn Sīrīn said to him: “You are dead” and recited where Allāh says

**“So when We decreed for him [i.e. Solomon] death, nothing indicated to them [i.e. the Jinn] his death except a creature of the earth... ”**

{*Saba'* (34): 14}

A date-palm tree symbolises a Muslim man and good words, while a colocynth<sup>1</sup> signifies the opposite. Idols symbolise an evil person who possesses no benefit while a garden signifies actions, a garden burning symbolises the worthlessness of his actions. Walking on a straight path symbolises a person's *istiqāmah* on the Straight Path; if two paths towards the right and towards the left are presented to a person in a vision and the person takes one of the paths this symbolises that he is of that path (i.e. either right or left). A person's *'Awrah* being exposed signifies a sin that the person has committed and shames himself with. A person fleeing from something symbolises salvation and triumph; drowning in water signifies a *fitnah* in a person's *deen* and *dunyā*; a person hanging from a rope between the heavens and the earth symbolises the person's clinging onto Allāh's Book...

Then Ibn ul-Qayyim stated after this:

Thus, a vision is a parable put forth (to a person) by an angel whom Allāh has made responsible for visions so that the seer can deduce comparisons from the parables have been put forth and interpret based on similarities. For this reason, the “ta'weel” of visions has been named (in Arabic) “ta'beer” which is a *tafeel*<sup>2</sup> from “al-'Ubūr”.

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<sup>1</sup> **Translator's note:** also known as “bitter apple”, “bitter cucumber”, “Egusi”, or the “Vine of Sodom”, is a plant native to the Mediterranean Basin - those regions where olives grow, it covers portions of Europe – such as parts of Turkey, Italy, the Iberian Peninsula and other places; Africa such as Egypt, northern Sudan, northern Morocco, northern Libya and northern Algeria; and the Near East such as Shām/the Levant. Its fruit is lemon-sized, yellow-green in colour and very bitter, it is also used as a laxative, in overdoses, the fruit can cause violent, sharp pains in the bowels, with dangerous inflammation.

<sup>2</sup> **Translator's note:** The *tafeel* is one of the verbal noun patterns which emphasises the meaning of the noun. If the verb is based on the form two verb *fa'āla* (when the middle letter has a *shaddah* on the 'Ayn) then its *Masdar* (the verbal noun) will take the form *Tafeel* for example the word *sa'āda* (to lift something up or elevate something) becomes *Tas'eed* (the act of lifting or elevating). The *tafeel* is a *Masdar ar-Rubā'i* (The verbal noun that is derived from a root of four Arabic letters) which is also considered *Masdar Qiyāsi* (a verbal noun based on certain patterns dictated by the type of verb it is), *tafeel* is one of its four main forms.

The other three main verbal noun forms are: *if'āl* – if it is from the form *Afala*, *this itself also has three main patterns*; *mufā'alah* - If the verb is based on the form three verb *fā'ala*, for example *jāhada* (he strove) become *Mujāhadah* (Fighting) which is a form that is *Qiyāsee* (based on certain patterns dictated by the type of verb it is) and it also takes the form *Fī'āl* for example *jāhada* (he strove) becomes *Jihād* (exertion, battle) which is a form that is *Samā'i* (what is commonly heard used by the people);

This is the way mentioned by Ibn ul-Qayyim which is oft-repeated within the books of Ahl ul-'Ilm in defining the science of vision interpretation and we transmitted their words in regards to this prior when presenting their definitions of dreams. This is what is needed by one who wants to understand it along with knowledge and broad investigation of different sciences, for this reason Ibn al-'Arabī (*rahimabullāh*) stated when discussing the accuracy of the virtue of Abū Bakr (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) over other companions:

**Because he was the first scholar of visions and their interpretation and this is only for one who is well-versed in all sciences. Vision interpretation is not extracted from just one source rather its foundation is the Book, the Sunnah, Arabic proverbs, Arabic poetry, customs and practices and other matters.<sup>1</sup>**

Al-Khaleel bin Shāheen (*rahimabullāh*) stated in *Muqaddimat ul-Isbārāt fī 'Ilm il-'Tbārāt*, pp.3-4:

**The vision interpreter has to be experienced, astute, truthful in his speech, good in his actions and famed for religiosity so that what he interprets is not rejected on account of his famed truthfulness. For this reason, Yūsuf ('alayhis-salām) was referred to as "as-Siddeeq". The vision interpreter also has to know the principles of vision interpretation and distinguish between people depending on their conditions and states and what is relevant to them. A vision interpreter should not equalise people in what they see. The vision interpreter within his interpretations has to take into consideration whatever Qur'anic verses, tafseer, hadeeth and scholars views mentioned in earlier books as are apparent to him. He also has to take into consideration the lucid wordings which are apparent among people, along with having knowledge of what was transmitted by writers, poets and others.**

Rather indeed, an-Nāblusī in *Ta'teer ul-Anām*, p.8:

The vision interpreters have many ways in extracting interpretations and for that reason the science is not restricted, rather it accepts additional (interpretations) with consideration of the interpreter's knowledge, acumen, *deen* and blessing in this science. Allāh guides whoever He wills to the Straight Path.

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*fa'lala* - If the verb is based on the form *fa'lala*, for example *zalzala* (he trembled or he shook) becomes *Zalzalāh* (Trembling or an Earthquake) which is a form that is *Qiyāsī* (based on certain patterns dictated by the type of verb it is) and is also takes the form *Fī'lāl* for example *zalzala* (he trembled or he shook) becomes *Zilzāl* (Convulsion, Shaking) which is a form that is considered *Samā'ī* (what is commonly heard used by the people).

For a superb English explanation of the *masdar* (verbal noun) in Arabic grammar refer to what our respected brother Abū 'Imrān al-Meksikī has translated and arranged here: <http://theajāroomiyyahblog.blogspot.com/2008/05/arabic-points-of-benefit-concerning-al.html>

<sup>1</sup> *'Aridat ul-Ahwadhī*, vol.9, pp.152-153

You will possibly find among the vision interpreters those who depend on a specific art in interpreting visions which he sticks to, as found in the report of Abū Tāhir bin al-Ghifārī (*rahimabullāh*) when he said:

Ibn Nabhān summoned Abu'l-Husayn bin al-Bawwāb and when he arrived Ibn Nabhān said to him: “I had a dream which I want interpreted.” Ibn al-Bawwāb said to him: “My madhhab in dream interpretation is based on the Qur’ān.” Ibn Nabhān replied: “I’m happy with that.” Then Ibn Nabhān continued: “I saw as if the sun and the moon were joined together and both fell into my lap.” Ibn Nabhān was happy with this as he thought, not knowing its correct interpretation, that it symbolised the coming together of the king and his minister. Ibn al-Bawwāb said to him: “Allāh says,

**“And the sun and the moon are joined, man will say on that Day, “Where is the [place of] escape?” No! There is no refuge.”**

{*al-Qiyāmah* (75): 9-11}

Ibn al-Bawwāb mentioned these three verses and then Ibn Nabhān got up and his face changed and he went into the women’s chamber. Then Ibn al-Bawwāb got up and went to his house. Three days later Ibn Nabhān moved to Wāsīt while in a bad state, and he was killed there.

Look at his saying **“my madhhab in dream interpretation is based on the Qur’ān”** due to his vast knowledge of the Qur’ān, broad study of the Qur’ān and his intense memorisation and precision in the Qur’ān. Thus, he viewed that there was no vision which was presented to him except that it had a basis within the Mighty Qur’ān, Ibn al-Bawwāb did not turn away from the interpretations of the Qur’ān for anything else. Even though this may be somewhat rigid and narrow, it forced him to leave trying to interpret other visions (which had to be interpreted via other sciences and arts).

### THIRD CATEGORY

These are the ones who *ascribe themselves* to dream interpretation and rely on dream dictionaries which have been authored by the people of knowledge past and present. These people have no knowledge of the detailed principles (of vision interpretation) and hence you will see that they cause more corruption than they bring benefit. It would have been better for them to have said what was stated by the servants of the king of Egypt when they said

عَثُّ أَحْلَمٍ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِتَأْوِيلِ الْأَحْلَمِ بِعَلَمِينَ قَالُوا أَضْ

**“...and we are not learned in the interpretation of dreams.”**

{*Yūsuf* (12): 44}

Ahl ul-'Ilm have brought attention to the danger of this science and its nobility and that none should dare to delve into it without maintaining its principles. Ibn Qutaybah states in his book *'Ibārat ur-Ru'yah* (p.72 of our edit):

**Within all the sciences that the people indulge in, and in the different sources of wisdom that they practice, there is none more obscure, more subtle, more magnificent, nobler, more difficult and more problematic than visions. This is because it is a type of revelation and a portion of Prophethood.**