

14096 - Seeing Allaah in a dream

the question

What is the ruling on one who claims to have seen the Lord of Glory in a dream? Is it true, as some say, that Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal saw the Lord of Glory in a dream more than one hundred times?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah and others said that it is possible for a person to see his Lord in a dream, but what they see is not how He really is, because there is nothing like unto Allaah. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“There is nothing like Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer”

[al-Shoora 42:11]

So nothing in His creation resembles Him, but a person may see in his dream that his Lord is speaking to him, but whatever images he sees is not Allaah because there is nothing like unto Allaah, so there is nothing that resembles Him.

Shaykh Taqiy al-Deen said concerning this that it may vary according to the situation of the person who sees it. The more righteous and good the person is, the closer his dream will be to what is true and correct, but Allaah is different from whatever he sees, because the basic principle is that there is nothing like unto Allaah.

He may hear a voice that says such and such or do such and such, without seeing any image that resembles any created being, because there is nothing like unto Allaah. It was narrated that the

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Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) saw his Lord in a dream. It was narrated from Mu'aadh (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) saw his Lord, and it was narrated via a number of isnaads that he saw his Lord, and that Allaah put His hand between the Prophet's shoulders so that he felt its coolness on his chest. Al-Haafiz ibn Rajab wrote an essay on that which he entitled *Ikhtiyaar al-Awla fi Sharh Hadeeth Ikhtisaam al-Mala' al-A'laa*. This indicates that the Prophets saw their Lord in their dreams. But as for seeing the Lord in this world with their eyes, that did not happen.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said that no one will see his Lord until he dies. This was narrated by Muslim in his *Saheeh*. When the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was asked whether he had seen his Lord, he said: "I saw Light." This was narrated by Muslim from Abu Dharr (may Allaah be pleased with him).

'Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) was asked about that and she said that no one will see Him in this world, because seeing Allaah in Paradise is the greatest blessing for the Muslims, so that will happen only to the people of Paradise and the believers in the Hereafter, and to the believers in the place of standing on the Day of Resurrection. This world is the abode of trial and testing, the place shared by both good and evil people, so it is not the place for seeing Allaah, for seeing Him is the greatest blessing, so Allaah has saved it for His believing slaves in the abode of honour on the Day of Resurrection.

With regard to seeing Allaah in a dream as many people claim to have done, that varies according to the situation of the one who saw that – as Shaykh al-Islam (Ibn Taymiyah – may Allaah have mercy on him) said – how righteous and pious the person is. Some people may imagine that they have seen Allaah when that is not the case, for the Shaytaan may appear to them and make them think that he is their Lord, as it was narrated that he appeared to 'Abd al-Qaadir al-Jeelaani on a throne above the water, and said, "I am your lord and I have relieved you of obligations." Shaykh 'Abd al-Qaadir said: "Shut up, O enemy of Allaah, you are not my Lord, because the commands of

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my Lord can never be lifted from those who are accountable.” Or words to that effect. The point is that seeing Allaah when awake cannot happen to anyone in this world, not even the Prophets (peace be upon them), as stated above in the hadeeth of Abu Dharr. This is also indicated by the words of Allaah to Moosa (peace be upon him) when he asked his Lord to let him see Him. He said to him (interpretation of the meaning):

“You cannot see Me”

[al-A’raaf 7:143]

But the Prophets and some of the righteous may see Him in a dream in a manner that does not resemble any of His creation, as stated above in the hadeeth of Mu’aadh (may Allaah be pleased with him). But if there is a command to do something that goes against sharee’ah, this is a sign that he has not seen his Lord, rather he has seen a devil. If he sees that he is telling him, Do not pray for you have been relieved of obligations, or you do not have to pay zakaah, or you do not have to fast Ramadaan, or you do not have to honour parents, or he says it does not matter if you consume riba (usury, interest) – all such things are signs that he has seen a devil and has not seen his Lord. With regard to the reports of Imam Ahmad seeing his Lord, I do not know if they are sound or not. It was said that he saw his Lord but I do not know if that is true.