

Taken from - <http://www.ummah.com/forum/showthread.php?182584-Transcripts-of-Imam-Anwar-Awlaki-s-Lectures>

Dreams and Dream Interpretations
by Imam Anwar Al-Awlaki

Seventeen Rules of Dream Interpretations:

Ibn Qutaybah ad-Dinawari رحمه الله says in his book about dream interpretations, "There is nothing in which people deal with from the different sciences that is more obscure, delicate, exalted, noble, difficult and problematic than dreams because they are a type of revelation and type of Prophethood."

Narrated Anas bin Malik رضي الله عنه Allah's Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A good dream (that comes true) of a righteous man is one of forty-six parts of prophet hood." [Sahih al-Bukhari]

Some scholars tried to give explanation to this ratio of 1:46. We have no way to find out that if their explanation is correct or not. Prophet hood of Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم extended from 40 to 63 years meaning for 23 years. We know from Seerah that six months before becoming a Prophet, Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم was seeing dreams that would come out to be true on a very frequent basis so much so that he would see a dream one night and it would come to be true the next morning. So the ratio of 6 months to 23 years is 1:46.

1) There are 3 types of dreams: Imam at-Tirmidhi رحمه الله narrates from Muhammad Ibn Sirin رحمه الله who narrates from Abu Hurairah رضي الله تعالى عنه that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "There are three types of dreams: 1. True Dreams 2. A dream in which a person is speaking to himself (i.e. whatever you were thinking about in the day time, you see at night) 3. A dream from shaytaan in which he wants to make you sad "

In one hadith it is mentioned that one should stand up and pray and in another is that he should not mention it to anyone.

Abu Salamah رضي الله عنه once said, "Sometimes I would see a dream that would be heavier on me than carrying a mountain. But since I heard this hadith I wouldn't care about the bad dream I would see."

Narrated Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri رضي الله عنه: The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If anyone of you sees a dream that he likes, then it is from Allah, and he should thank Allah for it and narrate it to others; but if he sees something else, i.e., a dream that he dislikes, then it is from Satan, and he should seek refuge with Allah from its evil, and he should not mention it to anybody, for it will not harm him." [Sahih Muslim]

Q1) A question arises, is every dream that a believer sees good?

Al Muhallab رحمه الله says, "Most of the dreams of the righteous people are good dreams because sometimes a righteous person could see a dream that is meaningless but that is not very frequent because shaytaan's control on them is very weak. And the opposite is true with other

people because shaytaan has a stronger grasp over them. People are of the categories:
i) The Prophets: all of their dreams are truthful and but sometimes they need interpretation.
The good dream is divided into 2 categories:

a) Direct dream: something one would see in a dream and the exact scene repeats itself in day-time when you are awake and this dream does not need interpretation.

b) A dream that comes in symbols and it needs to be interpreted.

ii) The righteous: most of the time their dreams are truthful (most of them need to be interpreted) and sometimes their dream are direct.

iii) Rest of the people: most of their dreams are not true but some of them could be true." [Fath al-Bari bi Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari]

2) Do not mention the dream for interpretation except to a scholar or a person who would advise you sincerely.

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "You should not mention this dream to an envious person..."

There is also evidence for this in the Qur`an: (Remember) when Yûsuf (Joseph) said to his father: "O my father! Verily, I saw (in a dream) eleven stars and the sun and the moon, I saw them prostrating themselves to me." He (the father) said: "O my son! Relate not your vision to your brothers, lest they arrange a plot against you. Verily! Shaitân (Satan) is to man an open enemy! {Surat al-Yusuf, ayat 4-5}

3) Seeing Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم:

Narrated Anas رضي الله عنه the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever has seen me in a dream, then no doubt, he has seen me, for Satan cannot imitate my shape. [Sahih al-Bukhari]

Q2) There is an issue here, what if a person sees Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and he feels that it is him but his description in the dream is different than the one we know of from ahadith. So is the person in the dream Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم?

Az-Zuhri رحمه الله says that Ibn Sirin رحمه الله said, "If you see him according to his description." An-Nawawi رحمه الله, however, has a contrary view and he says, "As long as you felt in your dream that the person you saw was Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then it is him even if he comes in a different form." Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله supports the view of Ibn Sirin رحمه الله

4) A repetition of a dream is a sign of its truth. It does not matter if the same person sees the dream more than once or more than one person.

'AbduLlah ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما reported that some people were shown the Night of Qadr as being in the last seven days (of the month of Ramadan). The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I see that your dreams strengthen each other that Night of Qadr is in the last seven nights of Ramadhan so whoever searches for it, would search for it in the last seven days (of Ramadan)." [Sahih al-Bukhari]

Also the dream about Adhan when 2 Sahabah رضي الله عنهما saw the same dream.

5) Q3) When is the most expected time to see a righteous dream? At night or day time? Are all the times equal (whether seen at the beginning of the night or end of the day)?

Ibn Sirin رحمه الله said, "Dreams of day time are equal to the dreams of night." [Sahih Muslim]

6) Ibn Battal رحمه الله said, "Dreams are of two types: a clear evident dream like somebody would dream about himself giving dates to someone and during the day time he would give somebody dates. This type of dream doesn't need any interpretation. Secondly, a dream that comes in symbols and this type you would understand its meaning unless you get it interpreted by a person who has knowledge and experience dream interpretation because sometimes the symbols are very delicate and sophisticated."

Like the dream Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw in which he was drinking milk from a vessel and when some of it was remaining, he gave it 'Umar رضي الله عنه. Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم interpreted it as knowledge. This means that Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم absorbed the knowledge and he mentions that the milk was so much that it started flowing beneath his nails. So he had so much knowledge in him, that it started flowing from him.

7) Dreams can be about the past or the present or the future.

8) True dreams increase towards the end of times.

Ibn Sirin رحمه الله said, "I heard Abu Hurairah saying, 'Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When Time approaches, the dream of the believer rarely would lie."' [Sahih al-Bukhari]

"When Time approaches..." is explained in two different opinions:

i) Al-Khattabi رحمه الله said, "The meaning of 'When Time approaches...' is the time of night and the time of day. When the time of night approaches the length the time of day, then the dreams of the believer will be true. These are the two times when flowers open up and when fruits are ripe. The scholars of dream interpretation actually state that these are the two time when the dreams are most likely to be true."

ii) Al-Qurtubi رحمه الله says, "What is meant by this hadith, and Allah سبحانه و تعالى knows best, is the end of times and it is talking about the group of believers that will be with 'Isa ibn Maryam عليه السلام after he kills dajjal."

Ibn Abi Jamrah رحمه الله says, "The reason why the believer sees true dreams at the time is because the believer will be ghareeb (stranger) as was mentioned in the hadith, 'Islam began as something strange and it will return to the way it began being strange so give glad tidings to the strangers so give glad tidings to the strangers.'"

Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani رحمه الله comments on all the opinions by saying, "Whenever the times are difficult for the believer, he will see dreams that are true frequently because he needs help. When the believer is alone, when the times are difficult, when you don't find people supporting on truth, then Allah سبحانه و تعالى will inspire you to give you glad tidings through the good dreams you would see and this is to give the believers in those difficult and testing times gives

the believers strength, it gives them confidence, it gives them hope so they would see a lot of dreams that would come true.”

For example the brothers who are doing Jihad feesabiliLlah see a lot of dreams that come out to be true because they are being tested by Allah تعالى و سبحانه thus He assists them.

9) Most of the times, if the dream is a glad tidings from Allah تعالى و سبحانه it would take a long for it to occur while if it is a warning it would occur swiftly.

For example Yusuf عليه سلام's dream took a very long time for it to happen around 40 years. Some scholars say this is because Allah تعالى و سبحانه gives the believer glad tidings early on to give him confidence and hope, to inspire him in his life. While if it is a warning, you would see it and it would occur very soon so that it would be the reason of fear in your heart.

10) Dreams are glad tidings and warnings but cannot be used as a source of Shari'ah.

Ash-Shatbi رحمه الله says regarding this, “Benefit of the dream in giving the believer a glad tidings or warning not in legislation and judgement or rulings.”

11) If one sees a dream that is very long like a movie or someone is chasing you and it never ends then most likely that dream doesn't mean anything. True dreams are short and concise.

12) The dream of a believer pleases him but it does not make him proud or over confident.

Ibn Muflih رضي الله عنه mentions in his book Adaab ash-Shar'iyah, “Ibrahim al-Humaydi was righteous man and Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal visited him so Ibrahim told Imam Ahmad, ‘My mother has seen a dream for you where she saw this-and-that for you,’ and then he mentioned Jannah. Imam Ahmad said, ‘My brother, Sahl ibn Salamah, people used to see dreams for him similar to what you mentioned and in the end he ended up shedding blood so the dream pleases the believer, it doesn't make him boastful.”

13) Dream interpretation is not certain but presumptive and Allah تعالى و سبحانه says in Surah Yusuf: “And he said to the one he presumed to be saved...” {ayah # 42}

Ibn Kathir رحمه الله mentions in his An-Nihayah wal Bidayah that there was a caliph (not a good one) of Ibn 'Abbas who saw dream that he was climbing a dream with 28 steps. So he had that dream interpreted. The one who interpreted his dream told him that the meaning of this dream is, “You will rule for 28 years.” But he died six months later. He died at the age of 28 so the steps were representing his age not the time for his rule.

There was a woman who dreamt that her daughter would break three banners (flag carried in war time). So she went to Ibn Sirin رحمه الله and he interpreted that dream saying, “If her dream is true, it means that she would marry three noble men all of them would be killed.” When her daughter grew up, she married Yazid ibn al-Muhallab who was a great leader in 'Iraq and he was killed. Later on, she married 'Amr ibn Yazid at-Taymi and he was killed. Her third marriage was with al-Hasan ibn 'Uthman ibn 'Abdur Rahman ibn 'Awf رحمه الله, the grandson of the Sahabi 'Abdur Rahman bin 'Awf. She had an argument with him and she told him, “In the Name of Allah, you would be killed.” He asked her the reason and she told him about her dream. He said,

“Alright, I am going to divorce you since you think I am going to be killed now!” Finally, she married al-‘Abbas ibn ‘AbdiLlah ibn Harith ibn Nawfal ibn Harith ibn ‘Abdul Muttalib and he was killed.

One man saw in a dream, during the plague, that caskets were coming out of his house and the number of them was equal to the number of his family. So, he interpreted the dream that his entire family would be killed in the plague. And the dream started to manifest itself. His family were dying one after the other and all the bodies were coming out of his house exactly how he saw in his dream until he was the last member of his family left so he was pretty sure that he would be killed by the plague because his dream was, until now, true. But a thief came into his house and was struck by the plague, he fell ill in his house, he died and he was the last body to leave the house and not the person who saw the dream.

14) It is haram and a great sin to claim that one has seen a dream whilst he has not seen it or to lie in it.

Narrated ‘AbduLlah ibn ‘Abbas رضي الله عنه that the Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم said, “Whoever claims to have seen a dream that he has not seen, would be told to tie between two hairs on the Day of Judgement.”

15) A dream could be seen by a person but it could be for someone else.

Al Hakim and ‘AbduLlah Ibn Mubarak narrate that someone saw a dream for Abu Jahl that he became a Muslim and pledged allegiance to Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم. But this never happened. So this dream was for his son, ‘Ikrimah رضي الله عنه who became a Muslim and pledged allegiance to Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم later on.

A dream was seen for Usayd bin Abil ‘Aas that he became the governor of Makkah and he never did but his son ‘Attab became the governor of Makkah.

16) Same symbol in a dream could mean different things for different people

For example: A man came to Ibn Sirin رحمه الله and told him that he had seen himself in a dream giving Adhan. Ibn Sirin رحمه الله replied, “You will make Hajj.” Another man came with the same dream and Ibn Sirin رحمه الله replied, “You are a thief!” Ibn Sirin رحمه الله was asked the reason of him giving different interpretations of the same dream to different people and he said, “Because I saw in the first man’s face righteousness and Allah تعالى و سبحانه says in the Qur`an that Ibrahim عليه سلام made adhan calling people to Hajj so I interpreted this mean that this person would make Hajj. Whilst I saw evil on the face of the other man and Allah تعالى و سبحانه says in Surah Yusuf, ‘then a crier cried: ‘O you (in) the caravan! Surely, you are thieves!’ so I interpreted it to mean that this person is a thief.”

17) Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم said, “A dream is hanging on the leg of a bird (and in another narration on the wing of the bird) as soon as it is interpreted, it happens as it was interpreted.” So some scholars say that if you take your dream to a scholar, it would happen as it is interpreted by him so that’s why you must take it to a person who has knowledge about dream interpretation and or a person who would give you a sincere advice and not to the person who

is envious so if the dream is interpreted it would happen as he interpreted. However, there is a difference of opinion regarding this issue. And Allah ﷻ knows best.