

Dreams and their Interpretation in the Baha'i Religion **Some preliminary remarks**

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Abstract

This paper provides an outline of the importance of dreams and their interpretation in the Bahá'í Religion. After some general remarks on dreams, dreams and dream interpretation in Islam will be discussed, since they provide an archetype for the Bahá'í context. Statements on dreams by Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá will be examined. Finally, a dream interpretation by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Ottoman Turkish that contains significant Islamic elements, will be commented on and a provisional translation of it appended.

Introduction

Dreams are a universal phenomenon and dream interpretation is an ancient and universal practice. There are books and scrolls extant on the subject, dating back to Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Ancient Greeks and the Romans. In available sources from Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, in the *Iliad* of Homer, also in the Old Testament and in pre-Islamic Arab peoples, dreams are sources of divination, that is, predictions of future events. In some indigenous cultures dreams are identical with reality or are believed to be fulfilled. In Ancient Greece, dreams were used to provide cures for ailments through divine power. The Greeks called this practice *egkoimesis*, and the Romans *incubatio*. Dream incubation is commonly associated with the cult of Asklepios but is apparently still an institution in the Mediterranean. Perhaps the most famous book on dream interpretation is by the Greek Artemidoros of Ephesos, called *Oneirocritica* (from Greek *oneiros*, "dream").¹

Overall, messengers and prophets of God have received their first revelations, inspirations, commands or glad-tidings through dreams and visions,- sometimes through angels or other intermediaries,- such as Abraham, Moses, Joseph, Muhammad, the Mormon 'prophet' Joseph Smith or the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. Also, scientists claimed to have solutions for intricate problems or inventions, in their dreams.

Dreams and their interpretation in Islam

During the period of classical Islam (9.-14. centuries A.D.) dream interpretation, among the ancient sciences, was passed on to Islam through

¹For a general discussion of dreams, see e.g. the entry 'dream' *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* and *The Encyclopaedia of Religion* (ed. Mircea Eliade); for the general Islamic context, see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (*EF*², 2. edition), s.v. 'Ru'yā'; *The Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān* (*EQ*), s.v. 'Dreams and Sleep'; Orhan Hançerlioğlu, *İslam İnançları Sözlüğü* (*İSS*, 'Dictionary of Islamic Beliefs,' Istanbul 1994²), s.v. 'Rüyâ'.

translations of Greek and Roman classics. Dreams (sing. *ru'yá*) and their interpretation (*ta'bir*) have had a central place among Muslims.² Countless books on dream interpretation in the Middle East are offered - and even on-line interpreters and digital dream encyclopaedias on the internet.³ Still popular in the Islamic world is also the practice of *istikhára*⁴ ('the search for the good') for invoking dreams in order to arrive at a solution of a problem. It is moreover noteworthy that *ta'bir*⁵ was utilised for political claims and legitimisation of rulers,⁶ the legitimisation of the four Sunni schools of law (*madháhib al-arba'a*),⁷ or as a means to evaluate *aḥádíth* (Islamic traditions, sg. *ḥadīth*).⁸

With respect to dreams and *aḥádíth* as a source of authority in Islam, it can be said that so-called 'legitimizing-edifying dreams' were utilised for decision-making, the establishment of preferences, and the approval of ideas. The same type of dreams offered guidelines for right conduct, thoughts and reactions in definite situations in the daily lives of Muslims. 'Legitimizing-edifying dreams' also had an important function in disputes among the Sunni *madháhib* through the way the four jurists were presented in dreams, how these should be understood with regard to the jurists' influence and status in the Islamic *umma* (community), and their value and trustworthiness as the founders of eponymous schools of law.⁹

The revelation of the Qur'an (Q.) itself commenced with a vision or a dream in which the angel Gabriel appeared to Muhammad (Sura 96), which is also transmitted in a *ḥadīth*: 'The commencement of the Divine Inspiration to God's Apostle was in the form of good righteous (true) dreams in his sleep.'¹⁰

The Qur'an itself contains some passages about dreams and their interpretation. The most famous is in the story of Joseph, 'the best of stories' (*aḥsan al-qaṣaṣ*, Q. 12:3) in the *Súrat Yúsuf* (12. Sura). As in Genesis, all three dream episodes of Joseph are mentioned. The purpose of these is to show that dreams and their proper interpretation are a sign of God's favour.

² Seminal works on dreams in Islam are: Helmut Gätje, 'Philosophische Traumlehren im Islam', in *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 109 (1959), 258-85, and Gustave E. Grunebaum/Robert Caillois, *The Dream and Human Societies* (L.A./Berkeley, 1966); Leah Kinberg, *Morality in the Guise of Dreams: Ibn Abī d-Dunyā, A Critical Edition of the kitāb al-manām* (Leiden et al., 1994); Annemarie Schimmel, *Die Träume des Kalifen: Träume und ihre Bedeutung in der islamischen Kultur* (München, 1998).

³ See, e.g., the websites <http://www.ibnsereen.com>, <http://www.alburaq.net/trabsform.cfm>, and <http://dreams.al-islam.com>

⁴ *EF*² s.v. 'Istikhára'; *ISS*, s.v. 'Istihâra'; Schimmel, 40-41.

⁵ *EF*², s.v. 'Ta'bir'; *ISS*, s.v. 'Tâbir'.

⁶ Leah Kinberg, 'Literal Dreams and Prophetic ḥadīths in Classical Islam: a comparison of legitimization', in *Islam* 70 (1993), 279-300.

⁷ Idem. 'The legitimization of the madháhib through dreams', in *Arabica* 32 (1985), 47-79. The schools are the Ḥanbalí, Ḥanafí, Sháfi'í and Malikí.

⁸ Idem. 'Dreams as a Means to Evaluate ḥadīths', in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 23 (1999), 79-99.

⁹ These founders are Abu Hanífa (d. 767), Malik b. Anas (d. 795), Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 855), and Muḥammad b. Idris ash-Sháfi'í (d. 820).

¹⁰ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* (SB), Volume 9, Book 87, Number 111; online at MSA-USC Hadith Database, <http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/reference/searchhadith.html>; where necessary, 'Allah' in following *aḥádíth* is replaced by 'God'.

The most significant episode is when Joseph tells his father about his own dream of ‘eleven stars and the sun and the moon were prostrating themselves before me.’ In the Old Testament this means that Joseph’s eleven brothers and his father and mother will one day bow down before him and this will infuriate his brothers. In the Qur’an it is said that his father warns Joseph not to tell his dream to his jealous brothers because of their intentions to kill him. His father’s statement ‘Thus will thy Lord choose thee and teach thee the interpretation of events’ (*ta’wíl al-aḥádíth*) (Q. 12:6) alludes to a later episode during Joseph’s imprisonment in Egypt when he is asked to interpret the dreams of two men (12:36-42). With these dreams coming true the Pharaoh realises Joseph’s ability to interpret dreams and asks him to interpret two dreams of his own after being displeased with his advisors, who admitted that they are not knowledgeable about dream interpretation and labelled the Pharaoh’s dreams as ‘confused/jumbled dreams’ (*aḍgháth aḥlám*, Q. 12:44). Joseph expounds the king’s dreams as predictions of his land’s future welfare and thus pleases him. As a result, the king awards Joseph by making him his personal servant. Both in Genesis and the Qur’an Joseph’s piety and his ability to interpret dreams are a sign of his nearness to God.¹¹

Another crucial Qur’anic as well as Biblical episode is that of Abraham’s sacrifice of his son, which is Isaac in Genesis and Isma‘il in the Qur’an. Abraham receives God’s command to sacrifice his son in a dream (*manám*). After telling his son about this, both surrender themselves to God’s will (*fa-lammá aslamá*, Q. 37:102-105). This in itself is utter humility and absolute trust and at the very heart of the Islamic faith: a ‘muslim’ is someone who entirely submits him/herself to God’s will (*islám*). Apart from this, another aspect is worth noting here. Although there is no indication that Abraham’s dream was divine in origin, he and his son readily accepted it as such.¹² Nevertheless Qur’an interpretations emphasise that Abraham saw this dream three times before being certain that it is from God. After the first night he wondered whether his dream is divine or satanic. The subsequent night he had the same dream and knew that it was a divine command. After seeing the dream for the third time, Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son. According to Qur’an commentators Abraham’s hesitation is not in agreement with the *ḥadīth* that dreams (*ru’yá*) of prophets are equal to revelation (*wahy*). Hence, if a prophetic *ru’yá* is *wahy*, there is no room for Abraham’s hesitation. Also, that Abraham asks his son what he thinks about the sacrifice is in the opinion of some commentators a contradiction.¹³

Four words stand for dreams, visions and sleep in the Qur’an: 1. *ru’yá* appears six times (12:5, 12:43, 12:100, 17:60, 37:105, 48:27); 2. *manám*, occurs four times (8:43, 30:23, 37:102, 39:42); 3. Then there is *bushrá*,

¹¹ Leah Kinberg, ‘Dreams and Sleep’, in *EQ*, vol. 1, A-D (Leiden et al. 2001), 546-53; Kelly Bulkeley, ‘Reflections on the Dream Tradition in Islam’, in *Sleep and Hypnosis* 4:1 (2002), 4-14,

¹² Bulkeley, 6.

¹³ Kinberg, *EQ* 547.

meaning ‘good-tidings’ or ‘good news,’ which is used once as ‘dream’ (10:64). While these three terms signify good dreams, the word *hulm* that occurs twice in the Qur’an, means bad dream and is used in the expression *adgháth ahlám*, that is, ‘confused/jumbled dreams’ (12:44, 21:5). Six of all these references deal with the biblical figures Abraham and Joseph; the other references relate to central Islamic issues like the conquest of Mecca that was revealed to Muhammad in a dream prior to the event itself (Q 48:27). For the interpretation of these qur’anic verses the commentators utilise Islamic sayings in canonical *hadíth* collections. They deal with the authority of dreams and their use as a means of legitimation. Many interpretive principles are found in the sayings, referring to the practice of dream interpretation, and therefore guide dream practices in contemporary Muslim countries.

Dreams in Islam are usually divided into three categories: 1. True dreams which come from God and are part of revelation or prophetism; 2. Deceitful dreams which are the whisperings of Satan or demons; 3. Dreams which are the result of man’s nature that are not dangerous but also do not bear a significant message.¹⁴ There are other classifications of dreams. The theologian al-Razi (d. 1210) suggested the following: 1. There are dreams with a message and become reality, such as Muhammad’s dream about his conquest of Mecca; 2. Dreams whose message is realised in the opposite way, like Abraham’s dream: he was asked to sacrifice his son but in reality he sacrificed a lamb; 3. Dreams that demand for interpretation, such as the dreams in the Sura of Joseph.¹⁵ Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406), the great Muslim learned, on the other hand, talks about 1. Clear dream visions which are from God; 2. Allegorical dreams from the angels, which need to be interpreted; 3. ‘Confused dreams’ from Satan, which are futile.¹⁶ The differentiation between ‘true dreams’ and ‘confused dreams’ is based on the *hadíth* “*ru’yá* is from God and *hulm* is from Satan.” As noted above *hulm* denotes bad dreams also in the Qur’an. Dreams are also an integral part of major and minor Islamic *hadíth* collections.

Dreams in the Babi and Baha’i Religions

There are Tablets of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá classifying dreams into several categories. He endorses some of those categories as a kind of inspiration or foreseeing of what will happen in future. In other Tablets he has given interpretation to believers’ dreams at the request of Bahá’is that had such experiences.

The Bab’s Revelation commenced with a vision. The Bab dreamt that He drank Imam Husayn’s blood. In a passage in which Shoghi Effendi talks about the first revelations of major prophets we read:

¹⁴ Gätje, 249-50.

¹⁵ Kinberg *EQ*, 547.

¹⁶ Bulkeley, 10.

The circumstances in which the Vehicle of this newborn Revelation, following with such swiftness that of the Báb, received the first intimations of His sublime mission recall, and indeed surpass in poignancy the soul-shaking experience of Moses when confronted by the Burning Bush in the wilderness of Sinai; of Zoroaster when awakened to His mission by a succession of seven visions; of Jesus when coming out of the waters of the Jordan He saw the heavens opened and the Holy Ghost descend like a dove and light upon Him; of Muḥammad when in the Cave of Ḥirá, outside of the holy city of Mecca, the voice of Gabriel bade Him “cry in the name of Thy Lord”; and of the Báb when in a dream He approached the bleeding head of the Imám Ḥusayn, and, quaffing the blood that dripped from his lacerated throat, awoke to find Himself the chosen recipient of the outpouring grace of the Almighty.¹⁷

Bahá'u'lláh's as well received His first revelation in the Siyáh-Chál through a vision. In a well-known passage He says: ‘One night, in a dream (*dar ‘ālam-i ru'yā*), these exalted words were heard on every side...’¹⁸ He regards sleep and the fact that we can dream as ‘phenomenon’, which is ‘the most mysterious of the signs of God amongst men (*āyat al-a'zam bayna 'n-nās*), were they to ponder it in their hearts.’ He adds that events in a dream during the sleep (*tará fī nawmika*) that become realised ‘after a considerable lapse of time’ (lit.: *ba'da sana aw sanatayn aw azyad*, ‘after a year or two or more’)¹⁹ or ‘after the lapse of many years’ (lit.: *ba'd az bist sanih aw azyad*, ‘after twenty or more years’).²⁰

Elsewhere, Bahá'u'lláh talks about a dream of His own, in which He beheld the Prophet Muḥammad. This dream serves as a confirmation of the removal of the Islamic *jihād*, of ‘holy war’ and His mission of peace:

One day I saw in a dream that I associated with His Holiness, the Apostle (Muḥammad), may the souls of all else but Him be sacrificed for His sake. Words were revealed and utterances were made manifest from that Dawning-Place of God's Book. Thereupon He said: ‘Previously I had said: ‘Paradise is beneath the shades of swords (*al-jannatu taḥta ḡilālī 's-suyúf*).’²¹ However, if I were manifest in these days, I would say: ‘Paradise is beneath the shade of the tree of friendliness and compassion’ (*al-jannatu*

¹⁷ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, Bahá'í Publishing Trust: Wilmette 1944 (1979²), 92.

¹⁸ Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf* 21; *Lawḥ-i Khitāb bih Shaykh Muḥammad Taqī Isfahānī* (*Lawḥ-i Ibn-i Dhi'b*), Baha'i-Verlag: Hofheim BE 138/1983-84), 15; online at the Baha'i Reference Library, <http://reference.bahai.org/fa/t/b/ESW/>

¹⁹ Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, ch. 79, p. 151-52; *Muntakhabát az Áthár-i Hadrat-i Bahá'u'lláh* (Bahá'í-Verlag: Hofheim BE 141/1985-86), 102-103

²⁰ *Ibid*, 162/108.

²¹ A *ḥadīth*; see *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Volume 4, Book 52, no. 73: ‘Know that Paradise is under the shades of swords.’; cf. Volume 4, Book 52, no. 2: ‘Once God's Apostle (during a holy battle), waited till the sun had declined and then he got up among the people and said, “O people! Do not wish to face the enemy (in a battle) and ask God to save you (from calamities) but if you should face the enemy, then be patient and let it be known to you that Paradise is under the shades of swords.”’; online at [MSA-USC Hadith Database](http://www.usc.edu/MSA/MSA-USC-Hadith-Database/)

taḥta zīlāli sidrati 'l-ulfati wa 'r-rahma). Upon hearing this blessed and exalted Word, I declared: 'May the souls of all men be a sacrifice unto Thy loving-kindness, tender mercy and bounty!' Subsequently, the Ocean of utterance spoke that which the Pen was unable to reveal and the ink not capable to make manifest. When I woke up from my sleep I have found Myself filled with gladness for a time, in such wise that it was beyond description.²²

'Abdu'l-Bahá, speaking of the immortality of the spirit/soul, reiterates the realisation of dreams. He also states that a problem or question, which one cannot resolve in this 'world of wakefulness is solved in the world of dreams (*'alam-i ru'yá*)' or 'the world of sleep' (*'alam-i kh'áb*). When man is asleep he does not any distance or dimension as in this material world but he embraces the East and the West, and travels 'in the twinkling of an eye'.²³ 'Abdu'l-Bahá differentiates between two kinds of visions or dreams, which He calls 'spiritual discoveries' (*iktisháfát-i ruḥániyyih*). The first one is 'the revelations of the Prophets (*ru'yá-yi anbiyá*)', and the spiritual discoveries of the elect (*iktisháfát-i ruḥániyyih-i asfíyá*). According to 'Abdu'l-Bahá those of the Prophets are not dreams (*ru'yá-yi anbiyá' kh'áb níst*) but 'spiritual discoveries (*iktisháfát-i ruḥáníst*) and have reality (*ḥaqíqat*)' since it occurs in the state of wakefulness and not during a sleep.²⁴

The second sort of 'spiritual discoveries' in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's categorisation are 'made up of pure imaginations' (*awhám-i širf*), which appear to 'simple-hearted people' as having a reality. In this situation the minds of men discover truths, 'and from this thought and discovery signs and results are produced. This thought has a foundation'. However, 'Abdu'l-Bahá compares these to 'the waves of the sea of imaginations; they have no fruit, and no result comes from them. In the same way, man sees in the world of sleep a vision which becomes exactly realized; at another time, he sees a dream which has absolutely no result.'²⁵

What we mean is that this state, which we call the converse and communications of spirits, is of two kinds: one is simply imaginary (*awhám-i maḥḍ*), and the other is like the visions (*ru'yáhá*) which are mentioned in the Holy Book, such as the revelations of St. John and Isaiah and the meeting of Christ with Moses and Elias. These are real, and produce wonderful effects in the minds and thoughts of men, and cause their hearts to be attracted.²⁶

²² From the *Lawh-i Tabīb*, provisional translation, *Má'idih-yi Ásmání*, (ed. 'Abdu'l-Hamid Ishraq-Khavari), vol. 8, Tehran 129 BE/1972-73, 78;

²³ 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 227/ *Mufáwwadát-i 'Abdu'l-Bahá* (Miṣr 1339/1920, 2 edition by Mir'át Publications 1998), 160. , cf. *Khiṭābāt Ḥaḍrat-i 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, vol. 2, Baha'i-Verlag: Hofheim BE 127/1970-71, 14.

²⁴ *Ibid.* ch. 71, 251-53/176-78.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

At another instance, ‘Abdu’l-Baha classifies dreams into three categories: 1. *ru’yá-yi şádiqih*, “true dreams”: they are as bright as the morning sun and do not need interpretation (*ta’bír*). They come to pass in the same manner as it was seen but most of the people do not achieve this; it needs a heart rid of all attachment and there must not exist idle thoughts in the mind; 2. *ru’yá-yi ta’bírí*, “interpretive dreams”: these are idle thoughts from the heart or mind and need interpretation. Idle thoughts must be separated from spiritual discoveries. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá explains thus: if you add any colour to a white cloth, it will accept it; but if you add blue to a yellow cloth, it will become green and the truth is distorted. In order to have the true colour, one needs to remove the added colour. 3. *ađgháth ahlám*, ‘confused dreams.’ If man is involved in strife and contention during the day and these events appear to him in his dreams, these cannot be interpreted and are no discovery. Finally, He adds that in the sight of the Prophets *ru’yá* is part of *wahy*, in which they see a celestial figure who tells them to say or to do things.²⁷

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s *Ta’bír* in Ottoman Turkish

As in the case of some other Tablets which ‘Abdu’l-Baha wrote in Ottoman Turkish,²⁸ this Tablet was also in all probability written to an Ottoman official.²⁹ He addresses the recipient with ‘his excellency’ (*zât-ı ulyáları*). In the first part of this Tablet ‘Abdu’l-Baha provides a short exegesis (*tafsír*) of a hadith to the same person.³⁰

The second part is ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s interpretation of the following ‘true dream’ (*riyâ-yi sâdik*): the person saw himself in the holy Ka’ba, the centre of the Muslim pilgrimage in Mecca. He moreover dreamed of the prophet Muhammad riding a camel (*deve*), and Muhammad was casting a sheltering shadow with his hand (*pençe*) on a flock of sheep. However, only ten chosen sheep were particularly protected.

‘Abdu’l-Baha explains what the ‘Ka’ba,’ ‘Muhammad,’ ‘camel,’ ‘hand,’ the ‘flock of sheep,’ and the ‘ten sheep’ stand for. He concludes by assuring his recipient that Muhammad has blessed him by revealing to him this dream. What is interesting is that ‘Abdu’l-Baha interprets this dream in favour of the Ottomans by saying that Sultan Abdulhamid II. and the Islamic *umma* were victorious over their enemies, the Greeks. In particular, the Muslim martyrs of the (first) Greco-Ottoman War of 1897,³¹ who died for the ‘religion and state’ (*din ve devlet*) receive his special blessings. Here

²⁷Quoted in Khosrow Farahani, *Sayrı dar ‘Awálim-i Ru’yá* (Bahá’i-Verlag: Hofheim, 149/1992), 9-10.

²⁸See, e.g., Necati Alkan, “‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Turkish Commentary of the Sura of the Fig: Introduction and Provisional Translation”, *Bahá’i Studies Review* 10 (2001), 115-129.

²⁹*Majmú’a-yi Alwáh wa Munajáthá-yi Turki* (Mu’assasa-yi Millí-yi Matbú’át-ı Amrí, BE 127/1970-71), 142-46.

³⁰Necati Alkan, “‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Commentary on the Islamic Tradition: “God doth give victory to this religion by means of a wicked man” – a provisional translation and notes”, in *Bahá’i Studies Review* 11, 53-57.

³¹See, e.g., Stanford Shaw/Ezel K. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey* (2 vols.), Cambridge University Press, 1977, 2:206-207; Mehmet Uğur Ekinci, ‘[The Origins of the 1897 Ottoman-Greek War: A Diplomatic History](#)’, M.A. Thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara, 2006

‘Abdu’l-Baha also acknowledges the first three caliphs Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthman as rightly guided and among the ten companions of Muhammad whom He had promised paradise.

Provisional Translation of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s *ta‘bír*:

As regards the interpretation of thy true dream (*rüyâ-yı sâdik*): thou hast seen thyself in the holy Ka‘ba. According to interpretation, the Ka‘ba is an impregnable stronghold and divinely safeguarded and protected. For it is a threshold of protection and safety and a refuge and asylum for all beasts and birds.

Thou hast also seen His Holiness, the Prophet (Muhammad) in thy dream. According to the holy tradition ‘Who hath seen Me in a dream, he indeed hath beheld the truth’ (*Man ra ‘ání fa-qad ra ‘á al-ḥaqq*),³² to see the blessed perfection, our Lord the Prophet (pbuh)³³ in a dream, there is no doubt that it is a real vision and true dream that hath come to pass (*müşâhede-i hakikî ve rü‘yet-i vâkî*). To behold our Lord indicateth attainment of gladness, bounty and blessings.

Furthermore, our Lord (pbuh) hath been envisioned riding a camel (*deve*). In the science of dream interpretation (*ilm-i tâbir*) the camel standeth for the enemy. This vision is a sign for the victory over and subjugation of the extremely rancorous and malicious (lit. ‘vindictive as a camel’) enemies and adversaries by the centre of the caliphate, the exalted Sultan Abdulhamid Khan (II.) and the late lamented *umma* (Tr. ümmet) of Muhammad. And it has been revealed (*inkişâf*) in the dream that our Lord (pbuh) hath cast a sheltering shadow with His blessed hand (*pençe*) upon a flock of sheep.³⁴ The flock of sheep is the *umma* and the hand signifieth the ‘five People of the Cloak (*Hamse-i Âl-i Abâ*),’³⁵ whose grace and blessings hath been vouchsafed unto the whole *umma*.

Moreover, thou hast seen that His blessed and sanctified hand hath cast its shadow only upon ten sheep of the flock. Those ten sheep are the ‘Ten who have been brought good news’ (*Aşere-i Mübeşşere*)³⁶ who ...³⁷ are the manifestations of the sublime grace of the People of the Cloak. However much the mass of the *umma* is blessed by the grace of the sanctified hand

³² *Man ra ‘ání fa-qad ra ‘á al-ḥaqq*; cited in Ibn Sírín, *Tafsír al-Aḥlâm*, p. 7, www.al-waraq.net.

³³ “peace and salutation be upon Him”.

³⁴ Or, ‘hath protected with His blessed hand...’.

³⁵ “... the five ‘People (or Companions) of the Cloak’ (Ahl al-Kisa’ or Ashab al-Kisa’), a name which derived from the famous occasion when Muhammad took ‘Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan and al-Husayn under his cloak and described them as members of his family, an event of immense significance for Shi’ism”; Ian Richard Netton, *A Popular Dictionary of Islam*, Curzon Press: London 1992,, 81, s.v. “Fatima”; Momen, *Shi‘i*, 14.

³⁶ Netton, 18: “Tradition portrays the Prophet Muhammad promising Paradise to ten of his followers. The names on the received lists vary but they usually include the Rashidun.”; Netton, s.v. “al-‘Ashara al-Mubashshara”. These are usually the first four Caliphs Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman, ‘Ali, and ‘Abdu’r-Rahman ibn ‘Awf, Abu ‘Ubayda, Talha, Zubayr, Sa’d ibn Abi Waqqas, and Sa’d ibn Zayd; see, Hançerlioğlu, *İnanç Sözlüğü*, 35.

³⁷ The text says *eğer ziyade* (‘should more’) but this does not make sense.

like unto that flock of sheep, only the ten who have been brought good news have fully attained unto the special bountiful gifts and found shelter beneath the extended shadow of the ‘five People of the Cloak.’ In addition, the flock of sheep, which hath been specially chosen by our Lord (pbuh) for sacrifice, represents the martyrs of the *umma*. This is the recent battle. These are the martyrs of the Greek War (*Muhârebe-i Yunan*) who readily laid down their lives for the religion and the state (*din ve devlet*), may God bless them and be pleased with them. That these visions were revealed unto thine excellency, shows the liberal effusions and favours of our Lord (pbuh) unto thee. Peace be upon thee. ‘Abbas

Latinised Text of the Tablet:

Gelelim gördüğünüz rüyâ-yı sâdıkın tâbirine: kendinizi Kâbe-i Mükerreme’de görmüşsünüz. Tâbirce, Kâbe, hısn-ı hasîn ve savn-ı himâyet-i İlâhiye’dir. Zîra, dergâh-ı emn ü emân ve kâffe-i vuhûş ve tuyûra melce ve penâhtır.

Bir de Hazret-i Risâlet-penâh Efendimizi rüyâda görmüşsünüz. “Beni gören Hakkı görmüş olur” hadîs-i şerîfinin fehvâsınca, Cemâl-i bâ-kemâl-i Nübüvvet-penâh, aleyhi’s-selâti ve’s-selâm, Efendimiz Hazretlerini görmek, müşâhede-i hakikî ve rüyet-i vâkîf olduğu şüphesizdir. Efendimizi müşâhede etmek, husûl-i inşirâh ve husûl-i feyz ü berekete delâlet eder.

Bir de bir deveye Efendimiz, aleyhi’s-selâti ve’s-selâmın bindikleri müşâhede buyrulmuştur. İlm-i tâbirde, deve düşman demektir. Bu rüyâ, merkez-i hilâfet-i seniyyeleri olan es-Sultân Abdülhamîd Hân efendimiz hazretlerinin ve ümmet-i merhûme-i Mustafavîlerinin şedîdü’l-bağzâ deve kineli olan âdâ ve husemâya gâlib ve kâhir olacaklarına delâlet eder.

Bir de, Efendimiz aleyhi’s-selâti ve’s-selâmın bir sürü koyuna mübârek pençeleriyle sâye saldıkları rüyâda inkişâf olunmuştur. O koyun sürüsü ümmettir ve ol mübârek pençe Hamse-i Âl-i Abâ’dır ki bütün ümmete feyz ü bereketleri şâmil olmuştur.

Bir de, mukaddes ve mübârek pençelerinin sâyesi koyun sürüsünden ancak on koyuna saldığını görmüşsünüz. O on koyun Aşere-i Mübeşşere’dir ki eğer ziyâde feyz-i celîl-i Âl-i Abâ’ya mazhardırlar. Sâir ümmet o koyun sürüsü gibi her ne kadar pençe-i mukaddesin berekâtından feyz-mend iseler de, fakat hasâis-i mevâhibe tamâm ile naîl olan zıll-ı memdûd-i Hamse-i Âl-i Abâ’ya sığınmış bulunan Aşere-i Mübeşşere’dir. Bir de Efendimiz aleyhisselâmın tarafından kurbanlığa tahsîs olunmuş olan koyun sürüsü şühedâ-yı ümmettir. Bu yakında gazevât-ı ahîredir. Din ve devlet uğrunda cân-fedâkârâne bezl-i hayât eden şehîdân-ı Muhârebe-i Yunân’dır; aleyhimi’r-rahmet ve’r-rıdvân. Ve o müşâhedât zât-ı ulyâlarına inkişâf olduğu cihetle aleyhi’s-selât ve’s-selâm Efendimiz size bir teveccühât-ı feyz-âyât-ı saâdetleri olduğuna delâlet eder. Ve’s-selâm. Abbas