

Examining the Isnad and Content of the Hadith “ru'yā al-anbiyā' waḥyun” in the Theory of “Muhammad, the Transmitter of Prophetic Dreams”

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Introduction

The connection between the higher world and the matter through revelation has always been a place of deliberation. Some opponents of the prophet in his mission era (Arabic: بعثت) questioned this connection by making some accusations. Currently, modern thinkers are also trying to interpret and modernize the complex subject of revelation. Soroush is one of those whose opinions have been constantly changing and evolving during the last three decades. Previously, he considered the holy Qur'an to be the words of God; But now he considers the holy Qur'an to be the dreams of the Prophet (pbuh). *Muhammad (pbuh) the Transmitter of Prophetic Dreams* is the title of his writings about the nature of the Qur'an. In Soroush's new understanding of revelation, the Prophet (pbuh) is only a transmitter of the dreams he saw. He has used three hadiths as evidence for his claim:

1. A true dream of a righteous man is one of forty-six parts of prophetism;
2. The states of the Prophet (pbuh) when receiving revelation;
3. The dream of the prophets is a revelation.

Criticism of the evidence and Soroush's traditional argument on the third hadith is examined in this article. Considering the importance of the subject and the necessity of finding a precise answer, this research used the descriptive-analytical method at the level of content analysis, as well as, the conventional method of fiqh al-hadith. Following the analysis of fiqh al-hadith, this hadith (i.e., رُؤْيَا الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَحَىٰ) was examined with the central question of how this hadith is in terms of Isnad and textual validity, and how the meaning of the tradition is related to this theory.

Materials and Methods

In this research, after examining Soroush's opinion and extracting the cited hadith, the aforementioned hadith is considered a place for reflection. First of all, the tradition was validated based on the method of fiqh al-hadith in which it was examined for its authenticity and validity to obtain the type of Isnad and the level of credibility. The complete examination of the hadith text is one of the important principles of fiqh al-hadith.

After this stage, the content analysis of the hadith has been performed. Isnad evaluation of a traditional is important and necessary in its place; But more important than that is the content analysis of hadiths. On the other hand, Isnad criticism is important, but we need to validate the text of hadiths itself, as well. The reason for this is that the forgers of hadith have also tampered with the records of hadiths and no matter how many reliable and just people there are in the chain of transmitters of hadiths, since they are not immune from mistakes, forgetting, quoting with meaning, etc., the text of authentic hadiths should also be examined for their content.

During content analysis, after putting light on the meaning of the terms of some hadith, hadiths of the same family should be collected. Then, the content of the desired hadith is examined based on the collected hadiths. In the second stage, using the descriptive-analytical method, the content analysis and criticism of Soroush's point of view and his reading of this hadith were discussed.

Results and Findings

Examining the hadith in question, using the conventional method of fiqh al-hadith, showed that this hadith had a weak Isnad, and in terms of content, it is not in line with what Soroush has claimed. Relying on the acceptance of revelation as a dream, Soroush tries to prove that the language of revelation is the dream. Not only has he no reason to consider revelation and its atmosphere a dream; but also, there are reasons and evidence against his understanding of the hadith in question. This hadith, which is found in Shia and Sunni sources, is not intended to express revelation; Rather, it comes under the discussion of dreams and considers it a part of prophecy and not the whole. It is not possible to generalize a component to the whole. Thus, it cannot be concluded from this hadith that the entire revelation to the Prophet (pbuh) is a dream. The content of the hadith is to give credit to the unseen revelations of the Prophet (pbuh). In addition, the examination of Soroush's statements shows that he did not have an argument in his words and only took the hadith as a witness and concluded that the revelation was a dream.

Soroush believes that according to this hadith, the Qur'an is the words of the Prophet (pbuh). In this hadith, which shows that revelation is a dream, it does not state that Quran is a dream. Even if, according to this hadith, we accept that the first revelation to the Prophet (pbuh) was in a dream, using

other hadiths, it can be inferred that the revelation was the means of prophethood and not a Quranic revelation. In addition, some hadiths clearly consider revelation in the waking and conscious state and even in the form of sensory observation.

From the Qur'anic point of view, due to the non-determination of dreams as a means of communication with the higher world, the invalidity of Soroush's generalization from this hadith is determined. According to the Qur'an, the revelation of the Qur'an was through Gabriel (pbuh). Moreover, the term *descending* (Arabic: نزول) is used for the Qur'an, which firmly denies that dreams are the source of revelation. *Dream* is seeing unseen scenes and concepts objectively, and if the revelation had been from dreams, a verb, corresponding to *seeing*, should have been used for Qur'an.

In addition, the Qur'an, as an eternal miracle that transcends time and space, should be communicated to the Prophet (pbuh) through the strongest and most reliable channel. If dreams had been the channel of communication with the Prophet (pbuh), it could have been the best reason for the crooked and sick-hearted opponents to accuse the Prophet of being insane, a poet, a priest, or a sorcerer. In addition, history has not reported such a report and this is the best reason that the Quranic revelation was through Gabriel (as), and not a dream.

Conclusion

The results of the research show that this hadith has weak Isnad in Shia and Sunni sources. From the content aspect, after the formation of the hadith family and the use of rational and Quranic evidence, it is clear that this hadith does not imply Soroush's claim of considering the entire Quranic revelation a dream. In other words, the content of the hadith is that the dreams of the Prophet (pbuh) have a divine origin, not that the Qur'an was descended through the channel of dreams. Quranic and historical evidence are also in line with this conclusion. Moreover, the proposition that *the dreams of the Prophets are revelation* is different from the proposition that *the revelation of the Prophets is a dream*.

Keywords: Qur'an, Revelation, Dream, The Prophet, Messenger, Soroush.