



( Part No : 1, Page No: 646)

Fatwa no. 5965

**Q: I read in some of the books written by Shaykh Al-Islam about talking to the dead. He said that it is Satan who comes out of the grave and talks to those who have come to him, and some other related things. Does the story of Mutarrif, which was mentioned by Ibn Al-Qayyim, belong to this category? Is there limit for talking to the dead, if in fact it is Satan who responds?**

**A:** The souls of the dead approach their graves on Thursday night or Friday morning, and they recognize those who visit or pass them and greet them then more clearly than at other times. The meeting of the living with the dead on this day is a matter that belongs to the Ghayb (Unseen), which is known exclusively by Allah and therefore can only be known about through a revelation from Him to one of his prophets. Information about this has not been confirmed in a Hadith from the Prophet (peace be upon him), as far as we know. It is not sufficient to rely on dreams to learn more about this, as they are not always correct, therefore talking about them or relying on them is tantamount to conjecture over the Ghayb.

**Secondly:** What you read in "Zad Al-Ma`ad" by Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah be merciful with him) in this regard is based on what was narrated by [Abu Bakr `Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn `Ubayd ibn Abu Al-Dunia](#) in his book "Al-Qubur (Graves)" in the chapter on: "The dead knowing about visits from the living." This includes Hadith, Athar (narrations from the Companions), and dreams that have not been authenticated. What follows is a critique of them.

Ibn Abu Al-Dunia [said](#), "I was told by Muhammad ibn `Awn that he was told by

( Part No : 1, Page No: 647)

[Yahya ibn Yaman](#) that he was told by `Abdullah ibn Sam`an that he was told by [Zayd ibn Aslam](#) on the authority of [`A'ishah](#) (may Allah be pleased with her) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ﴿ ["No man visits the grave of his brother and sits by him without his brother enjoying his company and responding to him \(his greetings\) until he rises."](#) ﴾

In the Sanad (chain of narrators) of this Hadith there is [Yahya ibn Yaman](#), about whom Ibn Hajar said in "Al-Taqrīb," "Yahya ibn Yaman Al-`Ijly Al-Kufy is a faithful worshipper who makes many mistakes, but he changed." In its Sanad there is also `Abdullah ibn Ziyad ibn Sulayman ibn Sam`an Al-Makhzumi Al-Madani about whom Ibn Hajar said in "Al-Taqrīb," "He is a Matruk (a narrator whose Hadith transmission was disregarded as being unreliable). He is also accused by [Abu Dawud](#) and others of telling lies."

Ibn Abu Al-Dunia further [said](#), "I was told by Muhammad ibn Qudamah Al-Jawhary that he was told by [Ma`n ibn `Isa Al-Qazzaz](#) that he was informed by [Hisham ibn Sa`d](#) that he was told by [Zayd ibn](#)

Aslam on the authority of [Abu Hurayrah](#) (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said, ( "When a man passes the grave of his brother whom he knew and greets him, he (the deceased) will return the greeting and know him. If he passes the grave of someone he did not know and greets him, he will return the greeting." )

In the Sanad of this Hadith there is Muhammad ibn Qudamah Al-Jawhary Al-Ansary Abu Ja`far Al-Baghdady about whom Ibn Hajar said in "Al-Taqrīb," "He is lenient." In its Sanad there is also [Hisham ibn Sa`d Al-Madany Abu `Abbad or Abu Sa`d Al-Qurashy](#), who is judged as Da`if (weak) by [Yahya ibn Ma`in and Al-Nasa'y](#). Also, Harb said, "He did not satisfy Ahmad." He is mentioned by [Ibn `Abdul-Bar](#) in the chapter: "Those judged as Da`if among those who write Hadith." Ibn Sa`d said, "He narrated many Hadith Da`if and was a Shi`ah (Shi'ite)." [Ibn Hajar stated](#)

**( Part No : 1, Page No: 648)**

in "Al-Taqrīb," "He is truthful but makes errors. He was accused of being a Shi`ah."

Ibn Abu Al-Dunya further [reported](#), "I was told by Muhammad ibn Al-Husayn that he was told by Yahya ibn Bistam Al-Asghar that he was told by Masma` that he was told by a man from the family of `Asim Al-Jahdary that he said, "I saw `Asim Al-Jahdary in a dream, two years after his death. I said to him, 'Aren't you dead?' He said, 'I am.' I asked, 'Where are you?' He replied, 'By Allah! I am in one of the gardens of Paradise along with a group of my companions. We meet every Thursday night and Friday morning with [Bakr ibn `Abdullah Al-Muzany](#) to receive news about you.' I wondered, 'Is it your souls or your bodies that meet?' He answered, 'Impossible! The bodies have disintegrated; it is the souls that meet.' I then asked, 'Do you know that we visit you?' He said, 'Yes, we know about it on Thursday night, all of Friday, and Friday night until sunrise.' I asked, 'Why then and not all the other days?' He replied, 'Due to the merit and greatness of Friday.'"

In this Sanad there is an unknown narrator and also Yahya ibn Bistam, about whom Ibn Hajar said in "Lisan Al-Mizan," "Abu Hatim said that he was truthful." However, [Ibn Hibban](#) said that it was not lawful to narrate Hadith from him, as he was inviting people to Qadriyyah (a deviant sect that claims Allah has no power over His Creation and humans are independent of Him) and because his narration includes those who are Munkar (whose narrations conflict with authentic Hadith). Al-`Aqily said that he was one of the Da`if narrators. [Abu Dawud said](#), "His Hadith is disregarded as being unreliable." [Mu`tamir ibn Sulayman](#) asked him, "Are you a Qadriyyah?" He answered, "Yes."

However, even if the Sanad was authentic, it could not be accepted as evidence, because it is only the dream of an infallible person, and this cannot be used as evidence.

**( Part No : 1, Page No: 649)**

Ibn Abu Al-Dunya further [reported](#), "I was told by [Khalid ibn Khidash](#) that he was told by Ja`far ibn Sulayman on the authority of [Abul-Tayyah](#) that he said, "Mutarrif would go out early in the morning, but if it was Friday he would go out at nightfall." And he said, "I heard Abul-Tayyah say, 'I was informed that he was given a light on his whip. When he approached some graves one night, while riding his horse, he saw the occupants of the graves sitting on their graves. They said, "This is Mutarrif, who comes (to visit us) on Friday." He asked them, "Do you know that it is Friday?" They replied, "Yes! We even know what the birds say." He said, "What do they say?" They answered, "They say, 'Peace, peace.'""

[Khalid ibn Khidash](#) is Abu Al-Haytham Al-Muhallaby. Their patron Al-Basry is judged by Ibn Hajar in

"Al-Taqrīb" as a truthful man who makes errors. Moreover, as this narration is about a dream, it cannot be taken as evidence to refute an established principle and the Sunnah (unchangeable law) of Allah, as the dead do not talk to the living and the living can not hear the speech of the dead. The only exception to this would be as a miracle that was given to a prophet (may peace be upon all them). The dead also will not come out of their graves, until the Day of Resurrection. As Allah (may He be Glorified) says: ﴿ [After that, surely, you will die.](#) ﴾ [Then \(again\), surely, you will be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection.](#) ﴾

As for the dead returning a greeting, there is a Hadith Da`īf that mentions this, which is quoted by Shaykh Ibn `Abdul-Hādī in "Al-Sarīm Al-Mankī." However, even if we verified the authenticity of the dream, it could not be taken as evidence

**( Part No : 1, Page No: 650)**

of the acceptability of what was mentioned by Ibn Al-Qayyim, as it has been narrated from an infallible person on the authority of an unknown narrator.

May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

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