You are right about some of it and wrong about some

Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: A man came to the Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and said: "I saw, in a dream tonight, a cloud from which butter and honey were dribbling; and I saw people collecting from these with their hands, some getting much and some little. And there was a rope extending from the earth to the sky, and I saw that you (the Prophet) held it and went up, and then another man held it and went up, and then another held it and went up. Thereafter, another man held it, but it was cut and then got connected again. Abu Bakr said: "O Messenger of Allah, I ransom you with my father, I ask you by Allah to let me interpret this dream." The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said to him, 'Interpret it.' Abu Bakr said: "The cloud is Islam. The butter and honey dribbling from it are the Qur’an. Its sweetness dribbles, and people take much or little from it. The rope which extends from the sky to the earth is the truth which you (the Prophet) are upon. You follow it and Allah raises you high, and then another man follows it and rises up because of it, and another person follows it, and then another man follows it but [the rope] is cut, and then it is connected for him and he rises up with it. O Messenger of Allah, I ransom you with my father, am I right or wrong?' The Prophet replied: "You are right about some of it and wrong about some." Abu Bakr said: "By Allah, O Messenger of Allah, tell me about what I was wrong." The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Do not swear."

[Authentic hadith] [Narrated by Bukhari & Muslim]

A man came to the Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and told him that in his dream, he saw a cloud that was raining butter and honey, and people were taking thereof with their hands. Some took a lot of it, and others took little. He also saw a rope extending from the earth to the sky. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) took hold of the rope and went up. Another two men did the same. A fourth man did the same, but the rope was cut and and then reconnected, so he finally managed to ascend. On hearing that, Abu Bakr swore that the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) should let him interpret the dream. He allowed him to do so. So Abu Bakr said that the cloud refers to Islam, for the cloud gives shade, protection, and blesses humans with its rain with the permission of Allah; and so does Islam: it protects from harm and destruction and brings bliss to one's life and afterlife. Abu Bakr further said that the honey and butter represent the Qur’an, which drips sweetness. Some people learn much, and others learn little of it. The rope that goes from the earth to the sky is the truth that the Prophet follows, and thus Allah raises him by means of it. Then a man takes the rope and rises up. This man was Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) for he would maintain the truth among the Muslims after the Prophet's death. Then another man, ‘Umar ibn al-Khattāb, takes hold of the rope and rises. Then a third man, ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān, takes hold of the rope and rises. The rope here breaks, signifying the killing of ‘Uthmān or the tribulations that

occur to him. Then the rope is connected again, meaning that the caliphate devolves to ‘Ali. Then Abu Bakr wondered if he was right or wrong in his interpretation. So the Prophet told him that he was right about parts and wrong about other parts. It was said that Abu Bakr was wrong in that he interpreted butter and honey as the Qur’an alone. As these are two things, he should have interpreted them as representing the Qur’an and the Sunnah, for the Sunnah explains the Qur’an. It is by means of both the Qur’an and the Sunnah that rulings attain perfection, just as pleasure is perfected by consuming both butter and honey together. It is further argued that the right interpretation is that the cloud refers to the Prophet and the honey and butter refer the Qur’an and the Sunnah. A third interpretation is that butter and honey represent knowledge and practicing, or understanding and memorizing. It is safer, some said: not to try to figure out what Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) got wrong in interpreting the dream, because the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) kept silent on that. Then Abu Bakr took an oath upon that the Prophet should tell him the parts about which he made mistakes, but the Prophet asked him not to take another oath on that, as he had already taken an oath before. The Prophet did not fulfill Abu Bakr's oath that time, for oaths should be fulfilled only when there is no subsequent evident harm or hardship. The harm resulting from fulfilling Abu Bakr's oath in this regard was that the Prophet would have mentioned that the rope would be cut by the killing of ‘Uthmān as well as the civil disorders that would arise during his time. So the Prophet hated to mention them so that such bad news would not spread.

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