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## THE TREATMENT OF THE ISSUE OF "RU'YATULLAH" IN SAFFOR BUKHARI'S "TALKHISUL ADILLAH"

Submission Date: Aug 09, 2024, Accepted Date: Aug 14, 2024,

Published Date: Aug 19, 2024

Crossref doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/ijhps/Volume04Issue08-05>

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### ABSTRACT

Saffor Bukhari is considered one of the representatives of the creed established by Imam Maturidi in the 5th-6th centuries AH. He is recognized as a scholar of the third period who made a significant contribution to the development of Maturidi teachings. His work titled "Talkhisul Adillah li Qawadi Tawhid" pertains to the science of Kalam and gained great fame during his time. In this work, the author discusses the issue of "Ru'yatullah" (the vision of God) in a manner specific to Maturidi Hanafi scholars. He refutes the incorrect and baseless beliefs of various misguided sects such as the Mu'tazila, Kharijites, Najjariyya, Zaydi, and Jahmi regarding this issue by relying on the Qur'an and Hadith and providing rational and textual evidence against them.

### KEYWORDS

Saffor Bukhari, theology, Tawhid, Maturidi, Ru'yatullah, Paradise, the Hereafter, Mu'tazila, Kharijites.

### INTRODUCTION

The concept of "Ru'yatullah," or the vision of Allah, is a significant theological issue discussed within Islamic Kalam (theology). This article explores how Saffor Bukhari, a prominent 5th-6th century scholar associated with Imam Maturidi's teachings, addresses this concept in his work, "Talkhisul Adillah li Qawadi Tawhid." The discussion focuses on Bukhari's analysis of whether seeing Allah is possible in this world, in

dreams, and in the Hereafter, contrasting his views with those of various Islamic sects and scholars.

"Ru'yatullah" – the issue of seeing Allah – is a theological matter discussed in various sources of Kalam (Islamic theology). Historically, there have been differing opinions among scholars about whether it is permissible or impermissible to see Allah in this world, in dreams, or in the Hereafter. Some scholars argue

that seeing Allah in a dream is not permissible because what is seen in a dream is a mere illusion, and one cannot provide an example of what is seen in a dream. They believe that it is impermissible to liken anything to Allah based on a dream. Conversely, other scholars assert that Allah exists and is visible, and therefore it is possible to see Him in a dream. Sunni scholars have unanimously agreed that the inhabitants of Paradise in the Hereafter will see the beauty of Allah.

## METHODS

This study examines Saffor Bukhari's arguments as presented in his book "Talkhisul Adillah," utilizing primary sources including the Qur'an, Hadith, and scholarly interpretations. The analysis also involves reviewing the perspectives of other theological schools and sects, such as the Mu'tazila, Jahmiyya, Najjariyya, Zaydi, and various Shia sects, to contrast and validate Bukhari's conclusions.

## RESULTS

### 1. Vision of Allah in Dreams and This World:

Saffor Bukhari addresses the possibility of seeing Allah in different contexts. He argues that seeing Allah in this world is impossible based on Qur'anic verses and Hadith. For instance, he cites the verse, "Eyes cannot perceive Him. He perceives all eyes. He is the Subtle, the All-Aware" (Qur'an 6:103), to support his claim. Bukhari emphasizes that the verse suggests that no living being can see Allah while alive.

Saffor Bukhari (460-534), a third-period scholar recognized for his significant contribution to the development of Maturidi teachings, explains the issue of seeing Allah in three contexts: in dreams, in this world, and in the Hereafter. Those who argue that it is not possible to see Allah in a dream cite the verse where Allah responds to Prophet Musa (peace be upon

him) by saying, "(You) cannot bear to see Me." According to them, this response to Musa (peace be upon him) implies that in this world, no one can see Allah in any state.

On the other hand, those who believe that it is possible to see Allah in a dream argue that since Allah is present and overseeing everything, there is a possibility of seeing Him in a dream. They contend that many things that are not normally visible can appear in dreams. They assert that seeing Allah in a dream is permissible if it is without any particular attribute, form, or symbol, and not face-to-face or with any imagination.

Saffor Bukhari does not compare the states of sleep and wakefulness. According to him, a person who claims to have seen Allah in a dream cannot assert that what they saw is indeed Allah. Furthermore, when a person is asleep, they might be in various states, including without ritual purification.

Saffor argues that if a person cannot see Allah in this world while awake, then they cannot see Him in a dream either.

### 2. Vision of Allah in the Hereafter:

Bukhari, aligning with the consensus of Ahl al-Sunnah, asserts that believers will indeed see Allah in Paradise. He supports this with Qur'anic verses such as "On that Day, some faces will be radiant, looking at their Lord" (Qur'an 75:22-23), and Hadith narrations. He refutes the claims of sects like the Mu'tazila and Jahmiyya that deny this possibility. Bukhari explains that the vision of Allah in the Hereafter will be distinct from any worldly vision, free from any form, direction, or resemblance.

Imam Abdulrahman ibn Muhammad Abul-Fadl Kirmani (d. 457-543) issued a fatwa stating that it should not be claimed that Allah can be seen in a dream. Hamiduddin Saffor Balkhi acknowledges that while it is possible to

see Allah in a dream, it is better to refrain from debating this issue.

### 3. Theological and Rational Arguments:

Bukhari also provides rational arguments to support the vision of Allah in Paradise. He argues that since everything that exists can be seen, and Allah exists, it follows that Allah can be seen. This rational perspective is backed by textual evidence from the Qur'an and Hadith, which emphasize the believers' ultimate vision of Allah as the greatest reward in Paradise.

Ibrahim Nizham, from the Mu'tazila sect, claimed that dreams are entirely illusory and do not contain any truth, except for the dreams of Ibrahim and Yusuf (peace be upon them). This claim by Ibrahim Nizham is also incorrect. Allah informed us about the king of Egypt's dream during the time of Prophet Yusuf (peace be upon him) and how Yusuf interpreted it. If dreams were purely illusory, Yusuf would not have been engaged in interpreting them. Additionally, Yusuf interpreted the dreams of two fellow prisoners in the dungeon. Allah also informed us about the dreams of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the Qur'an. This indicates that dreams can hold truth, not only for Ibrahim and Yusuf (peace be upon them) but also for other prophets. Furthermore, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "Whoever sees me in a dream has truly seen me, for Satan cannot appear in my image".

### 4. Scholarly Consensus and Refutations:

The article reviews the consensus among Hanafi-Maturidi scholars and compares it with the views of other sects. Scholars such as Imam Abu Hanifa and Najm al-Din Umar al-Nasafi affirm the possibility of seeing Allah in Paradise, while groups like the Mu'tazila

and Shia sects dispute this view. Bukhari's arguments are contrasted with the perspectives of these sects to demonstrate the robustness of the Maturidi position.

According to Saffor Bukhari and the majority view of the companions and the Tabi'in, when Musa (peace be upon him) requested to see Allah and received the response, "You cannot bear to see Me," this serves as evidence that no one can see Allah in this world.

The Qur'an states: "Eyes cannot perceive Him. He perceives all eyes. He is the Subtle, the All-Aware" (Qur'an 6:103).

Saffor Bukhari uses this verse as evidence that Allah cannot be seen in this world. He also references a hadith narrated by Muhammad ibn Ali Hakim Tirmidhi (d. 320/932) with a chain of narration from Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him), which supports this view.

The hadith mentions that when the Prophet (peace be upon him) was reciting Surah Al-A'raf and reached the part where Musa (peace be upon him) asks, "My Lord, show Yourself to me so that I may look at You!" Allah responded, "O Musa, you cannot bear to see Me. No living being can see Me while alive. Only the people of Paradise, whose eyes have not died and whose bodies have not decayed, will be able to see Me".

Saffor Bukhari explains that this hadith serves as an answer to the question of why Allah is not visible in this world. The continuation of the verse describes the mountain becoming one with the earth as a result of Allah's manifestation, indicating that seeing Allah in this world is impossible.

## DISCUSSION

Saffor Bukhari's treatment of "Ru'yatullah" is consistent with the Maturidi creed and aligns with the

broader Sunni consensus on the vision of Allah in Paradise. His work refutes various theological objections and supports the view that the vision of Allah in the Hereafter is a true and established belief. Bukhari's rational arguments and textual evidence provide a comprehensive defense of this belief against opposing views from various sects.

Saffor Bukhari discusses how Allah will be seen in the Hereafter and uses the Qur'anic verse, "Indeed, they will be veiled from their Lord that Day" (Qur'an 83:15), to emphasize that disbelievers will not see Allah in the Hereafter.

Abul Yusr Muhammad ibn Muhammad Pazdavi (1030-1099), one of the scholars who greatly contributed to the development of Maturidi theology after Abu Mansur Maturidi, also mentions the consensus of Ahl al-Sunnah that seeing Allah is permissible. He asserts that on the Day of Judgment, Allah will be seen by His servants, but this vision will be without any form, attribute, or boundary.

In his work "Usul al-Din," Pazdavi names 21 issues related to "seeing Allah" and explains the issue of "Ru'yatullah" in accordance with Imam Maturidi's views. He notes that while disbelievers cannot see Allah as a sign of mercy or favor, they may see Him as a form of punishment and suffering.

Saffor Bukhari supports the view that believers will see Allah in the Hereafter, countering the objections of the Mu'tazila, Kharijites, Najjariyya, and Zaydi groups who reject this idea. He refutes the claims of the Jahmiyya sect, who argue that Allah does not see anything and cannot be seen, by using the Qur'anic verse: "On that Day, some faces will be radiant, looking at their Lord" (Qur'an 75:22-23) to prove that seeing Allah is possible.

Saffor Bukhari also cites evidence from the Companions, including Abu Bakr and Umar (may Allah be pleased with them), who affirmed the possibility of seeing Allah in the Hereafter. When asked about this issue, they referred to the verse: "On that Day, some faces will be radiant, looking at their Lord" (Qur'an 75:22-23), indicating that it is indeed possible.

Saffor Bukhari clarifies that the Jahmiyya, Mu'tazila, and Kharijites deny the possibility of seeing Allah in the Hereafter. They attempt to explain away the notion of seeing Allah by suggesting that such visions involve the interplay of light or space between the seer and the seen, which they believe to be impossible. Saffor Bukhari emphasizes that Allah cannot be compared to any created being or object and that His vision cannot be conceived in any manner, as He is beyond all attributes and imagination.

The scholar uses another proof for the possibility of seeing Allah, citing the supplication of Musa (peace be upon him), who said, "My Lord, show Yourself to me so that I may look at You." According to this interpretation, the request by Musa (peace be upon him) implies that it was possible for him to see his Lord. If there were a belief that seeing Allah was impossible, Musa (peace be upon him) would not have made such a request, as prophets are protected from ignorance and would not ask for the impossible.

Saffor Bukhari supports the evidence from the Qur'an regarding the ability of believers to see their Lord by also providing rational arguments. He relies on the principle that "everything that exists can be seen." Thus, if everything that exists can be seen, Allah, who exists, should also be visible. In contrast, the material world cannot be seen if it does not exist. If existence were not visible, there would be no distinction between what exists and what does not. Saffor Bukhari argues that rational thinkers agree that there

is a difference between existence and materiality. Denying the possibility of seeing Allah implies that one is including Him among material things. However, Allah is above and beyond such claims. Saffor Bukhari's rational argument has been referenced by later Maturidi and Ash'ari scholars in their works.

The scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah have reached a consensus that believers will see Allah with their own eyes after entering Paradise. This is a matter of faith, and according to Hanafi Maturidis, it is considered rationally permissible and an obligatory belief.

Scholars such as Abu Mansur Maturidi, Abul Muin Nasafi, Najmuddin Umar Nasafi, Abul Barakat Nasafi, Nuruddin Sabuni, Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr Bukhari, Imam Abu Ja'far Tahaawi, Ali ibn Usman Sirajuddin Ushi, and Ibrahim Saffor have all dedicated specific sections in their works to the issue of "Ru'yatullah" (seeing Allah). They unanimously agree that it is permissible for believers to see Allah in Paradise, and this belief is supported by both rational and textual evidence.

Mu'tazilites, Kharijites, Najjariyya, and Zaydi groups deny that believers will see Allah in the Hereafter. Some Jahmiya sect members claim that no one sees Allah, that Allah sees nothing, and that Allah Himself cannot be seen.

Mu'tazilites assert that Allah sees everything, but no one can see Him. The Najjariyya sect believes that seeing Allah is possible but only with the "eye of the heart." The Karromiya sect argues that Allah will appear physically in the Hereafter.

Saffor Bukhari and the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah affirm that believers will see Allah in Paradise, emphasizing that this vision is true and distinct from seeing in this

world. They argue that the manner of seeing Allah is unique to Allah alone and is supported by evidence from the Qur'an and Hadith. Saffor Bukhari cites the following verse as evidence for the possibility of seeing Allah:

"On that Day, some faces will be radiant, looking at their Lord" (Qur'an 75:22-23), meaning that the faces of the believers will be joyful, beautiful, and bright because they are looking at their Lord.

Saffor Bukhari also emphasizes that when asked about the vision of Allah in the Hereafter, Abu Bakr Siddiq, Umar ibn al-Khattab, and more than ten other companions and followers cited the aforementioned verse to confirm that believers will see Allah with their own eyes in Paradise.

Other scholars have also cited evidence from the Qur'an and Sunnah regarding the issue of seeing Allah, affirming its truth and validity. For instance, the Qur'an says:

"They will have whatever they desire therein, and We have more" (Qur'an 50:35). The "more" here refers to the vision of Allah's face. Another verse states:

"For those who have done good is the best (reward) and even more" (Qur'an 10:26). Here, "good" refers to Paradise, and the "more" refers to seeing the beauty of Allah.

Almost all Hanafi Maturidi scholars interpret the term "more" in this context as seeing the beauty of Allah in Paradise. Once the inhabitants of Paradise see Allah's beauty, all other blessings seem insignificant by comparison. They become so captivated by Allah's beauty that even after being deprived of it, they are unable to describe or retain the image of Allah.

The issue of seeing Allah is described by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in a Hadith narrated by Suhayb (may Allah be pleased with him) as follows:

“When the people of Paradise enter Paradise, Allah, Blessed and Exalted, will ask them, ‘Do you wish for anything more?’ They will reply, ‘Have You not made our faces radiant? Have You not admitted us to Paradise? Have You not saved us from Hell?’ Then the veil will be lifted, and nothing will be dearer to them than seeing their Lord, Blessed and Exalted”.

This Hadith emphasizes that in the Hereafter, believers will see Allah clearly and easily, much like seeing a full moon on a fifteenth night. According to the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah belief, Allah will be visible to the believers in Paradise. They will see Him without any direction, distance, or resemblance to anything else.

Throughout history, there have been various disagreements on this matter. As mentioned above, groups such as the Mutazilites, Kharijites, Najjarites, and some Zaydi Rofidis have argued that it is not permissible to see Allah, claiming that no one can see Him either in this world or the Hereafter. They believe that such an impossibility remains unchanged regardless of time, eras, or places.

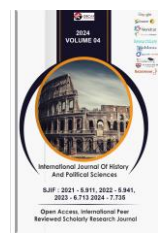
Hakim al-Tirmidhi addresses the views of the Mu'attilah and Mutazilites on the issue of seeing Allah in his work, Nawadir al-Usool. For example, he writes: “The extremists among the Mu'attilah claim that Allah is invisible both in this world and the Hereafter. They use the Qur'anic verse, ‘No vision can grasp Him, but His grasp is over all vision’ (Qur'an 6:103), as proof, arguing that Allah’s attribute does not change or become void; hence, if He is invisible in this world, He will be the same in the Hereafter.” They claim that asking Allah to show Himself would imply negating His attributes.

Hakim Tirmidhi refutes this view by stating: “If someone denies one of Allah’s attributes, such as claiming it does not exist, they fall out of the belief in Tawhid (the oneness of Allah). Moses (peace be upon him) asking Allah to show Himself does not mean he was asking for the negation of Allah’s attributes.” This refutation is directed at those who claim, “Allah cannot be seen.”

According to the Twelver Shia doctrine, it is also impossible to see Allah from the perspectives of the Qur'an, Sunnah, and reason. They argue that neither angels, prophets, nor any humans, whether believers or disbelievers, can see Allah in this world, the Hereafter, or even in dreams. They believe that for something to be seen, it must have shape, size, and presence in a specific place. They maintain that Allah is not only above these attributes but is the Creator of all such things.

Some Shia sects hold views on the issue of seeing Allah similar to those of the Mutazilites. According to them, seeing Allah is impossible both in this world and in the Hereafter. They interpret the relevant verses and Hadith in the same way as the Mutazilite scholars. However, some of them argue that while seeing Allah in this world is impossible and claiming otherwise would lead one out of the religion, the concept of seeing Allah in the Hereafter is not about seeing Allah Himself, but rather seeing His Prophet.

Their views on this matter are clearly mistaken and ignorant, as there are ample proofs in the Qur'an, Sunnah, and the consensus of the Companions and subsequent scholars that seeing Allah in the Hereafter is established. Nearly twenty Companions have narrated Hadiths from the Prophet (peace be upon him) on this subject. Numerous rebuttals from Sunni theologians to misguided groups are also well-known. Research on this topic will address the erroneous



beliefs of some contemporary misguided sects regarding seeing Allah.

Sufis, like the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah, also agree on the possibility of seeing Allah in the Hereafter. They hold that only the believers will see Allah, and not the disbelievers. They maintain that seeing Allah in the Hereafter is rationally permissible.

In the works of Hanafi-Maturidi scholars, the topic is addressed as follows:

Imam Abu Hanifa (699-767) states in his book *Fiqh al-Akbar*:

"Allah, the Exalted, will be seen in the Hereafter. The believers will see Him in Paradise with their own eyes, without any resemblance, description, or direction, and there will be no distance between Him and His creation".

The founder of the Hanafi school, Imam Abu Hanifa, emphasized that after entering Paradise, the greatest blessing for the believers will be seeing the Beauty of Allah. This vision will be without any resemblance, description, or attributes, and without any distance between Allah and His creation.

Najm al-Din Umar al-Nasafi (1068-1142) writes in his work *Aqā'id al-Nasafi*:

"Seeing Allah is rationally permissible and textually obligatory. There are auditory evidences affirming that the believers will see Allah in the Hereafter. Allah will be seen not in any particular place, nor in any direction or as a beam of light, nor will there be any distance between the viewer and Allah".

Imam al-Nasafi's views on this matter do not differ from those of Imam Abu Hanifa; rather, they provide a clearer explanation. This demonstrates that al-Nasafi

was one of the firmly established scholars of the Hanafi school and the Maturidi creed.

After entering Paradise, believers will be granted countless blessings that neither eyes have seen nor ears have heard. The greatest of these blessings is the vision of Allah. The servants will see Allah without any form, perception, or resemblance.

Disbelievers, on that Day, will be prevented from seeing Allah. This is mentioned in the Qur'an:

"Indeed, they will be veiled from their Lord that Day."

Imam Shafi'i and Imam Malik (may Allah be pleased with them) affirmed that after the enemies of Allah are prevented from seeing Him, it is true and established that Allah will manifest Himself to His friends, and that the believers will certainly see Him.

Ibrahim Saffar al-Bukhari stated in his fatwas that if someone claims that Allah cannot be seen and is invisible to the eye, it is said that such a person has departed from the faith because they have not accepted the Qur'anic verse. Allah says in the Qur'an:

Imam Saffar also discussed the issue of seeing Allah both in dreams and while awake, noting that it is a frequently asked question. Some scholars say that Allah can be seen in both states, but He cannot be imagined in any form. They argue that to claim Allah cannot be seen would imply that Allah is an entity that is invisible, which is the path of the Jahmiyyah. They support their views with the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him):

"Whoever sees me in a dream has truly seen me. For Satan cannot impersonate me."

They argue that if seeing Allah in a dream were not possible, it would not be mentioned in books of

interpretation. Just as people see Paradise, Hell, the realm of spirits, angels, and prophets in dreams, it is also possible to see Allah in dreams without any specific form or situation.

Those who believe that Allah can be seen both in dreams and while awake cite the words of Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) from the Qur'an: "My Lord, show Yourself to me that I may look at You!" They argue that if Prophet Musa believed that seeing Allah was impossible, he would not have asked, "Show Yourself to me!"

However, some argue that based on the verse where Allah says, "You cannot bear to see Me," it is impossible to see Allah even in a dream. They interpret that if seeing Allah were possible, it would imply that seeing Allah in some form would be possible, which they believe would contradict the verse.

In the work "Bada'i' al-Amali" by Ali ibn Usman al-Shirazi, a scholar of the Maturidi creed, the concept of seeing Allah in the Hereafter is expressed in a descriptive style as follows:

"Believers will see Him without any form,

Without perception and without a parable".

## CONCLUSION

The concept of "Ru'yatullah" is a deeply rooted theological issue with significant implications for Islamic faith. Saffor Bukhari's "Talkhisul Adillah" offers a detailed examination of this issue, reinforcing the belief that while seeing Allah in this world or in dreams is impossible, believers will indeed see Allah in Paradise. His work stands as a critical contribution to the Maturidi doctrine and a valuable reference for understanding Islamic views on the vision of Allah.

In summary, the issue of "Ruyatulloh" – the vision of Allah – is a matter of faith. According to the consensus of the Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jama'a scholars, the vision of Allah's beauty in Paradise for the believers on the Day of Judgment is both true and established. In his doctrinal views, Saffar Bukhari also addressed this matter. The scholar demonstrated, based on Maturidi doctrine, that in the Hereafter, believers will see Allah with their own eyes in a unique and distinct manner, without any direction, position, or resemblance.

Regarding the question of seeing Allah in dreams or while awake, most Hanafi-Maturidi theologians emphasize that this matter does not apply to this world, and they advise avoiding disputes over it. The Treatment of the Issue of "Ru'yatullah" in Saffor Bukhari's "Talkhisul Adillah".

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