



Chapter 7 - Harmony and dissonance: Jungian therapy and Islāmic psychotherapy

Prof. Dr. G. Hussein Rassool

Jung and the story of Moses and Khidr.

Jung (1969b) examined the Qur'ân, particularly the story of Moses and Khidr, Chapter 18 of the (Al-Kahf 18: 9-26), analysing it as a metaphor for the individuation process, the journey towards wholeness that integrates both conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche (Paragraphs 154-171). In brief, this is the story of the Companions of the Cave made up with a number of young men who were driven out of their homes because they believed in the unicity of Allâh (*Tawhîd*). They slept in a cave for many years (309 lunar years which is 300 solar years). When they woke up, they felt they had slept for a day or half a day. One of them went to the town to get some food and the town dwellers were amazed at his appearance and the old coins he was using. The story shows us how protects the righteous who believe in Him no matter how hard their situation is., and that that Allâh has the power to resurrect anyone He wills even after a long sleep of death, as He did in case of the Companions of the Cave.

In the context of the story of Moses and Khidr, it Ubai bin Ka'b narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Once the Prophet (ﷺ) Moses stood up and addressed Bani Israel. He was asked, "Who is the most learned man amongst the people. He said, "I am the most learned." Allâh admonished Moses as he did not attribute absolute knowledge to Him (Allâh). So Allâh inspired to him "At the junction of the two seas there is a slave amongst my slaves who is more learned than you [Khidr]." Moses said, "O my Lord! How can I meet him?" (Bukhârî). Regarding the narrative found in Surah Al-Kahf (18:60–82), it describes the voyage that Moses and his youthful aide take till they come across Khidr. Moses requests permission from Khidr to follow in order to benefit from Khidr's wisdom. Khidr, though, cautions Moses that he would not be able to tolerate him. Moses's initial perception of Khidr's deeds and their underlying wisdom is actually exceeded as the story progresses.

In his analysis, Jung describes Moses as the "representative of consciousness, with its emphasis on clarity, differentiation, and law." (Para. 155) and "representing an established order, a formulated, conscious morality."(para. 163). He contrasts Moses' reliance on "rational knowledge" with Khidr's embodiment of "an irrational wisdom." (Para. 167). He emphasises Moses' need to surrender his "preconceived ideas" and "conscious control" to embrace the deeper wisdom offered by Khidr (Para 171). Jung described Moses as a symbol of clear thinking, making distinctions, and following moral rules-an organized and conscious approach. In contrast, Khidr, seen as the opposite by Jung, embodied a wisdom that didn't follow clear rules and could seem

irrational. Jung emphasised that for Moses to grasp Khidr's deeper wisdom, he needed to let go of fixed ideas and conscious control. Jung emphasised a distinction between Khidr's enigmatic, deeper wisdom and Moses' rules-driven way of thinking. Jung suggested that ...

