



INTERPRETATION **OF DREAMS**

Ibn Raashid Al-Bakri Al-Qafsi
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Interpretations of Dreams

By: Ibn Raashid Al-Bakri Al-Qafsi

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A Short Biography of Author

His Name:

Muhammad ibn ‘Abd-Allah ibn Raashid Al-Bakri, by lineage, Al-Qafsi, by town of birth, Al-Maaliki. His Kunyah was Abu ‘Abd-Allah.

His Life:

He was born in Qafsah where he studied for a while, then travelled to Tunis and stayed there for some time, occupied with the pursuit of knowledge. He then travelled to Cairo and Alexandria, and then performed Hajj in the year 680 AH. He went back to the West having acquired a great deal of knowledge; he was appointed as the judge of Qafsah for a while and then he was dismissed.

His Shaykhs:

1. Al-Quraafi Shihaab-ud-Deen, to whom he stayed close and from whom he learned Fiqh and benefitted from greatly; he gave him Jaazah as a scholar of Usool Al-Fiqh and Fiqh.
2. Taqiyy-ud-Deen ibn Daqqeq Al-‘Eid, under whom he studied Mukhtasar Ibn Al-Haajib Al-Fiqhi.
3. Diya’ Al-Deen Al-‘Allaaf, from whom he learned Fiqh.
4. Al-Qaadi Naasir-ud-Deen ibn Al-Abyaari, the student of Abu ‘Amr ibn Al-Haajib.
5. Muhiy-ud-Deen who was known as Haafi Al-Ra’s (the bareheaded).
6. Shaykh Shams-ud-Deen Al-Asbahaani

The Scholars’ Comments Concerning Him:

1. Ibn Farhoon said that he was well-versed in Arabic language and literature. He was a prominent scholar in Arabic, dream interpretation and other fields. Al-Quraafi granted him Jaazah as a scholar of Usool Al-Fiqh and Fiqh.
2. Al-Zarkali said that he was a scholar of Maaliki Fiqh.
3. Kahhaalalah said that (he was) a Faqeeh and man of letters, well-versed in Arabic and many other branches of knowledge.

His Books:

1. Al-Shihaab Al-Thaaqib fi Sharh Mukhtasar Ibn Al-Haajib Al-Fiqhi
2. Al-Mudhahhib fi Dabt Qawaa’id Al-Madhab (6 vols). This was mentioned by Al-Zarkali. Ibn Farhoon and Kahhaalalah gave its title as Al-Dhahab fi...

Farhoon said that it is a well-written, comprehensive book. I heard Abu ‘Abd-Allah ibn Marzook say that the Maalikis have nothing else like it.

3. Lubb Al-Lubaab fi Furoo’ Al-Maalikiyyah which has been printed.
4. Al-Martabah Al-Saniyyah fi ‘Ilm Al-‘Arabiyyah

5. Al-Martabah Al-‘Ulya fi Ta’beer Al-Ru’ya .

Ibn Farhoon said that it is an outstanding book in this field. It is the present work, and we shall discuss it in further detail below, if Allah wills.

6. Al-Nuzm Al-Badee’ fi Ikhtisaar Al-Tafree’

7. Nukhbat Al-Waasil fi Sharh Al-Haasil – which is about Usool Al-Fiqh.

8. Tuhfat Al-Labeeb fi Ikhtisaar Kitaab ibn Al-Khateeb

9. Al-Faa’iq fi’l-Ahkaam wa’l-Wathaa’iq (8 vols.)

Ibn Farhoon said that he also authored other useful books.

His Death:

Ibn Farhoon said, “I could not find the date of his death, may Allah have mercy on him and be pleased with him.” It was said that he was alive in 731 AH. In Al-A’laam it is confirmed that the year of his death was 736 AH.

Sources for His Biography:

Al-Deebaaj Al-Mudhahhab by Ibn Farhoon, vol. 2 p. 328-339

Nayl Al-Ibtihaj by Al-Tanbaki, printed as a commentary on Al-Deebaaj, p. 235-236

Shajarat Al-Noor Al-Dhakiyyah by Makhloof, vol. 1 p. 210

Eedaah Al-Maknoon by Al-Baghdadi, vol. 2 p. 399 & 464

Hadiyyat Al-‘Aarifeen by Al-Baghdadi, vol. 2 p. 134 & 135

Al-I’laam by Al-Zarkali, vol. 6 p. 234

Mu’jam Al-Mu’allifeen by Al-Kahhaalah, 10/213,214.

Preface

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

O Lord, make things easy for me; You are Swift in calling to account.

Mentioned by the slave who is in need of the mercy of his Lord, Muhammad ibn ‘Abd-Allah ibn Raashid Al-Qafsi.

Praise be to Allah, the Owner of glory, majesty, splendor and perfection. Exalted be He above having any peer or parallel. Exalted be He above having any imperfection ascribed to Him. He alone is the eternal, all Glory be to Him. All favors come from Him, and by His help all blessings and guidance come. To Him is the ultimate destiny of all and He is the only Creator. He gives power to whomever He will, and He strips of power whomevers He wills; He endues with honor whomever He wills, and He brings low whomever He wills.

We praise Him, may He be glorified, and we send blessings and peace upon our leader Muhammad, His Noble Prophet. We bear witness that there is no god except Allah and we bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and His Messenger, whom He sent from among the noblest of the Arabs and raised him to the highest status; by means of him, He brought the whole divided world together, saved them from misguidance and erased evil by means of him; He granted him glory and power. May Allah send upon him blessings that fill heavens and earth. May Allah send blessings and peace upon him and upon his Family and Companions who were his supporters, in-laws, and advisers.

To proceed:

During the early stages of my life, I was not doing anything useful and I experienced ongoing pain and distress. Then I travelled to Egypt to seek knowledge and was very enthusiastic about doing so. There I met a number of senior scholars and virtuous and noble people. I studied with them Sharee’ah and other branches of knowledge, and I learned a great deal from them. One branch of knowledge that I was interested in was dream interpretation, because it is part of the knowledge of the Prophets, and the true dream is based on what one is going through and describes man’s present and foretells what he is going to face in the future. How can it be otherwise when dreams are one of the forty-six parts of Prophethood? Abu Hurayrah (May Allah be please with him) narrated that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

“Towards the end of time, hardly any dream of a Muslim will be false. The ones who have the truest dreams will be those who are truest in speech. The dream of a Muslim is one of the forty-six parts of Prophethood.”

‘Aa’ishah (May Allah be please with her) narrated that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

“After I am gone, nothing will be left (that could tell what will happen in the future) except news which gladdens the heart.” They said: O Messenger of Allah, what is news that gladdens the heart? He said: “A good dream that a man sees or that someone else sees for him.”

In Cairo I met Shaykh Al-Saalih Shihaab-ud-Deen ibn Ni‘mah Al-Maqdisi Al-Hanbali, who was a leader to be followed in this branch of knowledge and a man whose opinion was to be sought concerning its subtleties. I studied with him the book Al-Badr Al-Muneer fi ‘Ilm At-Ta‘beer, and he granted me Jaazah to teach it. Then I stayed close to him for some time and made my heart like a vessel for everything I heard from him (i.e., tried to memorize everything I heard from him). I memorized a great deal from him and drank many times from the fount of his knowledge. I hope that Allah will enable me to follow his example, even though I cannot attain his level of knowledge.

When Allah blessed me with the ability to write books about the knowledge I had acquired – nearly sixty small volumes – I wanted to write about this branch of knowledge, in the hope of acquiring a drop of the knowledge of the prophets and following in the footsteps of those who follow the path of the Awliya' [close friends of Allah]. So I wrote this summary and included in it all that has reached me from my Shaykh, Shihaab-ud-Deen, and what was included in his book *Al-Badr Al-Muneer*, and the notes that he wrote in the margins. I have also included issues discussed in *Al-Ishaarah fi 'Ilm Al-'Ibaarah* by Al-Neesaboori (2 vols.), as well as what I have learned from prominent scholars in this field. I have also tried to include dreams that were interpreted and which materialised as interpreted, or dreams which appear to mean something but have other subtle meanings that I have pointed out, and I have added my views on the subtle matters.

I have called this book *Al-Martabah Al-'Ulya fi Ta'beer Al-Ru'ya* (The Ultimate in Dream Interpretation) so that the title would suit the nature of the book and reflect its content. Whoever has similar knowledge and experience to mine will see the amazing things that I have come up with and will realise the depth of my knowledge in this field.

I pray to Allah to protect us from deviation, error and shortcomings, and to make this work sincerely for His sake and seeking His pleasure. Aameen.

I have organized the material into an introduction and several chapters, as follows.

The introduction includes six sections:

1. Definition of the Nafs (soul or self), as it is what sees the dreams
2. Definition of dreams
3. Types of dreams
4. Some of the dreams that were interpreted by the Prophet (Peace be upon him) or one of his Companions, seeking thereby blessings and offering evidence for some of the principles of dream interpretation
5. Etiquette for the dreamer and the interpreter.
6. Describing the things that dream interpreters pay attention to: likenesses (which is the main basis); similarities in wording; misreading and misspelling of words; change of vowels; breaking up words; reading words backwards; combinations of misreading, likenesses, making up words and changing vowels; implication; consequences; opposites; paying attention to sayings among the common folk; sayings and proverbs; evidence from the Qur'an and Hadeeth; poetry and its meanings; interpreting the wording to see what other meanings it may have; the number of letters; paying attention to the names of people whom the person sees in his dream; telling, derivation of names and signs.

There are seventeen chapters, as follows:

Chapter 1:

Seeing the Creator, may He be glorified and exalted, and seeing the Prophets, the Siddeeqs and the righteous in one's dreams

Chapter 2:

Seeing the heaven or sky; what is in it; what descends from it; what ascends to it and what happens in it; in one's dreams

Chapter 3:

Seeing the Jinn, air, the coming of night and day; and what happens in the air of rain, snow, clouds, thunder, lightning and rainbows.

Chapter 4:

The Earth, its mountains, minerals, rocks, pebbles, sand and dust

Chapter 5:

Gardens, trees, water and ships

Chapter 6:

Cities and what they contain

Chapter 7:

Animals

I. Different types of animals

A. Animals that walk

1. Animals found in the city

Beneficial animals, such as horses, mules and so on.

Non-beneficial animals, such as flies, ants and so on.

2. Animals found in the wilderness

B. Animals that fly

C. Animals that swim

II. Interactions with animals

Slaughter of animals; animals talking to humans; and so on.

III. Liquids, parts and sounds

Liquids that come out of animals; different parts of animals and their sounds.

Chapter 8:

The sons of Adam (i.e., humans)

I. Their ages and colors; the difference between those that are known and those that are unknown, and male and female.

II. Interpretation of each part of their bodies.

III. What comes out of the son of Adam.

Chapter 9:

Food and drink

I. Food

Grains

Meat

Fruits

Vegetables

II. Drinks

We end this chapter with mention of what is meant when things are very expensive or cheap, when sweet turns to sour and vice versa, and when good turns to bad and vice versa.

Chapter 10:

Clothing and furnishings

This chapter also includes discussion of furnishings, curtains, saddles and saddle blankets, jewellery, tents, etc.

Chapter 11:

Acts of worship and deeds of virtue

Chapter 12:

Tools and equipment

I. Tools of war (weapons)

Including various actions connected to war

II. Saddlery (riding equipment)

Equipment connected to riding and horsemanship.

III. Entertainment and things that are connected to it

Including singing and musical instruments.

IV. Games

Chess, etc.

V. Household implements

Household equipment, such as furniture,
vessels and tools.

VI. Tools for fire

Including fuel, stoves and lamps.

VII. Writing implements

Pen and ink, etc.

VIII. Gold and silver

Including things that are made from them, such as jewellery and coins.

IX. Hunting gear

Including nets, arrows and so on.

X. Implements for eating and craftsmen's tools.

Chapter 13:

Crafts and craftsmen

This includes mention of kings, their followers and inner circles, and judges.

Chapter 14:

Marriage and related matters

This includes a man's wife marrying someone else, divorce, jealousy, interpretation of adultery, homosexuality and lesbianism, and pregnancy and childbirth; as well as issues to do with other transactions and covenants.

Chapter 15:

Interpretation of miscellaneous things

Includes a list of actions and themes that often occur in dreams.

Chapter 16:

Death and dying

Including preparation and burial of the deceased, and issues pertaining to the grave.

Chapter 17:

The Hour and its portents

Including signs that will precede and herald the coming of the Hour, and matters pertaining to the Hereafter.

“May Allah grant us the best of this world and the Hereafter by His Grace” Aameen.

Introduction

Definition of the Nafs

It should be noted that the scholars differed greatly concerning the meaning of the Nafs [soul or self]. My Shaykh, Shihaab-ud-Deen Al-Quraafi, narrated to me from Imam Taqiyy -ud-Deen Ibn Daqeeq Al-Eid that he saw a book by the wise men about the reality of the Nafs in which there were 300 definitions. He (Peace be upon him) said:

The fact that there is such a difference of opinion is indicative of the large number of possibilities. Moreover, the scholars of Islam differed as to whether it is permissible to indulge in discussion of this matter or not, and there are two views:

The evidence of those who say that it is not allowed is the Verse in which Allah says:

﴿وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا﴾

“And they ask you (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) concerning the Rooh (the spirit). Say: ‘The Rooh (the spirit) is one of the things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord. And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little.’ [Al-Isra’ 17:85]

The relevant point here is that Allah did not explain the Nafs to His Prophet (Peace be upon him) in this Verse; rather the answer given here is general and brief: “Say:

﴿قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي﴾

“The Rooh (the spirit) is one of the things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord.”

Allah explains that people were given only a little of knowledge, and that implies that knowledge of the soul is among the abundant knowledge that is known only to Allah. Whatever Allah has concealed knowledge of, how can we indulge in discussing it?

The second opinion is that of those who say that it is permissible, and they say that Allah only forbade engaging in discussion thereof with people other than scholars. This view was favoured by Imam Al-Ghazali. But then those who said that it is permissible differed: is the Nafs a quality that resulted from the way things are put together as the coherent images, amazing threads and brilliant patterns appear in a garment of silk, then if the fabric disintegrates the image disappears and does not remain? Or does it have an essence or substance? Or does it have no essence and no quality? And is it that it cannot be described as being inside or outside the body? This is the view of Al-Ghazali and others.

The view of later scholars is that the Nafs is a substance made of light, like a flame going through the body, and like the sap in the rose and the heat of fire in the meat. The evidence that it is in the body is the Verse in which Allah says:

﴿فَلَوْلَا إِذَا بَلَغَتِ الْمُلُوكُومَ﴾

“Then why do you not (intervene) when (the soul of a dying person) reaches the throat?” [Al-Waaqi’ah 56:83]

If it were not in the body, then Allah would not have said that:

If you tell me that Galen said: We dissected a body and we did not find any trace of the soul; moreover if it was in the body that would mean that if a limb were cut off, part of the soul would be cut off too, but that is not the case so the soul is not there. I would say: Not finding something does not mean that it does not exist, based on the case of glass, which is extracted from sand after subjecting it to some processes. If we check the sand, we will not find any trace of glass. Moreover, transparent bodies cannot be seen, based on the case of the air around us. Furthermore, the soul may retract or extend, so perhaps it retracts when a limb is cut off, so cutting off a limb does not necessarily mean cutting off part of the Nafs. Moreover it may be divided into parts and then put together again, as indicated by the story of Shaykh Abu'l-Zaahir. Whatever is like that cannot be cut off, as attested by the case of water, fire and clouds. It should be noted that the soul, spirit, heart and mind are synonymous and can only refer to one thing in the body. It is called the soul (Nafs) because it is inclined towards whims and desires; it is called the spirit (Rooh) because the body cannot be alive or function without it; it is called the heart (Qalb) because it is constantly changing (Taqaallub); and it is called the mind ('Aql) because it understands information and the mind is knowledge. Once this is understood, you should know that Allah only created this body so that through the Nafs a person may acquire divine knowledge which is the cause of eternal happiness. Allah also created these five senses, namely hearing, sight, smell, taste and touch, and in the brain there are five other senses, namely rational sense, the ability to process real images, imagination, comprehension and memory. There is a difference of opinion concerning these senses: are they like windows through which the Nafs looks and learns what is beyond them, or are they like spies and servants, as in a pavilion in which a king is sitting in the middle, and in the pavilion there are five windows, behind each of which is a spy telling what he sees?

He acquires knowledge so that he can take care of the interests of the people under his charge, so he is always working to manage the affairs of his people and seeing how best to serve their interests. But then that king cannot continue working in that manner; rather he needs to rest, so he and his servants rest. But whilst resting he cannot neglect his people's affairs, so it is essential that he ask someone to keep a record of what happens whilst he is resting, so that he can tell him about that when he comes back to his headquarters. So Allah has put this Nafs in the body like that king in his pavilion, and He has made sleep a means for the soul to rest from its work. And He has given it the power of imagination, which is like a smooth mirror, and the Nafs is also like a heavy mirror: when it stands before Al-Lawh Al-Mahfooz, it imprints on it what Allah wants it to know. If that is imprinted on the Nafs, it will have a specific impact on the imagination, so that he can envisage it. Then Allah makes it possible for the memory to memorise what is envisaged by the imagination, and He enables another power to transfer what the memory has memorized to the Nafs when the veil of sleep is lifted from it. Imam Fakhr-ud-Deen Al-Khateeb said: It is proven that Allah has created the Nafs in such a way that it is able to ascend to heaven and to read Al-Lawh Al-Mahfooz, but that is not possible when a person is awake, because then the Nafs is preoccupied with managing the physical affairs of the individual. But at the time of sleep, it becomes less distracted so it is able to learn things. So once it finds out some information that has an appropriate impact on the imagination, so the Nafs learns things from that impact.

Shaykh Shihaab ibn Ni'mah said: An example of that is if a man sees himself in a dream eating sweets from a nice dish, then when he awakens, if the dreamer is sick with a fever, we say that (the dream) indicates that his sickness will be lengthy, and if he is healthy, then if the dreamer is a king we say that he is going to take over some land, and if he is of lower status, then he will be promoted to a good position; if he is a seeker of knowledge he will gain more knowledge, and if he is a single man, he will marry a beautiful wife. But if the sweets are of bad quality or rotten, all of that is reversed. It should be noted that some souls are very strong, so they see dreams which turn out exactly as seen. There are some people who, if their thoughts wander, they see in those wandering thoughts things like others see in dreams; sometimes it has an interpretation but sometimes there is no interpretation. I have seen that in myself and others.

Definition of Dreams

Dreams are a kind of knowledge that one may learn when sleeping, by means of interpreting symbols in most cases. Imam Al-Ghazali said: Souls cannot be seen, and what is seen in dreams is only symbols which indicate a meaning to the dreamer. This is supported by the fact that a man may sleep during the day and see (in his dream) someone he knows and some interaction may take place between them, but at that time the other man is not sleeping. So it is not possible to say that his soul came out so that the dreamer could see it; rather it is no more than a symbol of him.

We say usually because there may be an exception to what we have mentioned. A man may see something in his dream and then see the exact same thing in reality. One of the Companions { saw in his dream Thaabit ibn Shammaas, who had been killed in the war with Musaylimah. Thaabit said to him: I will give you my will and last requests; beware of saying that this is just a dream and neglecting it. When I was killed yesterday, a Muslim man came past me and took my shield. His tent is on the furthest edge of the camp, and there is a horse next to his tent. He has thrown a pot over the shield, and on top of the pot he has put a saddle. Go to Khaalid ibn Al-Waleed and tell him to send someone to take my shield, then when you reach Madeenah, go to the caliph of the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) and tell him that I owe such and such to so-and-so, and that so-and-so among my slaves are free. The man went to Khaalid and told him about that, and he sent someone to bring the shield to him. Then he told Abu Bakr (May Allah be please with him) about the dream, and he approved of Thaabit's will after his death. It is not known that any man's will was approved after his death except the will of Thaabit.

Types of Dreams:

Dreams may be classified on the basis of five criteria:

A. Whether they are sound or meaningless

1. Sound dreams are those in which things are seen as they are seen when one is awake.
2. Meaningless dreams are those which stem from one of five things:

Self-talk: which results in seeing themes that are meaningless, i.e., what a person thinks about to himself, because when a person is thinking to himself about something, that thing appears in his imagination, especially when the thing is dear to the Nafs. So when he goes to sleep, his imagination envisages it, then his memory stores it and that image reaches the Nafs when the veil of sleeping is lifted.

Habits, which result in a person seeing himself doing what he usually does. So a Muezzin sees himself giving the Adhaan, a reader sees himself reading, and a person who usually rides horses sees himself riding a horse and so on. This is not of any significance. But if he sees himself doing an action that is lower or better than his usual action, such as if he usually rides an old nag and he sees himself riding a fine steed, or vice versa, and the like, then this is significant and may be interpreted.

Fear, which results in a man seeing something that indicates that a thing feared by people may happen. This is of no significance.

Imagination and envisaging things. If there is something in the dream that he imagined or envisaged, it is of no significance, such as if a man says, I saw myself riding the mule of 'Abd Al-Haqq ibn Sulaymaan, and it was as if I were between darkness and light. I said: Did you imagine yourself riding? He said: Yes. I said: You want what he has, and this dream is of no significance.

When one of the humours predominates, such as if the blood predominates, a person will see (in his dream) things that bring joy and entertainment; if yellow bile predominates, he will see yellow things,

fire and smoke; if phlegm predominates, he will see rain and snow; if black bile predominates, he will see black things. This is of no significance.

Shihaab ibn Ni'mah said: If he sees along with something corrupt a thing that is not corrupt, then disregard the corrupt thing and interpret the rest.

3. Whether they are good or evil:

a) That which is indicative of good both explicitly and implicitly, such as drinking milk or wearing fine clothes in the case of one for whom it is appropriate to wear them. This is good as it appears to be, and it may be understood as referring implicitly to provision and benefits.

b) The opposite of that, such as burning with fire, drinking poison or being bitten by a snake. This indicates harm from an enemy both explicitly and implicitly.

c) That which appears outwardly to be bad, but in fact implies something good, such as death and being carried on the bier and crucifixion, unless the position is reversed or the 'Awrah is uncovered. This implies a rise in status, although it is outwardly bad.

d) That which is apparently good but implies something bad. Shihaab ibn Ni'mah said: Such as smelling a flower, if the person says 'ah' after smelling it, which is a word that is usually said at times of hardship. Other scholars disagreed with that, which will be discussed below.

Arees said: I dreamt that I was smelling rosewater, and I said this is a calamity that will result from a white animal. He had a white mare which died, and he was distressed as a result.

The correct view in my opinion is that smelling fragrances is indicative of joy and happiness which will be followed by some distress or hardship, because Shihaab ibn Ni'mah said: Thus we may reconcile both views.

4. Whether they show a thing as being near or far.

a) Indications of closeness, which is a sign of calamity or distress. By His grace, Allah does not combine two kinds of distress for His slave: the distress of expecting calamity and distress when it occurs. If a man sees (in his dream) something that may cause distress, then ask him: if it has already happened then it may be interpreted as such, otherwise it means that it is close at hand. Similarly, what indicates something good, if it is seen during the day, then it most likely indicates that it is going to materialize soon, and that also applies if something appears in the dream that indicates that it is going to be soon, such as the dream of the servant (who was in prison with Yoosuf (May Allah be please with him): because he saw himself in a garden, at the bottom of a strong grapevine that had three branches on which there were three bunches of grapes, and he saw himself collecting them and squeezing them into the cup of the King and giving it to him to drink. Yoosuf (May Allah be please with him) said: As for being at the bottom of the grapevine, that is a good sign and indicates that you will come out of prison after three and will go back as you were. So he regarded the three branches as a sign of closeness or that this event was going to happen soon.

b) Indication that something is far off and it is impossible for it to happen soon, such as the dream of Abu Bakr which told of power and authority, because the means of power and authority were not available at that time.

c) Indication that something is coming soon or that is far off, and that is something other than this. It may be said that if one goes to sleep at the beginning of the night and sees a dream, it is going to happen later, and if it is seen nearer to morning, then it is going to happen soon, and if it is seen in the middle of the night then it is in between being close at hand and far off. What I have experienced is

different from that; a dream may be seen at the beginning of the night and materializes the next morning, or it may be seen at the end of the night and take a long time to materialize.

5. With regard to how easy or difficult it is to earn a livelihood.

a) That in which provision is easy at the beginning and at the end, such as drinking milk or honey, or eating butter and loaves of bread and so on.

b) That which is difficult at the beginning and at the end, and easy in the middle, such as the citron which has a skin that has a sharp taste, then in the middle is the pulp, which is sweet, then the last part is worthless. The same applies to the pomegranate: the skin is tough, in the middle is the pulp which is sweet, and the end is hard. Shaykh Shihaab-ud-Deen noted this meaning when he interpreted the dream for a man who dreamt that he had a bone in which there was marrow and on which there was meat, and he was eating that meat and marrow. He told him: At the beginning of your life you will be rich, then you will become poor, then you will become rich again, because the meat is wealth and the marrow is wealth, and the bone, on which there is nothing, is in the middle and comes in between them. And it turned out as he said.

c) That which is difficult in the beginning and easy at the end, like almonds; at the beginning there is the shell which represents hardship, or it may refer to some income, the means of acquiring which starts with a dispute, because the shell makes a sound when you break it, and the centre of the almond is at the end.

d) That which is the opposite of that, such as dates and raisins, because the beginning thereof is the pulp and the end is the pit or hard seed. Shaykh Shihaab-ud-Deen said: Rather apricots and peaches are indicative of hardship, because they contain a pit and the eater is worried about it lest it damage his teeth.

6. With regard to cases where various dreams mean one thing or one dream has various meanings.

It should be noted that dreams may vary but have one meaning, or there may be the same dream but it has different meanings. An example of the first is where the judge sees in a dream that his mule dies, or he loses his pen, or his ink pot is broken or lost, or he loses his ring or chair, or he sees himself separating from his wife, or his shoes get damaged or he sells them or they wear out totally or partially. All of that indicates that he will be dismissed. Similarly, if one person sees the sun eclipsed, and another sees the ocean dry up, and another sees a great mountain collapse, and another sees a great river disappearing into the earth: all of that is indicative of one thing, which is the death of a great man, whether he is one of the righteous, a scholar, or a ruler.

With regard to one thing meaning many things, there are five causes of that:

a) Differences in language, as in the case of the Safarjal or quince. In the Persian language the word Safarjal means glory, so if a Persian or someone who knows their language sees it in his dream, in his case it refers to glory and pride. For the Arabs and those who know their language, Safarjal means a bone, and is indicative of travelling for Jihad or Hajj. If you misspell or mispronounce it, so that the Jeem becomes ha', then you are saying Safar Hall, which means it is time to travel. So if you say I saw a Safarjal, this is indicative of travel (Safar) and departure (Jala'). This is supported by the words of the poet:

b) Do not give a Safarjal to the one you love, for the beginning of it is Safar (travel) and the end of it is departure (Jala').

c) In my view, for the one who is distressed it signals relief because it may be mispronounced to say Baththun Yufraj (distress will be relieved).

d) Differences of religion, such as eating dead meat or drinking alcohol. For the one who believes them to be Haraam, (seeing them in a dream) means that he will get Haraam wealth, otherwise it will be permissible wealth.

e) Differences in customs, such as taking off one's clothes. If that is done in the bath, it represents something good and relief from distress, because it is the normal thing to do; but (if a person sees himself in his dream) taking off his clothes in front of a gathering of people, this is indicative of a bad reputation, especially if he is exposing the 'Awrah. The same applies to shaving the beard; it represents something good for those who prefer that, such as the Christians and the Qarandaliyyah, and for those who adorn themselves to attract women and the one who prefers an easy life. Similarly wearing silk and gold for the one for whom it is suitable is indicative of something good and coming closer to the prominent people. If a deceased person is seen with silk and gold, then that indicates that he is in a good state.

f) Differences in season, such as seeing oneself in a dream getting close to the fire for warmth, seeking the warmth of the sun, wearing fur or using hot water in the winter; this is good and is indicative of recovery for one who is sick because of the cold. But in the summer it is indicative of distress and misfortune and of lengthy sickness for one who is sick because of heat. Similarly a tree is a good sign at times of ease, and the shade of a tree is also a good sign at times when it is hot, but it is indicative of distress and little benefit at times of hardship.

g) Differences between people. Carrying a weapon (in the dream) for an off-duty soldier means that he will be called to service, for the fighter it is indicative of victory, for the worshipper it is a signal that he will give up his worship, for the student it is a sign that he will give up his study, and for others it is a warning of a bad deal with their opponents. Wearing a fine white garment (in a dream) is good for Fuqaha and the righteous, as it is indicative of a rise in status, a good attitude and a good life. But for butchers and herders it is a bad thing, as it indicates that they will lose their livelihood because they wear that when they are not working; but wearing dirty clothing is a good sign for them, because it is indicative of how they earn their livelihood, whereas for the Fuqaha and the righteous it is a bad thing. Riding a mule (in a dream) for the Faqeeh indicates that he will be appointed to some position; for the one who wants to get married it indicates that he will find a wife; for the cook and those in similar professions, it is indicative of a bad reputation. For a king, a pomegranate indicates a city; for the Faqeeh it indicates appointment to some position; for the provision seeker it indicates provision; for the one who is single it indicates a spouse; for the traveller it indicates capital, and it indicates the same for the one who wants to buy a house. Rain (in a dream) represents provision and plenty of it, but it indicates a lack of provision for the fuller; the opposite is the case with regard to the sun. Eating sweets (in a dream) represents provision for the healthy and recovery for the sick whose sickness is due to cold, whereas for those whose sickness is due to heat it indicates that their sickness will last for a long time; sour things represent the opposite of that.

Some of the Dreams that Were Interpreted by the Prophet (Peace be upon him) or One of the Companions, With Evidence for Some of the Principles of Dream Interpretation

It was narrated that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

“Whilst I was sleeping, I saw the people being shown to me and they were wearing garments, some of which came down to the chest and some came lower than that. ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattaab passed by and he was wearing a garment that was dragging.” They said: How did you interpret that, O Messenger of Allah? He said: “Religious commitment.”

Abu Bakr (May Allah be please with him) said: I dreamt I saw two brand marks on my chest. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: “You will be in charge of the people for two years.”

Ibn ‘Umar (May Allah be please with him) saw himself eating dates and the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said to him:

“That is the sweetness of faith.”

A man came to him and said: O Messenger of Allah, I dreamt I saw a green meadow in which food was spread out and a Minbar with seven steps was set up, and I saw you ascending to the seventh step, and calling people to the food. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

“As for the green meadow, it is Paradise; the food is Islam and the Minbar with seven steps on which I had ascended to the seventh is this world which will last for seven thousand years of which six thousand have passed, and now it is the seventh. As for the call, I call the people to Paradise.”

Abu Bakr (May Allah be please with him) saw in a dream on his way to Makkah that the Prophet * approached Makkah with his Companions, and a bitch came out to them waving her tail; when they got close to her, she fell on her back, dripping with milk. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

“Their hostility has gone and the milk of kindness may be expected from them. They are asking by virtue of ties of kinship for (reconciliation) and for you to meet with some of them. If you meet Abu Sufyaan ibn Harb, do not kill him.”

A man came to him and said: O Messenger of Allah, I saw myself acquiring twenty four Dinars, then I lost them all and I could only find four of them. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said to him:

“You have forsaken the jamaa’ah and are praying alone.”

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) saw [in a dream] that he had two bangles of gold on his arm and they bothered him, then Allah revealed to him in his dream that he should blow on them, so he blew on them and they flew away. He interpreted them as referring to two liars who would emerge after he was gone. Al-‘Ansi emerged in San‘aa’ and Musaylimah in Al-Yamaamah.

‘Abd-Allah ibn Salaam narrated that [he dreamt] he was holding on to a handhold of gold. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said to him:

“You will not die, if Allah wills, except in a state of fitrah.”

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) saw (in a dream) some black sheep followed by yellow sheep, until the yellow ones outnumbered the black. He said:

“O Abu Bakr, how would you interpret it?” He said: “It is the Arabs who will follow you, and the non-Arabs.” The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: “That is how the angel interpreted it.”

And the Prophet (Peace be upon him) saw himself in the house of Abu Raafi’. He said:

“We were brought some ibn taab dates. I interpreted it as high status in this world and a good ending in the Hereafter, and that our religion is perfected.”

This interpretation is based on derivation.

And the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

“I saw myself at a well drawing water for black sheep, then Abu Bakr took the bucket after me and drew a bucket or two, but there was some weakness in his drawing, may Allah forgive him. Then ‘Umar took the bucket after him and the bucket turned into a large one in his hands, I have never seen anyone among the men who come after me so proficient in drawing water as you, O son of Al-Khattaab.”

The Prophet (Peace be upon him): “I saw Abu Jahl in a dream, swearing allegiance to me.” Then his son ‘Ikrimah became a Muslim. This indicates that the dream may refer to someone other than the one seen in the dream.

When the Prophet (Peace be upon him) was in Al-Taa’if, he saw a dream in which a vessel of milk was brought and placed before him, and it fell and spilled. Abu Bakr said to him: I do not think that you will get anything from Al-Taa’if this year. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

“Yes, I have received no permission concerning it.”

And he (Peace be upon him) saw in a dream a black woman with unkempt hair who came out of Madeenah and settled in Al-Juhfah. He interpreted that as referring to an epidemic in Madeenah that moved to Al-Juhfah.

Abu Bakr (May Allah be please with him) said: I saw myself wearing two striped cloaks and I saw on my chest two patches of vellum; I started entering the people’s toilets and stepping on their ‘Awrahs. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: “As for the two cloaks, they are two sons whom you will look after; the two patches are two years during which you will be in charge of the Muslims’ affairs. As for your entering the people’s toilets and stepping on their ‘Awrahs, this refers to the disputes between the people and what answers they will give you.”

Umm Fadl said to him: I saw (in a dream) that part of my body had been cut off and placed in my lap. He is said to her:

“You have seen something good. Faatimah will give birth to a boy, if Allah wills, and he will be placed in your lap.” She gave birth to Al-Husayn (May Allah be please with him) and he was placed in her lap.

A Nakha’i man came to the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) accompanied with a delegation from Al-Nakha’ and said: O Messenger of Allah, I saw that on the way, a female donkey that I left at home gave birth to a foal that was reddish black with squinting eyes. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:

“Do you have a slave woman who you left at home and she is pregnant?” He said yes. He said: “She has given birth to a boy who is your son.” He said: Why is he reddish black and squinty eyed? He said: “Come close to me.” He came close to him and he said: “Do you have leprosy that you are concealing?” He said: Yes, by the One Who sent you with the truth; no one has seen it and no one knows about it. He said: “That is what it is.”

Etiquette of the Dreamer and the Interpreter

For the dreamer, there are five points of etiquette:

1. He should not tell his dream to anyone who may envy him. Don’t you see that Ya’qoob said to Yoosuf ^:

﴿لَا تَقْصُصْ رُءْيَاكَ عَلَىٰ إِخْوَتِكَ﴾

“Relate not your vision [dream] to your brothers”[Yoosuf 12:5]?

2. He should not tell it to one who is ignorant or sick, or to a child or a woman, as all of these are lacking in reason, lest they interpret it in a bad way when it is indicative of good and thus it will materialize in the way in which it is interpreted, because it says in the Hadeeth:

“The dream is for the first interpreter.” And in another Hadeeth it says: “The dream is not settled for a man, then when it is interpreted it will settle.”

A woman came to the Prophet (Peace be upon him) and said:

“[I saw in a dream that] I gave birth to a girl and the pillars of my house were broken.” Her husband was absent and he [the Prophet (Peace be upon him)] said to her: “You will give birth, if Allah wills, to a female and your husband will come.” Her husband came and she gave birth to a female. Then he went away again, and she came to him [the Prophet (Peace be upon him)] and said something similar, and he said to her the same as he had said the first time. Her husband came back, then he went away for a third time. She came to him [the Prophet (Peace be upon him)] and did not find him, so she told Abu Bakr [about her dream] and he said to her: “You will give birth to a female and your husband will die.” Then she told the Prophet (Peace be upon him) [about the dream] and he said to her: “Did anyone interpret it for you?” She told him about the interpretation of Abu Bakr (May Allah be please with him) and he said the same thing to her and said: “The dream is for the first interpreter.”

3. He should tell it as he saw it, without adding or subtracting anything. It says in the Hadeeth:

“Whoever tells a lie about his dream will be ordered on the Day of Resurrection to tie two grains of barley together.”

In some books of Fiqh it says: “... two grains of barley, and he will never be able to tie them together.”

4. He should tell it in secret as he saw it in secret.

5. He should tell it at the beginning of the month. I have seen this in the books of some of the authors who write about this field of knowledge. Others say that he should not tell it after ‘Asr or at night. Our Shaykh, Shihaab-ud-Deen, used to interpret dreams after ‘Asr, and I did not see him interpret dreams at the beginning of the month or at the end, but I do not know the reason for that.

For the interpreter, there are six points of etiquette:

1. He should say, “I think it is good.” The Prophet (Peace be upon him) would say to the dreamer: “May good befall you and may you be protected from evil; may it be good for us and bad for our enemies; praise be to Allah the Lord of the Worlds. Tell us your dream.”

2. He should interpret it in the best way, because of what it says in the Hadeeth: “The dream will materialize as it is interpreted.”

3. The interpreter should listen well and make sure he understands what the dreamer is saying, and give a good answer.

4. He should take his time giving an answer, because it is said: The one who takes his time will get it right or near enough, and the one who is hasty will get it wrong or near enough.

5. He should not withhold his interpretation from the dreamer.

6. He should listen to the dream from the one who saw it, so that he may know him and interpret it for him in an appropriate manner, and because an intermediary may change the words, and the interpretation varies according to different wordings.

Moreover, if the interpreter sees something in the dream that is indicative of good, he should give the dreamer glad tidings before interpreting it. If he sees something that indicates something bad, he should refrain from interpreting it or explain it according to the best possibility. If part of it indicates

something good and part of it indicates something bad, he should mention what is most likely. For example: entering the bathhouse is indicative of misfortune and troubles, but the interpretation is that it is indicative of relief from calamity. So the rest of the dream should be examined to see what the conclusion is most likely to be. If he gets confused, he should ask the dreamer about his name and interpret it according to what he understands from this name.

Things that Dream Interpreters Pay Attention to

There are eighteen things that dream interpreters pay attention to:

A. Likenesses

We have seen above that dreams give parallels, so (the interpreter) looks at the similarities between a thing and its parallels, in physical or psychological attributes, in names and letters, in terms of lineage and otherwise. I have listed every scenario that was interpreted and turned out to be true. When I was the one who interpreted it, I have attributed it to myself, and what my Shaykh Shihaab-ud-Deen said, I have attributed it to him. Where it has been proven to me that a dream was interpreted and turned out to be true, I have attributed it to the one who interpreted it. If I do not know who he was, I say “an interpreter said...” What I mention without attributing it is quoted from the book *Al-Ishaarah*. Then if I found out who interpreted it, I mention it; otherwise I list the dreams and mention what I think the interpretation must be. The interpreters had habits which have changed in our time, so the ruling has to change. For example, the dreams of Yoosuf (May Allah be please with him) refer to the prevalence of the Mutawakkili state. A man said to me in the year 14: I saw Yoosuf (May Allah be please with him) coming to Tunis on a man’s ship and I said: Perhaps Tunis will be taken over by a man who has similarities to [Yoosuf (May Allah be please with him)] in many ways, and I thought to myself that it was the ruler of Constantine [Arabic Qusanteenah, in NE Algeria].

I reached this conclusion on the basis of five things:

1. Constantine is like a ship in that it is surrounded by water.
2. Noble descent: the Prophet Yoosuf was a noble man, son of a noble man, descended from noble men, and the ruler of Constantine is a king, son of a king, descended from kings, so they have noble descent in common.
3. The grandfather of Yoosuf (May Allah be please with him) and the grandfather of this king were both called Ibraaheem.
4. Ibraaheem (May Allah be please with him) was tested by means of a disbelieving king whose religion had no basis, and Ibraaheem the grandfather of this king was tested by a king of no known origin.
5. Yoosuf (May Allah be please with him) was of handsome appearance and I have heard that this king is of handsome appearance. Then I heard that the reason why he came to power was a dream, then I came to the city during his time. That confirmed that he was the one referred to in the dream, so there should be something that is going to happen at the end of his life, and his reign would be lengthy. When Ibraaheem entered Tunis and this king took over Constantine, a man saw in his dream that another man, who was known as Abu Bakr Al-Qal’i, had entered Jaami’ Al-Zaytoonah with his scarf on his shoulders, and joined a circle of readers. I said: The Emir Abu Yahya will go back to Tunis, and that is what happened, because Abu Bakr was Al-Qal’i, as he was from Qal’at Qustantiniyyah, and the fact that his scarf was on his shoulders was indicative of resolution. Similarly, a man dreamt that he saw this Abu Bakr Al-Qal’i reciting Qur’an at night with a beautiful voice, and Hamzah ibn Abi’l-Layl was listening to him, then he turned to the dreamer, saying: Didn’t I tell you that I am the most wise, most powerful? At that time, the king had left to fight another army, so I said:

He will be victorious by the Lord of the Ka'bah, because he is wide and powerful. And that is how it happened.

Ibraaheem ibn Ahmad, the ruler of Qayrawaan, fell sick and was about to die, then he saw in a dream that a coffin was placed in front of him, then that coffin was opened and a young white girl, wearing a white garment, came out and greeted him and then went away. Then a young yellow girl came out and greeted him and then went away. Then a young black girl came out and greeted him and then went away. Then a young red girl, wearing a red garment and holding a fiddle in her hand, came out. She stood there and started to play the fiddle.

He told his dream to Shaykh Abu'l-Hasan 'Ali Al-Qayrawaani, and he said: Bring the phlebotomist. The doctors who were present said: If any blood comes out of him, he will die straightaway. He said: There is no alternative. The Emir ordered that the phlebotomist be brought, and when he let his blood out, he recovered. It was said to him: How did you know that? He said: The coffin represents the body and the four girls represent the humours. The fact that the white one, the yellow one and the black one greeted him and left indicates that he was safe from them, but when the red one stayed and played the fiddle, singing blood, blood, I knew that his problem was with the blood.

Another king's dream: Shaykh Shihaab-ud-Deen said to me: I was summoned by the king Al-Zaahir, and I found him shaking like a leaf in the wind. He said to me: Are you a Shaykh? I said: Yes, O master. He said: I dreamt that I became a midwife and attended twelve women (in childbirth), and I took the infants from their stomachs. I said: What you have dreamt is good, O master. As you have seen yourself as a woman, this is a sign that you are concealing your secrets and you will go out and conquer twelve fortresses belonging to the Christians. So he saw the resemblance between him and a woman as a sign of goodness and concealment. And he saw the wombs of the women as representing the fortresses. He said to me: He went out and conquered twelve fortresses, and when he returned he summoned me and said to me: O Shaykh. I said: Yes, O master. He said: This is the wealth that I seized, and if it is kept with the Amirs (emirs) it will be dangerous, so take half of it and I will take the other half.

A man saw in his dream that he stole night and day and sold them. Shaykh Shihaab-ud-Deen said to him: You have stolen a chessboard and sold it. He said: You are right. The similarity here is that one of the two sides (in chess) is white and the other is black, and one comes after the other.

A man dreamt that he bought Jibreel (May Allah be please with him) and put him in a cage, then a cat came and ate him. Shaykh Shihaab-ud-Deen said: You bought a hoopoe and put it in a cage, and the cat ate it.

The similarity here is that the hoopoe was the messenger of Sulaymaan (May Allah be please with him) and Jibreel is the Messenger of the Lord of the Worlds, may He be blessed and exalted, so they have the title of messenger in common.

A woman dreamt that she conquered a Christian fortress, and he said to her: You are a midwife tending to children born as a result of Zina. She said: You are right.

A woman dreamt that she turned into Dawood (May Allah be please with him). He said: You have started to do tattooing. She said: You are right

The similarity here is that the tool used for tattooing resembles chainmail.

A man said to Ibn Sireen: I dreamt that in my hands I had a vessel of dates on which was a pair of scissors. He said to him: Have you decided to travel? He said: Yes. He said: Do not do it, because the scissors look like the word no (La) and it is placed on the dates (Tamr), so from both of them we get the phrase La Tamurr (do not pass).