

*The Fifth Paradise: The Garden Of Beauty And Felicity
(On women, the secret of creation
and the secret of Jannat al-Naim)*

The Prophet traveled for five hundred thousand light-years, after which he arrived at the fifth paradise which is called the Garden of Beauty and Felicity (jannat al-naim). Its door is made of mixed gold and silver from heaven. Gabriel knocked at the door and a voice asked, "Who is it?"

"Gabriel, bringing the Prophet Muhammad."

"Has he been sent for?"

"Yes."

"Welcome, O Beloved one, to the fifth paradise!"

The door opened and the Prophet saw five beautiful ladies whose radiant light among their servants made them appear like diamonds surrounded by pearls. His heart was moved towards them He asked Gabriel, "Who are these ladies?"

He answered, "This is Eve, the mother of human beings. This is the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus. This is Moses' mother Yukabid. And this is Asiya, the wife of Pharaoh." The fifth lady looked like a sun among stars. Her light shone over the rest of the inhabitants of that paradise like a gentle breeze passing through the tree-leaves. Gabriel said, "This is an angel representing your daughter Fatima, O Prophet!"

The Prophet asked, "Gabriel, what is the secret of this paradise?"

Gabriel said, "God created this paradise to reflect the beauty and perfection of women. The light of this paradise is the source of the

angelic lights of all women on earth. Women have been created to carry the secret of creation in themselves. God has honored them greatly by making their wombs the repository of His words, which represent the spirit. He looks at the most sacred place and there descends His mercy and blessings. He perfected that place and covered it with three protective layers to shelter it from any damage. The first is a layer of light, the second, a layer of love, the third, a layer of beauty, There he fashions and creates human beings after His likeness, as the Prophet said, 'God created Adam after his likeness.' He orders the angels of the womb to perfect His creation by giving the baby life, beauty, health, intelligence, and all kinds of perfect attributes that will make each one distinguished among human beings.

"Women are not created weaker but more generous than men. They are created more beautiful and less fierce, as beauty hates to hurt and harm others. That is why they seem weak to people, but in reality they are not. Angels are the strongest of created beings. Women are closer to the angelic nature than men, as they are readier than men to carry angelic light. It is the good manner and ethics of spirituality, which they carry which makes them less forceful than men. Even physically, however, they are extremely strong. They undergo great upheavals in their body without flinching for the sake of childbirth and face the most dire physical conditions more successfully than men because God has strengthened them to ensure the survival of generations."

"God gave women five angelic qualities which men rarely have. They are the source of peace as God said that He created them 'So that you might find rest in them' (30:21). This is the attribute of the first paradise, which is named 'The Abode of Peace'. They are oases of constancy in the midst of chaos and change. That is why they

give birth. The mother nurtures and shelters the baby more reliably than the father. This is the attribute of the second paradise, which is named 'The Abode of Constancy'. They perpetuate generations. Through their offspring God creates angelic prophets and saints who establish His perpetual remembrance on earth as the angels establish it in heaven. This is the attribute of the third paradise, which is named 'The Abode of Eternity'. They are generous and bountiful. They are described as 'a fertile land' in all scriptures because they give without counting and this is the attribute of the fourth paradise, which is named 'The Sheltering Garden'. Finally, they are the source of beauty. Through their softness and subtlety, God has crowned the earth with the diadem of angelic grace. This is the attribute of the fifth paradise which is named 'the Garden of Beauty'."

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By Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani*