

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Hadith Umm Zar'

Living Quran
Session 6

Wife 5 – The Leopard

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Recap

Last time we talked about wife number four: the first time we had some praise from one of these eleven women. She mentioned a lot in just one line, and her description of her husband was amazing: he's a very moderate person, he's very understanding, a good entertainer, he listens, he's gentle and nice and has good character. We also discussed many issues surrounding how to improve communication with your husband or wife.

The fifth one said, 'My husband, when entering (the house) is a leopard, and when going out, is a lion. He does not ask about whatever is in the house.'

Today we will talk about wife number 5. She said, 'My husband when entering a house is a leopard, and when going out is a lion. He doesn't ask about what is in the house.' In another narration there is also an addition to the line, which says, 'and he doesn't postpone what is for today, til tomorrow.'

The Leopard

Firstly, we can see that she's made a comparison, that her husband is like a leopard. When you touch a leopard it's soft; it's nice to look at. We've seen in other sessions the importance of appearance. He looks after himself. Is it that important? Of course it is. Therefore he's a soft person with his wife and family, and in particular she used the description of the leopard to show that he's a person of goodness. Although there are some attributes attached to the leopard that he sleeps a lot, or he's into himself, these kinds of things. So this is why she followed it up with 'when he goes out, he's a lion.' So he's not a coward, he's not into himself – he's a community person and people respect him.

The other thing, which is well known among Arabs, is the proverb 'his provisions are more than a leopard's.' When describing someone who works hard and has a lot of *rizq*, they describe him as a leopard. Therefore this is another thing which says that her husband is very energetic; he's not lazy and he protects and provides for his family. Whether the leopard or the lion, both are protectors of their families. Hence this is another thing to be praised for: that he cares about his family, he's looking after them and he's there for them.

Intimacy

There's another take here, that it's not just a description of the softness of a leopard's fur. Leopards also jump more than any other animal in that category. So although she's not saying so explicitly, it's obvious to the listener that he loves her so much that when he sees her, he cannot resist jumping on her. They have intimate relations whenever he comes into the house.

Is this description praise or a complaint? Commentators have said that it's both: on the one hand he provides for his family and protects them, and he loves her. But on the other hand, he wants her constantly, every day.

This is not normal. Scientifically speaking, the healthy average is to have intimate relations once or twice a week. Anything below this is unhealthy, anything above perhaps needs to be reviewed. So here she's talking about 10/10. Is she fine with this, or is she complaining? It's not explicitly clear, but it's likely that she's saying this is too much.

When the intimate relationship is not right, the whole marriage is not right. Although marriage is not just about intimate relationships, nevertheless it's an integral part of marriage. At the end of the day, marriage is the *halal* way to fulfil your desires; this is why Allah Almighty made marriage *halal*.

This is why the Prophet (peace be upon him) says 'Marriage is my sunnah. Whoever disdains my sunnah is none of me.' (ibn Majah) There is no celibacy in Islam. But having said this, moderation is still the way.

She might also be saying that he's like a leopard, jumping on her with no foreplay. This is not good. It's hidden in what she says, but when she chose the leopard as a description, this is what we can take from it.

The husband needs to learn gentleness, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said in *hadith*,

'Do not jump on your wife like an animal. Make between you and her a messenger.'
(Daylami)

The messenger is creating the mood, and kissing and so on. Though the narration by Daylami is a weak narration, its meaning is correct and supported by authentic narrations from the Prophet's actions (peace be upon him): that he used to kiss his wives, have conversations with them, and this *hadith* itself is part of having conversation with the wife. Moreover, he used to ask his companions not to come straight home from their travel without informing their wives, to allow them to prepare themselves.

He also recommended to his companions to marry a virgin. It was narrated that Jabir said: I got married then I came to the Prophet and he said: 'Have you got married, O Jabir?' I said: 'Yes.' He said: 'To a virgin or to a previously married woman?' I said: 'To a previously married woman.' He said: 'Why not a virgin, so you could play with her and she could play with you?' (Nasa'i)

When we talk about marriage, we need to understand the functionality of marriage. We need to understand how we deal with this without being shy of asking about things. We don't have that much sexual education in our community. What is *halal* and *haram*? There is a big taboo on this. Everything apart from what is *haram* (anal sex), the rest is *halal*. So avoid what is *haram*.

There are very famous narrations in the community that you are not allowed to look at your husband's or wife's *awrah*; that it's *haram* or that whoever does this will be afflicted by blindness. **These are fabricated narrations.** Allah Almighty made your wife or your husband *halal* for you, everything apart from what is *haram*, which we will clarify later. So avoid what is *haram* and the rest is *halal*.

Wife 5 is saying that we have an 'intimate' relationship which in fact is not intimate – he's just jumping on me. This is not right and he should learn. A woman's psychology in this regard is very different to a man's. She needs time. This is why you need foreplay and introductions and the right atmosphere. You have to establish this with your wife and find out what she likes and doesn't like, and vice versa. It's unhealthy not to tell your husband or wife if you don't like something, and for them to keep doing it without knowing that you hate it. You need to tell them. In a gentle and polite way, not an in your face approach, but you have to be clear and open in your relationship. There's no taboo between you and your spouse.

Due to the lack of education in this department, sometimes wives and husbands are not satisfied. And this is what leads to people searching elsewhere to fulfil their desires. These issues can be sorted easily, if the couple are willing to learn and to improve their relationship with their spouse.

Here, the wife is saying her husband is too demanding and it's too much. This is not a common scenario, but if it is the case then one of the solutions is for the husband to have a second wife. It's

controversial to say this, but it's better than having a mistress, which is *haram*. It's not permissible from a legal point of view, in terms of UK law, but from a *shariah* point of view you could have a second marriage outside the country. I'm not encouraging this point of view, but if there's a problem that can't be sorted out, the only solution is the *halal* one.

It is often the case that a wife would rather her husband has a girlfriend than a second wife, however, this is allowing her emotions to prevail over her *deen*. A girlfriend is *haram*. A second wife is *halal*.

There are mechanisms for the husband if he has such a highly uncontrollable level of sexual desire. He can go to the gym, he can go running – if circumstances don't allow him to marry a second wife, he needs to diminish his libido in other ways. And the wife also needs to learn to satisfy her husband. And vice versa – I'm not blaming the wife, I'm not blaming anyone, don't misunderstand me – but she needs to learn how to satisfy him and look after herself. If whenever he comes into the house she's dusty and dishevelled from housework then of course he won't be satisfied. If he can't be satisfied in the only space where he can have it in a *halal* way, you're pushing him towards the *haram*. And vice versa – if she's into him and wants to satisfy him, but he's on his gadgets or he's watching the football, this is a problem as well. It's her right as well. This has to be sorted nicely and gently between the two of you. If you don't come to an understanding, you'll both be under stress, so diffuse this in a *halal* way to bring tranquillity for both.

In our communities, where we don't have this sexual education, there are many scenarios where a wife will never tell her husband what she likes, because she's shy to say. This is your husband. Tell him what you like and don't like. Your spouse cannot read your mind. You need to tell them and sort this out between you. If you are not satisfied in your bedroom, you will have troubles all over the place outside it. This is why Allah Almighty made marriage *halal*.

We will come back to this later, but it's very important to take into consideration. It's make or break in a relationship. Some people will say 'we shouldn't make marriages all about sex', but he and she are only human at the end of the day.

Generosity

Wife 5 also mentions, 'He doesn't ask about whatever is in the house'. This means, if he brought some things to the house and later can't find them, he won't make a fuss about it. If she's donated something that he bought, if she's given it to charity, he won't make a fuss about that. He's a generous person and they have mutual trust. You need to have permission from your spouse if you are donating out of their money. Of course it's not a master-slave relationship, it's a mutual relationship. You need to get their permission. So he's not that fussy, which is a good trait. And this is comforting to her – he's easy-going and forgiving, and very generous.

Efficiency

The last thing she mentions is that he doesn't leave things for today until tomorrow. This is a very good feature: it means he's a person to do something and not postpone it. Someone who can do something but says they'll do it later, later, and then never gets around to it – this creates frustration in their spouse. But she's saying he does things when she needs them, on the spot. So you can see from her description that her husband is super energetic, and this is a good thing but it goes both ways.

Husband's view point

Now what would he say, if we asked the husband to describe his wife? He would say that she's a very loving and respectful person, she's nice, she satisfies me and she never retreats from me. And she's also very generous, she gives charity and she wants to share the reward with me – she asks my permission and I will definitely grant it, so she is rewarded and I am rewarded. This is a very good feature, if you're so happy to share the reward. For instance if you went for umrah and your wife was not able, so you did umrah on her behalf as well and so you share the reward.

Overall

In general she is praising her husband, and he would praise her. It doesn't mean that they have no problems or challenges in their relationship – of course they do, we all do. But that doesn't mean it should control their relationship and be in the very forefront of it – we always need to find solutions for these challenges whenever we are faced with them. We should sit down and discuss them and try to find a solution that is satisfactory to both of us, as husband and wife.

So we can see that wife 5 is being discreet and respectful about the intimate relationship, without an in your face approach. We ask Allah Almighty to make us among those who fulfil their obligations and deliver the truth to people, and who try their best to improve their characters and their relationships with their spouses. And we ask Him to enable us to understand and apply the Prophet's (peace be upon him) sunnah in our lives. Ameen.