

Hikmah behind the marriages of Rasulallah(S)

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Published in Daily News, Pakistan on 11-02-2011

Revised Version

The Accusations by the bias Orientals:

In the beginning of the 15th century, the Orientals started a literary crusade against Islam. This crusade was primarily designed and directed towards labeling concocted allegations on Islam. They desired that Islam and its pioneers should be accused so profusely and they should be defamed so much that the people should get greatly suspicious about Islam and the Muslim pioneers.

Historical facts can't be denied regarding plural marriages and concubines of the Anbiya prior to Rasulallah(S). Earlier Scriptures including the Qur'an provide us limited details regarding marriages of selected personalities like Ibrahim (AS), Yaqub (AS), Dawood (AS), and Sulaiyman (AS). The Scriptures explained polygamy as a "good deed" bestowed upon them from their Lord. Sulaiyman(AS) had 700 wives and 300 concubines! In sealing treaties in ancient days, it was traditional for a junior monarch to present his daughter for marriage to the senior monarch. Every time a new treaty was sealed, Sulaiyman(AS) ended up with yet another wife. These wives were considered "tokens of friendship" and "sealed" the relationship between the two monarchs. Scripture shows that Dawood(AS) also had wives and concubines. Dawood(AS) blessings, including his wives, were given to him as a result of divine favor (2 Sam. 5:12-13; 12:8; D & C 132:39).

The perceptive of all such accusations and calumnies were the books written by biased writers which had been written during the previous centuries. A book entitled "Refutation or Rejection of the religion of Muhammad" was particularly written by J.A. Mure in the 15th Century and subsequent writers indulged in accusations against Islam, while making this book the basis of their allegations. Owing to their ignorance of the Arabi language, the writers could not get any benefit from the primary sources on Islam. Therefore whenever they wrote about Islam, they entirely depended on the study of this book and designed fabricated charges against Islam.

In the present distorted Biblical Literature, a reference has been made to the commitment of adultery by the Anbiya. Likewise, the nasty minds tried unsuccessfully to paint the picture of Rasulallah(S) in a manner that the world should believe him as a captive in the snare of lust or sexuality. Orientals have argued that Muhammad permitted Muslims to marry only four women, but he himself married 12 women. The purpose of such writings has only one motive, to defame the Rasul of Islam and to minimize his personality and character and in this manner prevent Islam from spreading.

Like their other efforts, this exercise, too, proved useless. A few realistic loving Orientals recognized the facts regarding Islam and Rasulallah (S), and apologized for the forged accusations against him. For us who believe in the status of Ismah of Rasulallah (S), such accusations are absolutely ineffectual. However it is essential to expose the reality for those who do not share our belief.

If the objectors are questioned why Rasulallah (S) spent his entire youth with a 40 years old widow and did not marry any other young women in his young age, and why during the last 10 years of his life when old age had set in, and his entire attention was devoted to solve the internal and external problems of Ummah he ventured to marry several women, what would they say? Is it lust of desire or licentiousness to spend life with women of different temperaments and of contradictory behavior? Is it an easy task to spend life with a girl who is not even mature? The objectors have no reply to these questions except this admission that all these marriages were not for a satisfaction of sexual desires and that all the accusations of this sort have been made on the basis of born enmity and prejudice.

Jone Port argued logically:

"Can a person be called licentious or lustful who does not marry any women till the age of 25 while living in an environment where several marriages were highly prevalent"?

Let us ponder over the reply to these questions as given by the famous western historian, Thomas Carlyle in his book "Heroes & Heroines Warship". He admitted:

"In effect, that contrary to what his enemies accuse him, Mohammad was never lusty and sexual and that it was a slander, only out of prejudice against him, and this indeed is great injustice".

The famous author of "Mohammad and Mohammedanism", Bosworth Smith explains:

"It should be remembered, however, that most of Mohammad's marriages may be explained at least, as much by his pity for the forlorn condition of the persons concerned as by other motives".

1. 595 AD, Khadijah bint Khuwalid, widow:

Rasulallah(S) remained single until 25. From age 25 to 50 he married only one wife, 40 years old Khudaijah. She was 15 years older than him, with children from two previous marriages. Rasulallah (S) passed about 25 years of his life with Khudaijah, when at that time number of noble unmarried girls of Arabia highly desired to marry him, but the Rasul of Islam did not consider them. Rasulallah(S) spent twenty-seven years with Khudaijah till she expired. It confirmed that Rasulallah(S) was not a "sexually passionate person". His marriage to Khudaijah shows only limited types of marriage that are allowed in Islam.

Between age 50 and 52 he remained unmarried and spent that time in commemoration of his beloved wife and kind guardian uncle, Abu Talib, the father of Ali. Between ages 53 and 60 he married all his other wives for many valid noble reasons. Rasulallah (S) after the demise of Khudaijah married the following women:

Saudah, Ayesha, Hafsa, Umme Habibah, Umme Salama, Zainab bint Jahash, Zainab bint Khuzaima, Maiyminah, Javeriah and Safiyah.

At the age of 60, through an Ayah he received instruction not to marry more. Ayah 52: Surah 33 Al-Ahzab says:

It is not lawful for you (to marry other) women after this, nor to change them for other wives.

The above mentioned Ayah refers that Rasulullah(S), like all his other actions established conjugal relations in accordance with the will of His Lord. Let us cast a glance over the causes and circumstances on the basis of which Rasulullah (S) married a number of Women. There could have been several reasons for the marriages of Rasulullah (S).

2. 620 AD, Saudah d/o Zama Amer, widow:

After migration to Abyssinia Saudah's husband had died and she was left without any supporter. At the age of 50, on the 10th year of Nubuwwah, with his marriage to Saudah bint Zama, a widower can choose to marry middle-aged, widow, jolly, and kind woman like Saudah who can take care of his children. Marriage of Rasulullah(S) to Saudah, who was Negro, also established that Islam allowed man to marry a woman of a different race and condemned spirit of racism. Marriages of Rasulullah(S) with Hafsa bint Umar, Zainab bint Khuzaimah and Umme Salama Hind bint Abi Umayyah, all widows show that Islam supports men to show kindness and care for widows. Marriage is a good way to show gentleness. Like Saudah there were women who had spent their lives in prosperity, and with honour and respect, but after the death of their patrons they had faced several social problems.

3. 620 AD=2(AH), Ayesha bint Abi Bakr, virgin:

She was not only young but also very intelligent. One of the Hikmah(divine wisdom) to select Ayesha, exclusively as the youngest wife, was her scholastic background. She came from a family who was famous in learning and memorizing. Her father was an expert of Arab pedigrees and poetry. Naturally she inherited the arts from her father.

4. 625 AD=4(AH), Hafsa d/o Umar bin Khatab, widow:

During the Muslim war with Makkah, many men were killed leaving behind widows and orphans. 21 years old Hafsa, daughter of Umar bin al Khattab was widowed at Ghazwah of Badr, when her husband Khunais ibn Hudhaifah was killed in action. Rasulullah(S) married her.

5. 626 AD, 5(AH), Zainab d/o Khuzaima bin Haris, widow:

50 years old Zainab bint Khuzaimah husband's death left her without any supporter and she was faced with hunger and deprivation. She was very generous and was known as Umm ul Masakin (the mother of the poor). Rasulullah (S) married her for the sake of her honor and generosity. She expired during the life time of Rasulullah (S).

6 626 AD, 4(AH), Umme Salama d/o Abi Ummayah, widow:

29 years old Umme Salama had many children but Rasulullah demonstrated his supreme righteous morals to support the widow as his wife and the orphans as his own children. Rasulullah(S) married her for the consideration that she was an ardent believer of Islam. Rasulullah (S) married several women by way of practical opposition of the traditional ways and manners of the days of Jahiliyah and also for a practical clarification of the Law of Islam. Umme Salama love Fatemah more than her own children. The love she had for the children of Ali and Fatemah, Hasan, Husain, Zainab and Kulsum was on peak. She commemorates the tragedy of Karbala and expired the same year.

7 626 AD, Zainab d/o Jahash, Divorcee:

Zainab bint Jahash was a cousin of Rasulullah (S), who was first married with his adopted son, Zaid bin Harisah. This marriage was against discrimination of the days of Jahiliyah because Zainab was the grand daughter of Abd al Muttalib and she enjoyed a particular eminence in the Arabian society, while Zaid was a slave, whom Rasulullah (S) had freed. Zainab always sang Qasaid of her family's grandeur and magnificence on account of which her relations with her husband became tense and bitter and their lives became sour. Rasulullah (S) tried hard to effect reconciliation between them; but it did not have any effect and ultimately Zaid divorced her. Marriage of Rasulullah(S) to his 38 years old cousin, Zainab bint Jahsh, who was divorced by his (Rasulullah) adopted son, Zaid, shows that in Islam, it is lawful for a man to marry his first degree cousin. It is also lawful for a man to marry a woman, divorced by his adopted son, since the adopted son is not related to him by blood.

When the divorce took place, Rasulullah (S) married her on the basis of a Divine injunction so that an uncalled for practice prevalent in the days of Jahiliyah should be done away with. Prior to the Dawn of Islam an adopted son was deemed as a real son and if a woman was married to an adopted son, the father of the adopted son could not marry her even after divorce.

In this case, Christian and Jew writers have demonstrated such a misunderstanding and incorrect opinion which is almost unintelligible. They have stated that Nauzubillah, "Due to beauty Rasulullah (S) had fallen in love with Zainab". All historical events and logical arguments are a witness to the silliness of this statement. If Rasulullah (S) had such ideas in his mind and was really in love with of her beauty, then why did he not marry her when she was a virgin and he, too, was young? Being a cousin, how is it possible that Rasulullah(S) was not aware of Zainab's beauty. During the period of Jahiliyah, in Arabian society, divorced women treated as an inferior status holder and were not allowed to remarry. Rasulullah(S) removed this evil practice by marrying a divorced lady and elevated the status of women, which still neglected in many societies.

8 627 AD=5(AH), Juvairiyah d/o Haris Freed slavegirl, widow

Rasulullah (S) married several women merely for the sake of getting certain captives released. Marriage with 20 years old Juvairiyah was solely for this purpose. Juvairiyah belonged to a large tribe, Bani Mustaliq. The members of this tribe were defeated in a battle against the Muslims and became captives. Rasulullah (S) married Juvairiyah bint al Haritha, who was the Chief of his tribe. When the Muslims saw that the war captives or P.O.W. had become relatives of Rasulullah(S), they released many of the captives and according to the famous Sirah writer Ibn Hisham, due to the blessings of this marriage, 100 families of Bani Mustaliq became free. Rasulullah(S) was ever anxious to bind his followers belonging to different clans and tribes in mutual love and affection. That was, doubtlessly, the object in marrying Juvairiyah bint al Haritha, the Chief of Bani al Mustaliq. The whole clan of that tribe and their allies were thus won over to Islam.

9 628 AD=6(AH), Umme Habibah d/o Abu Sufiyan, widow:

Umme Habibah (Ramlah) was the daughter of Abu Sufiyan. She was a member of a family who was a great enemy of Rasulullah (S). Her husband became Christian in Abyssinia and left the fold of Islam. Umme Habibah was a staunch Muslim and she did not tolerate such action, her father Abu Sufiyan was a great enemy of Islam. He did not provide protection to his daughter. Due to this, Umme Habibah spent her days and nights in lamentation. Therefore Rasulullah (S) married 36 years old Umme Habibah in order to support her and to bring the tribe of Bani Umayyah closer towards Islam. Sunnah of Rasulullah(S) allowed us to marry also when one spouse is far distance as in the case of his marriage to Umme Habibah(Ramlah), the daughter of Abu Sufiyan, who was in Abyssinia. Rasulullah(S) asked the emperor of Negus, who entered into the fold of Islam, for Umme Habibah's hand for marriage, which the emperor approved. This marriage shows how realistic and uncomplicated Islam is equally as a religion and as a mode of life.

10 628 AD=7(AH), Safiyah d/o Huaiy bin Akhtab, Freed slave girl:

Safiyah was the widowed daughter of Huaiy bin Akhtab, Chief of the Jewish tribe of Bani Nazir. When the Jewish captives were distributed among the Muslim, Rasul of Islam married 17 years old Safiyah in order to provide her protection and safeguard her status. In this way matrimonial relationship was established with a large tribe of Bani Israel and paving the way for them to come nearer to Islam. Plural marriages of Rasulullah(S) demonstrate that Islam sanctions inter-religious marriages with the Ahl al Kitab (the Jews and the Christians) by marrying Safiyah bint Huaiy bin Akhtab, a Jew and Mariyah, a Christian from Egypt. Both of them embraced Islam and became among the "Mothers of the Believers". Safiyah aided Usman during his siege.

Marriages of Rasulullah(S) to his prisoners: Juvairiyah bint al Haritha and Safiyah bint Huaiy bin Akhtab, show tolerance teachings of Islam regarding marriages based on social status. It also provides a lesson how to treat respectfully to the prisoners of war, if they are women. Marriages of Rasulullah (S) were to make strong the Dawah of Islam. He was alarmed for the political future of Islam.

11. 629 AD=7(AH), Maymunah d/o Haris, widow:

Her name was Barraah but Rasulallah(S) called her Maymunah. She was a member of a large tribe, Bani Makhzum. Rasulallah (S) married this 27 years old lady and established a precedent for women to extend their wish of marry directly to a person whom they likes in an honorable manner. The case of Maymunah is a best example, in which she voluntarily proposed herself to Rasulallah(S) and became one of his honorable wives.

12. Mariyah al Qibtiyyah, Freed slave girl

It is allowed for a man to marry a woman of low social class as in the case of Mariyah, who was presented to Rasulallah(S) by the ruler of Egypt. Rasulallah(S) elevated status of women by released her and married her, instead of making her his concubine, as per the tradition of those days.

Judgment of history:

The reality loving and justice minded writers have stated that the marriages of Rasulallah (S) were not on the basis of sexual desires, because he married 40 years old Khudaijah who had previously been married twice at the age of 25, when sexual desires and urges are at their height. The above marital briefs of Rasulallah (S) clearly shows the noble aim and objectives for which he married a number of wives. It is not difficult to see that none of these marriages was for personal satisfaction of sexual desires as unjustifiably accused by the Jews, Christians and Hindus writers. With the exception of Ayesha, all other wives of Rasulallah (S) were widows and several of them had passed the threshold of youth. This fact is an evidence in itself that all the marriages of Rasulallah (S) was for a great objective, and all accusations of lust or licentiousness are not applicable to him at all.

Rasulallah(S) changed the practice prevailed in Arabia that Muslim can marry his friends' daughters. These Nabavi actions were to achieve political strength stronger and crush the power of Quresh, in the tribal society of Arabia. He married his enemies' daughters Juvairiyah bint al Haritha, the head of Bani Al Mustaliq of Khuzaah and Umme Habibah, the daughter of Abu Sufiyan. Al-Harith and Abu Sufiyan were bitter enemies of Islam. These marriages show how Islam promotes peace and reconciliation. There was a Hikmah behind all his marriages. The above facts clearly contradict the wrong notions that Rasulallah(S) married these women in response to physical needs or biological pressures.

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