

or to mate after Muhammad, according to Qur'anic teaching. Why did Allah do that? Where was the justice in that? And we Muslims say that one of Allah's attributes is justice? He is "most merciful and most compassionate." Then where was mercy and compassion when Allah forbade Aisha and several other wives from marrying after Muhammad, when we were told that Muhammad was just a human like us with no superhuman attributes?

I cannot comprehend the life of the Mother of all believers because she suffered some injustice. It was enough for her to be a child-bride at the age of seven to a man who was older than her own father. It only added to the catastrophe that she was not allowed to remain with her husband after his death.

### **3. Zainab bint Jahsh**

Muhammad's third marriage is a story of great tragedy, filled with nothing but lust, sex and sensual desires. As you read, ask yourself, "Where were the tribal ties in this story?" "What did this marriage have to do with Muhammad's supposed calling?"

The story began when Zayd Ibn Haritha was kidnapped from his aristocratic family by some traveling Arabians who sold him to Khadija, the first wife of Muhammad, who in turn gave him as a present to her husband, Muhammad, to be his servant. But after Muhammad heard his calling to Islam, he freed Zayd and he adopted him for a son publicly, where he said, "Zayd is my son, I inherit him and he inherits me." Thereafter, he was called "Zayd, the son of Muhammad."

Later, he asked Zainab, his cousin on his father's side, to marry Zayd. She first refused because Zayd was homely. Furthermore, even though Muhammad adopted him publicly,

he was considered by the majority of the Arabs as a slave. For this reason, she could not bring herself to love him, so she said to Muhammad, "If you insist on me marrying him, I will, but I'd rather marry you, not Zayd." Muhammad insisted that she marry Zayd, and so it was. To convince her to marry Zayd, a verse had to descend upon Muhammad from heaven that commanded Zainab and all the Muslims to obey him:

"It is not fitting for a believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and his Messenger, to have any option about their decision; if anyone disobeys Allah and his Messenger, he is indeed on a clearly wrong path."<sup>44</sup>

Thus, Zainab married Zayd. Up to this point, the matter could seem logical despite all of the coercion and duress that were imposed upon Zainab. But what happened thereafter was very peculiar, shocking and appalling.

The story goes on to tell us that one day Muhammad went to visit his adopted son Zayd. When he entered the house, Zayd was not home. Muhammad saw Zainab half naked as she was putting her clothes on. Muhammad desired her, but he was afraid to enter the house and commit adultery with her. As he was leaving, he said to her, "Praise be to Allah who changes hearts." Zainab smiled and later told Zayd about that visit and Muhammad's statement. Zayd went immediately to Muhammad and asked him: "Do you want me to divorce her for you?" Muhammad answered him: "Hold unto your wife and fear Allah." That was initially a noble stand on the part of Muhammad. However, what filled Muhammad's heart and soul was totally different than what his lips expressed, for he really desired her as was reported

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44) Sura *Al-Ahzab* (the Allies) 33:36 (Yusuf Ali).

by Al-Zamkhashri: “The external appearance of Muhammad differed from what was inside him.”<sup>45</sup> Simply put, on the outside it appeared that Muhammad did not want Zayd to divorce Zainab. But his intentions were the opposite: for Muhammad fell in love with Zainab when he saw her half naked.<sup>46</sup>

The Qur’an tells us that when Muhammad saw Zainab half naked, he fell in love with her, and wanted her as his wife. However, he hesitated because of what people would say about him, snatching the wife of his adopted son. But Muhammad’s god came to reprimand him for his hesitation. Strangely, it was Allah who wanted the woman to leave her husband, and to violate all moral laws, so Muhammad could have her. And it’s in plain sight in the Qur’an:

“Behold, thou didst say to whom who had received the grace of Allah and thy favour, ‘Retain thou (in wedlock) thy wife, and fear Allah.’ But thou didst hide in thy heart that which Allah was about to make manifest: thou didst fear the people, but it is more fitting that thou shouldst fear Allah. Then when Zayd had dissolved (his marriage) with her, with the necessary (formality), we joined her in marriage to thee.”<sup>47</sup>

Little time passed between Sura 33:36, where Allah encouraged Zayd to stay married, and 33:37, where the god of Muhammad commanded Zayd to leave Zainab so Muhammad could marry her. What caused that god to change his mind? Was that god a toy in Muhammad’s hand, so a new verse would come down to annul the verse that came before

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45) *Al-Kashaf* by Al-Zamkhashri, Vol. III, p. 54.

46) *The Wives of the Prophet* by bint Al-Shati’, pp. 158 & 164.

47) Sura *Al-Ahzab* (the Allies) 33:37.

(the one that encouraged Zayd to keep his wife)? Did not Allah *command* Zayd to stay married to Zainab? Was his god unable to keep their house together? How could Muhammad's god find it easy to destroy a home, so Muhammad's desires could be met? Was that a god of justice and mercy?

In his book, *The Life of Muhammad*, Dr. Haikal objected to this story about Zayd and Zainab. He described it as shameful, and he accused missionaries and western researchers of fabricating it, trying to demean Islam and its prophet. When I was a Muslim, I wished that Dr. Haikal was right, and that all those defamation stories against Muhammad were just make-believe fabrications.

However, let us confront the bitter fact, and read the reply of Dr. bint Al-Shati', a renowned, well-read Muslim scholar, who stated the naked truth:

“The story of Muhammad, the Messenger, admiring Zainab ... and the story of Muhammad leaving her house saying, Praise Allah who changes the hearts, were told to us by good predecessors such as Imam Al-Tabari in his history book, and by Abu Ja'far Ibn Habib Al-Nabeh, and the beloved Al-Tabari, and the neighbor of Allah, Al-Zamkhashri. Those people told us the story before the world heard of the Crusades, evangelization and western missionaries. It is a right thing to leave their notion aside, and let us look at this case as it was told by the two Tabaris and by Ibn Habib. Why should we deny that the Messenger was a human who looked at someone like Zainab and admired her? Muhammad had never claimed that his heart was in his hand turning it whichever direction he wanted, neither did he ever allege that he was infallible, without human lust. As

he got excited seeing Aisha (more by Aisha than the other wives), he said, ‘Allah, do not blame me for not possessing what you possess (self-control).’<sup>48</sup>

Al-Zamkhashri, a great Muslim Imam, said:

“The Messenger of Allah saw Zainab, after he gave her in marriage to Zayd, and he fell in love with her, and said, Praise Allah, who changes things.”

Forget the missionaries and the western evangelists. Just look at the source of the Islamic story according to the imams of the early centuries of Islam. What was said above by bint Al-Shati’, an accomplished Muslim historian, will clear any and all doubts.

First, the greatest Muslim scholars verified and affirmed that the story of Zayd and Zainab was true.

Second, Muhammad was not immune from lust and erotic passion. He was a human with a human heart that loved and hated, accepted something one day, and rejecting it the next. And Allah supported Muhammad in all his decisions no matter what they were.

Moreover, Allah’s endorsement of Muhammad’s actions was recorded in the two Qur’an verses mentioned above, where he commanded Zayd to marry Zainab in one, and later, he sent down a verse commanding the same man to divorce his wife so Muhammad could marry her. How could Almighty God, the Just God, agree to such an atrocity? How could the Messenger of Allah lust after someone else’s wife, and how could he lust after his adopted son’s wife? Isn’t lust-ing and acting on the lust after another man’s wife a crime?

Should we say, “Praise be to Allah who made lawful to Muhammad what he makes unlawful to the rest of the world?”

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48) *The Wives of the Prophet* by bint Al-Shati’, pp.61 & 63.

Remember, Muhammad claimed to be a human like us, without infallibility and without any special privileges. Are each one of us supposed to have our own god and our own “Gabriel” so we can do what we want and reject what we don’t desire, alleging that god commanded, and that “Gabriel” brought down the verse that justified us?

It would be possible to overlook such acts if done by an ordinary or unbelieving man. But how can we overlook them when they were done by someone who claimed to be a prophet of Allah such as Muhammad, who is supposed to be the example of our life and our behavior?

Let us compare this to the life of King David, “the prophet David” to Muslims. David lusted after the wife of another man. But though he was much beloved of God, God did not let the affair slide by just because David was a prophet and a king. Rather, God severely reprimanded and punished him. God’s threat rang throughout Israel, as He said to David:

“Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from thine house because thou hast despised me and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.”<sup>49</sup>

Consequently, David repented with tears:

“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness... Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me... Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me”<sup>50</sup>

In other words, God is a holy, pure God who does not compromise His holiness for any person’s sins, whether it

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49) 2 Samuel 12:9

50) Psalm 51:1-3, 10

is David's or Muhammad's. The True God punishes sin. He does not reward it, ever! Consequently, the sword wreaked havoc in David's family.

Likewise, Muhammad behaved the same. Could that be the reason the sword has been wreaking havoc in his nation ever since it started? Since the inception of Islam, killing, murdering, and oppression have been the norm.

Nevertheless, let's get back to the story of Zainab. Muhammad did not wait, as was traditional in such situations. (Such a transitional period is required by Islam, but was not applicable to Muhammad.) Zainab herself explained:

"After the divorce, immediately, and behold, the prophet of Allah entered my house while I was without a head-cover, and I asked him, 'Is it going to be like this without a guardian or a witness?' He answered me, 'Allah is the guardian and "Gabriel" is the witness.'" As a result of his statement, Zainab boasted in front of Muhammad's other wives, saying: "Your fathers gave you in marriage, but as for me, it was heaven who gave me in marriage, to the Messenger of Allah."<sup>51</sup>

During his lifetime, Arabs and Muslims criticized Muhammad's behavior, saying he married the divorcée of his own son, which was not legal. But for Muhammad to get out of such a predicament, "Gabriel" was ready to bring down a verse from his god, stating he had never adopted Zayd. Therefore, marrying Zainab would be legal:

"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah, and the seal of

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51) For more information, read *The Jurisprudence of the Life of Muhammad* (Faqh Al-Sirah) by Sa'id 'Ashur, p. 126; and *Al-Isaba fi tamyiz al-Sahaba* by Ibn Hajar Asqalani, Vol. IV, p. 307.

the prophets: and Allah has full knowledge of all things.”<sup>52</sup>

This verse made it seem as though Muhammad had forgotten that he told the Muslims a short time before, “Zayd is my son, I inherit him and he inherits me.” And it is obvious that he did not care that his actions were the cause of abolishing adoption in Islam (even to this day), just because of his lustful relation with Zainab. In other words, people from around the world adopt Muslim orphans to alleviate their misery, but a Muslim family would not adopt a Muslim orphan, to keep from repeating the story of Zayd and Zainab in their families.

It seems that everyone and everything had to work together to satisfy the lust of Muhammad, including all the Muslims and the archangel “Gabriel.” Everyone was supposed to be prepared to do all things necessary, even give up one’s wife, and violate all moral laws, so Muhammad could be happy. What a prophet! What an example!

I should end the story of Muhammad’s marriage to Zainab bint Jahsh with a statement made by a great Muslim scholar and recorded in his book, *Al-Sira Al-Halabia*:

“If Muhammad lusted after a married woman, it became a must for her husband to divorce her for him.”<sup>53</sup>

Al-Suyuti said:

“Muhammad entered into Zainab without permission.”<sup>54</sup>

What mature mind can accept such an immoral incursion,

52) Sura *Al-Ahzab* (the Allies) 33:40.

53) *Al-Sira Al-Halabia* by Al-Halabi, Vol. III, p. 377.

54) *The Causes of Descendancy* (Asbab Al-Nuzul) by Al-Suyuti, p. 221.