



Mothers of
the
Believers

2012

Family: Reconnecting our Hearts to Home

Topic I

Table of Contents

Haleemah as-Sa'diyah	2
Barakah (Umm Ayman) and Fatimah bint Asad.....	4
Khadeejah bint Khuwaylid	5
Sawdah and 'A'ishah	8
Maymoonah, Mother of the Faithful.....	17
Hafsah, Mother of the Faithful.....	18
Zaynab bint Khuzaymah.....	20
Safiyah bint Huyay ibn Akhtab	22
Zaynab bint Jahsh as-Sadiyah	25
Zayd ibn Harithah	26
Umm Habeebah.....	31
Umm Salamah.....	34
Juwayriyah bint al-Harith	40

Haleemah as-Sa'diyah

Breastfeeding of babies by women who are not their biological mothers and allowing such babies to grow up in the deserts are some of the signs of nobility and high status among the Arabs of pre-Islamic era. Haleemah came to Makkah, in the company of some women from the clan of Banu Sa 'd, hoping to find babies to nurse. Each woman except Haleemah succeeded in getting a nursling.

Haleemah came to Makkah, in the company of some women from the clan of Banu Sa 'd, hoping to find babies to nurse. Each woman except Haleemah succeeded in getting a nursling. Haleemah said: "There was no woman among us who was not offered the Messenger of God), and as soon as she was told that he was an orphan, she would reject him. We would say, 'What is his mother going to give us? 'For, we only expected recompense from the baby' s father. By God, each of my colleagues was able to get a nursling except me. But when I did not succeed in getting any for myself, I told my husband, al-Harith ibn 'Abdul-'Uzza, 'By God, I would not like to be the only one from among my colleagues who would go back home without a nursling. I am going to take that orphan boy. '

My husband said, 'You can go and take him. Perhaps, God will bless us through him.' I went and took the boy. By God, I only took him because I could not find any other." Haleemah continued: "As soon as I took him and brought him to my riding animal, I breast-fed him as much as God would permit and he drank until he was satiated. His brother also drank until he was satiated. My husband then went to our old camel and milked her and both of us drank: until we were satiated. And we passed a good night.

In the morning, my husband told me, "Haleemah, by God, I could see that you have accepted a blessed child. Can't you observe the blessings we have been witnessing since we took him, and God continued to increase us in blessing?!" We set out on the return journey back to our village. By God, my donkey was so fast that none of those of my colleagues could catch up with her. Surprised at this, they said, "Daughter of Abu Dhu' ayb! Was this not your donkey on which you set out with us?!" I said, "Yes, by God, she is!"

They then said, "By God, there is something about her!" When we arrived at the land of Banu Sa'd and before that, I did not know a land more barren than our land - my sheep would graze and then come home satisfied and full of milk. We would milk as we liked, and none of our neighbors could be able to have even a drop of milk from their own sheep. Their sheep would go out grazing and would come home with empty stomachs. They would then tell their shepherds, "You should consider where the sheep graze." Yet their sheep would come back with empty stomachs while mine would come home satisfied, and we would milk as we liked.

So, God continued to show us the blessings that we could clearly perceive. The boy, Muhammad S), then reached age two and he had been growing up in a way different from that of other kids. By God, he had hardly reached the age of two that he had already had strong skin. We took him back to his mother, though we were consumed with grief that we would be losing the blessing he had brought to our household. When his mother saw him, we told her, "Please let our son stay with us for another year. For, we fear for him the epidemic of Makkah. "

We continued pleading with her until she released him to us. Two or three months after we brought him back, an incidence occurred. He and his foster brother were in the backyard with our sheep when his brother hurriedly came to us and said: "That my Qurayshi brother was visited by two men, clad in white garments. They laid him on his back and opened his belly." His stepfather and I rushed to him. We found him standing while his color has changed. His father embraced him and said: "My son, what happened to you?" He said, "Two men in white garment came to me. They laid me down and opened my belly. They removed something out and took it away. They then returned it as it was." We took him back home. His father said: "Haleemah, I fear that my son has been touched by (the Jinn). So, let us take him back to his family before what we fear can appear." Haleemah continued: "So we took him to his mother.

When she saw us, she exclaimed, "What brought you back, foster parents?! You had been taking an excellent care of him!" We said, 'By God, nothing has happened. It is only that God has helped us pay our debts and we fear that some harm or unforeseen things might happen to him. That is why we brought him back.'

But his mother did not believe us. She insisted that we tell her the truth and when we told her what had happened, she said, "So you fear that he might be touched by Satan?! No, by God! Satan will never be able to find his way to him. By God, here is something great about this son of mine. Shall I tell you something about him?"

We said, 'Yes.' She said, 'When I was pregnant with him, I never felt carrying anything that was lighter than him. I saw it in my dream that a light came out of me that illuminated the palaces of Syria. And when I gave birth to him, his delivery was different from that of other babies; he came out, supporting himself with both hands and raising his head up to the heaven. So, leave him alone. ' "

Thus did Lady Haleemah part with her great nursling. The Messenger of God (S) later in his life, talked about this unique childhood in which he extraordinarily understood things, pictures and names while he was at the dwellings of Banu Sa'd. A number of his Companions may God be pleased with them -narrated the events of this childhood. At the end of the Battle of Hunayn, when the Messenger of God (S) received properties and captives from Hawazin as spoils of war, a delegation from Hawazin, who had already embraced Islam came to him at a place called Ji'ranah. They said: "Messenger of God, we are a tribal people who had been touched with an affliction that is not unknown to you. Please grant us favor, God will grant you favor." There was among the captives, his foster sister, Shayma'. So she came, begging him to show compassion. She reminded him of how he bit her on her back (while he was still a nursling at the dwellings of Banu Sa'd). When the Messenger of God (S) heard this, he laid down his garment for her and made her sit down beside him.

The spokesman of the delegation, Zuhayr ibn Sard then stood up and said: "Messenger of God, your aunts and foster mothers who took care of you are among the captives that are inside the enclosures. If we had nursed Ibn Abi Shammar or Nu'man ibn Mundhir and then what happened to us from your part had happened to us from theirs, we would definitely hope in their reciprocal kindness and sympathy. And you are the best of those nursed by any foster mother." He then recited a poetic passage in which he implored the Prophet (S) to do favor to his foster people. The Messenger of God (S) then said, "As for that which is for me and the children of ' Abdul-Muttalib, it is all for God and for you." The Ansar (the Helpers) then said, "Whatever belongs to us is for God and His Messenger!"

That day was, indeed, a day of reciprocal kindness; and the stand took on that day was a stand that represented greatness and excellent moral quality! Muhammad went back to the warmth of his mother's embrace and unto the compassionate care of his grandfather, 'Abdul Muttalib. He had then become a young boy in whose noble face lights were illuminating, whose appearance brought splendor, whose heart was filled with signs of guidance and transparency and whose tongue was characterized with tenderness and sweetness. For, he was being nurtured by God, the Exalted. Aminah would hug and embrace her beloved son. She would feel a unique warmth that she used to have while she was pregnant with him; and she would perceive this extraordinary and indescribable warmth all over her body. His grandfather, 'Abdul-Muttalib - the chief of Quraysh could not bear Muhammad's absence, and he would never be tired of looking at him. He would visit him at Aminah's apartment every morning and evening, and at all times. He would ask her, "How is my son Muhammad?" And he would hold him and fondly hug him. He would see in Muhammad the picture of his son 'Abdullah who died while he was still a bridegroom and whose death brought him unparalleled sorrow. He would see in his grandson amazing characteristics that increased him in compassion and love for him.

When Muhammad (S) reached the age of six, his mother sought permission from 'Abdul-Muttalib to go to Yathrib with her son in order to visit the grave of her beloved husband 'Abdullah and to spend some time with his maternal uncles, Banu Najjar. He gave her permission to go and advised her to take care of herself and her son. Aminah set out with her son, Muhammad and in the company of her maid-servant called Barakah, who served her and took care of her son. Muhammad (S) loved Barakah and regarded her as a member of his household and family. Aminah felt a great pain and sorrow when she stood beside the grave of her beloved husband, shedding hot tears with her son,

Muhammad on her side on whose noble cheeks drops of tears that looked like pearls were rolling down - out of compassion for his sorrowful mother and in sadness for death of a father he never saw. It appeared that the fever of Yathrib had affected Aminah before she left the city. But she did not know of this until she was on her way back to Makkah. Her condition worsened, and while at a village called Abwa, she succumbed to her illness and breathed her last. Muhammad (S) wept bitterly. His orphan hood was, no doubt, the most painful one! The page of his mother, Aminah bint Wahb was then closed. The young boy, Muhammad (S) was then grabbed and taken back to Makkah by that young woman, Barakah, who was a freed slave of his parents.

Barakah (Umm Ayman) and Fatimah bint Asad

Muhammad (S) said, "Umm Ayman is my second mother." Barakah came back to Makkah with Muhammad (S) to his grandfather 'Abdul-Muttalib. It was there that she showed all the love and affection she had to Muhammad (S). And any child in Muhammad's age then, no matter how intelligent and self-dependent he may be, would still need someone to care of him. 'Abdul-Muttalib, as it was known of him that he extremely loved Muhammad was very keen in his care for him, especially since he had heard many sayings and news and signs from here and there about the importance and greatness of the future of Muhammad's life.

A group of men from Bani Mudlij tribe once told 'Abdul Muttalib, "Take care of him, for we have not seen a foot that resembles the feet that are at Maqaam (Ibraheem) more than his." 'Abdul-Muttalib looked at his son Abu Talib and told him, Listen to what these people are saying." It was there and then that 'Abdul-Muttalib entrusted the care of Muhammad (S) to Abu Talib, after his death.

Muhammad was in a pre-adolescent age. He would come to his grandfather, 'Abdul-Muttalib in his court at the Ka'bah under whose shade they used to lay a carpet for him. His sons would sit around the carpet until he came out to them. And none of them would sit on this carpet as a sign of respect for him. But Muhammad (S) would come and sit on the carpet and his uncles would prevent him from doing so. 'Abdul-Muttalib would then tell them, "Leave my son alone. By God, he is going to be a greatly important person." He would then make him sit down beside him on the carpet, and he would pat him on the back and would be pleased with whatever he did. Never did Abdul-Muttalib eat any food without saying, "Bring my son to me." And he would be brought to him.

During the years in which Abdul-Muttalib took care of this great orphan, he did not leave his domestic affairs or matters of his childhood unattended. He would command his nurse, Barakah to be cautious with and treat Muhammad (S) with utmost kindness and gentleness. He told her once, "Barakah, Be mindful of my son, for I had seen him with children near the lotus tree. The people of the Scripture are saying that my son is the Prophet of this generation."

Perhaps Barakah understood what that meant or, to say it in a better way, had witnessed that with her own eyes, heard it with her ears and understood it with her heart. She had a narration regarding this. She said, "Two men from the Jews of Madeenah came to me one day and they told me, 'Bring out for us Ahmed so that we can see him.' They then looked at him and scrutinized him. One of them told his companion, 'This is the Prophet of this Ummah and that is the place of his migration (referring to Madeenah). There will be a lot of killings and captive-taking there'." Barakah added, "When Aminah heard of that she was scared and took him away. She later died at Abwa while on her way back to Makkah.

Khadeejah bint Khuwaylid

May God be pleased with her

The Messenger of God (S) told her, "Khadeejah, here is (Angel) Gabriel. He commanded me to say salam to you and to give you the glad of tiding of a home of pearl in Paradise in which there will be no toil or hardship." She replied, "God is the Giver of salam (peace). Peace be upon Gabriel and peace and mercy of God be upon you. "

Khadeejah has had a previous marriage before she married the Messenger of God (S). But now, she was free, conducting the affairs of her life and shouldering her huge responsibilities all by herself.

She was a wealthy woman who had wide commercial holdings. This is in addition to her being beautiful, very famous and pure-mannered, a quality that won her the accolade: 'The pure woman'. All these qualities and qualifications made her attractive to many Qurayshi men who wished to marry her. But it seemed that her first marriage experience made her refuse to agree to any of the proposals. Her preoccupation with her business and other obligations might also have been another reason for her refusal of these proposals. She remained unmarried until she got older and approached the age of forty.

The popularity of the name of the Trustworthy (Muhammad) (S) who was a model of good conduct reached her. What she heard from her servant, Maysarah regarding Muhammad's excellent manners in buying and selling and how he made big profits when he accompanied them on their last business trip to Syria created in her a great interest in him. This led her to send someone to him to indirectly express her interest in marrying him. The marriage took place between her and Muhammad (S) and both were delighted because of the same conducts they shared and their hearts also shared the same feeling.

In the course of the years in which they lived together as husband and wife, the marriage was blessed with children. The first of them was al-Qasim, with whose name Muhammad (S) formed his famous acronym, Abul Qasim. They were then blessed with 'Abdullah, at-Tayyab, who was otherwise known as at-Tahir. But for some Divine Wisdom all of them died in their infancy. And that was before he was commissioned as a Prophet. After he was commissioned as a Prophet, he was blessed with girls successively in the following order: Zaynab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthoom and Fatimah (may God be pleased with all of them). The greatness of Khadeejah vividly showed in its best and perfect form at the time her husband was commissioned as a Prophet and after that until she died amid the tears of her daughters and the sorrow of their great father and the noble Messenger over his Companion, the life partner and the solid support.

The Messenger of God (S) was made to love seclusion and staying away from people and their materialistic world for the purpose of reflection and meditation over the sovereignty (of the heavens and the earth). This seclusion led to the elevation of his soul and the purity of his feeling. He became prepared to receive the Great News and the huge responsibility. The Prophet (S) used to visit the cave of Hijrah on the Mountain of Mercy (Jabal ar-Rahmah). He would take with him his food and drink that his wife, Khadeejah had prepared for him. He would spend some days and nights there, particularly during the month of Ramadan, in seclusion. The Prophet (R) returned home one day, after the revelation has been sent down to him for the first time. He returned home to convey the following divine words to Khadeejah:

Read! In the Name of your Lord Who has created [all that exists]. He has created man from a clot [a piece of thick coagulated blood]. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous. Who has taught [the writing] by the pen. He has taught man that which he knew not)

(Qur'an 96: 1-5)

It is here that the first signs of her greatness manifested. She unhesitantly believed in him and accepted Islam immediately. This is the consensus of the historians and writers of the life history of the Prophet (S). There is however a question: "Was her acceptance of Islam and her faith done just to

follow her husband so that their relationship could continue or was it done for noble and sublime reasons that transcended this materialistic and sentimental meaning?"

The Messenger of God (S) returned home to his wife, " Khadeejah while his heart was trembling and saying, "Cover me, cover me . " She covered him until he was no more terrified.

He told Khadeejah, after having informed her of his experience in the cave of Hira', "I fear that something might happen to me . " But his wife's response to this expression of fright was, "Never! By God, God will never disgrace you. You keep good relations with your Kith and kin, serve your guests generously, help the poor and the destitute and assist the deserving calamity-afflicted ones."

This statement is undoubtedly a sign of awareness, wisdom, maturity and a deep understanding of the situation. It is also an expression of support.

'A'ishah (S) narrated that the Messenger of God (S) was sitting down with Khadeejah. He then saw a person between the heaven and the earth and he told Khadeejah of what he saw. She asked him to move closer. When he moved closer she asked her if he still saw the person and he answered in the affirmative. She then told him to put his head under her garment and asked him if he still saw him. He answered in the negative. She then told him, "Relax, this is an angel, had he been a devil he would not have been ashamed (of looking at you while you are under the cover of a woman's garment). "

With decisive word and action did Khadeejah calmed the Prophet (S) and strengthened him. The great love she had for him transformed into what is greater: belief in God and His Messenger (S). One day, the Prophet (S) returned home after Jibreel (S) had taught him how to pray. He informed her of this and she said, "Just teach me how he taught you." And he taught her. She then performed ablution as he did and she prayed along with him, and then said, "I testify that you are really the Messenger of God."

Ibn Hajar said in his Book, al-Kabah: "This is the most correct narration I came about concerning her Islam., Ibn Ishaq said: "Khadeejah was the first person to believe in God and His Messenger and believe in all that he brought. God comforted His Messenger by that. The Prophet never heard any unpleasant thing from her whenever she talked to him. And the journey continued ... The ship of faith continued weathering the storms and waves of the age of ignorance and its darkness, while its great captain

Muhammad was directing the passengers with wisdom, patience and reliance on God. Whenever he sensed tiredness in himself or sensed an aggression in the violent winds he turned his eyes to the heaven and then sought support from his Companion and life partner. And what he got was a compassionate smile and a truthful, assuring and reinforcing word. He then became strengthened in his mission to carry out the command of God and His order. This great aspect of Khadeejah was adequately rewarded by the Lord of Majesty. Angel Gabriel (A) was sent to the Messenger of God (S) to give him a good tidings of a home of pearls in Paradise, where there would be no hardship or tiredness.

Here is another aspect of greatness in the life of Khadeejah. She had invested all her wealth in the cause of God. She generously and unlimitedly spent without making any mention of what she had spent, especially during the years of sanction in the alleys of Abu Talib. She spared the Messenger of God (S) the trouble of labor. All his occupation was calling unto the way of God. God reminded him of this favor when He (S) says:

"And He found you poor and made you rich [self-sufficient with self-contentment,]" (Qur'an 93: 8)

She also showed kindness to the weak and poor Muslims. She was very generous to them and was really and deservedly entitled to be called 'Mother of the faithful'. She was the first mother of the faithful in every sense. She enjoyed so an envious status that 'A'ishah was strongly jealous of her because the Messenger of God (S) frequently spoke of her and nostalgically remembered her days with him and missed her. 'A'ishah (R) said: "The Messenger of God (S) rarely went out of the house without mentioning Khadeejah and praising her. One day, he spoke of her and I grew very jealous and I told him, 'Was she not an old lady whom God has replaced for you with a better woman?' He got angry and said, 'No, by God! God did not replace her with any better woman. For, she believed in me when people disbelieved, she consoled me with her wealth when people denied me their money and God blessed me with children from her while I was denied children by other women.' 'A'ishah then said, 'And I said in my mind, 'Never shall I speak unfavorably of her again.'"

Khadeejah (R) came out of the alleys of Abu Talib physically weakened. She became sick and her beloved husband and daughters cared for her, consoled her and alleviated her suffering to the best of their ability. But as God would have it, no remedy or cure was able to heal her, and she finally surrendered her soul and left for the Highest Company.

Her death was one of the saddest experiences of the Messenger of God (S). Khawlah bint Hakeem asked the Prophet, "Messenger of God! It seems you have been afflicted by want since the death of Khadeejah." The Prophet (S) replied, "Yes, she was the mother of the household and the caretaker for the family." The saying of the Prophet (S) was the result of the inevitable gap her death created in the household, in the real sense of the word. This is because; seeing the daughters would remind of the absent mother, and the atmosphere of sorrow and distress would remind of the big heart that was flourishing with love and faith.

Sawdah and 'A'ishah

May God be pleased with them

Sawdah and 'A'ishah entered the life of the Prophet's household after the death of Khadeejah (S). There is something that we would like to call the attention of the reader to here: The Messenger of God (S) never had another wife for almost two decades in which he was married to Khadeejah, neither before he was commissioned as a Prophet nor after that. But when he died, he left behind ten wives who are mothers of the faithful. Before talking about Sawdah and 'A'ishah, attention needs to be paid to Khawlah bint Hakeem, the woman whose deep faith and strong love for the Messenger of God (S) spurred her into interfering in the Prophet's, private family affairs, and who played an excellent role in this regard. Khawlah was the wife of 'Uthman ibn Math'oon. And both of them were among the first persons who embraced the call of Islam and whom Islam embraced. They lived for this call and it lived by them. Islam moved in their limbs and veins like blood. Even their hearts pulsed for the love of this heavenly religion. It was Khawlah who saw signs of deep sorrow in the lineaments of the Prophet's noble face, just like other female Companions. But she was the bravest of them all and the most daring to ask the

Messenger of God (S). She said, "Messenger of God, it seems you have been afflicted by want since the death of Khadeejah." The Prophet (S) replied, "Yes, she was the mother of the household and the caretaker for the family."

Khawlah, the experienced lady, out of love and compassion, observed the need of the Prophet's noble household to someone who could fill the gap created by the death of Khadeejah. Khawlah employed her maturity, farsightedness and deep faith to peruse the psychological, social and momentary conditions of the Prophet (S). After sufficient study and reflection, she suggested marriage to the Messenger of God (S) telling him: "If you like, you can marry many a matron and if you like you can marry many a virgin," Messenger of God." So he asked her of the matron and the virgin and she replied that the matron was Sawdah bint Zam' ah and the virgin was Aishah daughter of Abi Bakr, who was the Prophet's most beloved of all men.

Perhaps, Khawlah suggested Sawdah who was a matron and experienced woman so that she could take care of the Prophet's family and cater for his household, and suggested Aishah who was a virgin and a young woman so his broken heart could be mended and serve as a way of strengthening the relationship between the Prophet and Abu Bakr.

The Messenger of God (S) then told Khawlah, "Mention me to them." So Khawlah commenced her efforts and the efforts were successful in both proposals. The Messenger of God (S) married Sawdah and consummated the marriage, but Aishah was engaged to him because she was then too young for consummation of marriage. Thus did Sawdah enter the household of the Prophet (S) as one of the mothers of the faithful. Sawdah (S) was a widow. She started taking care of Umm Kulthoom and Fatimah and managing the affairs of the Prophet's household. She was very dark in complexion, slow and fat. But she had a clean heart and was one of the truthful believers. In spite of her being slow and fat, she was amiable and humorous, dispelling the Prophet's worries with her humors, just like an essential and effective timely remedy.

It was reported that one day she saw on the face of the Prophet (S) paleness and distress and she told him jokingly, "Oh Messenger of God! I prayed behind you yesterday and you prolonged the prostration so long that I felt like having nose-bleeding." The Prophet (S) then launched into laughter, such that his molars were visible and his gloomy look disappeared. This is how Sawdah spent her days and years, recognizing the limits of her status in this great household and striving covetously to be a mother of the faithful. This is the greatest position that she sought in her worldly life and she sought nothing beside that, especially since the Prophet's days and nights were shared among a number of women who were his noble wives.

When Sawdah started feeling that she was becoming a liability, she voluntarily gave up the day and night which the Prophet apportioned her to Aishah. There are reasons for choosing Aishah. She was her mate from the beginning and she was the most beloved of the Prophet's wives. Sawdah was a pious worshipper and a generous giver of charity, as 'A'ishah has described her. She was blessed with longevity that she lived into the caliphate of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab (R), when she died and joined the High Companionship. Sawdah left a clean mark within the period in which she lived in the household of the Prophet that spanned thirteen years. She concluded that with the remaining years of her life in piety and worship.

Let us now go back to 'A'ishah (S) Here, her personality is interwoven with that of her mother, Umm Rooman. Umm Rooman played a role in the life of the Prophet (S) who is the husband of her daughter and the intimate friend of her husband, and what an intimate friend! Abu Bakr aS-Siddeeq (S) had been the Prophet's umbrageous shade. Never did he leave him. He supported him with his money and self and he was never lacking in generosity. He was so generous that he spent as it is famously known in the way of God, all his money with which he traded, in spite of the abundance of his wealth.

His house was a place that the Messenger of God (S) unfailingly visited every day. She would receive him with courteous manner and welcome him whenever he visited. And she would provide him with all means of comfort. Umm Rooman (S) was formerly married to al-Harith ibn 'Abdillah al-Azdi who brought her from San'a to Makkah. Her former husband entered into alliance with Abu Bakr but he died soon thereafter. So Abu Bakr married her as a sign of respect for the alliance, neighborliness and friendship that were between him and her former husband. She had two children by Abu Bakr, who are 'Abdur-Rahman and 'A'ishah. Abu Bakr had two other children from his other wife and they are 'Abdullah and Asma'. As for her faith and her love for God and His Messenger, that is wonderful. It is enough for her the testimony of the Prophet for her on the day of her death and burial. For he said while she was being lowered into her grave:

"Let him who wants to see a woman among the beautiful women of Paradise who have wide and lovely eyes, look at Umm Rooman." In another narration, he (S) said, "Let him look at this (woman)." Umm Rooman was naturally endowed with qualities that qualified her to be among the wide-eyed beautiful women of Paradise. And what will tell you what these women are? They are an embodiment of purity, sincerity, modesty, and honesty.

All this manifested in two stances and they are enough a proof: One: The day marriage proposal was made to 'A'ishah her daughter. Khawlah bint Hakeem came to Abu Bakr 's house and talked to Umm Rooman informing her of the Prophet's proposal to 'A'ishah. She was very happy for she realized that this anticipated marriage relationship with the Prophet (S) would fetch the blessings of this world and the Hereafter. She did not register any opposition. She did not speak a word about the youthfulness of 'A'ishah or about the wide age gap that was between her and the Messenger of God (S) or any other matters of this world. She only said, "Talk to Abu Bakr about that." The major reference in matters like this is the head of the family, for he might have an opinion different from hers. Expectedly, she took a very positive and encouraging stance while this matter was being presented to Abu Bakr. The matter then ended as Umm Rooman had willed and 'A'ishah become engaged to the Messenger of God (S) and the marriage was to be consummated after the Hijrah.

Months passed while the Messenger of God (S) was concerned with the new situations of the Muslims in Madeenah among which were: construction of the noble Prophet's Mosque, making brotherhood between the immigrants and the helpers, entering into pacts and treaties with Jews of Madeenah and firmly establishing the new Muslim society upon solid foundations, ill accordance with the revelations that were being revealed. Umm Rooman, the wife of the Truthful and the mother of the Truthful did not utter a word while she saw the Messenger of God (S) in a state of being seriously preoccupied. It was only on a certain day; after there had been a relative, stability that Umm Rooman opened a conversation with her husband, Abu Bakr and reminded him of 'A'ishah who was engaged to the Prophet. Abu Bakr went to the Messenger of God (S) and told him in a courteous and modest manner, "O Messenger of God! Didn't you want to consummate the marriage with your wife?" The Messenger of

God (S) smiled and said, "Surely, and upon the blessing of God." Before the marriage was consumed, 'A'ishah (S) had been affected with the weather of Madeenah and she had, as a result, become weak and emaciated and her face had become pale. Umm Rooman took care of her until she regained her health. 'A'ishah said, "My mother was treating me so that I could become plump, grooming me for the house of God's Messenger (S). She did not succeed in doing so until she made me eat cucumber with fresh dates, then I became plump in the best form one can be."

My dear reader, this is one of the qualifications and distinctions of Umm Rooman as a woman, mother and Muslim woman. She was aspiring for the pleasure of God and the love of His Messenger (S). Two: During days of the slander. It was really a great trial for the victim, 'A'ishah and her parents, Abu Bakr and Umm Rooman. It was rather the generality of the Muslims that was put in trial so that God might separate the evil from the good and distinguish the believers from the hypocrites.

The trial was also a violent storm that nearly destroyed everything if not for God's benevolence, care and mercy.

We deem it suitable to mention the story of this trial in full as narrated by 'A'ishah (S), herself. She said:

"Whenever God's Messenger intended to go on a journey, he used to draw lots among his wives and would take with him the one on whom the lot had fallen. Once he drew lots when he wanted to carry out an expedition, and the lot came upon me. So I proceeded with God's Messenger after God's order of veiling (the women) had been revealed and thus I was carried in my hawdaj (on a camel) and dismounted while still in it. We carried on our journey, and when God's Messenger had finished his expedition and returned and we approached Madeenah, God's Messenger ordered to proceed at night. When the army was ordered to resume the homeward journey, I got up and walked on till I left the army (camp) behind. When I had answered the call of nature, I went towards my hawdaj, but behold! A necklace of mine made of Jaz ' Dhufar (a kind of black bead) was broken and I looked for it and my search for it detained me. The group of people who used to carry me, came and carried my hawdaj on to the back of my camel on which I was riding, considering that I was therein. At that time women were light in weight and were not fleshy for they used to eat little (food), so those people did not feel the lightness of the hawdaj while raising it up, and I was still a young lady. They drove away the camel and proceeded. Then I found my necklace after the army had gone. I came to their camp but found nobody therein so I went to the place where I used to stay, thinking that they would miss me and come back in my search. While I was sitting at my place, I felt sleepy and slept. Safwan ibn al-Mu 'ani asSulami adh-Dhakwani was behind the army. He had started in the last part of the night and reached my stationing place in the morning and saw the figure of a sleeping person. He came to me and recognized me on seeing me for he used to see me before veiling. I got up because of his saying, 'Inna Lillahi wa inna ilayhi rajioon' (To God we belong, and to Him is our return), which he uttered on recognizing me. I covered my face with my garment, and by God, he did not say to me a single word except, 'Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi, till he made his she-camel kneel down whereupon he trod on its forelegs and I mounted it. Then Safwan set out, leading the she-camel that was carrying me, till we met the army while they were resting during the hot midday. Then whoever was meant for destruction, fell in destruction, and the leader of the rumors was Abdullah ibn Ubay ibn Salool.

After this we arrived at Madeenah and I became ill for one month while the people were spreading the forged statements, and I was not aware of anything thereof. But what aroused my doubt while I was

sick, was that I was no longer receiving from God's Messenger the same kindness as I used to receive when I fell sick. God's Messenger would come to me, say a greeting and add, 'How is that (lady)?' and then depart. That aroused my suspicion but I was not aware of the propagated evil till I recovered from my ailment. I went out with Umm Mistah to answer the call of nature towards al-Manasi, the place where we used to relieve ourselves, and used not to go out for this purpose except from night to night, and that was before we had lavatories close to our houses. And this habit of ours was similar to the habit of the old Arabs (in the deserts or in the tents) concerning the evacuation of the bowels, for we considered it troublesome and harmful to take lavatories in the houses. So I went out with Umm Mistah who was the daughter of ibn 'Abd Manaf, and her mother was daughter of Sakhr ibn' Amir who was the aunt of Abi Bakr as-Siddeeq, and her son was Mistah ibn Uthatha. When we had finished our affair, Umm Mistah and I came back towards my house. Umm Mistah stumbled over her robe whereupon she said, 'Let Mistah be ruined!' I said to her, 'What a bad word you have said! Do you abuse a man who has taken part in the Battle of Badr?' She said, "O you there! Didn't you hear what he has said?" I said, 'And what did he say?' She then told me the statement of the rumor spreaders which added to my ailment. When I returned home, God's Messenger came to me, and after greeting, he said, 'How is that (lady)?' I said, 'Will you allow me to go to my parents?' At that time I intended to be sure of the news through them. God's Messenger allowed me and I went to my parents and asked my mother, 'O my mother! What are the people talking about?' My mother said, 'O' my daughter! Take it easy, for by God, there is no charming lady who is loved by her husband who has other wives as well, but that those wives would find fault with her.' I said, 'SubhanAllah! Did the people really talk about that?' "

Here, dear reader, we would like to pause a little and later continue the Aishah's story. Let us ponder over how motherly and experienced Umm Roomful was. See how she controlled the anger and how truthful she was in her reliance on God in the light of her deep faith that equals high mountains in solidity and firmness.

Yes, there a relief-giver for every distress, there is a supporter in the face of every injustice and there is disapprover for every false accusation. That is God, the True Lord, be He glorified. Aishah (S) continued: "That night I kept on weeping the whole night till the morning. My tears never stopped, nor did I sleep, and morning broke while I was still weeping, God's Messenger called 'Ali ibn Abi Talib and Usamah ibn Zayd when the Divine Inspiration delayed, in order to consult them as to the idea of divorcing his wife. Usamah ibn Zayd told God's Messenger of what he knew about the innocence of his wife and of his affection for her. He said, 'O' God's Messenger! She is your wife, and we do not know anything about her except good.'

But 'Ali ibn Abi Talib said, 'O' God's Messenger! God does not impose restrictions on you; and there are plenty of women other than her. If you however, ask (her) slave girl, she will tell you the truth.' 'A'ishah added, 'So God's Messenger called for Bareerah and said, 'O' Bareerah Did you ever see anything which might have aroused your suspicion (as regards 'A'ishah)?' Bareerah said, 'By God Who has sent you with the truth, I have never seen anything regarding 'A'ishah which I would blame her for except that she is a girl of immature age who sometimes sleeps and leaves the dough of her family unprotected so that the domestic goats come and eat it.'

So God's Messenger got up (and addressed) the people and asked for somebody who would take revenge on 'Abdullah. Ibn Ubay ibn as Salool then. God's Messenger, while on the pulpit, said, 'O' Muslims Who will help me against a man who has hurt me by slandering my family? By God, I know

nothing except good about my family, and people have blamed a man of whom I know nothing except good, and he never used to visit my family except with me,'

Sa 'd ibn Mu'adh al-Ansari got up and said, 'O' God's Messenger! By God, I will relieve you from him. If he be from the tribe of (Bani) al-Aws, then I will chop his head off; and if he be from our brethren, the Khazraj, and then you give us your order and we will obey it.' On that, Sa 'd ibn 'Ubadah got up, and he was the chief of the Khazraj, and before this incident he had been a pious man but he was incited by his zeal for his tribe. He said to Sa'd (ibn Mu'adh), 'By God the Eternal, you have told a lie! You shall not kill him and you will never be able to kill him!' On that, Usayd ibn Hudayr, the cousin of Sa 'd (ibn Mu'adh) got up and said to Sa 'd ibn 'Ubadah, 'You are a liar! By God the Eternal, we will surely kill him; and you are a hypocrite defending the hypocrites!' So the two tribes of al-Aws and al-Khazraj got excited till they were on the point of fighting with each other while God's Messenger was standing on the pulpit. God's Messenger continued quieting them till they became silent whereupon he became silent too.

On that day I kept on weeping so much that neither did my tears stop, nor could I sleep. In the morning my parents were with me, and I had wept for two nights and a day without sleeping and with incessant tears till they thought that my liver would burst with weeping. While they were with me and I was weeping, an Ansari woman asked permission to see me. I admitted her and she sat and started weeping with me. While I was in that state, God's Messenger came to us, greeted, and sat down. He had never sat with me since the day what was said, was said.

He had stayed a month without receiving any Divine Inspiration concerning my case. God's Messenger recited the Tashahhud after he had sat down, and then said, 'Thereafter, O' Aishah! I have been informed such and-such a thing about you; and if you are innocent, God will reveal your innocence, and if you have committed a sin, then ask for God's forgiveness and repent to Him, for when a slave confesses his sin and then repents to God, God accepts his repentance.' When God's Messenger had finished his speech, my tears ceased completely so that I no longer felt even a drop thereof. Then I said to my father, 'Reply to God's Messenger on my behalf as to what he said.' He said, 'By God, I do not know what to say to God's Messenger.' Then I said to my mother, 'Reply to God's Messenger.' She said, 'I do not know what to say to God's Messenger.' Still a young girl as I was and though I had little knowledge of Qur'an, I said, 'By God, I know that you heard this story so much so that it has been planted in your minds and you have believed it.

So now, if I tell you that I am innocent, and God knows that I am innocent, you will not believe me; and if I confess something, and God knows that I am innocent of it, you will believe me. By God, I cannot find of you an example except that of Joseph's father: 'So (for me) patience is most fitting against that which you assert and it is God (Alone) Whose help can be sought.' Then I turned away and lay on my bed, and at that time I knew that I was innocent and that God would reveal my innocence. But by God, I never thought that God would sent down about my affair, verses that would be recited (forever), as I considered myself too unworthy to be talked of by God with something that was to be recited: but I hoped that God's Messenger might have a vision in which God would prove my innocence.

By God, God's Messenger had not left his seat and nobody had left the house when the Divine Inspiration came to God's Messenger. So there overtook him the same hard condition which used to

overtake him (when he was Divinely Inspired) so that the drops of his sweat were running down, like pearls, though it was a (cold) winter day, and that was because of the heaviness of the Statement which was revealed to him. When that state of God's Messenger was over, and he was smiling when he was relieved, the first word he said was, 'Aishah, God has declared your innocence.' My mother said to me, 'Get up and go to him.' I said, 'By God, I will not go to him and I will not thank anybody but God.' So God revealed, 'Verily! Those who spread the Slander are a gang among you. Think it not...'

When God revealed this to confirm my innocence, Abu Bakr asSiddiq who used to provide for Mistah ibn Uthathah because of the latter's kinship to him and his poverty, said, 'By God, I will never provide for Mistah anything after what he has said about 'A'ishah.' So God (S) revealed:

And let not those among you who are blessed with graces and wealth swear not to give [any sort of help] to their kinsmen, alMasakeen [the poor], and those who left their homes for God's Cause. Let them pardon and forgive. Do you not love that God should forgive you? And God is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful)

(Qur 'an 24: 22)

Abu Bakr said, 'Yes, by God, I wish that God should forgive me.' So he resumed giving Mistah the aid he used to give him before and said, 'By God, I will never withhold it from him at all . 'Aishah further said: "God's Messenger also asked Zaynab bint Jahsh about my case. He said, 'O' Zaynab! What have you seen?' She replied, 'O' God's Messenger! I protect my hearing and my sight (by refraining from telling lies). I know nothing but good (about 'Aishah).' Of all the wives of God's Messenger, it was Zaynab who aspired to receive from him the same favor as I used to receive, yet, God saved her (from telling lies) because of her piety.

But her sister, Hammah, kept on fighting on her behalf so she was destroyed as were those who invented and spread the slander." The saying of Umm Rooman to her daughter 'Aishah (may God be pleased with them) attracted my attention. When the verses that explained her innocence were revealed and the house of Abu Bakr was purified, never to be touched with any harm again, Umm Rooman told her daughter, "Get up and go to him."

This expression carried, within its letters, all signs of great love that Umm Rooman had in her heart for the Messenger of God (S). It also indicated the epitome of human experience in marriage, in the sense of love, companionship and mercy, so that the family could be established upon strong and firmly-rooted pillars which no circumstances can shake and no emerging event can weaken. This nice summation did not come from Umm Rooman accidentally. It rather emanated from her pure origin that was refined by Islam, and from there, presented as an excellent example for the entire mankind.

God (S) says:

(And among His Signs is this, that He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you affection and mercy. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect. (Qur'an 30: 21)

The days of slander and its trial had their toll on the body of Umm Rooman, because her big heart bore all the sorrows and pains of those days. It was this heart in which the husband, the daughter and all people, irrespective of their status, had a place. The heart then became weakened and it was only

months after the incidence of slander that Umm Rooman died. If the souls are big, bodies will toil in the way of achieving their goals. We have no recommendation or testimony or comment for her after the recommendation of the Messenger of God (S). He had said, "Whoever wants to see a woman among the beautiful women of Paradise who have wide and lovely eyes, should look at Umm Rooman." May God be pleased with her!

We can now go back to 'Ai shah's life journey with the Messenger of God (S) and after that. 'Ai shah spent nine years in the Prophet's house. How those years were and what did they produce? In spite of her being among rivals - and they were never rivals except within mild limits that left no adverse effect or caused any harm - 'Ai shah was the most beloved to the Messenger of God (S). Her marriage took place as an implementation of a divine revelation, for Angel Gabriel showed her to the Prophet (S) in a piece of silk: and he told him, "This is your wife in this world and the Hereafter. "

The Messenger of God told 'Ai shah, "You have been shown to me in (my) dreams on three nights. An angel was carrying you in a silken cloth and said to me, 'This is your wife.' And when I uncovered it; behold, it was you. I then said, ' If this dream is from God, He will cause it to come true . ' "

At-Tirmidhi also reported on the authority of 'Aishah that she said that Angel Gabriel came with her picture in a green silken cloth to the Messenger of God (S) and he told him, "This is your wife in this world and the Hereafter." 'Ai shah was the youngest of the Prophet's wives at the time of her marriage. She would enjoy the seesaw and would love to play with dolls. Hers was really an innocent childhood. She had a father, a husband and a brother and all means of love, affection and compassion. She even enjoyed fun. Many a time did the Prophet (S) playfully call her, 'O' 'Aish'.

A delegation would come from Abyssinia and its members would sit in the courtyard of the mosque and they would start playing with their arrows. 'A'ishah would stand in the door of her room behind the Messenger of God (S), placing her head upon his noble shoulder so that she could watch them and amuse herself. She would stay in this position until the Prophet would ask her: "Have you heard enough?" And she would say: "Yes." In a hadith reported by at-Tirmidhi, a man spoke ill of 'A'ishah in the presence of 'Ammar ibn yasir. 'Ammar rebuked the man saying, "May you be put to shame and disowned! Are you speaking ill of the sweetheart of the Messenger of God?!!!"

Anas ibn Malik said, "The first love in Islam was the love that the Messenger of God had for 'A'ishah. May God be pleased with her." Bukhari reported on the authority of 'A'ishah that she said: "The people used to send presents to the Prophet on the day of my turn. My companions (i.e. the other wives of the Prophet) gathered in the house of Umm Salamah and said, 'O' Umm Salamah! By God, the people choose to send presents on the day of 'A'ishah turn and we too, love the good (i.e. presents etc.) as 'A'ishah does. You should tell God's Messenger (S) to tell the people to send presents to him wherever he may be, or wherever his turn may be. Umm Salamah said that to the Prophet and he turned away from her, and when the Prophet returned to her (i.e. Umm Salamah), she repeated the same, and the Prophet again turned away, and when she told him the same for the third time, the Prophet said, 'O' Umm Salamah! Don't trouble me by harming 'A'ishah, for by God, the Divine Inspiration never came to me while I was under the blanket of any woman amongst you except her."

The other wives did not stop with Umm Salamah; they also sent Fatimah (S), his daughter, to him concerning the same issue. 'A'ishah said: "The Prophet's wives sent Fatimah, the Prophet's daughter

to him. She asked permission to enter while he was lying down with me in my woolen blanket. He permitted her to enter and she said, 'O' Messenger of God, your wives sent me to you demanding for fairness concerning (your treatment of) the daughter of Ibn Abi Quhafah (meaning 'A'ishah, daughter of Abu Bakr).' And I was there (listening but) silent. The Messenger of God (S) told her, 'O' daughter, don't you love whatever I love?' She said, 'Yes.' He then said, 'Then you should love this (lady).'

Dear reader, this is a human side of the Prophet's person. Hearts, according to the Messenger of God (S), are between the two of the Most-Merciful Lord's Fingers. He twists them as He wills!! And the heart is named qalb in Arabic because of its changing nature. The supplication that the Messenger of God (S) used to make frequently in his prostration is:

"Allahumma, ya muqallibal qulub, thabbit qalbi alal emaan."

This means: "O' God, the One Who turns the hearts; make my heart firm upon faith."

The Messenger of God (S) said the truth when he said, "O' God, this is my division in that over which I have power. Do not blame me for that over which you have power and I have no power." This great love was limitless. It transcended material feelings to things that are higher and more sublime: the soul, the heart and the mind. The emotional irradiation of this love reflects the picture of the distinctness in the Prophetic household and in the heart. It then preserved this distinctness in order to present it as lively and wonderful example that is full of understanding, knowledge, cognizance and honesty; and from there enrich the (Islamic) heritage with plentiful wealth of injunctions. Al Hakim said in his book, al-Mustadrak: "One fourth of the rule of Shari'ah was narrated on the authority of 'A'ishah."

Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (S) said, "Whenever a hadith was unclear to us we the Companions of God's Messenger and we asked 'Aishah about it, we always gained knowledge about that hadith from her."

Masrooq ibn al-Ajda' said, "I saw the elders among the Companions of Muhammad (S) asking her about the law of inheritance.'

Az-Zuhri said, "If 'Aishah's knowledge is compiled and compared to the knowledge of all women, her knowledge will surely excel theirs." He also said, "The first person to remove distress from the people and explain to them the Sunnah regarding that was 'A'ishah." We are not here explaining in detail, the knowledge that the mother of the faithful, 'Aishah possessed or the high status she had attained, we are only mentioning some examples to confirm the truthfulness of the Prophet's perspicacity. It was this that caused the great love he had for her. Though, the hadith reported that the Prophet (S) said, "Take half (of the knowledge) of your religion from this Humayra' (meaning red haired lady) " is weak, we, nevertheless, are not in doubt that the Messenger of God (S) used to estimate 'Aishah's cleverness, mental alertness, knowledge and piety. May God be pleased with her

'A'ishah's House

While we discuss the life of the Messenger of God (S) through the women Companions, each of whom played a distinguishing role in his life and in the course of his mission, we should not forget to discuss 'A'ishah's room for many reasons. First and foremost, it is the noble Prophetic room that shelters the Prophet's grave and his noble body. It is the only room that still exists of the rooms of the Prophet's wives. It was the room that the Messenger of God (S) wished that he should be nursed while he

was sick of fever. It is the room that shelters the remains of two leaders: Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may God be pleased with them). There is a story worthy of being told concerning burying the two leaders beside the Prophet (S) in 'Aishah's room.

Her father had commanded her in his sick bed that he should be buried beside the Prophet. The command was implemented. So a grave was dug for him in her room. His head was made parallel with the shoulders of the Prophet (S), his grave was brought close to that of the Prophet and water was sprinkled on it. Also, when 'Umar (R) was stabbed by Abu Lu'lu'ah, the Zoroastrian, he sought the permission of 'Aishah (S) to be allowed to be buried in her room. Indeed, I always feel a severe cold and I seriously shiver whenever I read about the stance of Ibn 'Umar and his saying when 'Umar's body was brought (for burial) at the door of 'Aishah's room, Ibn 'Umar said on that memorable moment, "The slave of God, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab is seeking permission to enter into the house of the mother of the faithful, 'Aishah." So 'Aishah allowed him in and showed compassion.

The mother of the faithful, 'Aishah was increased in greatness and honor, for she used to say (before 'Umar was buried there); "It is only my husband and my father that are here." But after 'Umar was buried there, she said, "I do not longer enter the room but with my garment fastened because I was shy (of being in the presence) of 'Umar.

As we do not want to talk much about the Battle of the Camel, we are only going to say some calm and wise statement and not convulsive and agitate statement that only divides and does not unite. We are saying a statement that is far above sectionalism and bigotries; and that transcends individuals and figures, and events and periods so that the hearts and minds can meet, and then all that can be united in the melting pot of Islam. All narrations in all historical sources are unanimous that the negotiations that took place between 'Ali on one side and Talhah, az-Zubayr and 'Aishah on the other were almost successful in arriving at a truce, peace and protection of blood.

It is usual that the group that has suffered a loss would not be pleased with that. Who is that group? It was the same group with its personalities. They are those who came from Egypt revolting against 'Uthman (R). 'Abdullah ibn Saba' the Jew had filled their hearts with malice and hatred. And the event of the day of distress took place in which 'Uthman ibn 'Affan was martyred. That was a historical calamity that destroyed the political edifice of Islam.

At the dawn of the appointed day in which announcement of the truce and peace was to be made, the situation exploded and the Sahabah started the war and the rest is now history.

Therefore, the greatest crisis selected its role, its place and its path; and the blood of the Muslims was the fuel of that crisis. In the month of Ramadan in the year 58 A.H. 'Aishah had her fatal illness and she said in her will: "Do not follow my bier with a fire nor lay a red velvet piece."

She then surrendered her soul in the night of Tuesday, 17th of Ramadan at the age of sixty six. She was buried on the same night after Salat al-Witr in al-Baqee'.

Maymoonah, Mother of the Faithful

Her name was Barraah, so the Messenger of God (S) changed it to Maymoonah. Maymoonah (S) was not the only lady who accepted Islam and whose name was Barraah and the Messenger of God (S) changed her name. There are many other women whom the Prophet (S) gave other names. An example is Zaynab bint Jahsh, another mother of the faithful. Her name was also Barraah, so the Messenger of God (S) changed it to Zaynab.

The Prophet (S) did not change the name of these women simply because of their being married to him. Rather, he did so in accordance with the principle of choosing good names that agree with Islamic teaching and Muslim faith.

Dear reader, you might be wondering that the purpose of changing the name of Abu Bakr from 'Abdul Ka'bah to 'Abdullah was clear as opposed to the purpose of changing the name 'Barraah, which is derived from birr that means righteousness. No problem. You have predecessors in this among the Companions, may God be pleased with all of them. The answer the Messenger of God gave in response to this question was most eloquent as it was good-mannered. He said, "Is she praising herself?" For, how can one praise oneself while it is only God Who can tell the righteous from the sinful and the pious from the corrupt and immoral? The Messenger of God (S) instructed us to be good-mannered in our dealing with God. He taught us to say, after praising someone because of their action or quality, "That is what we know about him."

Let us go back to Maymoonah, the mother of the faithful. The Messenger of God (S) died less than three years after marrying her, so her narrations from him are few and limited. Maymoonah was extremely pious, righteous and gentle. Enough for us in this regard was 'Aishah's description of her. She said about Maymoonah, "She was among the most pious of us and the kindest to the kith and kin. After the death of the Prophet (S) she lived her life calmly and peacefully, preoccupying herself with acts of worship and performing Hajj every year,

A noteworthy example of the purity of her mind and her strong affinity to the Messenger of God (S) is that, in her final Hajj, which she performed in the year 51 A.H., she became very ill on her way back to Madeenah from Makkah. She died in a place called 'Sarif that is some miles from Makkah. It was this same place in which a round-shaped structure was put up for the Messenger of God (S) where he consummated marriage with her, after he had performed 'Umrah'. 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas, the great Companion and who was a son of her sister, Umm al Fadl prepared for burial. Yes, she died in the very place where her wedding and its consummation with the Messenger of God (S) took place! Maybe it is coincidence? But it is a noteworthy indication from which lessons can be learnt.

Hafsah, Mother of the Faithful

She is the daughter of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab. In Arabic language, Hafs is one of the names of the lion. The Messenger of God, would often address 'Umar as Abu Hafs. There is a story for behind her entering the household of prophethood as a wife of the Messenger of God (S). She was married to a man known as Hudhayfah who witnessed the Battle of Badr and then fell ill at Madeenah and died. Hafsah then became a widow.

It has been part of Arab culture, either in the age of ignorance or after the emergence of Islam, that a man makes efforts to marry off his daughter, sister or any woman in his guardianship without any inconvenience - to someone he believed was good and suitable. This is because; her continuous stay in his house as an unmarried girl or a widow is regarded a great shame. So when Hafsa became a widow, it pained 'Umar and he was distressed. He went out one day heading for the house of the nearest person to him who was Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq. He informed him of what is in his mind and offered him Hafsa in marriage. Abu Bakr kept silent and did not utter a word. 'Umar left his house greatly distressed and embittered.

So 'Uthman came to his mind. Since his wife, Ruqayyah, the Prophet's daughter had passed; he was in a better position to respond favorably to his offer. So he made for his house and offered him his daughter in marriage. But 'Uthman told him, "I do not want to marry today." Who was she that can replace Ruqayyah in 'Uthman's house after both of them have enjoyed the life with each other for many years? And 'Uthman was in a psychological state that could not allow him to propose marriage or to marry. 'Umar's distress increased.

The Messenger of God (S) then saw him in that condition. He asked him about the matter and 'Umar told him of his encounter with Abu Bakr and 'Uthman. Bitterness and rage against them could be noticed in his speech and the way he talked. The Messenger of God (S) calmed him down and then said, "Hafsa shall marry someone who is better than 'Uthman and 'Uthman shall marry someone who is better than Hafsa." 'Umar stood up, somewhat calmed, but he was still scratching his head over the meaning of the Prophet's statement. When Abu Bakr met him, he approached him and they talked with each other.

'Umar informed him of what he heard from the Messenger of God (S) and he told Abu Bakr that he could not understand the statement. Abu Bakr smiled and said, "I have heard the Messenger of God (S) mentioning Hafsa. But I would not like to reveal his secret. If he had not shown his interest in marrying her I would have married her. So do not bear any grudge against me." 'Uthman came to the Messenger of God (S) in his softness, bashfulness and sorrow. He was tearful and gloomy. He said, "My marriage relationship with you has come to an end with the death of Ruqayyah, O' Messenger of God!" The noble Messenger, S) sympathized with him and then said, "I have given you her sister, Umm Kulthoom, in marriage. If I had had ten daughters, I would have given them to you in marriage (one after the other)."

That is how the Messenger of God S) married Hafsa and 'Uthman married Umm Kulthoom. And that is how Hafsa enter the household of the Prophet (S) as one of the mothers of the faithful. Hafsa(R) was a devoted worshipper, very pious, always fasting and praying in the night. She was the closest to 'A'ishah among the Prophet's wife. It is as if they were two sisters. They were always in agreement and never disagreed. However, Hafsa had in her nature an aspect of the meaning of her name: She was somewhat stern and tough. Perhaps, she inherited that from her father 'Umar, al-Farooq. This sternness was increased by the death of her first husband, making her easily irritated.

It was this nature of hers that caused the Messenger of God S) to divorce her once after which he took her back. We need to wait a little bit concerning his taking her back, for there is something in it that shows the status of 'Umar. Ibn Sa'd recorded that the Messenger of God) divorced Hafsa once and

then took her back because the Angel Gabriel told him, "Take Hafsah back, for she frequently fasts and prays in the night. And she is your wife in Paradise."

Humayd ibn Anas narrated that, "The Prophet (S) divorced Hafsah and he was thereafter commanded to take her back, and he did so." 'Uqbah ibn 'Amir narrated that the Messenger of God divorced Hafsah, 'Umar's daughter. When 'Umar heard this, he strewed sand over his head and said, "God will no more care about 'Umar and his daughter after she has been divorced [by the Prophet (S)]." So Angel Gabriel came to the Messenger of God the following day and told him, "God commands you to take back Hafsah as a way of showing compassion to 'Umar (her father)." In another version of the narration said, " 'Umar entered the place of Hafsah while she was crying and he asked her whether the Messenger of God (S) has divorced her. He said to her, 'He had divorced you once and took you back only because of me. If he divorces you again, I will never speak to you again.'

After that, Hafsah was keen never to annoy the Prophet (S) again until he died. Here, dear reader, we need to point to a new and illuminating aspect of Hafsah's personality, in addition to her other values and qualities. Angel Gabriel described her for the Prophet (S) that she was frequently performing (voluntary) fasting and night prayers, and that she is one of his wives in Paradise. These are degrees and ranks, as well as practical attributes and spiritual activities.

Another quality you can add to her credit is the fact that she could read and write, a quality that was very rare among womenfolk then, even among men. The new thing that attracts our attention here is that her house was the place in which the revealed verses of Qur'an written on palm branches, slates and other materials were kept. She was entrusted with the most honorable and the greatest thing. And she deserved that. This was the case since the time of the Messenger of God (S) up to the time of 'Uthman. When 'Uthman was compiling the Qur'an and copying it in a single book form, those kept with Hafsah were the primary sources in doing so.

This role played by Hafsah, transcended her life in the house of the Prophet, unto Islam itself. It was full of religiosity, activities, orderliness and a course of action. We cannot but make a stop, as a means of honoring the mother of the faithful, Hafsah. For, she was the custodian of the Book of God. She preserved it in her heart and in her house. Whenever we open a copy of the Qur'an to read it, we have to remember the Angel entrusted with the Revelation (Gabriel) and his reverberating sound, the impact the verses had on the heart of the Messenger of God (S) and the scribes of the Revelations: 'Ali, Zayd and others. We have to remember Abu Bakr and 'Umar and their compilations of the Qur'an; and 'Uthman and his resoluteness, trustworthiness and sense of duty; and finally Hafsah and her preservation of the Book.

We have to remember and seek guidance from God, the Great in His Majesty. At the beginning of the year 44 A.H., Hafsah departed from this world and joined the company of the loved ones, Muhammad (S) and his Companions.

Zaynab bint Khuzaymah

The Mother of the Faithful and the Mother of the Poor

She is the sister of Umm al-Fadl and Maymoonah (the mother of the faithful) from the same mother and different fathers. She embraced Islam early, married 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh and migrated with him to Abyssinia. Zaynab was of fine and noble origin. This, along with her pure religion, blossomed and produced in her great fruits: she was very pious. The fragrance of her piety spread with her name and whenever she is mentioned and the pleasant fruits of this piety flow abundantly from her hands to the poor and the needy in the form of unlimited gifts and charity so much so that she was known as 'mother of the poor'.

Her life with 'Abdullah was a clear example of love, obedience and self-sacrifice in marital obligations. The personality of her husband, 'Abdullah, had really increased her in status; but this made her more humble and more sincere in her love for God and His Messenger (S). She was not carried away by ostentation and pride and the Messenger of God (S) appointed her husband as the leader of the first contingent. The Prophet (S) had told his Companions about her husband, "I will certainly send a man who is most enduring of hunger and thirst among you." She was never seized by ostentation and arrogance when she married 'Abdullah who was a cousin of God's Messenger (S).

Humility was a prominent quality of Zaynab's personality. She entered the household of the Prophet (S) as a mother of the faithful. And this is a high and noble status. It is an honor that is higher than all other honors. She entered the household with a title of 'mother of the poor'. So the two titles became interwoven and the two became interconnected, though, they are in reality, one. Did the Prophet (S) not said in his supplication: "O' God, make me live as a poor person, cause me to die as a poor person and resurrect me amidst the group of poor people?"

Those are the ones you think were self-sufficient because of their restraint. And Zaynab entered the house of the Prophet (S) as his wife: It was on a Sunday in the third year of Hijrah; the day that 'Abdullah was wedded to the beautiful women of Paradise. It is noteworthy to mention the story of his martyrdom.

Al-Baghawi reported on the authority of Ishaq ibn Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas that he said: My father informed me that 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh told him on the day of Uhud, 'Can't you come so that we can supplicate?' He said, 'Then we moved into a corner and Sa'd made supplication saying, 'O' my Lord! When we meet (the enemy) today let me come into confrontation with a man who is sternly furious whom I will fight in Your cause. Then let me overcome him so that I can kill him and seize his weapons.'

'Abdullah ibn Jahsh said Amen to this supplication and then said, 'O' God! Let me meet a sternly furious man whom I will fight in Your cause and let him take hold of me and cut my nose and ears and when I will meet You I will say, 'This is in Your cause and in the cause of Your Messenger' and You will say, 'You have said the truth.' Sa'd said, 'So the supplication of 'Abdullah was better than mine. I have seen him later in the day with his nose and ears hanged in a thread.' "

Az-Zubayr ibn Bakkfu- narrated: " 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh used to be called 'the one who was mutilated in God's cause'. His sword got broken in the Battle of Uhud and the Messenger of God (S) gave him a thin dry rod and it turned into a sword in his hand and he was nicknamed 'the thin dry rod.'

This sword was still existent until it was sold to Bagha, the Turkish, for two hundred dinar." The Messenger of God (S) knew the pain of separation that Zaynab was suffering from. So he made efforts to console her and he proposed marriage to her. She welcomed the proposal and accepted it. And she entered the household of the Prophet (S) as a mother of the faithful. That was after his marriage to Hafsa, 'Umar's daughter. May God be pleased with all of them. Eight months after this marriage, Zaynab, the mother of the faithful and the mother of the poor seriously took ill and died.

She was the only wife of the Prophet (S) who died in his life after Khadeejah. The Prophet (S) was very sad for her departure. He invoked God to forgive her and he always remembered her days in patience.

Safiyah bint Huyay ibn Akhtab

Mother of the Faithful

The circumstances that made Safiyah one of the mothers of the faithful are very important. They are strongly related to the movement of the historical course of the Da'wah of Islam. Therefore, we need to discuss these circumstances and glorify them without any boring elaborations or faulty details. Her father Huyay ibn Akhtab was, for Islam and the Muslims, one of the most maliciously and treacherously dangerous Jewish leaders in Madeenah. He was the leader of Banu Naqeer, one of the three biggest Jewish tribes that were living in Madeenah. These tribes had their distinctive districts and fortresses. Other two major tribes are Banu Qaynuqa' and Banu Quraydhah.

The Messenger of God (S), when he arrived at Madeenah on his Hijrah and started organizing the new

society, had entered into pacts and treaties with the Jews, doing so separately with each Jewish clan. But since the Jews are naturally treacherous, it was not long before they broke the treaties. Banu Qaynuqa' was the first to act treacherously, followed by Banu Nadeer.

The Messenger of God (S) came to them one day along with a group of his Companions seeking their help in paying the blood money (diyah) of two persons who were mistakenly killed. He did so because of the alliance that was between him and them. Outwardly, they welcomed him and they stood up for deliberations. Their leader, Huyay ibn Akhtab then suggested that they should take the opportunity of Muhammad's presence in their midst and the fewness of his Companions that were with him to betray him and kill him. Most of them agreed on this suggestion and efforts were made to execute this evil plan.

It was here that Angel Gabriel came to the Messenger of God (S) and informed him of what was being planned against him. The Prophet (S) then stood up quietly and left leaving behind, even, his Companions.

The Jews of Banu Nadeer were taken by surprise that their evil plan had failed. As for his Companions who were with him, they thought that he only left them to meet some of his needs. But when they noticed that he had been away for a long time, they traced him, and when they saw him he told them of what had happened. As a punishment for their act of treachery, the Messenger of God (S)

commanded the Jews of Banu Nadeer to leave Madeenah, and he gave them a period within which they should do so. They refused to leave and rather fortified themselves in their forts. The leader of the hypocrites in Madeenah, 'Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salool supported them and promised them help.

When the period of grace expired, the army of Islam, under the able leadership of Muhammad (S) besieged them and Ibn Ubayy, the hypocrite let them down and disappointed them. Then the Messenger of God (S) forced them to evacuate Madeenah. So they went out of the city to Khaybar without anyone pitying them. From here, Huyay ibn Akhtab went about spreading his malicious venoms anew and arousing the polytheists' anger against the Prophet (S); shuttling between Khaybar, Makkah and Madeenah.

These efforts of Huyay, culminated in the Battle of the Confederates, known otherwise as the Battle of the Trench. This was followed by the Battle of Banu Quraydhah who allied themselves with the polytheists and broke the treaties they made with the Messenger of God (S).

The presence of Huyay ibn Akhtab in the midst of Banu Quraydhah was coincidental with the time that the Muslims were in war with them. So he was killed along with the fighters against whom Sa' d ibn Mu'adh gave a judgment that they should be killed. They themselves appointed Sa' d as the arbitrator between them and the Messenger of God (S) hoping that he would be lenient with them because he was their former ally. The Messenger of God (S) told him, "You have indeed judged among them with the judgment of God from above the seven heavens."

In the light of the above, Khaybar, the source of problem and conspiracy against the Muslims had to be conquered. In spite of severe hardships from its many forts and powerful fighters, it eventually fell into the hands of the Muslims.

Safiyah bint Huyay fell, as a captive, in the share of Dihyah ibn Khaleefah al-Kalbi. But a number of the Companions vied with one another for her; each of them wanted to have her for she was amazingly beautiful and she is the daughter of the king of Banu Nadeer and the wife of Khaybar chief, Kinanah ibn Abul-Huqayq. To put an end to this dispute, the Messenger of God (S) chose her for himself and made it a condition upon her that she should accept Islam and be set free. She accepted. By this the competitors were calmed.

When the Messenger of God saw that Safiyah's eyes were green, he asked her of the reason and she said: "When I was a bride for Kinanah ibn Abi al-Huqayq, I saw in a dream, as if the sun descended upon my chest. I told my husband and he slapped me very hard and said, 'Are you wishing to be the wife of the king of the Arabs?' This reminded us of Prophet Yousuf's dream when he (S) said:

Verily, I saw [in a dream] eleven stars and the sun and the moon I saw them prostrating themselves to me. (Qur'an 12: 4)

On the other side, it confirmed the Jews' discussions in their secluded assemblies about the Prophethood of Muhammad (S), and that some of them believed in it. The story of 'Abdullah ibn Salam's embrace of Islam is a vivid example in this regard. Also, the symbolic fall of the sun upon Safiyah's chest has its own indications. For, she has yearning, from the depth of her heart that is full of Eeman, for the person of the Messenger of God, Muhammad (S).

Certainly, the life of Safiyah in the household of the Prophet and after the Prophet's death confirmed the great love that she had for him and the depth of her faith in God (SWT).

Ibn Sa'd narrated on the authority of ibn Yasar that he said: "When Safiyah arrived from Khaybar, she lodged at a house belonging to Harithah ibn an-Nu'man. The Ansar women heard of that and they came looking at her beauty and 'A'ishah also came wearing her face veil. When she came out, the Messenger of God (S) asked her, 'What did you see?' She said, 'I saw a Jewish woman!!' He then told her, 'Do not say that. For, she has embraced Islam and practices it perfectly.'" The women's jealousy did not stop with 'A'ishah. Some of the Prophet's wives were also jealous of her.

Ibn Sa'd narrated on the authority of 'A'ishah: "That the Messenger of God (S) was on a journey and a camel for Safiyah became ill and Zaynab bint Jahsh had an extra camel. So the Prophet(S) told her, 'Safiyah's camel is ill, can you please give her a camel?' But Zaynab said, 'Should I give (camel) to that Jewish woman?' So the Messenger of God (S) deserted her for DhulHijjah and Muharram, two or three months without coming to her. Zaynab said, 'Until I gave up all hope in him.' "

It was also reported that the Prophet's wives used to say many other things about her. Her servant Kinanah narrated that she (Safiyah) said: "The Prophet (S) entered my house while it had reached me that 'Aishah and Hafsa used to say they were dearer to the Messenger of God (S) than her and that they were his wives and cousins. When she mentioned that to the Messenger of God) he told her, 'You should have told them, 'how could you be better than me while my husband is Muhammad and my father is Haroon and my uncle is Musa?'" "

Some of her most prominent qualities are intelligence, forbearance and nobility. A maid of her plotted against her in the presence of 'Umar and informed him that she loved Saturday and that she was kind with the Jews. 'Umar sent for her and asked her about that. She said, "As for Saturday I no longer love it since God have substituted it for me with Friday. As for the Jews, I still have kith and kin among them. So I have to be kind to them."

Safiyah knew that it was her maid who plotted against her and she asked her, "Why did you do this?" The maid said, "It was Satan." Safiyah then told her, "Go, you are free." I believed that Safiyah freed her maid because she had said the truth and asserted that the cause of this plot was Satan. This act of Safiyah is an indication of her forbearance and excellence.

Her intelligence and farsightedness also contributed to her freeing of the maid. For, this maid that had once succumbed to the temptations of Satan could do so once more or many times more. So keeping her away from such temptation through freeing her is a protection for her against it. "She is truthful." This is another testimony for Safiyah from the Messenger of God (S). It was in fact, a testimony from the one who never talked out of his own desire.

Ibn Sa'd reported with a Hasan chain of transmitters on the authority of Zayd ibn Aslam who said: "The Prophet's wives gathered when the Messenger of God (S) was in his sickness in which he died. Safiyah said, 'O' Prophet of God! I wish I were suffering from that which you are suffering from!' Upon hearing that, the Prophet's other wives winked at one another. The Messenger of God (S) commanded them, 'Go and rinse your mouths.' And they said, 'From what?' He said, 'Because of your wink at one another to mock her. By God! She is truthful (in what she said).'" "

Safiyah lived as a mother of the believers, honored and abundantly respected. She died in the year 52 A.H. during the caliphate of Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufiyan. She memorized many hadiths of the Prophet (S) and she narrated and people narrated from her, may God be pleased with her!

Zaynab bint Jahsh as-Sadiyah

Mother of the Faithful

May God be pleased with her

God (S) says: God has not put for any man two hearts inside his body. Neither has He made your wives whom you declare to be like your mothers' backs, your real mothers. [adh-Dhihiir is the saying of a husband to his wife, 'You are to me like the back of my mother' i.e. You are unlawful for me to approach], nor has He made your adopted sons your real sons. That is but your saying with your mouths. But God says the truth, and He guides to the [Right] Way. Call them [adopted sons] by [the names of] their fathers: that is more just with God. But if you know not their father's [names, call them] your brothers in faith and Mawlakum [your freed slaves]. And there is no sin on you concerning that in which you made a mistake, except in regard to...

It is not for a believer, man or woman, when God and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision. And whoever disobeys God and His Messenger, he has indeed strayed in a plain error. And [remember] when you said to him [Zayd ibn Harithah - the freed-slave of the Prophet] on whom God has bestowed Grace [by guiding him to Islam] and you [O' Muhammad too] have done favor [by manumitting him], 'Keep your wife to yourself, and fear God.' But you did hide in yourself [i.e. what God has already made known to you that He will give her to you in marriage] that which God will make manifest, you did fear the people [i.e., their saying that Muhammad married the divorced wife of his manumitted slave] whereas God had a better right that you should fear Him. So when Zayd had accomplished his desire from her [i.e. divorced her], We gave her to you in marriage, so that [in future] there may be no difficulty to the believers in respect of [the marriage of] the wives of their adopted sons when the latter have no desire to keep them [i.e. they have divorced them]. And God's Command must be fulfilled. There is no blame on the Prophet in that which God has made legal for him. That has been God's Way with those who have passed away of [the Prophets of] old. And the Command of God is a decree determined.) (Qur'an 33: 36-38)

Personalities and events are interwoven and rules and ordainments are revealed. So anybody who wants to write or talk about the mother of the faithful Zaynab bint Jahsh should be conversant with all this. He should do so in accordance with what the necessity of the research and study demands and within the literary and topical limits without losing the purpose so that no aspect with override another and in order to avoid a mistake that could lead to the abyss of ignorance and desire.

Dear reader, prefacing this discussion with clear verses from the Qur'an does not in any way, mean that I am going to make an exegesis of the verses. That is an entirely different field. The aspect of the verses that concerns us here is that with which we can support a fact and in which we can seek arbitration in the course of exchanging views. God says the truth, and He guides to the (Right) Way.

Zayd ibn Harithah

The story of Zayd's life in the house of Khadeejah is well known and does not need any repetition. But what we are concerned with here is the Prophet's adoption of Zayd. Adoption was a very popular habit during the time of ignorance. Zayd's father, Harithah, had mown of his son's being in Makkah in the house of Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah, the husband of Khadeejah bint Khuwaylid. So he quickly came to Makkah in the company of a brother of his, wanting to get his son back and paying whatever ransom was needed, for before that, he was very sad and tearful.

Of the poem he used to repeat in expression of his sorrow about Zayd is the one whose meaning is rendered as follows:

"I wept over Zayd for I didn't know what happened to him; Is he still alive or he has been seized by death. By God!

I don't know if I may ask:

Were you snatched by the even ground or you were snatched by the mountain.

Would that I knew whether you will be back;

For, it suffices me in this world that you return to me quickly.

Whenever the sun rises it reminds me of him;

And when the rain falls, the memory of him comes to me.

When the wind blows, it stirs his memory;

How often is my sorrow and fear over him!

I will make of the camel over the land with great effort;

And I shall not relent in roaming about the land (in search of him)

until the camel becomes weary and tired.

Or until the death comes to me;

Then, every man will die even if he is deluded by hope."

The above lines sufficiently show us the suffering of Harithah from the agony of his missing of Zayd. Every word, rather every letter of these lines indicates how sad and distressed he was. We can notice the tears that fall from Harithah's eyes with every poetic line he exudes. I take God as a witness that each time I read these poetic lines, I am seized by shock and I share with Harithah his emotions and then tears roll down from my eyes.

Zayd son of Muhammad

When the Messenger of God (S) saw that, he took Zayd out to the place near the Black Stone and said, " I take you all as witnesses that Zayd is my son. He can inherit me and I can inherit him." When Zayd's father and uncle saw that, they were happy and they went away.

Let us ponder a little bit over Harithah and his brother's statement, "You have increased us in fairness." Fairness is justice. The historical fact testifies that Muhammad gave both men more than fairness when he, firstly, gave Zayd the freedom of choice and that if he preferred to go with his father he was free to do so; and secondly, that he would not take any ransom for him.

Muhammad (m) then attained the highest level of justice and fairness in human relations with Zayd when he took a group of Qurayshites as witnesses in the precincts of the Sacred Mosque that he had adopted Zayd as a son and abided by the implications of this adoption in all matters relating to a father and his son. This is the third act of fairness on his path, (m). This concept of justice was a human norm and a followed tradition of the time of ignorance. Noble people who possessed qualities of manliness keenly followed it and were proud of it. It was not only in the case of adoption but in many other matters as well.

When the dawn of Islam appears and its illuminating light beamed through the minds and hearts of the rightly guided and the darkness of the age of ignorance was eliminated, the concept of fairness then became defined by the divine law that is more just with God. The Qur ' an says:

... Nor He made your adopted sons your real sons. That is but your saying with your mouths. But God says the truth, and He guides to the [Right] Way. Call them [adopted sons] by [the names of] their fathers: that is more just with God. But if you know not their father's [names, call them] your brothers in faith and Mawaleekum [your freed slaves]. And there is no sin on you concerning that in which you made a mistake, except in regard to what your hearts deliberately intend. And God is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Qur'an 33: 4-5)

With the revelation of these clear verses on the heart of the noble Messenger (S), the system of adoption as a custom and tradition was abrogated because it was neither truth nor reality; it was for some time a human fairness governed by manliness. It was only an emotional feeling, free of fundamentals and it did not transcend a word spoken by the mouth: That is but your saying with your mouths.

So Zayd returned to the originality of his lineage and turned from Zayd ibn Muhammad to Zayd ibn Harithah. And it was only the link of religion and faith that remained between the Messenger of God (S) and Zayd (R). The Prophet (S) then chose Zaynab bint Jahsh al-Asadiyah as a wife for his freed slave Zayd ibn Harithah. Zaynab was a Qurayshi girl. She was beautiful and of noble lineage. A great number of Qurayshi young men had wanted to marry her but she rejected all of them out of pride in her origin and high lineage. She was from the highest branch of the clan of Bani Asad. Her mother was Umaymah, the daughter of 'Abdul-Mutalib, the chief of Quraysh. She therefore did not want to marry but only a noble man.

That was the complexity in her life, and it was of the remnants of the days of ignorance in her heart.

When the Messenger of God informed her of his intention, she eschewed, raged and refused. She narrated the story to her brother 'Abdullah. So 'Abdullah came to the Messenger of God (S) to talk

to him and ask him to have a second look at the matter. The family of Banu Jahsh had all embraced Islam and the faith has penetrated in to their hearts and overwhelmed them.

'Abdullah asked the Prophet (S), "Are you pleased that Zaynab should marry Zayd?"

The Messenger of God said, "Yes."

'Abdullah then said, "We are pleased with what pleases you, O Messenger of God, and we shall not disobey your command." Zaynab was also satisfied, albeit reluctantly. That was in response to the command of God:

"It is not for a believer, man or woman, when God and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision. And whoever disobeys God and His Messenger, he has indeed strayed in plain error) (Qur'an 33: 36)

Thus did the marriage of Zaynab to Zayd take place and a dark page in the journey of history was closed and a new and bright page was opened. This new page spoke the truth through the saying of God (S):

Verily, the most honorable of you with God is that [believer] who has piety.) (Qur'an 49: 13)

And the saying of the Prophet (S), "There is no superiority for an Arab over a non-Arab or for a non-Arab over an Arab except through piety."

The ship of life then moved with them through a fathomless sea. Zayd was a favorite of God's Messenger and the dearest of all people to him. He was always in his company and follows him about like a shadow. He was his Companion during his journey to Ta'if. He entrusted him to bring his family from Makkah to Madeenah during migration and he made him a commander of a number of contingents to fight to the polytheists. Aishah (R) said: "Had Zayd been alive on the day the Prophet (S) died, he would have assigned him a responsibility."

Zayd was undoubtedly a great energy of faith. That is why he was able to endure the waves of yelling provoked by the violent winds of Zaynab and he tried as much as he could to paddle the ship far from the stormy currents with the wisdom of an experienced sailor. But Zaynab was in a perpetual and unquiet storm. Many a time she had injured the pride and the nobleness of faith in the heart of Zayd by her constantly reminding him of her high nobility and hurting him with that.

When Zayd could no longer bear the matter, he went to the Prophet (S) and complained to him. He opened his mind to him and sought a way out. The Prophet (S) asked him to keep his wife. The complaint was made repeatedly and the answer was the same. The Qur'an narrates the event to us. God (S) says in clear verses:

And [remember] when you said to him [Zayd ibn Harithah the freed-slave of the Prophet] on whom God has bestowed Grace [by guiding him to Islam] and you [O' Muhammad too] have done favor [by manumitting him], 'Keep your wife to yourself, and fear God.' But you did hide in yourself [Le. what God has already made known to you that He will give her to you in marriage] that which God will make manifest, you did fear the people [i.e., their saying that Muhammad married the divorced wife of his manumitted slave] whereas God had a better right that you should fear Him ...

(Qur'an 33: 37)

Here, dear reader, some ignorant people among the orientalisists and occidentalists who are advocates of evil launched one of their attacks against Islam and the Messenger of Islam. They say - may God destroy their mouths and disgrace them that Messenger of God (S) loved Zaynab and was stunned by her beauty. They claimed that he came one day to Zaynab's house asking for Zayd, and Zaynab came out to meet hurriedly before she could dress herself up properly, so some attractive parts of her body were exposed. Zayd was not at home so Zaynab cheerfully invited him in and he thanked her and left while saying: "Glory be to God Who twists hearts."

The advocates of evil even ignorantly cite to support their fabrication the saying of God, But you did hide in yourself [Le. what God has already made known to you that He will give her to you in marriage] that which God will make manifest). They do all this to diminish the status of prophethood! But the reality in which there is no dispute is entirely different from this. This poisoned arrow of fitnah and error is disproved by the conclusion of the quoted verse in which the purpose of this divine commandment is explained.

So when Zayd had accomplished his desire from her [i.e. divorced her], We gave her to you in marriage, so that [in future] there may be no difficulty to the believers in respect of [the marriage of] the wives of their adopted sons when the latter have no desire to keep them [i.e. they have divorced them]. And God's Command must be fulfilled.) (Qur'an 33: 37)

Since adoption was then the order of the day and a pure pre Islamic culture that transgressed over the reality, so was marrying the divorced wife of an adopted son regarded a taboo, because it was regarded as marrying the wife of one's son. Who then has a greater right to establish the truth and put it in its rightful place and remove the difficulty (in legislation) than the one with whom the Message was sent? Who has the greater right to be the excellent model that should be followed?

Indeed in the Messenger of God [Muhammad] you have a good example to follow ...) (Qur'an 33: 21)

What was it that the Messenger of God (S) was trying to hide and for which he feared people? Was it the love for Zaynab as claimed by the ignorant and the people of desire and evil intentions? Or was it legislation of the truth and abrogation of an ignorant and erroneous custom? This question was clearly answered by the above verse. It is because, it is the command of God And God's Command must be fulfilled). If it is true that he loved Zaynab, what then prevented him from marrying her? Also, what was the thing that Zayd had accomplished from Zaynab?

The Arabs of the time of ignorance were governed by false deities of all colors and forms:

∴ False deities of idols and statues

∴ False deities of casting lots and divination by arrows

∴ False deities of masters and slaves and disregarding the humanity of man

∴ False deities of money and usury

∴ False deities of intoxicants, adultery, burying female newborns alive and all other vices

∴ False deities of fortune-telling and sorcery

∴ False deities of tribalism, war and looting.

The Messenger of God (S) has relentlessly lived all his life in destroying all these false deities. He laid a practical example with his own person and his close relatives so that the balance of truth may stand firm without any prejudice or partiality. The purpose of Zayd's marriage to Zaynab was therefore to destroy the false deity of racial discrimination and abolition of the segregation of the time of ignorance. This incidence reminds us of the Prophet's standing and sermon in his farewell pilgrimage when he said, "All usury is abrogated; and the first usury I will abrogate is that of al-'Abbas."

The divorce then took place between Zayd and Zaynab. Revelation came from the heaven that the Messenger of God (S) should marry Zaynab to complete the legislation of laws and in order to remove the despicable and heavy burden that had been on the people.

The event, from the beginning to the end, is resplendent in laws and verses that are recited for eternity. Add to this the fact that no Companion of the Prophet (S) is mentioned by name in the Book of God in spite of many rules and reasons of revelation except Zayd alone, without mentioning the name of the other party, Zaynab.

It was reported that Ibn 'Abbas said, "When Zaynab heard the news of her divorce from Zayd and her engagement to the Prophet (S), she prostrated to God (in gratitude). Zaynab then lived in the house of prophethood as a mother of the faithful. She was given to observing much fasting and night prayers; and she was a pious worshipper. The Messenger of God (S) would incline to her and keep her company frequently. She would incessantly mention her superiority over other wives of the Prophet (S) without hurting any of them. She once told the Prophet (S), "O God's Messenger! By God, I am not like your other wives. There is none among your wives whose father, brother or family had not married her off to you except me. For, it is God, from above the heaven, Who married me off to you."

Whenever 'A'ishah (S) remembered her, she would invoke God's mercy on her and describe her, especially concerning her stand during the incidence of slander saying, "God protected her with abstention (i.e. from wading into the matter)."

'A'ishah also mentioned that the Messenger of God (S) said: "The quickest of you to join me is the one with the longest hand." What did they understand from this statement? 'A'ishah narrated that the Prophet's wives would go to a wall and stretch up their hands in order to know which of them has the longest hand.

It would be noted that Zaynab was not tall but she was the first of the Prophet's wives to die after him. It is then understood that what the Prophet (S) meant by long hand was charity and generosity. And among the best sources of income is the work done with one's hands.

'A'ishah said: "Zaynab was very proud with God's Messenger. The Prophet would frequently keep her company. She was given to performing fasting and prayer. She was a skilled craftswoman and she would give charity with the proceeds of her handiwork. "Ibn Sa' d reported on the authority of al-Qasim ibn Muhammad that Zaynab said when she was about to die, "I have prepared my own shroud,

and 'Umar is going to send a shroud for me. So give out one of them in charity. And if you are able to also give my loincloth in charity you can do so."

'Amr ah bint 'Abdur-ar Rahman al-AnSanyah had the following to tell us: " 'Umar sent five Ifarranee cloths, each of them incensed. She was shrouded with them. Her sister, Hammah gave out the shroud she had prepared for her own burial in charity."

'Amr ah narrated that she heard 'Ai shah (S) said, "The praiseworthy woman, the devoted worshipper and the refuge of the orphans and the widows is gone."

Muhammad ibn K' ab al-Quradhi said: "Zaynab bint Ja1;tsh's annual grant was twelve thousand. She took it only once and she started saying, 'O' God, do not let this money catch up with me next year because it is a trial.' She then distributed it to her kith and kin and the needy. When 'Umar heard that, he said, 'This is a blessed woman.' He then sent greetings to her and said, 'The news of what you have done have reached me .' So he sent her one thousand dirham that would last her. But she treated the money as she did with the first."

Zaynab died in year 20 A.H. at the age of fifty-three. 'Umar performed funeral prayer on her. May God be pleased with her and please her. There is indeed a lesson in her person, in her life with Zayd, in her life in the house of prophethood and with her co-wives and even in her death.

Umm Habeebah Ramlah bint Abi Sufiyan

Mother of the Faithful

There was calmness, peacefulness and magnanimity in her nature. She embraced Islam early; so she was one of the early Muslims. She migrated with her husband, 'Ubaydullah ibn Jahsh to Abyssinia. She preferred the love of God and His Messenger (S) above the house of her father Abu Sufiyan, the Quraysh leader and above his wealth, influence and affluence. She endured the pain of farness from Makkah, her hometown, the difficulty of life in a strange land and the agony of poverty.

Her husband then became a Christian, indulged in drinking alcohol and then died. But who was better than the Messenger of God (S) in healing the huge wound inflicted on the heart of Umm Habeebah?

The Prophet is closer to the believers than their own selves, and his wives are their [believers'] mothers ... S (Qur'an)

When the Messenger of God S knew about Umm Habeebah's loneliness. he sent to her asking for her hand in marriage. She willingly and happily accepted the proposal. Here, dear reader, many people just make a passing mention of this event without taking a deep and reflective stance, especially in respect to the Negus, the Abyssinian king who paid the mahr (bridal gift) and witness the marriage contract.

Umm Habeebah is the daughter of the Quraysh chief and leader. She is the daughter of Abu Sufiyan who became the leader of Quraysh after the death of Abu Jahl. And the suitor was the Muhammad, the Messenger of God The gesture of the Negus was of the highest level! This event

reflected on the psyche of Abu Sufiyan in some aspects: One, implied psychological satisfaction with what had happened; and two, verbal acknowledgement of the Prophet's wisdom and far-sightedness when he said, "He is a stallion whose nose should not be cut off.

And years passed until Khaybar was conquered and Ja'far returned with Umm Habeebah in his company. The Messenger of God (S) then consummated the marriage with her and gave her an apartment. He would visit her, express happiness in meeting her and would pass the night in her house. Umm Habeebah was a good model in good companionship.

Throughout more than fifteen years which Umm Habeebah spent in foreign land, she did not set her eyes on the Prophet (S), neither did she enjoy his nice words. But like her fellow male and female migrants, she received the new verses of the Qur'an that were being revealed, memorized them and understood them. News of events also came to them successively and they were on a constant contact with the Da'wah movement. Dear reader, starting our talk about Umm Habeebah by mentioning that she was naturally calm, peaceful and magnanimous and that her heart was firm in faith like high mountains is not done out of a vacuum neither is it a made-up idea. She was in fact endowed with a great share of pure faith.

Her dreams regarding her separation from her husband, 'Ubaydullah ibn Jahsh and the Prophet's marriage proposal to her, testified to this. She narrates to us: "I saw my husband in a worst figure in my dream and I was frightened. When I woke up in the morning I found out that he had become a Christian. I informed him of the dream and he disregarded it and he became addicted to alcohol until he died.

Someone then came to me in my dream and said, 'O' mother of the faithful', and I was frightened. And as soon as I finished my waiting period, a female messenger of the Negus whose name is Abrahah came to me and said, 'The king said, 'Appoint someone as your guardian in marriage.' So I sent to Khalid ibn Sa'eed ibn al-'S ibn Umayyah and I appointed him as my guardian, and I gave Abrahah two bracelets of silver.' "

On the evening, the Negus commanded Ja'far ibn Abi Talib (to deliver a speech on his behalf). Ja'far then praised God, extolled Him and read statements of testimony. He then said, "To proceed; the Messenger of God (S) sent a message to me requesting the hand of Umm Habeebah in marriage. So I granted his request. I am giving four hundred dinar as bridal money (mahr) on behalf of the Messenger of God (S). "

The Negus then poured the money. Khalid then said, "I have accepted what the Messenger of God (S) and his wife Umm Habeebah called to." He thereafter accepted the money. The Negus threw a banquet for them and they eat. Umm Habeebah said, "When the money came to me, I gave Abrahah fifty dinar therefrom. She returned the money and said that the king had commanded her to do so. She also returned what I had given her before.

On the following day, she came to me with aloes, wars, and ambergris, and many ziyad. I brought all that with me when I came to the Messenger of God.

This purity of faith transformed her into another person during the time of her confrontation with polytheism. It is as if she was in a battlefield. Her weapon was the word of the truth that served

like a sharp and stern sword. She feared no harm or difficulty, even with her closest blood relation. The evidence for this is that the Quraysh reneged on the truce of Hdaybiyah which they made with the Messenger of God (S) and Banu Bakr helped their allies against Banu Khuza'ah who were allies of the Prophet (S). They cruelly massacred them and they wantonly shed their blood without even any regard for the Ancient House.

Fearing that matters might develop into situations that would not be favorable to them, Abu Sufiyan left Makkah as an envoy of the Quraysh to Madeenah to meet the Messenger of God (S) and to apologize, vindicate themselves and reaffirm the truce. The first thing he did when he arrived at Madeenah was that he headed for the apartment of his daughter, Umm Habeebah who he had not seen for many years. She coldly received him. When he wanted to sit on the Prophet's bed, she folded it up and did not allow him to sit on it.

He asked her astonishingly and sadly, "Daughter, do you love this bed better than me or you love me better than this bed?!" She answered resolutely, sincerely and courageously, without being influenced by any family sentiment: "No! It is the Prophet's bed and you are a filthy polytheist!" Abu Sufiyan then said, "You have been afflicted with evil after me."

She retorted, "No, I have rather been blessed with all goodness."

He then went out of her apartment, and he did not find any favor with her. Here, the memory is vivid, memory of the encounter between the Muslims and the polytheists in the Battle of Badr; the encounter between the father and the son, the man and his brother and between members of the same kith and kin. But the bond of faith and the glory of Islam are more sublime and stronger. God (S) says:

The believers are nothing else than brothers ... S (Qur'an 49: 10)

God also says:

You [O' Muhammad] will not find any people who believe in God and the Last Day, making friendship with those who oppose God and His Messenger [Muhammad] even though they were their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their kindred [people]. For such He has written Faith in their hearts, and strengthened them with Rooh" [proofs, light and true guidance] from Himself. And He will admit them to Gardens [Paradise] under which rivers flow to dwell therein [forever]. God is pleased with them, and they with Him. They are the Party of God. Verily, it is the Party of God that will be the successful.; (Qur'an 58: 22)

Abu Bakr and his son 'Abdur-Rahman had confronted each other; Abu 'Ubaydah and his father faced each other and 'Umar and his maternal uncle had met head-on with each other. There are other similar examples.

The faith and Islam were the deciding factors! And it was as if the mother of the faithful, Umm Habeebah was raising the sword of Islam in the face of her father, Abu Sufiyan!! Indeed, there is a lesson there for those who are wise and there is, surely, in that a reminder for whoever has a heart or who listens while he is present in mind. Was there any extremism in her behavior? Was there any rigidity? Or she just adhered to the truth?

God indeed prevents the true believers from befriending those who challenge God and His Messenger even if they are their fathers, brothers or kindred! There is no friendship with disbelief; there is no truce with polytheism, absolutely and truthfully.

In spite of few years that Umm Habeebah spent with the Messenger of God (S), she has memorized and narrated a considerable number of hadiths from him. Those who heard from her narrated to us a number of traditions of the Messenger of God (S). She therefore faithfully and trustworthily took part in enriching the noble Sunnah. Umm Habeebah lived for a while after the death of the Prophet (S). The most authentic narration is that she died in the year 44 after Hijrah.

She witnessed the crisis in which commander of the faithful 'Uthman ibn 'Aff'an (R) was martyred but she took no part in the conflict neither with an opinion nor with a stand. In spite of her family ties with 'Uthman, she kept herself away from the furnace of the crisis that eat up everything with no exceptions.

She also witnessed the crisis that occurred between the leader of the faithful, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (R), and her brother, Mu'awiyah but she did not take part in it. Umm Habeebah was always noble. She had always wanted to meet God while her heart is free from malice against any Muslim. She was extremely delicate and severely sensitive. Her pure faith is rarely equaled. Look at what she did when she was about to leave this world:

A'ishah said, "Umm Habeebah called me when she was about to die and said, 'There might have been between me and you what usually happens between rivals. Will you please absolve me?' So I absolved her and asked God to forgive her. She then said, 'You have made me happy, may God make you also happy.' And she sent to Umm Salamah in the like manner."

But where is Habeebah, her only child? There was a report that Umm Habeebah migrated to Abyssinia while she was pregnant with Habeebah and that she gave birth to her there. Habeebah was married to Dawood ibn 'Urwah ibn Mas'ood ath-Thaqafi.

May God be pleased with Umm Habeebah, the mother of the faithful! May He also please her and make her abode honorable! May He let us join her in the group of His righteous slaves!

Umm Salamah

Mother of the Faithful

Hind the daughter of Zad ar-Rakib, Hudhayfah ibn al-Mugheerah al-Makhzoomi. She is of the noble clan of Makhzoom; and of the gracious tribe of Quraysh. Zad ar-Rakib is a nickname by which her father, Abu Umayyah, Hudhayfah ibn al-Mugheerah was known because of his generosity. He was one of the most famous generous men of the pre-Islamic era who lived in the Arabian Peninsula. Their leader was Hatim at-Ta'ee to whom the Hatimic generosity is attributed and about whom the Prophet (S) said: "He loved all noble qualities."

But why was Hudhayfah, Umm Salamah's father called 'provision of the traveler'? It was said that whenever he travelled, no one who travelled in his company would be allowed to bring their

provision with them. He would rather be responsible for that however much their number was and however long the journey would be. It was therefore in this firm-rooted home where there was gallantry and generosity that Hind was born and raised. She drew from its pure spring until she was satiated and she flourished as a blooming and sweet-smelling branch, bearing a delicious fruit. She was clever and wise, beautiful in appearance and conduct.

She and her husband, 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-Asad are among the earliest Muslims, and performed together the first migration to Abyssinia. She was also said to be the first woman to migrate. She remained in Abyssinia until the news that Hamzah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib and 'Umar ibn al-Khattab had embraced Islam reached them. Some of the emigrants then strongly yearned to return to their homeland and meet the Messenger of God, believing that Islam had being strengthened by the conversion of the two unique men, Hamzah and 'Umar.

Umm Salamah returned to Madeenah along with those who returned. And she had already given birth to her first child, Salamah the son of Abu Salamah. But the Qurayshi persecution did not stop nor abated, and it was not concealed. After the conclusion of Pledge of 'Aqabah between the Messenger of God (S) and the Ansar (the Aws and Khazraj tribes) of Madeenah, the Messenger of God (S) gave permission to his Companions to migrate to Madeenah. That was the beginning of the great transformation in the course of the Prophet's mission. As usual, Umm Salamah was one of the first emigrants.

Before we start talking about the second stand of Umm Salamah with the Prophet (S) and his message, we should allow her to tell us the circumstances of the great event and how it happened. For, she is definitely more truthful than us. She said:

"When Abu Salamah decided to leave Madeenah, he equipped a camel of his and carried me along with my son Salamah. He then led his camel out. When men of Banu al-Mugheerah (Umm Salamah's clan) saw him, then went to him and told him, 'There is nothing we can do to prevent you from going wherever you want; but as for this sister of ours, we cannot leave you roaming about in the land with her.' They then seized the bridle of the camel from him and took me away from him.

When Banu 'Abdul-Asad (Abu Salamah's clan) heard of that, they got angry and aimed for Salamah saying, 'By God! We are not going to leave our son with her since they have snatched her away from our brother.' They then took my son Salamah away from me.

The men of Banu 'Abdul-Asad went away and Banu al-Mugheerah held me in their custody. And my husband proceeded in his migration until he reached Madeenah. That was how they separated between me, my husband and my son!"

Dear reader! If it were possible, I would have added more than one exclamation and question mark at the end of the speech of Umm Salamah, without any exaggeration. This is because, this great and impressive position is beyond what any knowledge, intellect or imagination can adequately express. It is the most difficult separation in the cause of God with Whom no good deed is lost. God (SWT) says:

Indeed, We shall not make the reward of anyone who does his [righteous] deeds in the most perfect manner to be lost.'

(Qur'an 18: 3)

What righteousness is greater than to sacrifice one's self in the way of God, The Owner of the Splendid Majesty? Did we - regardless of our different categories, the old and the young, men and women, the callers and the called, the leaders and the led - learn any lesson from Abu Salamah and Umm Salamah? Did we take, as the center of our attention, our Islam, our message and the pleasure of God and His Messenger? Or did we just sever every link: that is between us and our history to the extent that whenever we mention our history we just regard it as a mere story? For instance, we celebrate the anniversary of the Great Battle of Badr on the 17th of Ramadan every year as communities, organizations and groups and then we play around with the word, the picture and the memory but sooner than later the matter ends there, as if we are talking of one of the battles of 'Antarah or one of the adventures of Abu Zayd al-Hila1i!

Do we really feel the state of ignominy in which we are living today? Is there still any link: between us, as a nation, and God, the Exalted? The answer is: as individuals, yes and as a nation, no! Here lies the problem ... ! .

Perhaps, the remaining part of the story of Umm Salamah's migration and the surrounding events will give us a definite and a clear-cut answer to our questions and doubts. Umm Salamah has vowed to dedicate herself to God since she embraced Islam! She faced the most difficult and the most horrible situation, but God was with her. He encompasses the disbelievers from behind. He is the best Helper for whoever relies on Him and returns to Him in repentance.

Umm Salamah said: " I used to go out every morning and sit down at al-Abtal, and I would cry until the evening. I did this for nearly seven days until a man among my cousins came by and saw what was on my face. He then told Banu al-Mugheerah (my clan), 'Won't you let this poor woman go?! You have separated between her and her husband and son?!' They then said, 'Go and join your husband if you like.'

Then the men of Banu 'Abdul-Asad (my husband's clan) gave my son back to me. I then prepared my camel, held my son in my bosom and set out to join my husband in Madeenah; and no one was with me and that was the most difficult situation I confronted. When I reached Tan'eem, I met 'Uthman ibn Talhah of Banu ad-Dar clan. He asked me, 'Where are you going, daughter of Abu Umayyah?' I said, ' I want to join my husband in Madeenah!' He said, 'Is anybody with you?' I said, 'No, by God! It is only God and my son that are with me.' And he said, 'By God, you shall not be left alone.' He then held the bridle of my camel and led me off. By God, I have never been in a company of an Arab man more gracious than him. If they arrived at a place he would halt for me to rest and he would move to a nearby tree and lie down beneath it. When it was time to move on, he would bring forth the camel and move a bit far from me and say, 'Mount!' When I have mounted and settled on the camel he would come, hold its bridle and lead me on until we arrived at the next halting place. He continued in this way until we arrived at Madeenah. When he saw the village of Banu 'Amr ibn 'Awf at Quba', he said, 'Your husband is in this village.' And truly, Abu Salamah was residing there." The small family - rather the big family - was then brought back together. It is small in terms of the number of its members and big in terms of its Jihad and historical movement and its echo throughout all corners of the world.

Umm Salamah went out of Makkah alone in the company of no one except her child, Salamah in her bosom. But God the Exalted protected her in a journey that took days and nights, and in a remote

and expansive desert interspersed with mountains, lowlands and sand hills and in which predatory animals and reptiles are waiting for their prey. She was neither afraid nor worried.

And whosoever fears God and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out [from every difficulty]. And He will provide him from [sources] he never could imagine, And whosoever puts his trust in God, then He will suffice him. Verily, God will accomplish his purpose. Indeed God has set a measure for all things. (Qur'an 65: 2-3)

God (S) provided for her a way out of her distress. He sent 'Uthman ibn Talhah to her to accompany her until she reached her place of security in spite of his being a disbeliever. And Umm Salamah testified to his good conduct, noble-mindedness and excellent companionship, All this was later to serve as a treasure for him on the day of the conquest of Makkah, The key of the Ka 'bah was with him, for he was of the clan of Banu 'Abdud-Dar who were the keepers of the Ka 'bah and who were the holders of its key. 'Ali (S) took the key from them and gave it to the Prophet (*). But the Prophet (S) returned the key back to 'Uthman repeating the saying of God:

Verily! God commands that you should render back the trusts to those to whom they are due .

(Qur'an 4: 58)

He then told 'Uthman, " 'Uthman, take it. Today is the day of probity and fulfillment. It is only the unjust person that will attempt to take it away from you."

'Uthman later accepted Islam and he was a good Muslim. All this was a result of the blessing of that great day in which he accompanied Umm Salamah from Makkah to Madeenah. It was definitely planned and decreed by God. I hope that we have really grasped the situation, realized the wisdom and given due estimation to the roles of history.

Abu Salamah

As Umm Salamah was the daughter of the Prophet's aunt, Abu Salamah was also the son of Barrah ibn Abdul-Muttalib, who was a Prophet's aunt as well He had an additional merit: He was a foster brother of the Prophet (S) . Abu Salamah was among the favorite Companions of the Prophet (S), because of his early acceptance of Islam and his endurance of immigration and Jihad in the way of God; and his firm Eeman, bravery, worship and righteousness. He therefore occupied a place in the eyes of the Messenger of God (S). He had appointed him a leader of some contingents. He sent him to Banu Asad in the month of Safar, 4 A.H. and he succeeded in his mission and fulfilled the trust.

The Messenger of God (S) attested to his righteousness when he said, "The first person that will be given his record of deeds (on the Day of Resurrection) is Abu Salamah ibn 'Abdul-Asad." He participated in the battle of Badr and he played a prominent role in it. He then participated in the battle of Uhud and he was among those who remained firm. He suffered a serious injury in that battle from which he was healed but not totally. For, after some time, the wound decayed and deteriorated until claimed his life.

He once came to his wife, Umm Salamah and told her, " I have heard a statement from the Messenger of God (S) that is dearer to me than so and so. " I heard him say: ' No one is afflicted with a calamity and then make istighfar and after that say, 'O' God! It is from You that I seek the reward of this calamity of mine. O' God! Provide a better substitute for me ', except that God give him that."

Ziyad ibn Maryam narrated that Umm Salamah told Abu Salamah, " I heard that if the husband of a woman dies and he is one of the inhabitants of Paradise and his wife did not remarry after him, God will join them together in Paradise. The same thing applies to man. "

Abu Salamah then told his wife, "I am making a pledge with you that I will not marry after and you will not marry after me . " He then asked her, "Will you obey me ? " Umm Salamah said, " If I did not want to obey you I would not have consulted you. " Abu Salamah said, " I f! die you should remarry." He then said, "O' God! Provide for Umm Salamah after me a man who is better than me and who will not disgrace her or harm her." Umm Salamah said, "When he died I said, 'Who is that man that will better than Abu Salamah?' Then after a while, the Messenger of God S) married me . "

Umm Salamah entered a new role of her life around the noble Messenger and the great Prophet (S) . Before we start discussing this role, we would like to mention how 'Ai shah described Umm Salamah.

Ibn Sa 'd reported on the authority of 'Urwah from 'Ai shah that she said: "1 was very sad when the Messenger of God married Umm Salamah because of the news of her beauty that had reached us. So 1 took the matter easy until 1 saw her and 1 saw that she was much more beautiful than 1 have been told. So 1 mentioned that to Hafsah who told me that she was as described. When I saw her (Umm Salamah) after that, 1 realized that she was as Hafsah had described her. I then realized that I was only being jealous."

Ibn Sa 'd added, "And Umm Salamah was said to possess great beauty, extraordinary intelligent and correct judgment." We are not at all saying that it was sexual passion or beauty that spurred the Prophet (S) to marry Umm Salamah. His very life strongly refutes that. His marriage to Sawdah bint Zam' ah after the death of Khadeejah is a good proof in this regard.

The Messenger of God S) was encouraged to marry Umm Salamah by two things: One: The Arab custom of supporting the wife of a friend by marrying her after the death of her husband. Two: It has to do with the prayer of Abu Salamah that God should provide his wife with a husband who would be better than him after his death.

Umm Salamah herself informs us of this: "When Abu Salamah died, I did not feel comfortable to ask God to substitute him for me with someone who is better than him (as a Muslim must say when afflicted with a calamity). And I said, 'Who is better than Abu Salamah? Had he not done this and that? Was he not so and so?' When I finished the period of waiting, the Messenger of God (S) sent (someone) to me and married me."

An-Nasa'i narrated this story in detail. According to him: "When Umm Salamah finished her period of waiting after the death of her husband, Abu Bakr proposed marriage to her but she did not accept the proposal. So the Prophet (S) sent to her proposing marriage to her. She told the person who was sent to her, 'Tell the Messenger of God (S) that I am a jealous woman, I have children and none of my guardians is present.' He sent back to me, 'Tell her that as for your jealousy, I will ask God to remove it; as for your being with children, I will take care of them; and as for the fact that none of your guardians is present, none of them, present or absent, will oppose your marriage to me.'

She then asked her son 'Umar, 'Get up and marry (me) to the Messenger of God (S).' And he married her to him."

In another narration by an-Nasa'i: "When I gave birth to Zaynab, the Messenger of God (S) came and proposed marriage to me. I said, 'I am not fit for marriage and I am jealous and I have children.' The Prophet (S) then said, 'I am older than you, as for your jealousy, God will remove it; as for the children, God and His Messenger will take care of them.' "

The Messenger of God (S) then married her, and he would come to her and ask, "Where is Zaynab? "

With her entrance into the house of the Prophet (S) as one of the mothers of the faithful, she started another phase and role that had their own significance and impacts, especially since she was highly intelligent and had good sense of judgment. She has made her apartment a place where the Messenger of God (S) frequented and took as a place for rest. Perhaps, she reminded him with her maturity, wisdom, affection, her big heart, the sweetness of her smiling, her pleasant reception and her pure Companionship of Khadeejah.

It is true that 'A'ishah was the dearest wife to the Prophet (S), but Umm Salamah's entrance as one of the mothers of the faithful had created for her a new place and a grounded status. She was the mediator among the Prophet's wives. All of them honored her and respected her status.

The history has recorded for her an unforgettable stand. This stand was unanimously praised in all narrations. After the truce of Judaybiyah, many Companions of the Prophet (S) felt frustrated and disappointed. 'Umar ibn al-Khattab was the most argumentative of them all in this respect.

Abu Bakr's was admonishing 'Umar to abide by the Prophet's decision, but 'Umar in his usual sternness, turned away from him. When the Messenger of God (S) came, 'Umar repeated the same argument to him and the Messenger of God (S) told him, "I am indeed the Messenger of God; and He will not neglect me." The truce of Hudaybiyah apparently implied the superiority of Quraysh as it gave them many concessions. But inwardly, it was full of wisdom and far-sightedness. Subsequent events testified to that. It was enough a blessing that God calls the truce 'a clear victory' in His Book when He says:

"Verily, We have given you [O Muhammad] a manifest victory."

(Qur'an 48: 1)

The Surah in which the verse is revealed is also named 'Surah of Victory'. But many people know not. The Messenger of God (S) had brought the sacrificial animals with him. But since the Quraysh had prevented him from completing his rites - not out of compromise or scorn, but in expectation of God's command after having made a truce, he decided to terminate his ihram and commanded the people to do the same. The people however failed to comply.

The Messenger of God (S) visited Umm Salamah for it was her tum to go with him on that day. She saw that he was distressed and gloomy. She gently asked him of the reason for his gloominess and he narrated what happened to her. She talked gently and pleasantly in a manner full of love and care. And in an extremely wise and matured way, she advised him to go out, invite his barber and have his head shaven publicly.

He did so and suddenly people started shaving or cutting their hair. And they shoved and pushed that they nearly killed one another. The Messenger of God (S) was very happy and he laughed that his molar teeth were seen.

The problem was then solved and the Satan who wanted to cause dissension was defeated. All this is due to God's grace through what He taught Umm Salamah! Before we close this great scene, it is imperative that we point to a very important issue that caused the Prophet (S) to yield to the demands of the Quraysh and make peace with them on that day.

When the Muslims reached Hudaibiyah, on their way to Makkah for 'Umrah, the Prophet's she-camel halted, and the people said, "al-Qaswa' has knelt down!!" They said this out of their human understanding of the nature of the camels. But the Messenger of God (S) told them in Prophetic tone, "It did not kneel down, and that is not her habit. She was rather stopped from proceeding by the One Who stopped the Elephant. And among the statement the Prophet (S) made on that day was that he would grant any request made by the Quraysh in which there is honor for the House of God and its sacredness. The Prophet also said on the day of the Conquest of Makkah that war was made lawful for him for only an hour of the day and that it was never made lawful for anybody before him neither will it be ever made lawful for anybody after him.

All this points to one thing: the sacredness of the Ancient House, the Noble Ka'bah. After the death of the Prophet (S), Umm Salamah lived for many more decades until she was the last to die of the Prophet's wives. Thus did Umm Salamah witness some of the crucial events that the Muslims experienced. There is no doubt that the crisis that emanated from the martyrdom of Uthman ibn Affan was the most dangerous and had the farthest impact. But Umm Salamah remained neutral throughout. She rather - according to many reports called to harmony and mutual love among the Muslims.

One of the most prominent deeds attributed to her during these crises was her criticism of Aishah after the Battle of the Camel. The love for God and His Messenger, and the love for the Prophet's household had occupied the big heart of Umm Salamah. May God be pleased with her and please her! May He honor her abode and made her a model for our women! He is the All-Hearing, the Responding.

Juwayriyah bint al-Harith

Mother of the Faithful

Mother of the faithful 'A'ishah, said, "I did not know a woman who brought greater blessing to her people more than Juwayriyah." Juwayriyah is a diminutive form of Janyah.

Diminutive form in Arabic language has two opposing purposes. It can be used to as an expression of praise, commendation and showing love. It can also be used to disdain or derogate. As for Juwayriyah, it was the Prophet (S) who named her so. For her name was Barraah: the name her father gave her. The Messenger of God then changed her name from Barraah to Juwayriyah.

Changing names of his Companions is a known habit of the Prophet (S) whether it is a male or a female's name. He did this in order to let his Companions shun all that was related to the time of ignorance. As to why he changed the name of a number of female Muslims from 'Barraah', there are different opinions in this regard, some of these related to the individuals and some related to the meaning. The Messenger of God (S) disliked that a man should praise himself, for the name 'Barraah' is derived from birr which means righteousness. How then can a person claim to be righteous and strut

about with that name? He also disliked that one should say: He just left the house of 'Barrah' (which means: a righteous woman).

Juwayriyah was the daughter of the chief of Banu al-Mustaliq, ibn Abi Qirar. She was married to Mani' ibn Safwan, one of their leaders and most influential men. Banu al-Mustaliq is one of the tribes that waged war against Islam wanting to extinguish the light of God with their mouths and hands and stubbornly remaining upon their state of ignorance and paganism. They massed up weapons and prepared to attack Madeenah.

The Messenger of God given the capabilities and extraordinary leadership qualities he was endowed with, had appointed highly qualified men among his Companions to monitor the movement of the enemy so that he could accurately estimate the situations and draw out plans. We are not saying this randomly. All his battles rather testified to this. Even his directives to his commanders under whom he sent contingencies to different directions corroborate that.

So Banu al-Mustaliq's intention and preparations were known through one of the Prophet's intelligence sources. As an experienced commander, he decided to launch a sudden attack on them and arrived at their place near a well called al-Muraysee'. There he attacked them and put an end to their hopes and dreams.

Dear reader, it is from here that Juwayriyah entered the company of the women around the Messenger (S). And it is from here she attained the great honor and the title: 'mother of the faithful'.

The mother of the faithful 'A'ishah speaks about that day: "The Messenger of God (S) took the women of Banu al-Mustaliq as captives. He took out the one fifth of them and divided the remaining ones among his Companions giving the cavalry soldier two shares and the infantry soldier a share.

Juwayriyah fell into the share of Thabit ibn Qays al-Ansari. She was formerly married to a cousin of hers known as Mani' ibn Safwan ibn Malik ibn Judhaymah, who is also known as Dhu ashShafrah. She was bereaved of him. She then agreed with Thabit ibn Qays to buy her freedom with nine Ooqiyah." 'Aishah describes her saying, "She was a pleasant woman. No one saw her except he became captivated by her. While the Messenger of God (S) was when suddenly Juwayriyah entered asking him concerning her ransom agreement (with Thabit). By God, as soon as I saw her, I disliked her entering the place of Messenger of God (S) for I knew that he would see what I saw in her.

She then started addressing the Prophet (S), 'O' Messenger of God! I am Juwayriyah bint al-Harith the leader of his people. You are not oblivious of what had happened to me. So I fell in the share of Thabit ibn Qays and I agreed with him to ransom myself with nine Ooqiyah. So help me to free myself.'

The Messenger of God (S) replied, 'Do you want what is better than that?' She said, 'What is it? The Prophet (S) said, 'I will pay on your behalf and then marry you.' She said, 'Yes, O' Messenger of God.' The Prophet (S) then said, 'I have done that.' ,

This event leads us to a brief discussion about some of the Prophet's marriages so that some among us might not fall victims to misconceptions, scorning or mocking stirred by the orientalist and occidentalists, enemies of Islam and the Prophet (S). Through these misconceptions, the enemies had created a crevice in the hearts and minds of the people. They mock and attack Islam, its Prophet and the Muslims. May God destroy them; why are they deluded? The Messenger of God (S) was, in all his

marriages, an excellent example of human attitude and inclination. He has more right to the Muslims than they have to their own selves. His desire for any woman was only in accordance with the natural inclination that God created in him as human being, though that desire was not the dominating factor in his marriages.

There are many harmonious evidences for this since his first marriage. He consummated his first marriage with Khadeejah while he was in the prime of his youthfulness, active and energetic, while Khadeejah was forty years old and close to menopause. Then he married Sawdah, the rather overweight woman. She was, however, one of the earliest Muslims and immigrants. She was also one of the believing women who devotedly worshipped and emigrated for the cause of God. It was then necessary to console her. The Messenger of God (S) then married 'A'ishah.

The command to marry her came from the heaven. He then proposed marriage to her, and he did not consummate his marriage with her until after more than two years of contracting the marriage when her father, Abu Bakr (R) reminded him. It should be recalled that there was a strong relationship between the Prophet (S) and Abu Bakr's household generally and between him and Abu Bakr himself particularly. Strengthening relationship is a necessity if the ties are to be kept alive, especially in a tribal society that was still impacted with clan inclinations. This was to help the cause of Islamic propagation and foster harmony among its elements and its supporters.

The Messenger of God caused a crack in the Umayyad household when he successively married his two daughters, Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthoom to 'Uthman, who was one of the leading Umayyads in status, wealth and influence.

Consider also, his marriage to Umm Habeebah, who was in her loneliness, widowhood, emigrations, tribulation and patience. She was a daughter of Abu Sufiyan the heir to the Quraysh leadership in politics and war and the chief of Banu Umayyah. We have already mentioned the statement he made when he heard of the Prophet's marriage proposal to his daughter, and his acknowledgment of the Prophet's farsightedness and wisdom.

Giving solace is a human tendency and strengthening relationships is one of the necessities of promoting the cause of Islam. These two are some of the major factors in his marriages. As regards sexual passion with which the misguided ones and the slanderers accuse him, the Messenger of God (S) had, in his human life, no more than what he was naturally endowed with. Let us now go back to our discussion on Juwayriyah and her being around the Messenger of God (S).

The first statement she uttered was, "O' Messenger of God!" This statement alone is enough to indicate her Islam. She then added, "I am Juwayriyah, the daughter of al-Harith who is the leader of his people and I have been affected with something (captivity) that is known to you. For, I fell into the share of Thabit ibn Qays and I agreed with him to ransom myself with nine Ooqiyah. So help me to free myself."

Then she had embraced Islam though she was the daughter of her people's leader and she came to the Messenger of God (g) seeking his help. She then needed to be put in her correct and rightful place.

The Messenger of God then told her, "Do you want what is better than that?" She asked, "What is it?" The Prophet (S) said, "I will pay your ransom on your behalf and will then marry you." She said, "Yes, O' Messenger of God." The Prophet (S) then said, "I have done that."

She came to the Messenger of God (S) seeking for what was good but she got what was better and greater. There is no doubt that this action of the Prophet (S) had left its impacts and far-reaching effects on her heart and in the hearts of her family and, by extension, her tribe.

'A'ishah said: "Then the news of the marriage came to the people and started saying, 'Will the Prophet's in-laws be held as captives?!' Then the people freed all the captives that were with them of the tribe of Banu al-Mustaliq, and the number of those freed reached one hundred households because of the Prophet's marriage to Juwayriyah." 'Ai shah added, "I knew of no other woman who brought greater blessing to her people than Juwayriyah."

Juwayriyah was, at the beginning of her Islam, the source of good and blessing. And this was her first credit. She had another credit that lies in her excellence adherence to the teachings of Islam the truthfulness of her Eeman. This has to be so because she was in the household of the Prophet (S) and in a place where God's clear verses were being revealed to the Prophet

Ibn 'Abbas narrated that Juwayriyah's name was 'Barrah', so the Messenger of God (S) named her Juwayriyah. He then said: "The Prophet (S) prayed Fajr prayer and then left her apartment. He stayed out until forenoon and then came while she was still at her place of prayer. She told him, 'I have remained here ever since you left.' The Prophet (S) thereupon told her, 'I have recited four words three times after I left you and if these are to be weighed against what you have recited since morning these would outweigh them and (these words) are, 'Praise be to God according to the number of His creation and according to the pleasure of His Self and according to the weight of His Throne and according to the ink (used in recording) words (for His Praise)'

In addition to her great piety and deep worship, she was also a treasure of the noble traditions of the Prophet (S) which she narrated from him.

Abu Ayyoob al-'Atakee narrated from Juwayriyah who said that the Messenger of God (S) visited her on a Friday while she was fasting. He asked her, "Did you fast yesterday?" She said, "No." He said, "Are you going to fast tomorrow?" She said, "No." Thereupon he said, "Then, break your fast." There are other hadiths like this from which Islamic legal ruling are derived, either in acts of worship or in human interactions, which the erudite scholars regard as important and fundamental sources.

There is another point in which the Prophet's greatness vividly shows, through his prophethood and messengership: Juwayriyah's father knew of his daughter's movement from the possession of Thabit ibn Qays to the house of Muhammad (S) and that she had become the Prophet's wife. He then decided to come to Madeenah to ransom her with one hundred camels, hoping that the Prophet (S) will accept that from him.

When he came close to Madeenah, he looked at his camels scrutinizing them, and he saw two camels that impressed him. He made up his mind to put them aside so that they would not be among the ransom camels. So he set them aside, tied them up in a safe place and assigned some guards from his company to watch over them. He then entered to meet the Messenger of God while he was in the

mosque and greeted him. He then begged him to accept the ransom and give his daughter back to him. The Messenger of God (S) welcomed him and asked him with a smile, "What about the two camels you set aside and tied up in so and so place?"

The man suddenly became speechless and was visibly amazed. His tongue was unable to tell lie. He then spoke the following words: " I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except God and that you, Muhammad are a Messenger of God! By God! No one knows of this matter except God alone."

Following his embracing of Islam, all members of Banu al-Mustaliq tribe also embraced Islam when he returned to them and informed them about what happened and called them to Islam.

This is a manifestation of God's blessing upon Juwayriyah and her tribe, through His Messenger (S). It was also partly due to her stay with the Messenger of God (S) among his household. Juwayriyah lived till the 50th year of Hijrah. She was said to have attained the age of sixty-five before she died. The then governor of Madeenah, Marwan ibn al-Hakam performed the funeral prayer on her after which she was buried in alBaqee'.

May God be pleased with her and please her! May He also honor her abode and the place of rest!