

Letter 78

[More Reasons for Preferring Umm Salamah's Hadith](#)

Safar 22, 1330

Not only did Lady Umm Salamah believe wholeheartedly in the great Book of Allah, which distinguishes between right and wrong and enjoins repentance to Allah Almighty, as the Holy Qur'an testifies,¹ she is not rebuked in the Qur'an for insubordination to the Prophet nor because of her supporting the enemies of his wasi,² nor did Allah, Gabriel, the true believers, and the angels, all side by His Prophet against her, nor did Allah threaten to divorce her and compensate His Prophet with a better wife than her,³ nor did He bring the example of the wives of Nuhh and Lut as being in her own category,⁴ nor did she try to instigate the Prophet to make unlawful unto himself that which Allah has made lawful unto him,⁵ nor did the Prophet (S) preach once and point to her residence saying: "Right there is the dissension, disunity, and discord...; from there will the devil's horn come out,"⁶ nor did her manners permit her to stretch her legs before the Prophet while performing the rite of prayers, thus showing disrespect to him and to the rite of prayers, without removing them from the place of his prostration till he beckoned her to do so, then when he beckoned her, she lifted her leg till he stood up, then she put it down again...!⁷

This is how she was. As if she did not scandalize and arouse people against 'Uthman, calling him "Na'thal," saying, *verbatim*, "*Uqtulu Na'thal faqad kafar!*" ("Kill Na'thal, for he has turned *kafir* [disbeliever]."⁸ As if she did not go out of her house, after having been commanded by Allah Almighty to settle therein,⁹ ride her camel 'Askar and lead an army,¹⁰ descending a hill or ascending a mountain. Yet she did not yield to advice but insisted on leading the army which she had raised to fight the Imam.¹¹ Her statement that the Messenger of Allah (S) died on her chest, therefore, is as good as her statement claiming that the Messenger of Allah (S) saw a few Sudanese men playing at their mosque with their shields and spears, and he supposedly asked her if she liked to have a look at them, to which invitation she responded in the affirmative. 'Ayesha goes on to say: "He let me stand behind him, my cheek on his, and said: 'O Sons of Arfada, keep on!'" supposedly encouraging them to play so that the lady mighty be entertained, till he asked her if she saw enough. Upon saying "Yes," he told her to leave.¹²

And it is similar to her other story in which she claims: "The Messenger of Allah (S) came in once when I had two concubines singing for me excitingly. He lay down on the bed. Abu Bakr entered and rebuked me saying: 'Do I hear Satan's pipe being played in the presence of the Messenger of Allah?!' The Messenger of Allah (S) approached him and told him to leave them alone."¹³

Yet similar to it is another story. She says: "The Prophet raced with me once and I outran him. We kept doing so for years during which I gained weight, and when he outran me, he said: 'This [game] cancels that!'" as quoted by Imam Ahmad in 'Ayesha's hadith on page 39, Vol. 6, of his Musnad.

Or like her statement: "I used to play with girls, and some of my friends would come to play with me, and the Messenger of Allah used to let them in so that I would play with them," which is quoted by Imam Ahmad who discusses 'Ayesha on page 75, Vol. 6, of his Musnad.

Or like yet another story of hers quoted by Ibn Abu Shaybah, and it is hadith number 1017 of the ahadith narrated by Ibn Abu Shaybah in Vol 7 of *Kanz al-'Ummal*: "I have acquired seven merits no woman, other than Mary daughter of 'Umran, was endowed with: The angel of revelation descended in my own form; the Messenger of Allah married me as a virgin whom no man ever touched before; the revelation descended upon him while we were having intercourse; he loved me more than any other woman; several verses of the Qur'an were revealed on my behalf that almost caused the nation to perish; I saw Gabriel while none of the other wives of the Prophet saw him besides me; and he breathed his last in my house while nobody was there except I and the angel of death."¹⁴ Other "ahadith" which she has narrated go in more details about her "merits," all falling in the same pattern.

As regarding Umm Salamah, suffices her for a merit her loyalty to her *wali* and her Prophet's wasi. She was well-known for her terse opinion and great intellect, her strong faith, her suggestion on the Day of Hudaibiya which testified to her intellectual prowess, her wise judgment, and her lofty status; may Allah have mercy and blessings upon her, Wassalam.

Sincerely,

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^{1.} This is a reference to the following verse in Surat al-Tahrim: "If you both repent to Allah, then your hearts have submitted to Allah."

^{2.} Her insubordination to the vicegerent is manifested by her denial of the existence of the Prophet's will to him, and by bearing grudge towards him as long as he lived. As regarding her insubordination to the Prophet (S), and Allah's readiness to side with His Prophet (S) against her, this is proven by the verse saying:

"If they become insubordinate to him, then (suffices him that) Allah is his Mawla, and so are Gabriel and the righteous among the believers, and even the angels support him (Qur'an, 66:4)."

^{3.} This hadith and the one that precedes it is a reference to the verse "It could be that if he divorces you, his Lord will bless him with wives better than you, submitting to Allah, truly believing in Him."

^{4.} This is a reference to the statement of the Almighty: "Allah has struck for those who disbelieved the example of the wife of Nuh and the wife of Lut," to the end of the chapter.

[5.](#) This is a reference to the verse:

"O Messenger! Why do you make unlawful what Allah has made lawful unto you, seeking to please your wives (Qur'an, 66:1)?"

[6.](#) This is quoted by al-Bukhari in his section dealing with stories about what went on at the homes of the Prophet's wives in his dissertation on the issues of holy wars and the Prophet's biography in his Sahih. It also is on page 125, Vol. 2, following his chapter on the injunction of the khums and its payment. Its wording in Muslim's Sahih is as follows: "The Messenger of Allah came out of 'Ayesha's house and said: 'Satan's horn shall come out of this place,'" so refer to page 503 of its second volume [original Arabic text].

[7.](#) Refer to Bukhari's Sahih, his section dealing with what deeds are lawful while performing the prayers, page 143, Vol. 1.

[8.](#) Her scandalizing 'Uthman and denouncing many of his actions, her calling him names, and her statement: "Kill Na'thal, for he has turned infidel," are hardly overlooked by any book containing such events and affairs. Suffices you what exists in the books of history by Ibn Jarir, Ibn al-Athir, and by others. Some individuals denounced her behaviour and composed poetry in this regard such as:

You started something and schemed,

Like winds blown and rain streamed;

You ordered them to slay the Imam,

Claiming he reneged from Islam...

Up to the conclusion of these verses which are quoted on page 80, Vol. 3, of Ibn al-Athir's Al-Kamil, after reference was made as to how the Battle of the Camel started.

[9.](#) That is, when the Almighty says:

"And remain at your homes, and do not decorate your selves as you used to do during the days of jahiliyya (Qur'an, 33:33)."

[10.](#) The camel 'Ayesha was riding during the Basra incident was called 'Askar. It was brought to her by Ya'li ibn Umayyah, and it was huge, masculine. When she saw it, she liked it, but when she came to know that its name was 'Askar, she changed her mind and said: "Return it, for I have no need for it." She stated that the Messenger of Allah (S) had informed her of such name and forbidden her from riding it; so, they changed its saddle and brought it back to her saying: "We have found another one for you, larger and stronger." Thus, she was pleased with it. This incident is mentioned by a number of writers of history and of biographies; so, refer to page 80, Vol. 2, of Sharh Nahjul Balaghah by the Mu'tazilite scholar.

[11.](#) The hadith in this regard is quite famous, and it is one of the signs of true prophethood and miracles of Islam. It has been summarized by Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal while quoting 'Ayesha's hadith in his Musnad, pages 52 and 97, Vol. 6. Hakim did likewise, quoting it on page 120, Vol. 3, of his authentic Mustadrak, and al-Thahbi admitted the same when he quoted it in his Talkhis al-Mustadrak.

[12.](#) This hadith about her is undisputed. It is quoted by both shaykhs in their sahihs; so, you may refer to Bukhari's Sahih, the beginning of his section on both 'lids, page 116, Vol. 1, and refer to Muslim's Sahih, his section on permissible sports during the days of the eid, page 327, Vol. 1. Also refer to Ahmad's Musnad, page 57, Vol. 6.

[13.](#) This is quoted by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and Imam Ahmad from 'Ayesha's hadith which we referenced in the footnote above.

[14.](#) It is unanimously agreed upon that he (S) died in the presence of 'Ali (as), and that 'Ali (as) was nursing him and aiding him; so, how can it be accurate to claim that he died while nobody was there except 'Ayesha and the angel of death? Where were 'Ali (as) and 'Abbas then? And where were Fatima (as) and Safiyya? Or where were the Prophet's consorts and all the descendants of Hashim? How did they leave him to 'Ayesha alone? It is also quite obvious that Mary, peace be upon her, did not really possess any of the seven virtues the mother of believers attributes to her; so, what is the wisdom of her using her as the only exception?

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