

## Preparations for The Wedding

A non-planned period of time elapsed between the engagement and the wedding ceremony, because Imam 'Ali (as) was too shy to ask the Prophet to assign a day for the wedding, while he wanted to protect Fatima's (sa) pride by refraining from asking 'Ali to do so.

A month, or, more passed when Imam 'Ali (as) said nothing about the wedding. Aqeel ('Ali's brother) asked him about the reason for the delay in holding the wedding ceremony, and encouraged him to prepare for the wedding, and to ask the Prophet to assign a date for it. Despite 'Ali's humbleness, he accompanied Aqeel to the Prophet's house to fulfill his wishes. On their way to the Prophet's house, they met Umm Ayman who, when told the reason for their visit, asked them to leave the matter to her. She, in turn, informed Umm Salama, and the Prophet's wives who gathered in Aisha's house, where the Prophet was, and said:

"May our parents be your sacrifice! We are gathered here in regard to that, had Khadija been alive would have brought happiness to her life!!!"

When hearing Lady Khadija's (as) name, the Prophet (S) cried, and said:

"Surely Khadija believed me when men did not, and helped in establishing Allah's religion, and granted me her belongings in its path. Allah-Exalted is His Name-commanded me to bring the good news to Khadija that (she has) a house in Paradise made of brocade, and emeralds, where there is not roaring, nor, strain."

Umm Salama said:

"May our parents be your sacrifice, O Messenger of Allah!! Surely everything you have praised Khadija for is true, but she departed to her Lord! May He bring happiness to her and gather us with her in the Paradise of His satisfaction and Mercy. Messenger of Allah! Your brother from among the people of the world who is also your cousin, 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib, wished that you specify a day for the wedding so that he may be united with his wife Fatima."

The Prophet answered: "Why doesn't 'Ali ask me to do so?"

She replied: "Shyness prevents him!"

He said: "Umm Ayman, go call 'Ali for me."

When Umm Ayman came out, she found 'Ali (as) waiting for the answer. Upon her request he, entered the house, and shyly sat near the Prophet who said to him:

"Do you wish to be wedded to your wife?"

'Ali replied: "Alright, it is to your honor!! If you wish, the wedding can take place tonight or tomorrow night, if Allah wills."

The Prophet (S) said: "*So prepare a house for Fatima.*"

'Ali (as) then said: "The only house I can acquire is Harithah Ibn al-Numan's."

The Prophet said: "Surely we are shy for Harithah Ibn al-Numan, for we have taken the majority of his houses!"

When Harithah heard about this, he proceeded towards the Prophet (S) and said:

"Messenger of Allah, I and my property belong to Allah and His Messenger. By Allah, there is nothing more beloved to me than that which you take; it surely is more desirable to me (that you take it) than if you leave it (for me)!!"

Consequently, Harithah, motivated by his strong faith and belief in good deeds, granted 'Ali (as) one of his houses. Imam 'Ali (as) furnished one of the rooms by spreading sand on the floor, and erecting a pole for hanging the water container. In addition to some gifts that were given to him by some companions, he also purchased a jug and jar, and laid a piece of wood between two walls for hanging clothes, and placed a ram's skin on the floor, and put a pillow made of fiber on it.

The Prophet (S) ordered 'Ali (as) to hold a dinner because Allah, the Exalted, is pleased with those who do so; for the social good it does is bring people together and implement love, and harmony among them.

It is noteworthy that Lady Fatima Zahra (sa) excelled in giving on the path of Allah; she possessed generosity that no other woman can claim to be equality.

Al-Asfoury wrote in his book *Nuzhat al-Majalis* v.2, p.226, on the authority of Ibn al-Tawous:

"The Prophet had a new dress made for Fatima (as a gift) for her wedding; she had just one old patched dress. On her wedding night, someone knocked on the door and said:

"I ask the household of Prophethood to give me an old dress." At first, Fatima was going to give him her

old dress, but then remembered the Qur'anic verse:

'By no means shall ye attain righteousness unless ye give (freely) of that which ye love (prefer)'

She then gave the poor man her new dress. Consequently, Gabriel descended, and said:

"O Muhammad! Allah sends Him peace upon you; He commanded me to greet Fatima and (give her the gift He sent her) which is a dress from Paradise, made of silk brocade etc."

Regarding the feast, when the food had been prepared, the meat cooked, the bread baked and the dates and butter obtained, the Prophet (S) started spitting the dates, and mixing them with the butter to replace sweetmeat for the wedding. When everything was ready, he asked 'Ali (as) to invite the people to the feast.

When 'Ali (as) reached the Mosque, he found it crowded with people who were at the Mosque, from the poor immigrants who lived there to the Ansars. Nevertheless, 'Ali's (as) generosity and noble-heartedness did not allow him to invite some people, and exclude others, especially since everyone wanted to be invited to the Prophet's (as) daughter's wedding feast.

'Ali's (as) belief in Allah's power, and the Prophet's (as) blessed heart, motivated him to call out loud:

"O people, answer the call for the feast of Fatima Bint Muhammad"

Men and women from all around Medina gathered in the house. They ate, drank and even took food to their homes. The blessings of the Prophet (S) were obvious on that day, for not only the food was enough to feed everyone, but also it did not decrease at all. The Prophet (S) asked for food containers to be brought, and filled them, and sent them to his wives, and left a special container for Fatima az-Zahra (sa), and her husband.

By sunset, the wedding night had begun; it was time for Fatima az-Zahra to depart to her new home.

Everything went well, for the Prophet had made all the necessary preparation for the wedding. Despite the simplicity and modesty of her wedding, Fatima's marriage ceremony was surrounded by signs of greatness, excellence, and beauty. Al-Haithami wrote in Majma' Az-Zawaed that Jabir said:

"We were present at Fatima and 'Ali's (may Allah be pleased with them) wedding ceremony, and indeed we have not seen any ceremony better than that one..."

The Messenger of Allah (S) ordered his wives to embellish Fatima az-Zahra (sa) before the wedding; they perfumed, and dressed her with jewellery. They all helped to ready Fatima az-Zahra (sa); some combed her hair while others embellished, and dressed her in the dress brought by Angel Gabriel from Paradise.

Allah's Messenger (as) paid special attention to Fatima az-Zahra (sa), which he did not bestow on his

other daughters for the following reasons:

A. Her special characteristics and noble traits.

B. Her husband is 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib (as), who is known for his talents and longstanding service to Islam, besides being the Prophet's cousin.

C. The Prophet (S) also knew that his daughter was going to be included in the verse of purification, the verse of Mubahelah (supplication), and the verse of Kinship.

D. Fatima az-Zahra (sa) is the mother of the Holy Imams who will lead humanity until the Day of Resurrection.

The night of Fatima's (sa) wedding arrived. Because every girl needs her mother on her wedding night, Fatima missed Lady Khadija (as), and felt very much like an orphan. With his noble and special attention to Fatima az-Zahra (sa), the Prophet wished to fill Lady Khadija's (as) space; the Prophet called 'Ali (as), and Fatima az-Zahra (sa), who proceeded towards him. Fatima az-Zahra (sa) was in her long heavenly dress overtaken with shyness. He ['Ali (as)] brought his gray horse, and asked Fatima az-Zahra (sa) to ride it, and ordered Salman to lead while he (as) followed them.

Yes, indeed, Fatima's (sa) wedding was attended by heavenly creatures as well as people, for she is a human huri.

Al-Khateeb al-Baghdadi in Tareekh Baghdad v.5, p.7, Al-Hamvini in Duraral-Simtain,

Al-Dhahabi in Mizan al-Etedal, Garani in Akhbar al-Dowal, and Qandouzi in Yanabi' al-Mawaddah have narrated that Ibn Abbas said:

"When Fatima was taken to 'Ali's house on her wedding night, the Prophet proceeded her, Gabriel was on her right, and Michael on her left, and seventy thousand angels followed her. These angels praised and glorified Allah until dawn!!

The Hashemit men, Abdul Muttalib's daughters, and Muhajerin and Ansar's women all accompanied Fatima's caravan that night. The Prophet's wives joyfully led the caravan; they were also the first to enter the house.

Upon arriving, the Prophet placed Fatima's hand in 'Ali's hand and said:

"May Allah bless his Messenger's daughter;

'Ali this is Fatima, you are responsible for her (or, I entrust her to you)

'Ali, what an excellent wife Fatima is!!

Fatima, what an excellent husband 'Ali is!!

O Allah, bless them, bless their lives, and bless their children

O Allah, surely they are the most beloved to me from among your creatures, so love them too, and assign for them a guardian

I place them and their progeny under Your protection from the curse devil."

The Prophet then asked for a jug of water; he sipped a small amount of the water, and after gargling with it, placed it back in the jug. He then called for Fatima az-Zahra (sa), and sprayed her head and shoulders with that water and did the same thing to 'Ali (as). Thereafter, he ordered the women to leave the house. They all left except Asma Bint Umais. When he (as) noticed that she had stayed behind, he exclaimed: *'Didn't I ask you to leave?'*

She answered: `Indeed, O Messenger of Allah! May my parents be your sacrifice; I did not intend to disobey you, but I promised Khadija to take her place on this night.'

The Prophet (S) was moved by this; he cried, and said to Asma: *'By Allah, this is the reason that made you stay behind?'*

She said: 'Yes, by Allah!'

He [Prophet (S)] then said: 'Asma, may Allah fulfill for you the needs of this world and the Hereafter.'

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