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Section 4: Umar's Marriage to Umm Kulthum in Shiite Narrations

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As we was mentioned while raising a question regarding Umm Kulthum's marriage to Umar ibn Khattab, the story is famous and well-known among Sunni Muslims and the narrations regarding this marriage have also been reported in the books authored by Shia scholars. However, in spite of this story being well-known among Sunni Muslims and the fact that it has also been reported in some Shiite sources, some of our scholars have rejected the story on the ground that it is not true and genuine. If one goes through Shiite sources, he will see the rejection and refutation in the works authored by Sheikh Mufid, Sayyid Murtadha and Sayyid Nasir Hussain, the son of the author of *Abaqat Al-Anwar* (may Allah bless him) – and in the works by other figures who have engaged in the analysis and evaluation of this very subject matter.

Here we reiterate that the narrations reported by reliable Shiite narrators indicate and reveal what we have already stated in our answer to the forgoing question. In this respect, we quoted Nawbakhti, one of the Shiite scholars, and also Zarqani, a Sunnite scholar. Now we shall mention and elaborate on the narrations reported by Shiite sources through reliable chains of transmission.²

The first tradition

Imam Ja'far Sadiq (S.A) has been reported as having said concerning the marriage of Umm Kulthum:

إن ذلك فرج غصبناه

“That this was the farj that was usurped from us.”

The second tradition

It has been narrated in another narration that Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said:

لما خطب اليه قال له أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام: إنها صبية

قال : فلقني العباس فقال له: ما لي؟ أبي بأس؟

قال: وما ذاك؟

قال: خطبت إلى ابن أخيك فردني أما والله! لأعورن زمزم ولا ادع لكم مكربة إلا هدمتها ولأقيم على شاهدين بأنه سرق ولأقتعن يمينه.

فأته العباس وسأله أن يجعل الأمر إليه فجعله إليه.

‘When Umar came to make the marriage proposal, the Commander of the Faithful, Ali (a.s.) told him: She is a young girl.

Thereupon, Umar met Abbas and told him: What is wrong with me? Do I have any defect?^٢

Abbas said: Why are you saying that?

Umar said: ^٣I asked your nephew for his daughter’s hand in marriage, but he has turned me down. I swear by Allah! I will fill the well of Zamzam with earth, I will destroy every honor that you have, and I will set up two witnesses to testify that he stole, that I may cut off his right hand.’ Abbas thereupon came to Ali and informed him of what had transpired. He asked Ali to put the matter in his hands, and Ali complied.’³

The third tradition

In another narration reported from Sulaiman ibn Khalid and others, Sulaiman has been quoted as having said: I asked Imam Sadiq (a.s.) as to where a lady whose husband had died should pass her Iddah (waiting) period⁴. Was it necessary for her to pass the period in her husband’s house or wherever she wanted?

The Imam (a.s.) said: Yes, she can pass her waiting period wherever she would like to.^٤ Then he said:

إن عليا عليه السلام لما مات عمر أتى أم كلثوم فأخذ بيدها فأطلق بها إلى بيته

When Umar died, Ali (a.s.) went to Umm Kulthum, got hold of her hand and brought her to his house.⁵

In view of the above details and assuming that the narrations are true and authentic, we say: ^٤ The opponents cannot use these narrations to base their arguments and prove their side of the story or to make us accept anything in this regard. This is because the utmost conclusion that can be drawn from these narrations is that the marriage contract took place under threat and intimidating promises. It was only after these threats that Umm Kulthum went to Umar's house. When Umar was killed, the Imam (a.s.) went to Umm Kulthum and took her to his house.

On the other hand, perhaps this saying of Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) i.e., Ali (a.s.) held her hand and took her to his house is a proof of what some scholars have stated that Umar died before Umm Kulthum attained the age of puberty.

Therefore, what merit does this proposal and the imposed marriage which was characterized by threat and intimidation does it earn Umar? What defect and flaw does such a proposal and marriage exact on the Commander of the Faithful, Ali (a.s.) and the Household of the Prophet, peace be upon them? Can such a marriage be an indication of the two sides being sincere friends of each other?

When Umar threatens the Commander of the Faithful, Ali (a.s.), in the manner demonstrated by the narrations, to usurp and get this girl, how may his threats have been for usurping the caliphate which forcibly silenced the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) and his followers compelling them to pay allegiance to him?! In fact, we can say that this usurpation was meant to eliminate the effects of that usurpation.

Indeed, Hajjaj ibn Yusuf Thaqafi learnt this same method from Umar as evidenced by this historical narration: Muhammad ibn Idris Shafe'i (d.) says: When Hajjaj ibn Yusuf married the daughter of Abdullah ibn Ja'far, Khalid ibn Yazid ibn Muawiyah told Abdul Malik ibn Marwan:

Did you leave Hajjaj to marry the daughter of Abdullah ibn Ja'far?^٥ He said: Yes, what is wrong with it?

Khalid said: By Allah, this is the worst shame.^٦ Abdul Malik asked: How is that?

Khalid said: I swear by Allah! O Commander of the Faithful, ever since I married Ramlah, the daughter of Zubair, the enmity I had in my heart toward Zubair, has perished. Khalid goes on saying: It seems Abdul Malik was asleep and I woke him up with these words of mine. Then and there he wrote a letter to Hajjaj making him to divorce Abdullah's daughter. Hajjaj complied with Abdul Malik's order and divorced her.⁶

Final word concerning the marriage of Umm Kulthum

Considering the investigation and research conducted in regard to Umm Kulthum's marriage, a question that does arise is: Whom did Umm Kulthum marry finally? In answer to this question, we must say that it was clarified earlier that, based on the saying of Commander of the Faithful, Ali (a.s.), he had kept his daughters for the sons of his brother, Ja'far. In fact, this was done by the order of the Messenger of Allah (S) because one day the holy Prophet (S) looked at Ali's and Ja'far's children whereupon the Prophet (S) said:

بناتنا لبنينا وبنونا لبناتنا

"Our daughters are for our sons and our sons are for our daughters".^{[7](#)}

However, when it comes to Umm Kulthum, there is a narration which says: Umar asked Ali for Umm Kulthum's hand in marriage. Ali (AS) made the excuse that she was too young and he further said that he had kept her for the son of his brother, Ja'far...^{[8](#)}

Likewise it is seen in this narration that the Imam (a.s.) did not specify which son of Ja'far he had kept his daughter for, but we know that he meant either Awn or Muhammad. This is because, as mentioned earlier, the Commander of the Faithful, Ali (a.s.) had married his daughter Zainab (a.s.) to Abdullah, who was the eldest of his brothers.

Among the Sunni scholars, whose opinions and reports we are discussing in this book, there is no difference as to the fact that Awn was killed in the battle of Shushtar, during the reign of Umar's caliphate. Hence, based on the aforementioned narrations which we assume to be authentic, Umm Kulthum was married to Umar during this time.

When it comes to Muhammad, Ibn Ja'far, Ibn Hajar comments as such:

Abu Umar has narrated from Waqidi that Muhammad's nickname was Abul Qasim. He married Umm Kulthum after Umar's death. He further says: Muhammad was martyred in the battle of Shushtar.

It has been said that Muhammad lived until the time of Imam Ali (a.s.) and was in the company of the Commander of the Faithful, Ali (a.s.) during the battle of Siffin.

In his Al-Ikhwah, Dar Qutni writes: It is said that Muhammad was martyred in the battle of Siffin. In this battle, he fought with Ubaidullah ibn Umar ibn Khattab and they fought each other to their death.

In this respect, Marzbani too writes in Mu'jam Al-Shuara: Muhammad ibn Ja'far and Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr were in Egypt. When Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr was killed, Muhammad went into hiding. A person from the clan of Ak and the tribe of Ghafiq advised him to leave Egypt and he fled there for Palestine

where he went to one of maternal uncles from Khath'am clan. He saved Muhammad from Muawiyah's mischief. Later on, Muhammad composed a poem describing this incident.

He further writes: ﴿This has been proven and it rejects Waqidi who said that Muhammad was martyred in the battle of Shushtar. [9](#)

So, the person who married Umm Kulthum, after Umar's death, based on the foregoing supposition, is Muhammad ibn Ja'far and, as was stated earlier, Ibn Abd al-Barr has confirmed this. Concerning Abdullah too, it is necessary to know that he is likely to have married Umm Kulthum after the death of his wife Zainab (S.A). That is because according to Ibn Abd al-Barr, Abdullah was alive until the year 80 of the Islamic lunar calendar and he lived for ninety years.

- [1.](#) It is worth mentioning that the previous edition of this book lacked this section as it was added only in the wake of a request by some scholars and seminarians. That was because my study was focused only on Sunni traditions and narrations in connection with the subject matter. It is expected that this section will be supplementary and that it will throw further light on the answers given briefly in this book.
- [2.](#) Of course in this topic there are other traditions in the sources of the Shia which after a careful evaluation, we have realized that on the part of their documents, they have been tampered with and disclaimed.
- [3.](#) Al-Kafi, 5/346 tradition number 1 and 2.
- [4.](#) Iddah is a waiting period of (four months and ten days) during which a lady who has lost her husband, must stay away from marriage.
- [5.](#) Al-Kafi, 6/115 and 116 tradition number 2, this information because of its application in the aforesaid law, it has also been mentioned in the books of Islamic laws.
- [6.](#) Mukhtasar Tarikh Dimashq, 6/205.
- [7.](#) Man la Yahdhuruhi Al-Faqih, 3/249 tradition number 1184.
- [8.](#) Dhakhair Uqba, 288; Kanzul Ummal, 13/269 tradition number 37586.
- [9.](#) Al-Isabah, 6/7.

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