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His Wives, Children and Relatives

This chapter consists of four sections. It deals with the wives and children of the Messenger of Allah, as well as his paternal uncles and aunts, and others of his relatives. It also discusses his male and female servants (*mawali*) as well as his maidservants (*jawari*).

The Wives Of The Apostle Of Allah And His Children

The first woman whom the Messenger of Allah married was Khadijah daughter of Khuwaylid ibn Asad ibn `Abdi 'l` Uzza ibn Qusayy. He married her when he was twenty-five years old. She had been previously married to `Atiq ibn `A'idh al-Makhzumi, whom she had borne a daughter. She was then married to Abu Halah al-Asadi, whom she bore a son, Hind ibn Abi Halah. Finally the Messenger of Allah married her, and brought up her son Hind.

When the Messenger of Allah grew up and reached manhood, he was a man of little means. Thus Khadijah hired him to trade for her at the market of Khubashah. On his return, he sought Khadijah's hand, and she was married to him by her father Khuwaylid ibn Asad. It is also reported that her uncle `Amr ibn Asad gave her away in marriage. Abu Talib addressed the men of Quraysh, who were present for the marriage ceremony, as follows: "Praise be to Allah Who made us of the seed of Abraham and the progeny of Ishmael. He granted us a Sacred House and a place of pilgrimage. He made us to dwell in a secure sanctuary (*haram*), to which the fruits of everything are brought.^{[1](#)}

He made us, moreover, arbiters in men's affairs, and blessed for us this land in which we dwell." Abu Talib then said: "Were Muhammad, the son of my brother `Abdullah son of `Abdu'l-Muttalib, to be weighed against any man among the Arabs, he would excel him. Nor would any man be comparable to him. He is peerless among men, even though he is a man of little wealth. Yet riches are only transient possessions, and an ephemeral security. He has expressed a desire for Khadijah, and she likewise has shown interest in him. As for any bride gift (*mahr*) you demand – both the part to be presented now and the one presented at a later date – it will be of my own wealth." Abu Talib was a man of note and high status; as well, he possessed a tongue of superior eloquence and persuasion.

The Prophet married Khadijah, and took her into his home the next day. The Messenger of Allah took no other wife until she died. She lived with him for twenty-four years and one month. Her bride gift was twelve and a half ounces of precious metal. The Prophet fixed this amount as the bride gift for all his other wives. The first child Khadijah bore was `Abdullah son of Muhammad, whose epithets were *at-Tayyib* (the Good or Wholesome) and *at-Tahir* (the Pure). She also gave birth to another son called al-Qasim. It is also reported that al-Qasim was the eldest son, and the Prophet's firstborn, as he was known as Abu 'l-Qasim (father of al-Qasim). Some traditionists have mistakenly assumed that the Prophet had four sons from Khadijah: al-Qasim, `Abdullah, at-Tayyib and at-Tahir. The truth is that he had from her two sons and four daughters: Zaynab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthum and Fatimah.

As for Zaynab, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah, she was married to Abu 'l-`As ibn Rabi' ibn `Abdi 'l-`Uzza ibn `Abd Shams ibn `Abd Manaf. Zaynab bore him a daughter called Umamah, whom `Ali ibn Abi Talib married after Fatimah's death in accordance with her own will. When `Ali was martyred, Umamah was married to al-Mughirah ibn Nawfal ibn al-Harith ibn `Abdi 'l-Muttalib, in whose house she died. The mother of Abu 'l-`As was Halah, daughter of Khuwaylid; thus Khadijah was Abu 'l-`As's aunt. Zaynab died in Medina in the seventh year of the *hijrah*.

As for Ruqayyah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah, she was married to `Utbah son of Abu Lahab, but he divorced her before the marriage was consummated. Moreover, he ill-treated her. Thus the Prophet prayed: "O Allah send against `Utbah a dog (that is, a beast of prey) from among your dogs!" A lion did in fact pick him out from among his Companions. Ruqayyah was then married to `Uthman ibn `Affan in Medina, for whom she bore `Abdullah, who died in infancy. A cock picked at his eyes, and the child fell ill and died. Ruqayyah died in Medina at the time of the Battle of Badr. `Uthman stayed behind in Medina to bury her; thus he was prevented from taking part in the battle.

Ruqayyah had previously accompanied `Uthman when he migrated to Abyssinia. `Uthman also married Umm Kulthum after the death of her sister Ruqayyah. She too died with him. The Prophet's daughter Fatimah will be discussed in a special chapter devoted to her alone.

The Messenger of Allah had no children by any wife other than Khadijah except Ibrahim. He was born in Medina to Mariyah al-Qubtiyyah in the eighth year of the *hijrah* and died in Medina at the age of one year, six months and a few days. His grave is in al-Baqi' (an ancient graveyard in Medina containing the graves of a number of the *imams*, and other relatives and Companions of the Prophet).

The second wife of the Prophet was Sawdah daughter of Zam'ah, who was previously married to Sakran ibn `Amr. Sakran, however, died a Muslim in Abyssinia.

The third was `A'ishah daughter of Abi Bakr, whom the Prophet married in Mecca when she was only seven years of age. She was the only virgin whom the Prophet married. He went into her when she was eight years and three months old, after his migration to Medina. `A'ishah lived well into Mu'awiyah's caliphate (she died in 56/678).

The fourth wife of the Prophet was Umm Sharik, who offered herself to the Prophet (that is, no one acted as her guardian, nor did she demand a bride gift). Her name was Ghuzzayyah, daughter of Dudan ibn `Awf ibn `Amir. Before the Prophet, Ghuzzayyah was married to Abu 'l-`lkr ibn Samiyy al-Azdi, whom she bore Sharik.

The fifth wife was Hafsah daughter of `Umar ibn al-Khattab, whom the Prophet married after the death of her husband Khunays ibn `Abdillah ibn Hudhafah as-Sahmi. The Messenger of Allah had sent him as an emissary to Kisra (Khusraw, the King of Persia). Khunays died, leaving no offspring. Hafsah died during the caliphate of `Uthman.

The sixth wife of the Prophet was Umm Habibah daughter of Abu Sufyan, whose name was Ramlah. She was previously married to `Ubaydullah ibn Jahsh al-Asadi. She accompanied him to Abyssinia, where he died a Christian. The Messenger of Allah then married Umm Habibah, `Amr ibn Umayyah ad-Damri acting as his deputy.

The seventh was Umm Salamah, who was the daughter of `Atikah, daughter of `Abdu'l-Muttalib, the Prophet's paternal aunt. It is also reported that Umm Salamah's mother was the daughter of `Amir ibn Rabi'ah of the tribe of Firas ibn Ghanam, whose name was Hind daughter of Abu Umayyah ibn al-Mughirah ibn `Abdillah ibn `Amr ibn Makhzum; she was the paternal cousin of Abu Jahl. It is reported that the Messenger of Allah sent word to Umm Salamah: "Order your son to give you away in marriage." Thus her son Salamah ibn Abi Salamah gave her in marriage to the Messenger of Allah. Salamah was at the time a youth who had not become of age. He fixed her bride gift, while he was with an-Najashi in Abyssinia, at four hundred dinars, to be received at the time of the marriage ceremony.

Umm Salamah was one of the last women whom the Prophet married. She died long after him. She was previously married to Abu Salamah ibn `Abdi'l-Asad, whose mother was Barrah, daughter of `Abdu'l-Muttalib. Thus Abu Salamah was the Messenger of Allah's maternal cousin. Umm Salamah bore for him Zaynab and `Amr. The latter fought on 'Ali's side in the Battle of the Camel (36/656). 'Ali appointed him as the Governor of Bahrayn. `Amr had a number of children who were born in Medina. Among Umm Salamah's clients were Shaybah ibn Misah, who was the foremost authority on Qur'an recitation in Medina. Another client of Umm Salamah was Khayrah, the mother of Hasan al-Basri.

The eighth wife of the Prophet was Zaynab daughter of Jahsh of the Asad tribe. She was the daughter of Maymunah daughter of `Abdu'l-Muttalib, the Prophet's paternal aunt. She was the first of the Prophet's wives to die after him, during the caliphate of `Umar. Before marrying the Prophet, Zaynab was the wife of Zayd ibn al-Harithah. Zayd divorced her, and the story of Zayd and his wife Zaynab has been mentioned by Allah in the Qur'an.² She was also the first woman for whom a bier was constructed. This was done by Asma' daughter of `Umays who saw it being used in Abyssinia.

The ninth was Zaynab daughter of Khuzaymah al-Hilabiyah of the descendants of `Abd Manaf ibn Hilal ibn `Amir ibn Sa'sa'ah. Before the Prophet married her, Zaynab was the wife of `Ubaydah ibn al-Harith. Zaynab died before the Prophet. She was known as 'the mother of the poor'.

The tenth wife was Maymunah daughter of al-Harith, of the descendants of `Abdullah ibn Hilal, ibn `Amir ibn Sa'sa'ah. The Prophet took Maymunah in marriage in Medina, where Abu Rafi` acted as his deputy. The Prophet went into her in Sarf – a place about ten miles distance from Mecca – on his way back to Medina, after performing the lesser pilgrimage. Maymunah died in Sarf where she was also buried. Before that, she was married to Abu Sabrah<sup>3</sup> ibn Abi Ruhm al-`Amiri.

The eleventh woman whom the Prophet married was Juwayriyyah daughter of al-Harith ibn al-Mustaliq, whom the Prophet took captive. He then freed her and married her. Juwayriyyah died in 56 A. H.

The twelfth was Safiyyah daughter of Huyay ibn Akhtab of the tribe of Banu 'n-Nadir. The Prophet chose Safiyyah for himself of the booty, then he freed her and married her. He gave her as a bride gift her own freedom. Safiyyah died in 36 A. H.

The Messenger of Allah thus married twelve women with whom he actually consummated the marriage. Eleven of these he married, and one offered herself to him as a gift. He also married `Aliyah daughter of Zabyan, but then divorced her as soon as she was brought in to him. He also married Qutaylah daughter of Qays, and sister of al-Ash'ath ibn Qays, but he died before uniting with her. It is also reported that he divorced her before their coming together, and before he died⁴ she was then after married to a man called `Ikrimah.

The Prophet also married Fatimah daughter of ad-Dahhak after the death of his daughter Zaynab. When, however, *ayatu't-takhyir* (verse of choice)⁵ was revealed, he offered her the choice between `Allah, His Messenger and life in the hereafter', or `the life of this world', but she chose the life of this world. He thus let her go. It is reported that thereafter she used to pick animal dung and repeat, "I indeed am a miserable woman, for I have chosen the life of this world."

The Prophet married Sana daughter of as-Salt, but she also died before she was brought in to him. He married Asma' daughter of an-Nu'man ibn Shurahil, who exclaimed when she saw him, "I seek refuge in Allah from you! " The Prophet replied: "I too will grant you refuge; go back to your people!" One of the Prophet's wives had instructed her to say this. Thus he divorced Asma' before uniting with her.

Another woman whom the Prophet married was Mulaykah al-Laythiyyah. When he went in to her, he said: "Offer yourself to me! " She answered: "Would a queen offer herself to one of the rabble! " As he lifted his hand to touch her, she exclaimed: "I seek refuge in Allah from you! " He replied: "You have indeed sought refuge in One Who is worthy of refuge!" He thus let her go, and offered her, her bride gift.

The Prophet also married a woman called `Amrah daughter of Yazid, but he found in her traces of leprosy. He thus said: "You (meaning her family) have deceived me! ", and returned her to her parents. He also married Layla daughter of Khatim al-Ansariyyah, who begged, "Let me go" ; and he sent her back. He sought the hand of a woman of the tribe of Banu Murrah; her father said: "She has leprosy", but in reality she did not. When, however, her father went home, he found her to be leprous.

The Prophet sought the hand of another woman whose father described her to him and said: "I wish to

add that she has never been sick.” The Prophet retorted: “Allah has nothing good for this woman!” It is also reported that he did marry her, but when her father said this, he divorced her. The Messenger of Allah thus married or sought the hands of twenty-one women. He died having united with nine or ten of them. These were: `A'ishah, Hafsah, Umm Salamah, Umm Habibah, Zaynab daughter of Jahsh, Maymunah, Safiyyah, Juwayriyah and Sawdah. Sawdah, however, gave her night to `A'ishah. When the Prophet wanted to divorce her, she argued: “I have no desire for men; I only wished to be gathered (on the Day of Resurrection) among your wives.”

The Prophet's Paternal Uncles And Aunts

The Messenger of Allah had nine uncles, all sons of `Abdu'l-Muttalib. They were: al-Harith, az-Zubayr, Abu Talib, Hamzah, al-Ghaydaq, Dirar, al-Muqawwam, Abu Lahab, whose name was `Abdu'l-`Uzza, and al-`Abbas.

Only four of the Prophet's uncles left offspring: al-Harith, Abu Talib, al-`Abbas and Abu Lahab. As for al-Harith, he was the eldest of `Abdu'l-Muttalib's children, and `Abdu'l-Muttalib's agnomen was Abul-Harith. al-Harith assisted his father `Abdu'l-Muttalib in digging the well of Zamzam. al-Harith had five male children: Abu Sufyan, al-Mughirah, Nawfal, Rabi'ah and `Abd Shams. Abu Sufyan became a Muslim during the year of the conquest of Mecca. He left no offspring. Nawfal, who was older than Hamzah and al-`Abbas, accepted Islam during the siege of *al-Khandaq* (the Trench). He left offspring after him. As for `Abd Shams, the Apostle of Allah changed his name to `Abdullah. His children lived after him in Syria.

As for Abu Talib, he and `Abdullah, the Prophet's father, were children of the same mother. Their mother was Fatimah daughter of `Amr ibn `A'idh ibn `Imran ibn Makhzum, Abu Talib's name was `Abd Manaf, and he had four male children. These were: Talib, `Aqil, Ja'far and 'Ali. His female children were Umm Hani, whose names were Fakhitah and Jumanah. The mother of all these children was Fatimah daughter of Asad. `Aqil was ten years older than Ja'far. Talib had no children, and he died three years before the Prophet migrated to Medina.

The Messenger of Allah was protected from all harm in Mecca with his status secure, until Abu Talib died. Then Mecca rejected him, nor could he carry out his mission, until Gabriel finally came to him and said: “Allah sends you salutations of peace and says to you, ‘Depart Mecca, for your supporter is dead!’” When Abu Talib died, 'Ali went to the Apostle of Allah and informed him of this. The Prophet said to him: “Go O `Ali, and take charge of washing, shrouding and embalming him, but when you have laid him out on his bier, come and inform me!” `Ali did so, and the Prophet stood before the corpse and exclaimed: “You have indeed acted kindly towards your next of kin; may you therefore be well rewarded, O uncle, for you were a good guardian of the one whom you brought up as a youth. You also assisted him and offered support to him as a grown man!” The Prophet then turned to those present and said: “By Allah, I shall intercede on my uncle's behalf with an intercession at which both men and *jinn* shall

marvel! ”

As for al-`Abbas, his agnomen was Abu 'l-Fadl, and to him belonged the rite of offering water to the pilgrims, as well as the guardianship of the well of Zamzam. He accepted Islam at the time of the Battle of Badr. He also received the Prophet at al-Abwa' at the time of the conquest of Mecca, and accompanied him when entered it. With him the *hijrah* (migration of the Muslims) was completed. al-`Abbas died in Medina during the caliphate of `Uthman, after losing his sight due to old age. He had twelve children, nine males and three females. They were: `Abdullah, `Ubaydullah; al-Fadl, Qutham, Ma'bad, `Abdu 'r-Rahman and Umm Habib. The mother of all these was Lubabah daughter of al-Fadl ibn al-Harith al-Hilaliyyah, the sister of Maymunah daughter of al-Harith, the wife of the Prophet. The other children of al-`Abbas were born to different mothers; they were: Tammam, Kathir, al-Harith, Aminah and Safiyyah.

As for Abu Lahab, his children were `Utaybah, `Utbah, `Uqbah and Mu'attab. Their mother was Umm Jamil daughter of Harb and sister of Abu Sufyan, *'the carrier of wood'* (see Qur'an 111).

The Prophet's paternal aunts were six, the children of different mothers. They were: Umaymah, Umm Hakim, Barrah, `Atikah, Safiyyah and Arwa. Umaymah was the wife of Jahsh ibn Ri'ab al-Asadi. Umm Hakim – known as al-Bayda' (the fair one) – was the wife of Karir ibn Rabi'ah ibn Habib ibn `Abd Shams. Barrah was the wife of `Abdu 'l-Asad ibn Hilal al-Makhzumi, for whom she bore Abu Salamah, who was the husband of Umm Salamah (before the Prophet married her). `Atikah was the wife of Abu Umayyah ibn al-Mughirah al-Makhzumi. Safiyyah was the wife of al-Harith ibn Harb ibn Umayyah. She then married al-`Awwam ibn Khuwaylid, for whom she bore az-Zubayr (a well-known Companion and second cousin of the Prophet). Arwa was the wife of `Umayr ibn `Abdi 'l-Uzza ibn Qusayy. The only one among the Prophet's aunts who accepted Islam was Safiyyah. It is also reported that three became Muslims: Safiyyah, Arwa and `Atikah.

The Prophet's Relatives In Nursing

The Messenger of Allah had no maternal relatives except those in nursing. This is because his mother Aminah daughter of Wahb had no brothers or sisters, who would have been the Prophet's uncles or aunts. Yet the men of the tribe of Banu Zuhrah claimed to be his uncles because Aminah was a member of that tribe. Nor did his parents `Abdullah and Aminah have any other children, who would have then been his blood brothers or sisters.

The Prophet had a maternal aunt in nursing called Salma, who was the sister of Halimah (as-Sa'diyyah, his nursing mother), daughter of Abu Dhuwayb. He also had two brothers in nursing, `Abdullah ibn al-Harith and Anisah ibn al-Harith, whose father was al-Harith ibn `Abdi 'l-Uzza ibn Sa'd ibn Bakr ibn Hawazin.

The Prophet's Male and Female Clients, and His Maidservants

Among the Prophet's male clients was Zayd ibn al-Harithah, who was bought as a youth for Khadijah by Hakim ibn Hizam at the market of `Ukaz for four hundred dirhams. But after the Messenger of Allah married Khadijah, she gave him Zayd as a gift. The Prophet, however, set him free and adopted him. He also married him to Umm Ayman, who bore him Usamah. Zayd was known as 'the son of the Apostle of Allah' until Allah sent down:

Let sons be called only after their fathers (Qur.33:5).

Another of the Prophet's clients was Abu Rafi`, whose name was Aslam. He belonged to al-`Abbas (the Prophet's uncle), who gave Abu Rafi` to the Prophet as gift. When al-`Abbas accepted Islam, Abu Rafi` hastened with the news to the Prophet, who was so pleased that he set him free. The Prophet also had Abu Rafi` married to Salma, his maidservant, who bore him `Ubaydullah ibn Abi Rafi`, who was 'Ali's scribe during the latter's caliphate. Another client was a man called Safinah, whose name was Rabah. The Messenger of Allah bought him and set him free. Nawban, a man of the tribe of Himyar, whose agnomen was Abu `Abdillah, was taken captive, and the Apostle of Allah also bought him and set him free.

Yassar, a Nubian slave, was also bought by the Messenger of Allah and set free. Yassar was killed by the man from the tribe of `Uraynah who raided the orchard of the Messenger of Allah. Other clients were Shuqran, whose name was Salih, and Abu Kabshah, whose name was Sulayman. Another client was Abu Danmirah, whom the Prophet set free and for whom he wrote a deed of surety which remained with his descendants after him. Mud'im, who was also a client of the Prophet, was shot with an arrow at Wadi 'I-Qura (near Mecca), where he died.

Other clients were Abu Muwayhibah, Anasah, Fudalah, Tahman, Abu Ayman, Abu Hind and Anjashah. Anjashah was the man to whom the Prophet said: "Be not in haste O Anjashah, be gentle with the crystals (that is, women, as being fragile) ! " [6](#)

Others also were: Salih, Abu Salma, Abu `Usayb, `Ubayd, Aflah, Ruwayfi`, Abu Laqit, Abu Rafi` al-Asghar (the younger), Yassar al-Akbar (the elder) and Karkarah. Karkarah was given by a man called Hudah ibn `Ali al-Hanafi to the Prophet, who set him free. There was also Rabah, Abu Lubabah, and Abu 'I-Yusr, who alone left offspring.

As for the Prophet's maidservants, first al-Muqawqis, the ruler of Alexandria (Egypt), presented to him two maidservants, one of whom was Mariyah al-Qubtiyyah. She bore him Ibrahim, dying five years after the Prophet in 16 A.H. The other maidservant (who was given him along with Mariyah), he gave to Hassan ibn Thabit.

Umm Ayman was the Prophet's special maid, whom he inherited from his mother. She was a black

woman, and her name was Barakah. The Prophet set her free and gave her in marriage to `Ubayd al-Khazraji in Mecca. She bore `Ubayd a son called Ayman. Then he died, and the Prophet married her to Zayd, for whom she bore Usamah, who was also black resembling her. Thus Usamah and Ayman were two brothers of the same mother.

Another was Rayhanah, daughter of Sham'un, whom the Prophet captured with the booty from the tribe of Banu Qurayzah.

The Prophet's freemen and women servants were: Anas ibn Malik, and Hind and Asma', daughters of Kharijah of the tribe of Banu Aslam.

[1.](#) See Qur'an 2: 126.

[2.](#) See Qur'an 33:37.

[3.](#) Most of the historians say that her former husband was Abu Ruhm ibn `Abdi'l-`Uzza al-`Amiri. But it is also said that he was Sakhbarah, the son of Abu Ruhm. (ed.)

[4.](#) This fact is emphasized because the Prophet's wives could not remarry after him, being considered the mothers of all Muslims. See Qur'an 33:6.

[5.](#) See Qur'an 33 :28 and 29.

[6.](#) See al-Bukhari, vol 7, pp. 121- 2.

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