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# The Year of Fatima's Marriage

Opinions of the historian, and narrators differ from one to another regarding the year of Lady Fatima az-Zahra's (sa) marriage.

Sayid Ibn Tawoos wrote in Al-Iqbal on the authority of Sheikh Mufid:

"Fatima's (sa) marriage took place on the night of the 21st of Muharram, 3 A.H."

Al-Misbah: "Zul Hijja first, or, sixth."

and, Al-Amali: "Her marriage took place sixteen (16) days after the death of Ruqiyya, Uthman's wife, after he returned from Badr. This means that it took place at the beginning of Shawwal."

**Ambiguous Findings**

Asma Bint Umais and Umm Salama under the Spotlight

Asma was Ja'far Ibn Abu Talib's wife. It is a given fact that he had immigrated to Habashah with his wife and a group of Muslims several years before Hijra. It is also known that Ja'far returned to Medina after the Muslims conquered Khaibar in 5 A.H. These findings are unanimously agreed upon by all historians.

Nevertheless, we have seen that Asma was present when Lady Khadija (as) passed away in Mecca, and at Fatima's wedding ceremony according to many narrations, which state her name as Asma Bint Umais al-Khathamia.

The following historians state that she was present at Fatima's (sa) wedding ceremony: the author of Kashf Al-Ghummah, Hadhrami in Rashfat al-Sadi, p.10, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal in al-Manaqib, Al-Haithami in Majma' Az-Zawaed, Nisaee in Khasaes pg. 31, and Muhib Ad-Din Tabari in Dhakhaer al-Uqbi. They depend on the narrations of: Abu Abbas Khawarazmi from Al-Husayn Ibn 'Ali (as), Sayid Jalal al-Din Abu al-Hamid Ibn Fakhr al-Musawi, and Dulabi from Imam Baqir and his father [Imam Zainul-Abideen (as)].

How can we comprehend the contradiction between these narrations and the fact that Fatima's marriage

took place after the battle of Badr, or, even Uhud in 2 A.H.

Actually, this is a historical problem that has not yet been solved despite the various attempts made by Sheikh Majlisi in Bihar v. 10.

More interesting is the following statement that was mentioned in Safinat al-Bihar on the authority of Mujahid in which Asma was said to have been present at Aisha's marriage. In the statement it was claimed that Asma said:

"I was the one who, in the company of other women, prepared Aisha and brought her to the Messenger of Allah. By Allah, he had not but a cup of buttermilk which he drank and gave to Aisha; but she was too shy to take it, so I said to her: 'Do not reject it; it is from the hand of the Prophet.'

She (Aisha) then took it, and after drinking some, he [Prophet Muhammad (S)] said: *`Give some to your friends.'* But the women did not desire any.

The Prophet (S) then said: 'Do not gather hunger and lying together.'

I said: `Messenger of Allah, is it considered lying if one of us says she does not like something?'

The Prophet (S) replied: `Surely lying is counted (against the person) up to the point that even a small lie is recorded too."

As we said, this narration shows that Asma was present at Aisha's marriage, which took place before that of Fatima's (sa).

Moreover, it is unanimously narrated that Asma was present when Imam Husayn (as) was born in 4, or, 5 A.H. All these events are known to have taken place before conquering Khaibar, and Ja'far Ibn Abu Talib's return to Medina.

In an attempt to clarify the issue, Muhammad Ibn Yusuf (as Sheikh Majlisi also said in Bihar v. 10) wrote in Kefayat al-Talib, concerning Asma's presence at Fatima's (sa) wedding:

"This is an authentic finding, exactly as Ibn Batta narrated. But, mentioning Asma Bint Umais's name is not accurate, for this Asma is Ja'far Ibn Abu Talib's wife... Asma who attended Fatima's wedding, is Asma Bint Yazid Ibn Sakan al Ansari. As for Asma Bint Umais, she remained in the company of her husband in Habashah until he returned to Medina, the day Khaibar was conquered in 7 A.H. While Fatima's marriage took place several days after the battle of Badr."

Regardless of this, I say that the narrations clearly state Asma Bint Umais's name; therefore, this justification cannot be taken into account. Besides, Asma Bint Yazid was an Ansarian woman, hence could not have been present at Lady Khadija's (as) death. Her presence in Mecca at that time was not mentioned by any other historian.

In the light of these findings, I deem it necessary to clarify that Asma Bint Umais had actually immigrated with her husband to Habashah, but repeatedly returned to Mecca and Medina. This becomes clear especially when we realize that the distance between Jedda and Habashah is limited to that of the width of the Red sea, which in not so difficult for a journey. This historical confusion came about because her repeated trips were not adequately recorded, just as Abu Dharr's immigration to Habashah with Ja'far was not given enough attention.

This conclusion is supported by the following tradition which Al-Majlisi wrote in Bihar v.1, quoting Mawlid Fatima:

"Ibn Babawaih said:

`The Prophet ordered Abdul Muttalib's daughters... (until he said): The Prophet, Hamza, Aqeel, Ja'far, and Ahlul-Bayt followed the caravan."

It is clearly stated in this narration that Ja'far, Asma's husband, was present; which, as we said, supports our conclusion. In addition to this, the Prophet's (as) migration to Medina took place after Lady Khadija's (as) death, and Ja'far traveled to Habashah twice. The second journey took place before Hijra, and after Khadija's death. Thus, it becomes easy to understand how Asma was present at the time of Khadija's death.

There is confusion in historical findings regarding the reason for the presence of Umm Salama's name in the events preceding Fatima's (sa) marriage; i.e., the Prophet leaving some of Fatima's dowry with her, and the women's consultation with her, despite the fact that he married her in 4 A.H., while Fatima's marriage took place in 2 A.H. Thus, the question arises as to what role she played in these events even though she was not yet married to the Prophet (S)*?*

There are two probable answers that can be given to this question.

First: Perhaps there was a mistake in recording the year she was married to the Prophet (S). But, this is not based on any historical evidence, or, scientific findings, and therefore cannot be taken into account.

Second: Since Lady Umm Salama was the Prophet's (as) cousin, it was expected of her to participate in different stages of the wedding, and to keep part of Fatima's dowry in her possession according to the Prophet's (as) wish.

I prefer the second opinion. Yet, I leave it to Allah, for He is the Omniscient.

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