

Who Are Ahlul-Bayt? Part 5

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Mother Of Believers

One thing that our Sunni brothers/sisters usually say as means of justifying Aisha is that she was "Ummul Mu'minin"-- the mother of believers. In fact, Qur'an states that the wives of the Prophet (S) are the mothers of the believers. But let us ponder the following points:

1. Let's consider someone who is a believer. It naturally follows that his mother becomes a mother of believer. Does it automatically mean that his mother is also a good believer? Most certainly not! Being a mother of believer does not make that mother a good believer and righteous. The same argument applies for the mother of all the believers.

2. All the Sunni collections of traditions are replete with the traditions reported by Ummul Mu'minin Aisha. The Prophet (S) had many other wives, and all of them were mothers of believers. Many of the wives of the Prophet were highly pious and righteous, such as Umm Salama and Umm Ayman.

But unfortunately there are not many traditions from them in the Sihah Sittah (not even 5% of what is conveyed by Aisha). But we hear from Aisha in a bulk rate. Was it because she was the daughter of Abu Bakr? Or because she was the only one among the wives of the Prophet who fought Imam 'Ali (as)?

3. According to Islam, a believer is required to respect his mother. However, if such mother goes against the instruction of the Messenger of Allah, conducts and leads the rebellions, and kills innocents, we are religiously required to disassociate ourselves from such mother, and more importantly, we can NOT trust such mother for transmitting the traditions of the Prophet in such volume.

4. Indeed, there is a good reason why Allah gave them the title of "Mothers of Believers." Allah gave

them this title in order to prevent people to marry them after the demise of the Prophet (S). We cannot marry our mother. Right?

If Allah wouldn't have given this title to them, some influential people would have married them and would probably have brought sons from them and would have ordered people to follow them as the Ahlul-Bayt, or even worst, they might have claimed that they are the real sons of the Prophet and would have claimed prophethood for them and many more possible dangerous consequences. As such, Allah (SWT) gave them this title (the mother of believers) to prevent such marriages.

The Best Wife Of The Prophet Vs. The Most Envious

It is well-known among Muslims that the best wife of the Prophet (S) was Khadija (ra). She was the first woman who embraced Islam and spent all her wealth for the cause of Allah and the Prophet never married another woman as long as Khadija was alive.

The Messenger of Allah gave the name of the best women of the world in chronological order and one should not be surprised that the name of Aisha is missing:

The Messenger of Allah (S) said: "The most excellent of the women of all worlds whom Allah chose over all women are: Asiya the wife of Pharaoh, Mary the daughter of Imran, Khadija the daughter of Khuwaylid, and Fatimah the daughter of Muhammad."

Sunni references:

- Sahih al-Tirmidhi, v5, p702
- al-Mustadrak, by al-Hakim, v3, p157, who said this tradition is authentic based on the criteria of two Shaikhs (al-Bukhari and Muslim)
- Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v3, p135
- Fadha'il al-Sahaba, by Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v2, p755, Tradition #1325
- Hilyatul Awliyaa, by Abu Nu'aym, v2, p344
- Majma' al-Zawa'id, by al-Haythami, v9, p223
- al-Isti'ab, by Ibn Abd al-Barr, v4, p377
- al-Awsat by al-Tabarani, as well as Ibn Habban, etc.

Furthermore, Ibn Abbas (ra) narrated:

The Messenger of Allah (S) said: Four women are the mistress of the worlds: Mary, Asiya (the wife of

Pharaoh), Khadija, and Fatimah. And the most excellent one among them in the world is Fatimah."

Sunni references: Ibn Asakir, as quoted in Tafsir al-Durr al-Manthoor

Moreover, after the demise of Khadija (ra) when the Prophet (S) married Aisha and others, he explicitly preferred some of them over Aisha and said they are better than Aisha (see Sahih al-Tirmidhi; al-Isti'ab by Ibn Abd al-Barr; and al-Isabah, by Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, in the biography of Safiyya).

Also the verse:

"Perhaps if he divorces you, his Lord will give him wives who are better than you, who submit and believe (Qur'an 66:5)"

clearly indicates that there were believing women among the Muslims who were much better than Aisha.

Envy so controlled her heart and her mind that she conducted herself in the presence of the Messenger of Allah (S) without respect or manners. On one occasion, Aisha said to the Prophet (S), when he mentioned Khadija in her presence:

Sahih Bukhari Hadith: 5.168.b

... Narrated Aisha: Once Hala Bint Khuwailid, Khadija's sister, asked the permission of the Prophet to enter. On that, the Prophet remembered the way Khadija used to ask permission, and that made him sad. He said, "O Allah! Hala!" So I became jealous and said, "What makes you remember an old woman amongst the old women of Quraish an old woman (with a teethless mouth) of red gums who died long ago, and in whose place Allah has given you somebody better than her?"

The Prophet of Allah (S) became very angry at this until his hair stood. (also reported in Muslim). Moreover, al-Bukhari narrated that Aisha confessed:

Sahih Bukhari Hadith: 5.166

Narrated Aisha:

I did not feel jealous of any of the wives of the Prophet as much as I did of Khadija though I did not see her, but the Prophet used to mention her very often, and whenever he slaughtered a sheep, he would cut its parts and send them to the women friends of Khadija. When I sometimes said to him, "(You treat Khadija in such a way) as if there is no woman on earth except Khadija," he would say, "Khadija was such-and-such, and from her I had children."

Khadija was the foremost believing woman, to whom Gabriel gave Greetings, and was given the glad tidings of Paradise:

Sahih Bukhari Hadith: 9.588

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet said that Gabriel said, "Here is Khadija coming to you with a dish of food or a tumbler containing something to drink. Convey to her a greeting from her Lord (Allah) and give her the glad tidings that she will have a palace in Paradise built of Qasab wherein there will be neither any noise nor any fatigue (trouble)."

Similar traditions was reported by the authority of Isma'il and Aisha (See Sahih al-Bukhari, Traditions: 3.19, 5.164, 5.165, 5.167, 5.168, 7.156, 8.33, and 9.576).

When Aisha was jealous, she would exceed her bounds and would do strange things like breaking dishes or tearing clothes. On another occasion when the Prophet was in the house of Aisha, one of the mothers of the believers (namely Safiyya) sent to the Prophet a dish that he really loved. She destroyed the dish, together with the food in it. Let us see how Aisha herself described this episode:

Aisha said: "Safiyya, the wife of the Prophet (S), sent a dish she had made for him when he was with me. When I saw the maidservant, I trembled with rage and fury, and I took the bowl and hurled it away. The Prophet of Allah (S) then looked at me; I saw the anger in his face and I said to him: 'I seek refuge from Allah's Apostle cursing me today.' The Prophet said: 'Undo it'. I said: 'What is its compensation, O Prophet of Allah?' He said: 'The food like her food, and a bowl like her bowl.'"

Sunni references:

- Musnad, by Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v6, p227
- Sahih al-Nisa'i, v2, p148

Al-Bukhari confirms this episode as well:

Sahih al-Bukhari Hadith: 7.152 (The Chapter of Envy)

Narrated Anas:

While the Prophet was in the house of one of his wives, one of the mothers of the believers sent a meal in a dish. The wife at whose house the Prophet was, struck the hand of the servant, causing the dish to fall and break.

The Prophet gathered the broken pieces of the dish and then started collecting on them the food which had been in the dish and said, "Your mother (my wife) felt jealous." Then he detained the servant till a (sound) dish was brought from the wife at whose house he was. He gave the sound dish to the wife whose dish had been broken and kept the broken one at the house where it had been broken.

And on another occasion, speaking of herself:

Aisha said: "I said to the Prophet (S) 'Enough for you about Safiyya is such and such.' The Prophet of Allah (S) said to me: 'You have uttered words which, if they were mixed with the waters of the sea, would color it.'"

Sunni reference: Sahih al-Tirmidhi, and al-Zamakhshari has related it from him on, p73

By this Aisha was trying to disclose Safiyya's faults. Glory be to Allah! How far was this mother of the believers away from the ethics and basic rights which Islam has enjoined concerning forbidding of backbiting and slander? No doubt her speech: "Enough for you about Safiyya is such and such" and the response of the Prophet of Allah (S) "You have uttered words which, if they were mixed with the waters of the sea, would color it" shows what Aisha had said regarding Safiyya was a grave thing and of immense concern. The narrators of the Hadith found it repulsive, and since they respected her, they changed the words to "so and so" as is their normal practice in such scandals.

And here is Aisha, the mother of the believers, narrating, once again, of her envy of Mariya (another mother of the believers). Aisha said:

"I have never been as jealous of any woman as I have been of Mariya. That was because she had beautiful ringlets. She used to stay in the house of Haritha Ibn al-Numan. We frightened her and I became concerned. The Prophet of Allah (S) sent her to a higher place and he would visit her there. That was very hard upon us, and then Allah blessed him with a boy through her and we shunned him".

Sunni references:

- al-Tabaqat, by Ibn Sa'd, v8, p212
- al-Ansab al-Ashraf, by al-Baladhuri, v1, p339

Aisha's jealousy went beyond the person of Mariya, and was directed even against Ibrahim, the innocent, newly born suckling baby:

Aisha said: "When Ibrahim was born, the Prophet of Allah (S) brought him to me and said: 'Look how much he resembles me.' I said: 'I do not see any resemblance.' The Prophet of Allah (S) said: 'Don't you see how robust and fair he is?'" Aisha said: "I said: 'Whoever is fed with the milk of sheep becomes fair and robust.'"

Sunni references:

- al-Tabaqat, by Ibn Sa'd, v1, p37
- also in al-Ansab al-Ashraf, by al-Baladhuri

Aisha was very partial and yielded to emotions and selfish motives. When some people maliciously accused Mariya (the wife of the Prophet), she was Aisha who supported the accusers and tried to

confirm the false blame.

But Allah, the Mighty and Glorious, absolved her from blame and saved her from injustice, through the Commander of Believers, Imam 'Ali (as). (For details refer to the account of Lady Mariya, may Allah be gracious to her, in al-Mustadrak, by al-Hakim, v4, p30, or Talkhis of al-Mustadrak, by al-Dhahabi).

When she was overcome by suspicion and devilish insinuation, her jealousy crossed all boundaries and was beyond the expression of words, leading her to suspect the Prophet of Allah (S). Quite often, she used to pretend to be asleep when the Prophet stayed the night at her house, but, in fact, she would closely observe her husband, spying upon him in the darkness, following behind where he went. Here is a report, in her own words, which was narrated by Muslim in his Sahih, and Ahmad Ibn Hanbal in his Musnad and other Sunni scholars:

Aisha said: When it was my turn for Allah's Messenger to spend the night with me, he turned his side, put on his mantle, and took off his shoes and placed them near his feet and spread the corner of his shawl on his bed and then lay down till he thought that I had gone to sleep.

He then took hold of his mantle and put on the shoes slowly, and opened the door and went out and then closed the door lightly. I covered my head, put on my veil, and tightened my waist wrapper, and then went out following his steps till he reached (the cemetery of) al-Baqi.

He stood there for a long time and then he lifted his hand three times and then returned, and I also returned. He hastened his steps and I also hastened my steps. He ran and I also ran. He came (to the home) and I also came (to the home). I, however, preceded him and entered and lay down on the bed. He entered and said: Why is it, O Aisha, that you are out of breath? I said: There is nothing. He said: Tell me or the Subtle and the Aware will inform me. I told him the story. He said: Was it the darkness (of your shadow) that I saw in front of me? I said: Yes. He struck me on the chest which caused me pain and he said: Did you think Allah and His Apostle would deal unjustly with you?

Sunni references:

- Sahih Muslim, English version, chapter CCCLII (titled: What is to be said while visiting the graveyard), v2, pp 461-462, Tradition #2127
- Sahih Muslim, Arabic version, 1980 Edition Pub. in Saudi Arabia, v2, pp 669-670, Tradition #103
- Musnad, by Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v6, p147

On another occasion, she said:

"I lost track of the Prophet of Allah (S), and I suspected that he had gone to another of his wives. I went looking for him and I found him in prostration, saying. "O My Lord! Forgive me"

Sunni reference: Musnad, by Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v6, p147

On another occasion:

Aisha said: "One night, when he was with me, the Messenger of Allah (S) went out". She said: "I became jealous. When he came and saw what I had done, he said: 'What is the matter, O Aisha? Are you jealous?' I replied: 'And why should not those like me be jealous of those like you?' The Prophet of Allah (S) then said: 'Has your devil taken possession of you?'".

Sunni reference: Musnad, by Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v6, p115

No doubt Aisha was quite often overcome or confused by her devil, for he found a way to her heart through jealousy. It has been narrated that the Prophet (S) said: "Jealousy for a man is faith and for a woman disbelief", meaning that a man may get jealous concerning his wife, for his wife is not religiously allowed to have sexual relation with another man.

The woman, however, does not have the right to be jealous of her husband, because Allah, Glory be to Him, has allowed him to marry more than one wife. An upright and believing woman who submits to the rulings of Allah, accepts her co-wife wholeheartedly, especially if her husband is just, upright, and God-fearing. How about the leader of humanity, the symbol of perfection and justice, and the most noble character, the Messenger of Allah?

Once the Prophet asked Aisha to collect certain information about a particular woman, namely, Sharraf, the sister of Dihya al-Kalbi. The information that she conveyed to him was not the information she had gathered, but wrong information prompted by selfish motives. When the Prophet (S) informed her of the truth of what she had observed, Aisha replied: "O Prophet of Allah! No secret is unknown to you. Who is able to hide anything from you?"

Sunni references:

- Kanz al-Ummal, by al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, v6, p294
- al-Tabaqat, by Ibn Sa'd, v8, p115

She said once she addressed to the Messenger of Allah: "I smell Maghafir (a kind of flower having a very bad odor) from you." She said this in order to prevent him from visiting the house of Umm al-Mu'minin Zainab (ra) and eating honey there. This is the claim of Aisha. No other people mentioned this. As I will point out shortly, the story said by Umar regarding the revelation of divorce verses, is much different than the context of what Aisha said.

Sahih Bukhari Hadith: 6.434

Narrated Aisha:

Allah's Apostle used to drink honey in the house of Zainab, the daughter of Jahsh, and would stay there with her. So Hafsa and I agreed secretly that, if he come to either of us, she would say to him "It seems you have eaten Maghafir (a kind of bad-smelling resin), for I smell in you the smell of Maghafir."

Sahih al-Bukhari Hadith 7.192

Narrated 'Ubaid bin Umar:

I heard Aisha saying, "The Prophet used to stay for a long while with Zainab Bint Jahsh and drink honey at her house. So Hafsa and I decided that if the Prophet came to anyone of us, she should say him, "I detect the smell of Maghafir (a nasty smelling gum) in you. Have you eaten Maghafir?'... So there was revealed: 'O Prophet! Why do you ban (for you) that which Allah has made lawful for you . . . If you two (wives of Prophet) turn in repentance to Allah,' (66:1-4) addressing Aisha and Hafsa. 'When the Prophet disclosed a matter in confidence to some of his wives.'(66:3)

Tradition 8.682 of Sahih al-Bukhari is also similar to above and is narrated by Aisha himself. No other person narrated the story of honey in connection with the divorce verses. Please also see the previous article where we mentioned Sahih al-Bukhari, Tradition 7.119. In that tradition which is narrated by Umar, the Prophet (S) did not enter to the house of Aisha and Hafsa for one full month as a punishment for their aggressive actions.

Considering the compassionate and the gentle personality of the Prophet (S), such severe punishment and the threat to divorce just for their saying to the Prophet "You smell Maghafir"(as Aisha claimed) does not seem reasonable. Qur'an confirms that the charges against Hafsa and Aisha was revealing a secret news:

When the Prophet disclosed a matter in confidence to one of his wives (i.e., Hafsa) and she then divulged it (i.e., to Aisha) and Allah made it known to him, he made known (to her) part thereof and passed over part. Then when he (i.e., the Prophet) told her thereof, she said: "Who told you this?" He said "He who knows and is well-aware (of all things) told me."(Qur'an 66.3)

It seems that the report of Umar is more accurate. Umar said: "The Prophet kept away from his wives for twenty-nine days because of the story which Hafsa had disclosed to Aisha."(See Sahih al-Bukhari 7.119 and 6.435). This is much different than the story made by Aisha about honey.

After one month that the Prophet deserted his wives, and when the words of Allah: "You may defer any one of them you wish and take to your self any you wish and there is no sin for you to take back any of them you have (temporarily) set aside (33:51)" were revealed, Aisha said to the Prophet:

"It seems to me that your Lord hastens to satisfy your desire!"

Sunni references:

- Sahih Muslim, English version, Chapter DLXXII (titled: Permissibility of bestowing the turn on one's fellow wife), v2, pp 748–749, Traditions #3453–3454
- Sahih Muslim, Arabic version, 1980 Edition Pub. in Saudi Arabia, v2, pp 1085–1086, Traditions #49–50

Her evil conduct in the presence of the Prophet of Allah (S) reached a point that while he was praying, she would spread her feet towards his direction of prostration. When he prostrated and pinched them, she retracted them. When he stood up for the rest of the prayer, she would spread her feet out again:

Sahih Bukhari Hadith: 1.492 & 1.379

Narrated Aisha:

"I used to sleep in front of Allah's Apostle with my legs opposite his Qibla (facing him); and whenever he prostrated, he pushed my feet and I withdrew them and whenever he stood, I stretched them."

One day, in the presence of her father, she started a quarrel with the Prophet and told him: "Be just." Her father punished her for the impudence by giving a powerful slap on her face so that she bled profusely and the blood ran onto her clothes.

Sunni references:

- Kanz al-Ummal, by al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, v7, p116, Tradition #1020
- Ihyaa al-Ulum, by al-Ghazzali, Chapter 3, Bab al-Nikah, v2, p35
- Mukashifat al-Qulub, by al-Ghazzali, Chapter 94, p238

If Aisha got angry at the Prophet – which she did quite often – she would avoid uttering the name of the Prophet (S). She would not mention the name of Muhammad, but rather used to say: "By the Lord of Abraham" (Sahih al-Bukhari, Arabic-English version, Tradition #7.155 and #8.101, The Chapter of Jealousy and Wives of a woman).

Once she angrily said to the Messenger of Allah (S):

"It is you who pretend to be a prophet from Allah."

Sunni references:

- Ihyaa al-Ulum, by al-Ghazzali, Chapter 3, v2, p29, The Book on the Etiquettes of Marriage
- Mukashifat al-Qulub, by al-Ghazzali, Chapter 94

Subhana Allah!!! This is the Messenger of Allah, and submitting to his order is obligatory for every believing men and women. Disputing him is a sign of great impurity and the one who does that cannot

be regarded as pure and righteous since s/he has committed a grave sin, let alone casting doubt on the prophethood of Muhammad (S).

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