



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL

ROLE MODEL 2 – AISHAH BINT ABU BAKR

INTRODUCTION

InshaAllah in this second series of talks on the Exemplary Figures in Islam, we will cover the story of another Mother of the Believers (Umm al Mu'mineen). It is also with sadness that some communities such as the Shia are propagating lies about our mother (RA). Without understanding the whole situation, some people are pre judging stories on Aishah (RA) based on lies.

We hope that we will now look at this amazing story of prophet Muhammad's (Peace and Blessings be upon him) favourite wife.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

Name: Umm Abdillāh 'Āisha bint Abī Bakr as-Siddeeqe al-Qurashīyyah at-Taymīyyah

Father: Abū Bakr as-Siddeeqe (عنه الله رضي)

Mother: Umm Rumān bint 'Āmir al-Kinānīyyah (عنها الله رضي)

Marriage: Prophet (سالم و عليه الله صلى) married her shortly before the Hijrah to Madīnah, (after Khadījah (عنها الله رضي) had passed away).

Children: 0 [All of the Prophet's (سالم و عليه الله صلى) children were from Khadījah (عنها الله رضي) and 1 from Māriyah al-Qibtīyyah]

Acceptance of Islam: Born into Islām, she stated (عنها الله رضي): "I do not recollect (have any memories of) my parents except them being upon Islām"

She was Sister of a Courageous Lady of Islam Asma (R.A) who kept the secret of Prophet's (Peace and Blessings be upon him) Migration to Madina with Abu Bakr (R.A) and was amongst those who accepted Islam first.

'Aisha (R.A) was Daughter of Righteous Mother Umm-e-Rumman (R.A) who was praised by Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him). At the time of her Death, the Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) entered her (R.A) grave and asked Allah (S.W.T) to forgive her by saying,

" O Allah, you know well what Umm-e-Rumman suffered for the sake of you and your Messenger"

Death: 57/58h. It is reported Abū Huraira (عنه الله رضي) prayed the Janāza upon her.

AISHAH (RA) BEFORE MARRIAGE

'Aisha (R.A) was born in Makkah in around 613 or 614 CE. She had lots of Significant qualities and special Blessings of Allah in regards to the progress of the religion Islam. She was chosen by Allah (S.W.T) as a leader for Muslim ummah to convey correct and authentic Knowledge. Since Islam was a newly grown flower that needed fresh water to keep it blossoming. It was possible due to the sacrifices and efforts of devoted people who would benefit others with their knowledge and wisdom.

'Aisha was educated in early childhood by her father. She was raised in a Muslim family being born a Muslim. As the daughter of Abu Bakr (RA), she had the same strength and characteristics of leadership as her father. It was her unique virtue in early times of Makkah when people were accepting Islam. It was rare to have a complete Muslim family during that age of Islam. 'Aisha (R.A) was among those who acknowledged Islam by birth. She grew up at a time when teachings of Islam were fresh and new which is a major factor of her becoming a great scholar of Islam. 'Aisha (R.A) Narrates about herself:

"I never saw my parents practicing anything other than Islam"

AISHAH (RA) UPON HER MARRIAGE

Another blessing of Allah (S.W.T) on her was being the youngest and the only virgin wife of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) .The marriage of 'Aisha to Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) is nothing less than the best love story ever written. An important thing to clarify here is that *Prophet Muhammad* (Peace and Blessings be upon him) *did not marry Aisha (R.A) when she was an immature little girl.* Her parents offered their daughter in marriage to Prophet, as was customary in their culture at the time. However, the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be

upon him), did not accept this and they waited for a few of years, and then again offered their daughter to him in marriage.

From the hadeeth narrated by Aisha herself, it appears she was at the age of 6 when her mother came to her while she was playing outside. Her mother took her into their home where her father, who was a lifelong best friend of Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him), was sitting with him, and the offer of marriage was being discussed. She then tells us she went back outside. This was at the age of six.

Clearly she was offered to him in marriage, but obviously, it was not accepted until some years later, when she again narrates a similar incident and at that time she was married to the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him). She tells us they had consummated the marriage when she was old enough and ready (and she tells us she was very pleased about the whole entire thing). It shows that the girl must be old enough to have children and to be able to determine what her will is.

Narrated `Aisha:

That the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) said to her, "You have been shown to me twice in my dream. I saw you pictured on a piece of silk and some-one said (to me). 'This is your wife.' When I uncovered the picture, I saw that it was yours. I said, 'If this is from Allah, it will be done.'" (al Bukhari)

For prophets, their dream is a revelation from Allah, and therefore the marriage would be done, with Allah's Will.

The early years of their marriage began quite innocently. Although 'Aisha (RA) was a young bride, she carried on with the many joys of childhood and fortunate for her, as she had a husband gentle and kind enough to understand this. When she first came to live in the Prophet's household as a young girl, a strong and lasting friendship grew up between her and Sawdah (R.A), and Sawdah took care of her along with the rest of the household.

Rather than throwing all the responsibilities of a wife on her at once, the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) made the marriage and its duties a gradual process for Aisha and ensured that she made a smooth transition into her new life. 'A'isha was also content to manage his household.

He (Peace and Blessings be upon him) taught her wisdom, manners, etiquette, public dealings, economic and domestic laws and ways of living in very light and natural ways. She also owned the honour of being the most beloved wife after Khadija (R.A). Once he (Peace and Blessings be upon him) was asked by a companion "*Who do you love the most in the world?*" He responded by saying "'Aisha". She was regarded as superior over other women after Maryam (A.S), Asiya (A.S) and Khadija (R.A). He, Peace and Blessings be upon him, also said on a certain occasion,

"The excellence of 'Aisha over other women is like the excellence of Tharid (a type of food) over other types of food".

This great love was limitless. It transcended material feelings to things that are higher and more sublime: the soul, the heart, and the mind. The emotional example of this love reflects the picture of the distinctness in the Prophetic household and in the heart. It then preserved this uniqueness in order to present it as a lively and wonderful model for us.

MARRIAGE LIFE OF THE COUPLE

It is important to keep the romance alive once the relationship is officialised through nikah/marriage, because without this effort, the marriage will go stale. There will be no emotional fulfilment in your life after marriage without romance. And before nikah, romance will lead to haram only. It is more of your responsibility and your spouse's right, that s/he enjoy romantic gestures from your end. To elaborate it, we can see how romantic this couple was!

Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings be upon him) like to eat and drink from his wife - Aisha's (R.A) used plate and cup without feeling uncomfortable. He also had eaten meat that was bitten by 'Aisha. (Sahih Muslim, 300)

From 'Aisha RA, she said,

"I used to drink from the same glass even when on menstruation, and the Prophet pbuh take the glass and put his mouth in same spot where I put my mouth, and then he drank."
(Sahih Muslim 300)

Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) once raced her and she won. This was an example of the fact that it is okay and in fact your responsibility and right to have fun with your spouse and arouse romance. On some later day, the Holy Couple happened to again cross that path and they raced again and this time, the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) won, and he cheekily said to his wife "Tit for Tat.

She used to hide behind Prophet's back to protect herself from her father Abu Bakr (R.A), if he got angry on her some innocent mistake due to her being very young.

She was obedient towards her husband, (Peace and Blessings be upon him), and was understanding to please him. It was the blessing of this beautiful relationship where love for each other was abundant. 'Aisha (R.A) was an example of a pious wife. She was very cautious about having anyone to enter her house in the absence of Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him). It was her simplicity and comfortable presence that keep him relaxed in her company.

It was a very friendly, a very loving relationship, that they had. For example, on the day of Eid, Abu Bakr walks into the house of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon

him), into Aishah's house, and finds that some girls were playing with drums, the hand drums, the duff, and they were singing some songs. So Abu Bakr got very angry and told them they cannot do this in the house of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him). The Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) told Abu Bakr [RA] that it is the day of Eid, let them have fun. So Abu Bakr (RA) left and the children continued to play with Aishah [RA] and sing their songs. After these girls had left, Aishah (RA) and the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) went outside to the masjid and in the masjid, there were some young Abyssinians who were playing with their spears, putting on a little demonstration. So the Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him), he held Aishah (RA) in a way that she could see properly what was happening, and he kept standing there with Aishah in his arms until she was tired and had had enough and she had enjoyed the entertainment and was ready to go back. So the Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him), we learn from this, not only was he loving to his wife Aishah, but he also took out time to have fun with her and to enjoy some entertainment with her, which is something a lot of people don't realise is part of Islam, that marital couples need to spend time having fun together. That time must be made. You need to take out time for your spouse and enjoy time together. This is something which is from the sunnah.

Now Aishah (RA) she was the most beloved wife of the prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him), but despite that, she would still get jealous of his other wives. And she was most jealous of Khadija (RA) even though Khadija (RA) had passed away before her; the reason being that the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) loved Khadija a lot. So much so, that the scholars differ on whether he loved Aishah (RA) more or Khadija (RA) more. So Aishah narrates that no woman made her more jealous than Khadija even though she had never seen her, because every day the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) would talk about her until one day Aishah (RA) got angry and told the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him), "Didn't Allah give you something better than her?" (talking about herself). And the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him), he got angry and he replied, "Khadija believed in me when nobody else did, and Khadija was the one who assisted me with her wealth, and she is the one to whom Allah had blessed me with children." From then Aishah realised that she should not speak about Khadija again. These stories show that the sahabah, who were the greatest of humanity after the prophets, were also human and they were also subject to the mistakes of human beings and to the emotions that the rest of us feel. Sometimes we paint too beautiful a picture of the sahabah until it seems unrealistic and it seems like something we can't follow. But when you look at Aishah [RA] and the other sahabah, they were humans like ourselves but they strived to be amongst the best and, as a result, because of this, Allah elevated their status.

There are many other stories of her jealousy, which shows some of her human mistakes. For example, once, when the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) had some of his guests in her house, and one of the other wives had sent some food for these guests, she got very angry as to why she was sending food to her house, and she threw the plate and it broke. The Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) did

not scream at her, he did not shout at her, he did not get abusive or vulgar, as was his nature. He was the mercy to this universe. He was a mercy to his wives as well. He simply laughed and told his companions that your mother is jealous. And he told Aishah to replace the plate and that was it. End of the story. He didn't blow it out of proportion, understanding human nature and understanding the nature of co-wives, that they would be jealous of each other.

So Aishah (RA), she was a human being like us but she strived. She strived to be the best. And she was a very gifted woman in terms of her intellect. And this can be seen from the fact that not only did she narrate many narrations from the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him), but in many of these narrations you will find that they're not just narrating, but questioning as well. If the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) would say something, she would ask a question to clarify it. And it was this questioning nature of hers which led her to gain even more knowledge. The scholars of Islam deduct from her life, and from the life of other scholars, that one of the signs of a true student of knowledge is the ability to ask deep questions which expand upon the issues being discussed. So, when the prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) narrated to Aishah the hadith that on the Day of Judgment humanity will be raised uncircumcised and naked, Aishah (RA) asked the question, "Won't people be looking at each other?" A very good question. And the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) replied, "On that day, the affair will be so severe, people will be so scared of Allah, they won't even think about looking at each other." So from her question we got to understand just how scary the Day of Judgment is. But these types of questions led her to become a great scholar.

We find that the age most of us spend in school and in our studies, she spent this age in the company of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) studying under him. So from the age of 9 until 18 or 20, she was in the company of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him). So when he (Peace and Blessings be upon him) passed away, she now had an ocean of knowledge which she began to share, not just with female companions, but even the male sahabah and the male *tabieen* used to come and study underneath her and she used to teach them from behind a niqab, but there were those who were mahram to her and they would study with her without hijab. The best example of this was her nephew, Urwah bin Zubair (RA), who was from the *tabieen*. He was the son of Aishah's sister, Asma (RA), and husband Zubair bin Awam (RA). Urwah wanted to study Islam and he asked his father, "Who is the best scholar for me to study under?" And Zubair told him to go and study with Aishah because Aishah was the greatest female scholar of her time and Urwah had an advantage that other men did not have. Aishah was his aunt, so there was no need for hijab so he could study underneath her in a much more personal and direct manner. So Urwah began to study under Aishah and became one of her closest students. And he narrates that he had not seen anyone with more knowledge in hadith, tafsir, fiqh, Arabic, poetry, or even medicine, than Aishah (RA), and he had very high respect for her. So this was Aishah (RA); she became one of the greatest scholars. She became an advisor to the khalifs after the

time of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him), and there are many other great stories about her. Indeed you can spend many hours just discussing her life alone.

AISHAH (RA) ON HER STATUS IN HER KNOWLEDGE

Imam Dhahaby (الله رحمه):

“I do not know of any woman in the Ummah of Mohammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) or before more knowledgeable than her”.

Many reports state how the senior companions would refer to her and ask her issues.

Imam Zuhry (الله رحمه):

“If the knowledge of ‘Āisha was put together with knowledge of all women, ‘Āisha’s knowledge would be superior”.

[All this knowledge despite the fact she was only 18 when Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) died]. It is also reported she had advanced knowledge of Medicine.

A crucial dimension to their equation was the student-teacher relationship they shared. ‘Aisha’s enthusiastic and inquisitive nature made her one of the foremost students of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him).

She was devoted to learning Islam keenly from its beginnings. Her intelligence and curiosity for knowledge played an important role for her being a great Muslim woman scholar. Her marriage to our Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) led to further moral and intellectual growth, maturity and depth. She received so much Islamic knowledge through the words and actions of the Prophet, that she transmitted faithfully throughout the years of her life to the believers. For instance, once she asked the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) about neighbour’s rights. She (RA) said,

“O Allah’s Apostle! I have two neighbours and would like to know to which of them should I give presents”.

He (Peace and Blessings be upon him) replied,

“ To the one whose door is nearer to yours”.

We can see how much she had the desire to learn. Aisha bint Abu Bakr (RA) was the voice of authority for many of the hadith known today and she was responsible for the transmission of thousands of sayings after the Prophet’s (Peace and Blessings be

upon him) death. She is known to have narrated 2,210 Hadith. Those are a treasure for the guidance of Muslim Ummah. She served Muslims for 44 years after the Prophet's (Peace and Blessings be upon him) death. Islamic scholars acknowledge her remarkable efforts for Islam. Imam Zuhri, a leading jurist says:

" 'Aisha (R.A) was the most learned person among the people, senior and learned companions used to consult her."

Her being a major part of some of the milestone events, left a huge impact on her personality by enhancing wisdom and light of truth in her.

We can see how much Islam encourages us to seek knowledge and to value education regardless of gender. We should offer girls and women the opportunity to learn the religion as well as what will benefit them among the worldly sciences.

Another point to be noted, that the prominence of 'Aisha in the most reliable of hadith and her playing a role in the important political developments of her time are clear attestations to the fact that Islam does not seek to lock women behind closed doors. Those who have been confined today, are women who have been imprisoned in the name of religion and confined by the cages of prejudice.

HER PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY

'Aisha's (RA) early life in Madinah also had its more serious and anxious times. Once her father and two companions who were staying with him fell ill with a dangerous fever which was common in Madinah at certain seasons. One morning 'Aisha (RA) went to visit him and was dismayed to find the three men lying completely weak and exhausted. She asked her father how he was and he answered her in verse but she did not understand what he was saying. The two others also answered her with lines of poetry which seemed to her to be nothing but unintelligible babbling. She was deeply troubled and went home to the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) saying:

" They are raving, out of their minds, through the heat of the fever."

The Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) asked what they had said and was somewhat reassured when she repeated almost word for word the lines they had uttered and which made sense although she did not fully understand them then. This was a demonstration of the great retentive power of her memory which as the years went by were to preserve so many of the priceless sayings of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him).

DIFFICULTIES AISHAH (RA) ENCOUNTERED

There was something quite distinct about 'Aisha (R.A) which drew the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) so close to her. Her quality of being content

regardless of circumstances helped her overcome many challenges she faced as the Prophet's wife.

There was a time in the Prophet's home when they had no fire or food for cooking and they simply lived off of dates and water. Yet 'Aisha (RA) went through this hardship and showed the mark of a true companion – one who can offer unrelenting support even under the most trying circumstances. 'Aisha endured poverty and hunger with the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him).

Once the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) stayed away from his wives for a month because they had distressed him by asking him that which he did not have. This was after the Khaybar expedition when an increase of riches whetted the appetite for presents. Returning from his self-imposed retreat, he went first to Aisha's apartment. She was delighted to see him but he said he had received revelation which required him to put two options before her.

"Do not make a hasty decision," he said, "and consult your parents first."

He (Peace and Blessings be upon him) then recited the ayahs of Surah Al-Ahzab:

O Prophet, say to your wives: 'If you desire the life of this world and its adornments, then come, and I will make you content, and I will release you with a fair release. But if you desire Allah and His Messenger and the abode of the next world, then truly Allah has prepared an immense reward for those of you who do good.' (Qur'an 33:28-29)

Her (RA) reply was:

"Is there any need to consult my parents?" . "Indeed I desire Allah and His Messenger and the abode of the next world." "Indeed I desire Allah and His Messenger and the abode of the Hereafter,"

And her response was followed by all the other wives. It was during the course of their marriage that, amongst others, the battles of Badr, and Uhud, and Al-Khandaq (the Ditch) were fought. These were the three major battles against the Quraish, that shifted the balance of power out of the hands of the disbelievers and into the hands of the Muslims. Although she was still very young, Aisha participated in them all, bringing water for the Muslims warriors, and helping to look after the wounded. She witnessed life, and she witnessed death – both in the way of Allah and in the way of the disbelievers – and she understood both. Indeed one of the meanings of her name, Aisha, is "life".

Her Generosity and Simple Lifestyle:

Once, when the Muslims were favoured with great wealth, she has given a gift of one hundred thousand Dirhams. She was fasting when she received the money, and

distributed it to the poor and needy, even though she had no provisions in her house. Shortly after that, her maidservant said to her,

"Couldn't you have brought a dirham's worth of meat with which to break your fast?"

"If I had thought of it," she replied, "I would have done so!"

She developed the nickname Umm al-Teeb (the Mother of Fragrance), for every time a beggar knocked on her door, she would touch the money with perfume before giving it to him. When asked why, she explained that the charity would reach Allah before it reached the beggar's hands, and she wanted the charity to be given to Allah in a fragrant condition.

In another report, a needy person knocked on the door. She only had one grape, and gave it to him. When asked what the value of a single grape was as a charity, she quoted the following ayahs of Surah Az-Zalzalah from the Qur'an:

"So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, And whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it." (Qur'an 99:7 - 99:8)

She rationalised – how many atoms are there in a grape?

How many of us are of such a status, where our vigilance, thinking and even the smallest action is completely for the pleasing of Allah, and reflected by the Qur'an and teaching of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him).

True Example of Companionship:

Now we call attention to something very interesting about the subject of a friendly relationship between husband and wife. Once a group of Jews entered upon Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) and they said,
" As-Saum Alaik (death be upon you) "

Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) said, *" Wa Alaik (and upon you)"*

So 'Aisha (R.A) said, *"Rather (upon you be death and curse)"*

So the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) said, *" 'Aisha! Indeed Allah (S.W.T) loves gentleness in every matter". '*

Aisha (R.A) said, " Did you not hear what they said? " In response, he said to her, "And I replied! Upon you".

(Jami` at-Tirmidhi 2701)

This incident shows 'Aisha (RA) was a truly dynamic woman, complete with the qualities of virtue, intelligence and even possessiveness over her husband . She noticed, how Jews said against him, so instantly defended him out of her love. This hadith does depict that a person should be humble to correct one's faults yet having the confidence to inquire about any doubts regarding matters to remove any confusion.

During the last days, it was noticed that Prophet's (Peace and Blessings be upon him) desire was to stay with 'Aisha (R.A). All wives agreed for him to stay with 'Aisha (R.A). He (Peace and Blessings be upon him) chewed a Siwak that was softened by 'Aisha's saliva before leaving this world. In his last moments of life, his head was on 'Aisha (R.A) lap. She remained with Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) for nine years until his death. At the time of the Holy Prophet's death, she was only eighteen years old.

You could really say about their story - "*..and they all lived happily ever after - in Paradise.*"

This represents the very best of marriages between a man and a woman in human history. In the current era, the concept of having relationships with opposite sex is common before marriage and such relationships are defined as love or romance. 'Aisha (R.A) gave a beautiful account of marriage to the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him). She mentioned the detailed descriptions of events and happenings before and during their marriage.

And very important - she demonstrated here continued commitment to the memory of her husband (Peace and Blessings be upon him), and her firm belief about being reunited with him in the Paradise.

These glimpses of this blessed couple's life leave a beautiful impression of Islam presenting a very charming and serene family life. Islam encourages a strong relationship between spouses where both partners understand each other's need and desires.

We need to ponder over the lives of our role models to improve our living standards.

AISHAH (RA) AS THE MOTHER OF THE BELIEVERS

She was one of the early scholars of his ummah, being from the sahabah, and she is a woman whose scholarship is agreed upon by the scholars of Islam. The ulema have agreed upon her high level of scholarship.

Allah (S.W.T) honoured her to be beneficial for Muslim ummah in many ways. The ummah was benefited through her by having relief of Tayammum. Once, she lost her necklace during a Journey when the whole crew had to wait till they would find

her necklace at a place where water was unavailable to perform ablution. Allah (S.W.T) revealed divine ayahs in Surah Al-Maida of Tayammum on this incident, while after this necklace was found underneath a Camel. Usaid bin Hudair said

"O the family of Abu Bakr! This is not the first blessing of yours."

'Aisha (R.A) stands superior to other women in regards to her special honour of having ayahs about her in the Quran.

'Aisha (R.A) was vindicated by Allah (S.W.T) against a slander that was spread by the hypocrites during a campaign when she accompanied the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him), in a caravan. Her Piety was expressed in Quran giving a strong message for Muslim ummah to defend their brotherhood keeping strong ties and trust on each other. This bears testament to Aisha's (R.A) trust in Allah as well as her humility. In fact, twenty verses of Surah An-Nur in the Quran were revealed about this incident is indicative of its importance and is also a reminder to us of the high status of 'Aisha (R.A).

This great lady, the mother of Muslims fulfilled her responsibility and conveyed a big portion of knowledge throughout her Life. 'Aisha (May Allah be pleased with her) died in Madina at her home on 17 Ramadan, 58 AH at the age of 64. She was buried in Jannat-al-Baqi. Muslim Ummah will continue to quench the thirst of knowledge from the knowledge conveyed by her following the recommendation of Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) saying:

"Learn a portion of your religion from this Humayra (red coloured lady)."

Look at the ultimate wisdom of Allah. Abu Bakr sacrificed his entire life in the path of Allah, and Allah granted him a beautiful gift which was to let his daughter be the most beloved wife of Rasulullah (Peace and Blessings be upon him) after Khadija, and decorated his daughter Aisha with the charm, intelligence, and integrity.

She carried the in-depth legacy and knowledge of Rasulullah's (Peace and Blessings be upon him) memory. One cannot open Islamic books about the Qur'an, the biography of Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) or jurisprudence, without finding Aisha's name referenced in there. What a great honour for such a woman.

'Aisha, Umm-Al-Mu'minin, even though she never had a single child, yet she is the **Mother of Believers**.

May Almighty Allah make the women of today act upon the life of 'Aisha (Radhiyallahu-Anha) Ameen.

Note: For ease of reading, we have not inserted “May Allah be pleased with her (R.A)” each time Aisha’s R.A name or the name of each Companion is mentioned, but please take it that the salutations apply to all of them, may Allah be pleased with them all.

IN HER LAST DAYS OF HER LIFE

When this great scholar and our beloved mother, Ayesha Bint Abi Bakr was in her final illness, another great scholar Abdullah Ibn Abbas went to visit her. After seeking permission to see her, Ibn Abbas entered her room in which her nephew Abdullah Ibn Abdur Rahman was with her.

She lay in bed at the age of sixty two getting ready to return to her Creator. Ibn Abbas told Ayesha, “Glad tidings to you,” She replied, “Why?”

He answered, “There is nothing between you and meeting Muhammad (peace be upon him) and your loved ones except the leaving of your soul from your body. You were the most beloved of women to the messenger of Allah, and the messenger only loved that which is pure.

And your necklace fell on the night of Abwaa then the messenger stopped and he remained in that place and he people stopped too, even though they did not have any water, so Allah revealed the verses of tayammum, and that was because of you, otherwise Allah might not have revealed that concession for this ummah.

And Allah revealed your innocence from above the seven heavens (in Surah Noor), the Noble Angel brought it and there is not a Masjid from the Masjids of Allah except that these verses are recited in it day and night.”

She replied, “Please leave me, Oh Ibn Abbas. By the one in whose Hand is my soul, I wish I was gone and forgotten,” (Narrated in the Musnad of Imam Ahmad with a Hassan chain, Quoted by Ibn Kathir in Bidaya Wa Nihaya, Vol: 8, pp. 265-266)

This was paraphrasing the words of Maryam [AS] mentioned in Surah Maryam when she was pregnant with Eesa [AS] and going through the pains of labour and thinking about what people will say when they see the baby, how would they react. She said the same thing, “I wish I had died before this or I was unknown.” So Aishah [RA], she passed away after this. And from that story we see the high respect that Abdullah bin Abbas and the other sahabah had for her. Because Abdullah bin Abbas himself was a scholar of Islam, the great mufassir of Islam. And he was also a scholar of fiqh but he also looked up to her as a scholar, he also had great respect for her. She was from amongst the mothers of the believers, one of our mothers.

- Lessons we learn from Ibn Abbas's statements:
 - 1) The high status that Ayesha has in our history
 - 2) The high status a woman of this ummah can reach
 - 3) The importance of focusing on Allah's Mercy and on hope at the time of death
 - 4) The scholars among the Sahaba looked up to Ayesha
 - 5) High Status in the sight of Allah is equally attainable to men and women
- Lesson we learn from the response of Ayesha:

The righteous predecessors were not concerned with status, fame or the amount of their deeds and virtues. Their concern was the pleasure of Allah and His acceptance. Upon hearing all her virtues so close to her death, Ayesha was afraid of Riya and Pride, and preferred to have died before hearing all that. Such was the piety and sincerity of the Sahabah.

SEVERAL IMPORTANT ISSUES AND LESSONS

Some enemies of Islam in 2020 would always like to stoke up issues against our mother, Aishah (RA).

1. The marriage of prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) to Aishah (RA)

To be precise, the Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him), he wedded Aishah (RA) when she was six but they only consummated the marriage a few years later after she had attained puberty. So, this marriage, in modern terms, seems problematic because of the culture we are used to, we are accustomed to. However, when you look at it in the historical context, there was nothing wrong with it because, at that time in Arabia, it was normal for people with such different age groups to get married. It was normal for men or women to get married at a very young age. People used to mature a lot faster in terms of their mental capabilities as they were raised to be husbands and wives, and so at a younger age, they were more prepared for marriage. If the Prophet Muhammad's (Peace and Blessings be upon him) marriage was something bad, his enemies would have been the first to jump on it. But not a single enemy of Islam at the time picked on his marriage to Aishah. And if it was something bad, it would have affected her in a negative way. Normally when a young woman is forced into marriage to someone who she does not like, or she's forced into marriage at a young age when she's not ready, she grows intense dislike for that individual who she's married to, and it stems into hatred. And this is seen in her life later on.

But with Aishah and the Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him), the case is the opposite. Her love for the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him), grew so much that she became his most beloved wife. And even after the Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) had passed away, she became one of

the leading scholars to propagate his message to the world, showing that she was a mature woman who studied from the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him), and loved him so much that she wanted to be one of the main propagators of his religion. So this marriage is something no Muslim should feel ashamed about or to try and distort historical facts about, it is something that was a blessing for the ummah.

2. The great slander

One story about her life that stands out and is perhaps most often discussed is the story of the great slander. *Hadithul ifk*. In this story, it happened during the lifetime of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him), Aishah (RA) was on a journey with the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him), and as they were returning from an expedition, she left the camp to relieve herself. When she was coming back, she realised that she had dropped her necklace and she went back to pick it up. While she was gone, the people did not realise that she was gone, and they continued with the journey, as she was in a hijab type of carriage and this carriage was being carried, and so people could not see inside and thought she was inside it. When she returned to the place where the caravan was, there was nobody there and she was now alone in the desert. So she sat down on a rock and she began to wait. She fell asleep and while she was asleep, her niqab came off and one of the sahabah who stayed behind, he came riding up on his horse and he saw her and he recognised her because he knew her from the days before the laws of hijab were revealed. So he just said *inna lilahi wa inna ilayhi rajioon* and she immediately woke up and covered her face and without speaking to each other, he let her get onto his horse and he walked and took her back to Madinah. So here we can see the piety not just of Aishah but of this man as well, that they didn't even speak to each other out of fear, not just of what could happen, but what people could say because this is the wife of the Prophet and people are looking to try and find fault with him and his family. So in the most purest manner possible, he took Aishah back home.

But the leader of hypocrites, Abdullah bin Ubayy, he saw this and he decided to use this to his advantage to try and slander Aishah. And so he began to spread a rumour that Aishah and this sahabi had *naoozubillah*, done some kind of sin. And this rumour had spread. Aishah was very sick and she was in her home for a few days and she did not know that this rumour was spreading. When she finally found out about it, she went home to her parents, and she says before that that she realised the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) was being a bit cold; he wasn't as sweet as he normally is and she couldn't understand why. When she heard about the rumour, she finally understood and she asked permission to go to her parents' house. She went home and asked her parents if it's true that such rumours were spreading, and her parents said that yes those rumours are spreading, and they were very sympathetic, and she stayed there and she began to make dua. The Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him), he went around doing some research and investigation to try and find out if there was any truth to these rumours and he

finally came to visit her and speak to her and her family, and her family did not know what to say, so she said that, "I know that I am innocent but people won't believe me, so I leave my affair to Allah. Allah will help me." And after that, the verses of Surah Nur were revealed. Surah Nur, about 10 or 20 verses of Surah Nur, clarifying the name of Aishah [ra], declaring her chastity, and condemning those who accused her of any kind of sin to hell. When these verses were revealed, her parents told her to thank the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) and she said that she'll only thank Allah.

- Now there are many lessons we can derive from this story. The first lesson is that not only is it important to stay away from sins, but it is important to stay away from such situations or circumstances that can help make people accuse you of sin. Because if people see you doing something which can be interpreted in the wrong way, then they can really easily misconstrue the situation and attack your name. And defending one's honour and keeping an honourable face in public is all part of the deen.
- The next lesson we learn from this story is that the covering of the face was something that the wives of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) used to do. Scholars differ on whether it is obligatory or recommended. I personally follow the opinion that it is recommended, it is not an obligation, but it is something they used to do, definitely. So for those Muslims who try to stop women from covering their face and claiming it is not from Islam, this story is very clear - Aishah (RA) used to cover her face in front of men who were not related to her.
- The next lesson we can derive from this story is that the Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him), he did not know the unseen, except what Allah revealed to him. And this is very important because there are many Muslims who think that the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him) had blanket knowledge of the unseen. If he had blanket knowledge of the unseen, he would not have worried, he would not have changed his attitude, he would not have done any investigations, and he would not have waited for *wahy*. He would have already known that Aishah was innocent. But he was a human who received revelation and only whatever revelation he received, that was the amount of the unseen that Allah allowed him to know.
- The next lesson we learn from this story is that gossip and slander are from the worst of sins that affect our society. There is a narration that says that backbiting is worse than *zina*. And really, here we can see the effects of backbiting, how it ruins the lives of good people. That there can be a good man or woman in the society, but people with loose tongues talk ill about them, spread rumours about them, and this affects their lives and it makes life difficult for them. Aishah [RA] was not the only person to be affected by rumours. There were others who were afflicted so badly that it even led to their death.
- Look at the life of Imam Bukhari [rah]. In the final years of his life, some of the scholars who were jealous of him began to misconstrue some of his statements and spread rumours that he has wrong *aqeedah*. And so wherever

he went, people did not want to listen to him, as those rumours had spread before him. Finally Imam Bukhari [rah] raised his hands and made duaa. He said, "Oh Allah, your earth is vast, but it has become narrow for me, so choose me for Yourself, take me to You." And one month later, Imam Bukhari [rah] passed away. What led to his death? Many of the scholars say it was this: slander, rumours, gossip, unfounded accusations. If it can affect the lives of righteous people like Imam Bukhari and Aishah (RA), what about us? What about your neighbour? What about your family members? So this is a warning to every single believer to control your tongue. Be careful what you say about others.

- The Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be upon him) said, "Whoever believes in Allah and the last day should either speak what is good or remain silent." That is the way of the believer. If what you are saying is not good and beneficial, don't say it. Don't speak about others. In another hadith he said, "From the perfection of iman is to leave things that don't concern you." Don't get involved in other peoples lives. Who is committing what sin, what is the latest gossip, what is the latest rumour. This is evil and this destroys society. Stay away from this. Stay away from these type of things. This we can learn from the story of the slander of Aishah [ra]. There are many other lessons which other speakers might be able to extract, and other authors will have extracted, as is the nature of the stories of the sahabah and the prophets and the great scholars of the past. Their lessons are not limited.
- Another lesson we can extract from this story, which also can be taken from the story of hadithul ifk, is that Aishah (RA), she had such a strong connection with the Quran that many a times, her words, her speech, would be from the Quran. So during the incident of the slander, when they asked her what she had to say, she simply said, "I say what the father of Yusuf [AS] said: that patience is beautiful and Allah's help is sought against what they are saying." So her words were the words of the Quran. Likewise, when she was passing away, her words were the words of Maryam [AS] mentioned in the Quran. So she had this strong connection with the Quran that she was able to quote it like that in her own speech, for her own answers, she would quote Quran. And this is a really strong connection that we all should try to have with the Quran.

3. The Battle of the Camel

Aishah (RA), another amazing story in her life happened after the death of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings be upon him). At the time of Uthman (RA), towards the end of his life, there was a great fitnah. And in this fitnah, it actually led to many Muslims (or so called Muslims) attacking him and assassinating him. At this point in time, Aishah (RA) was in Makkah performing the hajj; Uthman (RA) was in Madinah. So the people of Madinah, they chose Ali (RA) to be the next khalif, and Aishah and her companions in Makkah were of the view that Ali should first bring the murderer of Uthman to justice and then they would accept him as the khalif. And so Aishah (RA), according to one of the narrations in Bidayah Wannihayah, she went in front of the Kabah and she delivered a lecture about the virtues of

Uthman (RA), and she rallied the people to go and speak to Ali (RA) about this issue. So Aishah (RA) left at the head of an army with Talha (RA) and Zubair (RA) by her side to go and speak to Ali (RA). Note that their intention was to speak to Ali and to discuss the issue, not to fight with him. When they reached there, they had a discussion and they came to some peaceful agreement that they'll accept him as khalif and then he will do what he can to bring the murderers to justice. Some of the hypocrites in the army, when they heard about this peace, they decided to plot and start a war. And so they split themselves up in to either side of the army and began to attack each other. This caused a battle to break out between the followers of Aishah and the followers of Ali. And in this battle, known as the battle of the camel, both Talha (RA) and Zubair (RA) were murdered and Aishah (RA), she was on her camel in a hawdaj and in order to stop the battle, Ali had his men attack the camel, so once the hawdaj fell, people stopped fighting. And that was the end of the battle. Aishah and Ali came to peaceful terms and that was a regrettable incident amongst the sahabah.

Going back to what was said earlier, the sahabah (RA) were humans and they made mistakes. And these mistakes cannot be held against them. Indeed, we have done a lot worse in our lives to look back at the one or two mistakes the great scholars and great sahabah have done and to hold it against them.

Aishah (RA), in her army were Talha (RA) and Zubair (RA), both of whom were given the glad tidings of jannah in this world. And Aishah (RA) herself was praised in the Quran. And Ali (RA) himself was given the glad tidings of Jannah. So on both sides were righteous people. And we look at them as our righteous sahabah and we say for each of them radiAllahu anhum and we do not attack their character in any way, because they were the sahabah, they were much more righteous than us, and whatever mistakes they made, we just make duaa, "May Allah be pleased with them and may Allah have mercy on them."

CONCLUSION

We can see a glimpse of the stories and lessons to be learnt from our mother, Aishah (RA). There are so many lessons to be learnt and we make du'a that the sisters are able to emulate from our wonderful mother (RA) who has provided us with an epic role model for everyone to follow inshaAllah.

SOURCES OF THE ABOVE ARTICLE

www.alhudathequranclub.wordpress.com

www.muslimmatters.org