

The Marriages of Prophet Muhammad (part 2 of 2): A Humble Life

Description: The marriages that Prophet Muhammad contracted in the various stages of his life. Part 2: A look into some aspects of the humble life of the Prophet and how it relates to the reasons he contracted his marriages.

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The Fourth Stage

Upon the conquest of Mecca in 8 A.H., warfare came to an end for the most part. After this time, the Prophet did not remarry. This shows that he added wives to his family only in the time of instability and warfare, both to protect them and their children, and to expand and stabilize the Muslim nation.

The fact that Prophet Muhammad led a morally upright life was acknowledged by his adversaries, and this is referred to in the Quran where God challenges his detractors by asking them, rhetorically, if they can find any moral defect in his life. He told Prophet Muhammad to

"...(Say), I have lived among you a lifetime before this. Do you not then use your reason?" (Quran 10:16)

No one was able to find any fault in his character that they could make stick. Assuming, against all evidence, that he was an imposter and the personal author of the Quran; would he have presented his morally upright life as proof for his claim to be God's prophet?

His Humble Standard of Living

Those few years in Medina in which most of his marriages took place was not one spent in luxury and comfort. Rather, his was a harsh life, marred with the death struggle against the pagans. Huge armies were at the gates of Medina ready to crush the Muslims, and most of Arabia had united against him. Battles had to be fought in quick succession, no time for resting on the laurels of victory or ashes of defeat between them. For a responsible leader, it was no time for indulging the passions; not even the ordinary man who was so inclined would find much to indulge his passions in such times.

Once an orphan, he then became the ruler of a unified Arabia; but that did not change his simple way of living. He ate the same humble food and wore the same manner of dress he had worn from his early manhood, perhaps even more simple and humble than then. The furniture of his sleeping room consisted of a bed made of date palm leaves which left marks on his body, one about which even one of the closest companions remarked:

"O Messenger of God, the leaders of the Persians drink from vessels of gold silver, and you do as such?" (Ahmed)

He would often go without eating for nights on end, and for days no fire would be lit in his house to prepare food. When this happened, the whole family would survive on dates and water, despite the fact that the public treasury was at his disposal. The Prophet could have lived in comfort if he wanted to, as his followers, some of them quite wealthy, were ready to sacrifice anything for him. However, due to God's command concerning the behavior of Prophets, he would accept no charity for himself or his family. Moreover, whether in times of poverty or plenty, he was not a man devoted to the pleasures this worldly life.

His Nights

Prophet Muhammad had many wives, but he did not spend most of his night in conjugal enjoyment with them. The Prophet was commanded by God to

"Stand (praying) all night, except a little; half of it or a little less than that, or a little more. And recite the Quran (aloud) in a slow, (pleasant tone and) style." (Quran 73:2-4)

His wives described how his feet would swell from standing in prayer. This habitual and constant occupation clearly does not belong to the life of a man given to sensual pleasures.

The Simple Life of His Wives

After migration to Medina, prosperous trade changed the condition of Muslims. Conquests brought the comforts of life, and the wives of the Prophet naturally desired to share the legitimate comforts of life. However, God revealed:

"O Prophet, say to your wives, if you desire the life of this world and it's charms, come, I will give you a provision and set you free with kindness. But if you desire God and His Messenger and the life of the Hereafter, then, truly, God has prepared for those of you who are virtuous, a great reward." (Quran 33:28-29)

All the wives were offered alternatives, but not a single one of them left him for a more comfortable life. Had they suspected him of being an imposter, or had found the least fault in his character, or even truly desired the comfortable life offered as an alternative to being married to him, they could have simply left. Instead, every single one of them chose the honor of being his wife. Surely if he was a sensual man, he would not deny the wishes of his wives like this and be willing to divorce all of them if they had inclined, even if briefly, towards the worldly pleasures that had become available.

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