

UMM AL-MU'MININ SAYYIDAH 'Ā'ISHAH رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا

Umm al-Mu'minin Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا is the most beloved of the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ wives to him after Sayyidah Khadijah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. She was the most knowledgeable of the women of this Ummah to whom many of the senior Companions would refer, seeking her ruling on matters. She is the only wife of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ who was not previously married; thus, she was only ever devoted to and belonged entirely to the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Let us focus on one such incident which illustrates the manner in which she was beloved to Allah سُبحانه وتعالى and beloved to the Best of all creation, Muhammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

THE INCIDENT OF DHĀT AL-JAYSH

Umm al-Mu'minin Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا accompanied the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ on a journey. When they came to a place called al-Baydā' or Dhāt al-Jaysh, she lost her necklace. She went to inform the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ of what had transpired. He stopped the caravan and commanded the Sahābah to search for the necklace and they readily complied, even though it was late and the caravan had been travelling through the night.

A SIGN OF TRUE LOVE

Look at the love, care, and patience the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had for Umm al-Mu'minin Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ did not complain, but rather stopped the caravan and ordered a search to be carried out. She is truly the beloved of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

THE BELOVED OF THE PROPHET صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

'Amr ibn al-Ās رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ once asked the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, "Who amongst the people is most beloved to you?" The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied without hesitation, "'Ā'ishah." He asked "And from the males?" The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied, "Her father." [Bukhārī]

The wives of the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ were in two parties. One party consisted of 'Ā'ishah, Hafsa, Safiyyah, and Sawdah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا; and the other party consisted of Umm Salamah and others رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. The Muslims were well aware of the Messenger's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ love for 'Ā'ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا; so, if any of them had a gift for the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, they would delay it until it was Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah's turn.

The party of Umm Salamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا discussed the matter and decided that Umm Salamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا should request the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to tell the people to send their gifts to him at the home of whichever wife he was at. Umm Salamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا conveyed the message to him, but he did not reply. She spoke to him on three separate occasions. On the third occasion, he explained, "Do not inconvenience me regarding 'Ā'ishah

as Revelation has never come to me under the sheets of anyone besides 'Ā'ishah's." On that, Umm Salamah said, "I seek Allah's repentance from inconveniencing you."

Al-Dhahabī commented on this saying, "This response indicates that the superiority of 'Ā'ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا to the other Mothers of the Believers was something that was divinely ordained and was not just because he loved her; rather this was one of the reasons why the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ loved her." [Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā']

So, the party of Umm Salamah called Fātimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, the Prophet's beloved daughter, and sent her to the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to tell him, "Your wives request to treat them and the daughter of Abū Bakr on equal terms." Fātimah conveyed the message to him. The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ responded, "O my daughter! Do you not love whom I love?" She replied in the affirmative, "Then love 'Ā'ishah," instructed the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Fātimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا informed the Prophet's other wives of his response. [Bukhārī]

THE PROPHET'S صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ CONSIDERATION FOR HER

On one occasion, a Persian neighbour of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ invited him to partake of meals at his home. The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied that he would accept the invitation on condition that Umm al-Mu'minin Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah could also accompany him. The man declined and the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "In that case, I cannot accept your invitation." At that time, the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ household were hard-pressed and suffering from hunger. Thus, the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ did not think it appropriate to indulge himself in a meal while his beloved wife was suffering from hunger at home. The man again invited him and the same dialogue took place. On the third attempt, the host granted permission for her to attend. The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ joined him for meals accompanied by Umm al-Mu'minin Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. [Nasā'ī]

Once, the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ stood at the door of her apartment screening her with his mantle, enabling her to see the sport of the Abyssinians as they played with their lances in the Masjid. He kept standing for her sake till she was satisfied. She commented, "You can well imagine how long a girl, tender of age and fond of sports (could have watched)." [Muslim]

She was the beloved of Allah's Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ without a shadow of doubt. We can now truly understand the love the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had for her that would prompt him to halt the entire caravan to search for her necklace.

APPREHENSION DUE TO SCARCITY OF WATER

This was an unscheduled stop, however, and there was no water nearby nor were



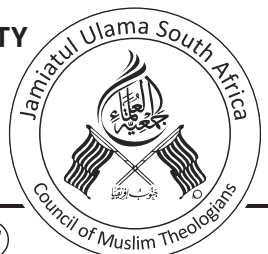
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they carrying any with them. The time of Fajr was approaching and anxiety began to set in. What were they to do if the necklace is not found and the time of prayer arrives? The law of Tayammum had not yet been revealed. But who was going to inform the Prophet ﷺ about the situation; none wished to cause distress to the Prophet ﷺ concerning Umm al-Mu'minīn? So, they came to Abū Bakr al-Siddīq and informed him about it. Who best to send than a beloved of the Prophet and the father of the beloved?

SAYYIDUNĀ ABŪ BAKR REPRIMANDS HER

So, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ came to see the Prophet ﷺ but he was asleep with his head in the lap of Umm al-Mu'minīn. Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ sought to reprimand her instead, "You have made the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the people stop when there is no water nearby and they are not carrying any with them!" As he reprimanded her, he poked her in the waist. She mentioned that the only thing that stopped her from moving was that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had his head on her lap and she did not wish to disturb his sleep.

WITH ADVERSITY COME EASE

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ awoke, he was informed of the situation and the verses of Tayammum were subsequently revealed:

And if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or you have contacted women [i.e., had marital relations] and find no water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and your hands [with it]. [Nisā': 43]

All this time, the Companions were searching for the necklace in the desert sand, in the darkness of night; burrowing and searching in the dunes for the necklace, all because of their intense love for the Prophet ﷺ and his beloved, Umm al-Mu'minīn. When they became apprehensive and sought a solution to their dilemma, Allah ﷻ informed them that their solution lies in the very action they were just doing. Allah ﷻ instructed them to use that very sand they were just searching in as a means of purifying themselves.

THE BLESSINGS OF UMM AL-MU'MINĪN

Later, when her camel was roused, they found the necklace underneath it. Usayd ibn Hudayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said to her, "This is not the first of your blessings, O family of Abū Bakr." [Bukhārī] He also added, "May Allah have mercy upon you! Never has there been an occasion when you were beset with an unpleasant matter but Allah created ease for you and the Muslims through it." [Abū Dāwūd]

Usayd ibn Hudayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is referring to the verses that were revealed by Allah ﷻ when she was falsely slandered, testifying to her purity and chastity until eternity. Allah ﷻ linked her purity with the Purity of the

Prophet ﷺ, making slandering her tantamount to slandering the Prophet ﷺ, when Allah ﷻ declared:

Evil women are for evil men, and evil men are for evil women. And good women are for good men and good men are for good women. Those [good people] are declared innocent of what the slanderers say. For them is forgiveness and noble provision. [Nur: 26]

WARNING FROM THE ALMIGHTY

Allah ﷻ warns those who falsely accuse her:

Indeed, those who [falsely] accuse chaste, unaware, and believing women are cursed in this world and the Hereafter; and they will have a great punishment. [Nūr: 23]

Allah ﷻ has cited a harsh warning against casting such unfounded allegations against her ever again:

Allah warns you against returning to the likes of this [conduct], ever, if you should be believers. [Nūr: 17]

A true believer will never dare perpetrate such a horrendous crime. 'Ammār ibn Yāsir رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ once saw a man cursing 'Ā'ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. He walked up to him and said, "Be silent, O despicable and rejected one. Do you revile the beloved of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ? Undoubtedly, she is his wife in Jannah!" [Ahmad]

CONCLUSION

The love of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ for Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah was profound and unmatched. It was a love expressed not only in words, but in every action—in his patience, his care, and his unwavering respect for her. He halted an entire caravan to search for her lost necklace, did not accept invitations without her presence, screened her while she watched the sport of the Abyssinians, warned his wives from harming him regarding her, commanded his daughter to love her, and treated her as his beloved, confidante, and partner in faith. This love was a reflection of his mercy, his honour, and his nobility.

Let the Ummah take heed: Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا is above reproach. To speak against her, belittle her, or question her integrity is to disregard the deep love and respect the Prophet ﷺ held for her. She is the Mother of the Believers, a woman of knowledge, character, and virtue. We must honour her, defend her dignity, and follow the example of the Messenger ﷺ in cherishing and respecting those whom Allah has elevated.

May our hearts be filled with reverence for her, and may our tongues speak nothing but respect and admiration for the beloved of the Prophet ﷺ. May Allah ﷻ guide us and grant us the ability to understand the status of Umm al-Mu'minīn Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, and make us of her dutiful sons who continue to defend her and protect her legacy.



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