The Prophet's Sirah
Series 32B

Mothers of the Believers

Ummahat al-Mu'minin (Part 2): Umm Salamah, Zaynab bint Jahsh, Juwayriyah, Umm Habibah, Safiyyah and Maymunah, According to the Qur'an and Authentic Hadith



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

THE PROPHET'S SIRAH

SERIES 32B

MOTHERS OF THE BELIEVERS

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وَٱذۡكُرۡنَ مَا يُتۡلَىٰ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ مِنۡ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلۡحِكۡمَةِۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ لَطِيفًا خَبِيرًا

"And remember what is recited in your houses of the verses of Allah and wisdom. Indeed, Allah is ever Subtle and Acquainted [with all things]."

SURAH AL-AHZAB 33:34

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise is due to Allah, who honoured the wives of His Messenger and made them mothers of the believers. Blessings and peace be upon our master, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the best of husbands to his family, and upon his family and his Companions.

This eBook is specially dedicated to my beloved wife,

ZAHARAH MOHD LATIF;

my dear children,

MUHAMMAD HAFIZ, NOOR HAZWANI, ABDUL HAKIM, NOOR HIDAYAH, NOR AQILA and **NOR ATIQAH**;

and my sons- and daughters-in-law,

FAZILAH, MALEK, HANIN, FAIRIZAL and **FIRWAN**.

This Book 32B of The Prophet's Sirah is the second part of the story of the Mothers of the Believers — Umm Salamah, Zaynab bint Jahsh, Juwayriyah, Umm Habibah, Safiyyah and Maymunah — with a note on Mariyah the Copt. They came from different backgrounds, yet were united by faith and love for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. May we come to know our mothers, and follow their example.

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ABOUT THE COVER OF THIS EBOOK

This eBook's cover does not depict any human being or animal. It shows **nine clay oil lamps** glowing softly on a wooden ledge, with **a twilight sky** and date palms in the background.

The nine lamps represent **the nine Mothers of the Believers** who were still alive when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died. Each of them was ***a light*** in the Prophet's home, and after him continued to light up the Ummah with the knowledge they narrated — as Allah says: "And remember what is recited in your houses of the verses of Allah and wisdom" (Al-Ahzab 33:34).

The dark blue band at the bottom, framed by **fine gold lines**, is where the author's name appears.

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MOTHERS OF THE BELIEVERS

In Book 32 (Part 1), we came to know five Mothers of the Believers: ***Khadijah, Sawdah, 'A'ishah, Hafsah and Zaynab bint Khuzaymah*** رضى الله عنهن. This Book 32B continues with six more: ***Umm Salamah, Zaynab bint Jahsh, Juwayriyah, Umm Habibah, Safiyyah and Maymunah***, with a note on ***Mariyah the Copt***.

These six women came from ***very different backgrounds***: an emigrant of Banu Makhzum, a cousin of the Prophet from Banu Hashim's kin, the captured daughter of a tribal chief, the daughter of the Quraysh leader who opposed Islam, the daughter of the Jewish chief of Banu an-Nadir, and a woman of Banu Hilal who was aunt to Ibn 'Abbas and Khalid ibn al-Walid.

Yet Islam united them in one home, and Allah honoured them all with the same title: ***Mothers of the Believers***. Their stories show how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***built bridges*** between tribes, abolished pre-Islamic customs, and cared for women who had lost everything.

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The Mothers of the Believers: Order of the Prophet's Marriages ﷺ

1	**Khadijah binti Khuwailid** 15 years before prophethood	His only wife for ±25 years; died in the 10th year of prophethood
2	**Sawdah binti Zam'ah** 10th year of prophethood	After Khadijah's death; widowed emigrant from Abyssinia
3	**'A'ishah bint Abi Bakr** Contract before Hijrah; joined him 1 AH	His only wife who was a virgin
4	**Hafsah bint 'Umar** 3 AH	Widow of Khunays (a veteran of Badr) who died in Madinah
5	**Zaynab bint Khuzaymah** 3–4 AH	"Mother of the poor"; died months later
6	**Umm Salamah** 4 AH	Widow of Abu Salamah (Uhud)
7	**Zaynab bint Jahsh** 5 AH	Married by Allah's decree (Al-Ahzab 33:37)
8	**Juwayriyah bint al-Harith** 5–6 AH	After Banu al-Mustaliq
9	**Umm Habibah** 6–7 AH	Daughter of Abu Sufyan; contract in Abyssinia
10	**Safiyyah bint Huyayy** 7 AH	After Khaybar
11	**Maymunah bint al-Harith** 7 AH	During 'Umrat al-Qada'

Part 1 (Book 32) Part 2 (this book)

Years are approximate according to Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Hisham and al-Mubarakpuri; some are disputed among historians.

Figure 1: The Mothers of the Believers — the order of the Prophet's marriages ﷺ. Part 2 is marked in brown.

Note: The Qur'anic translation in this eBook is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in its box. Dates of events are approximate according to the books of sirah, and some are disputed.

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CONTINUING THE STORY OF OUR MOTHERS

Allah reminds the wives of the Prophet ﷺ of the great blessing they had: ***"And remember what is recited in your houses of the verses of Allah and wisdom"*** (Al-Ahzab 33:34) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 33:34.

Their homes were ***the first school*** in Islam. There the Qur'an was recited and the Sunnah lived every day. This verse was also ***a trust***: what they heard and saw had to be conveyed to the Ummah — and that is what they did all their lives.

The six wives in this part narrated hundreds of hadiths. ***Umm Salamah*** alone narrated nearly 400, making her the second most prolific narrator among his wives after 'A'ishah. Hadiths on the regular sunnah prayers, the bath from janabah, mourning, morning remembrance and the supplication in calamity reached us through them.

As in Part 1, we will use the Qur'an, ***sahih and hasan*** hadiths, and trusted books of sirah. Weak or disputed reports are placed in "Sirah Note" boxes.

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UMM SALAMAH: THE FIRST FAMILY TO EMIGRATE

Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها, whose real name was ***Hind bint Abi Umayyah***, came from Banu Makhzum, one of the leading clans of Quraysh. Her father was known as ***Zad ar-Rakib*** — "the traveller's provision" — because when he travelled, he provided for everyone with him.

Her husband, ***Abu Salamah 'Abdullah ibn 'Abd al-Asad***, was a cousin and foster-brother of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and among the early Muslims. The two emigrated to ***Abyssinia***, then returned to Makkah, and later emigrated to Madinah.

SIRAH NOTE: UMM SALAMAH'S EMIGRATION

Ibn Ishaq narrates from Umm Salamah that when they set out to emigrate to Madinah, her clan Banu al-Mughirah held her back, while Abu Salamah's family took her son Salamah. Abu Salamah emigrated alone. For nearly a year, Umm Salamah went out every morning to al-Abtah and wept until evening.

At last her people took pity and let her go, and her son was returned. She set out alone with her son, and ***'Uthman ibn Talhah*** — not yet a Muslim — escorted her with great respect to Quba'. This story is narrated in the books of sirah; it is famous, but scholars discuss its chain.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Prophet's marriages; Ibn Sa'd, at-Tabaqat al-Kubra; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah; Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad.

From this story we see ***the price of hijrah***: a family torn apart, a child taken, and a mother weeping for a year. Yet Umm Salamah did not turn back. This steadfastness prepared her to become ***a Mother of the Believers***.

The emigration of Abu Salamah's family also teaches that ***sacrifice for faith*** sometimes means separation from those we love most. Yet Allah did not let that sacrifice go to waste: the separated family was reunited in Madinah, and Umm Salamah was later honoured as a Mother of the Believers.

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A SUPPLICATION IN CALAMITY

Abu Salamah was wounded at Uhud, and a few months later he died in the 4th year AH. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself came, closed his eyes and said: "When the soul is taken, the sight follows it," then prayed for him (Sahih Muslim 920).

Umm Salamah lost the husband she loved, with young children to care for. It was then that she practised the supplication the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had taught:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 918B

وَحَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ، عَنْ سَعْدِ بْنِ سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي عُمَرُ بْنُ كَثِيرِ بْنِ أَفْلَحَ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ ابْنَ سَفِينَةَ، يُحَدِّثُ أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ أُمَّ سَلَمَةَ، زَوْجَ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم تَقُولُ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَقُولُ مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ تُصِيبُهُ مُصِيبَةٌ فَيَقُولُ إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ اللَّهُمَّ أْجُرْنِي فِي مُصِيبَتِي وَأَخْلِفْ لِي خَيْرًا مِنْهَا إِلاَّ أَجَرَهُ اللَّهُ فِي مُصِيبَتِهِ وَأَخْلَفَ لَهُ خَيْرًا مِنْهَا. قَالَتْ فَلَمَّا تُوُفِّيَ أَبُو سَلَمَةَ قُلْتُ كَمَا أَمَرَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَأَخْلَفَ اللَّهُ لِي خَيْرًا مِنْهُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم.

TRANSLATION:

Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها, wife of the Prophet ﷺ, said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: ***"No servant is struck by a calamity and says: 'Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un. Allahumma'jurni fi musibati wa akhlif li khayran minha' (We belong to Allah and to Him we return. O Allah, reward me in my calamity and replace it for me with something better), except that Allah rewards him in his calamity and replaces it for him with something better."*** She said: When Abu Salamah died, I said it as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had commanded me, ***and Allah replaced him for me with someone better than him: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shaybah, from Abu Usamah Hammad ibn Usamah, from Sa'd ibn Sa'id, from 'Umar ibn Kathir ibn Aflah, from Ibn Safinah, from Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Funerals, Chapter: What to say at a calamity, Hadith No. 918b.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:918b

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The first part of this supplication comes from the Qur'an: ***"Who, when disaster strikes them, say, "Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return"*** (Al-Baqarah 2:156) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:156.

In another narration, Umm Salamah said: "Which of the Muslims is better than Abu Salamah, the first household to emigrate to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?" She could not imagine a better replacement — yet she ***still prayed with certainty***. And Allah replaced him for her with ***the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself***.

A lesson for us: when struck by calamity, do not merely grieve. ***Say this supplication with certainty***, even if our minds cannot imagine how Allah will replace what was lost. Allah's replacement often comes from where we least expect.

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THE PROPHET'S PROPOSAL

After her 'iddah ended, Abu Bakr and 'Umar proposed to her, but she declined. Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent someone to propose. Umm Salamah answered honestly: "Tell the Messenger of Allah that

I am a very jealous woman, ***I have children***, and ***none of my guardians*** is present here" (Sunan an-Nasa'i 3254 — hasan).

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ answered each concern gently: as for jealousy, he would pray that Allah remove it; as for her children, they would be cared for; and as for guardians, none of them, present or absent, would object. So she agreed, and the marriage took place in ***the 4th year AH***.

This story shows Umm Salamah's ***honesty*** and the Prophet's ***wisdom***. A woman may state her concerns openly before marriage, and a good man answers them with gentleness, not by belittling them.

Umm Salamah's children — Salamah, 'Umar, Zaynab and Durrah — grew up in the Prophet's home as ***his stepchildren***. 'Umar ibn Abi Salamah narrated the table manners he taught: "O boy, mention Allah's name, eat with your right hand, and eat from what is near you" (Sahih al-Bukhari 5376). Zaynab bint Abi Salamah became a learned woman.

Umm Salamah's honesty is also an example in ***choosing a spouse***. She did not hide her weaknesses, nor pretend. A marriage built on honesty from the start is easier to sustain, because both sides know the true situation.

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SEEING JIBRIL IN THE FORM OF DIHYAH

Umm Salamah was granted an extraordinary experience — she ***saw Jibril***, though she did not realise it at the time:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3634

حَدَّثَنِي عَبَّاسُ بْنُ الْوَلِيدِ النَّرْسِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا مُعْتَمِرٌ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَبِي، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عُثْمَانَ، قَالَ أُنْبِئْتُ أَنَّ جِبْرِيلَ ـ عَلَيْهِ السَّلاَمُ ـ أَتَى النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ سَلَمَةَ، فَجَعَلَ يُحَدِّثُ ثُمَّ قَامَ، فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم لأُمِّ سَلَمَةَ مَنْ هَذَا. أَوْ كَمَا قَالَ. قَالَتْ هَذَا دِحْيَةُ. قَالَتْ أُمُّ سَلَمَةَ ايْمُ اللَّهِ مَا حَسِبْتُهُ إِلاَّ إِيَّاهُ حَتَّى سَمِعْتُ خُطْبَةَ نَبِيِّ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُخْبِرُ جِبْرِيلَ أَوْ كَمَا قَالَ. قَالَ فَقُلْتُ لأَبِي عُثْمَانَ مِمَّنْ سَمِعْتَ هَذَا قَالَ مِنْ أُسَامَةَ بْنِ زَيْدٍ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu 'Uthman said: I was told that Jibril عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ came to the Prophet ﷺ while Umm Salamah was with him.

He spoke with him, then got up and left. The Prophet ﷺ asked Umm Salamah: "Who was this?" She said: "This was Dihyah." Umm Salamah said: ***"By Allah, I thought he was none other than Dihyah, until I heard the sermon of the Prophet of Allah ﷺ telling about Jibril."*** (The narrator asked Abu 'Uthman: "From whom did you hear this?" He said: "From Usamah ibn Zayd.")

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abbas ibn al-Walid an-Narsi, from Mu'tamir ibn Sulayman, from Sulayman at-Taymi (his father), from Abu 'Uthman an-Nahdi, from Usamah ibn Zayd رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Virtues, Chapter: Signs of prophethood in Islam, Hadith No. 3634; also No. 4980 and Muslim No. 2451.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3634

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Jibril عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ sometimes came in the form of ***Dihyah al-Kalbi***, a Companion known for his handsome looks. This hadith shows that angels can take human form by Allah's permission, as in the famous hadith of Jibril about Islam, iman and ihsan.

It also shows that the homes of the Prophet's wives ﷺ were ***places where revelation and angels descended***. Umm Salamah witnessed firsthand how revelation reached him — an honour shared by very few people.

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WISE COUNSEL AT HUDAYBIYAH

In the 6th year AH, Umm Salamah accompanied the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on the journey to Makkah that ended with ***the Treaty of Hudaybiyah*** (Book 15). The terms seemed one-sided, and the Companions were deeply disappointed.

After the treaty was signed, he ordered the Companions to slaughter their sacrifices and shave their heads, but ***no one rose***, though he repeated it three times. He went in to Umm Salamah and told her what had happened (Sahih al-Bukhari 2731).

Umm Salamah gave very wise advice: ***"O Prophet of Allah, do you want this done? Go out, and do not speak a word to any of them until you have slaughtered your camel and called your barber to shave you."*** He did so, and when the Companions saw him, they rushed to slaughter and shave (Sahih al-Bukhari 2731).

Scholars cite this event as proof of ***Umm Salamah's wisdom*** and ***the Prophet's readiness to listen to his wife's view***. She understood human nature: ***example in action is more effective than spoken orders***. It also shows that a wise woman's counsel can resolve a major crisis.

The Hudaybiyah event also shows that ***consulting one's wife*** is a Sunnah. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who received revelation from heaven, did not feel it beneath him to seek his wife's view in a crisis. How much more should husbands today.

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THE LAST OF THE WIVES TO DIE

Umm Salamah lived long after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. She became ***a reference of knowledge*** in Madinah, especially in matters concerning women, worship and his home life. Companions and Successors came to ask her from behind a screen.

She was known for ***eloquence, intelligence and composure***. She loved the Ahl al-Bayt dearly, and by the well-known view she died in ***61 or 62 AH*** aged over 80, making her ***the last of the Prophet's wives ﷺ to die***. She was buried in al-Baqi'.

Umm Salamah's life spanned almost the whole early history of Islam: from persecution in Makkah, the emigrations to Abyssinia and Madinah, life with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, to the Umayyad era. She was ***a living witness*** to this Ummah's journey.

Among the hadiths narrated by Umm Salamah is the supplication the Messenger of Allah ﷺ often said:

"Ya Muqallib al-qulub, thabbit qalbi 'ala dinik" — O Turner of hearts, keep my heart firm upon Your religion (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3522 — hasan). She asked why he said it so often, and he explained that human hearts are between the fingers of Allah.

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ZAYNAB BINT JAHSH: COUSIN OF THE PROPHET ﷺ

Zaynab bint Jahsh رضى الله عنها was from Banu Asad ibn Khuzaymah. Her mother was ***Umaymah bint 'Abd al-Muttalib***, the Prophet's aunt, making Zaynab his ***cousin***. Her brother 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh was martyred at Uhud. She was a noble, beautiful woman, devoted in worship and generous.

Before marrying the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he himself proposed Zaynab for ***Zayd ibn Harithah*** رضى الله عنه, the freed slave he had adopted. In Arab custom, the marriage of a noble Qurayshi woman to a former slave was extraordinary. Zaynab and her family were at first reluctant.

According to some exegetes, concerning this event Allah revealed: ***"It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should [thereafter] have any choice about their affair"*** (Al-Ahzab 33:36) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 33:36.

Zaynab ***submitted to the decree of Allah and His Messenger*** and married Zayd. This marriage became a lesson that in Islam ***honour is measured by piety***, not lineage. Yet their marriage was not happy, and Zayd came repeatedly to complain to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

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ABOLISHING THE CUSTOM OF ADOPTION

Before Islam, the Arabs treated ***an adopted son exactly like a biological son***: his lineage was attributed to his adoptive father, he inherited, and his former wife was forbidden to the adoptive father. Zayd himself was called ***"Zayd ibn Muhammad"***.

Allah abolished this custom: ***"Call them by [the names of] their fathers; it is more just in the sight of Allah"*** (Al-Ahzab 33:5) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 33:5.

'Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما said: "We used to call Zayd ibn Harithah nothing but Zayd ibn Muhammad, until the verse came down: 'Call them by their fathers'" (Sahih al-Bukhari 4782).

Yet a deep-rooted custom is not easily abolished by words alone. Allah willed ***an example in action*** from His Messenger himself. After Zayd divorced Zaynab, Allah commanded him to marry her — to prove that the former wife of an adopted son ***is not a mahram***.

"So when Zayd had no longer any need for her, We married her to you in order that there not be upon the believers any discomfort concerning the wives of their adopted sons" (Al-Ahzab 33:37) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 33:37.

And Allah affirms: ***"Muhammad is not the father of [any] one of your men, but [he is] the Messenger of Allah and last of the prophets"*** (Al-Ahzab 33:40) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 33:40.

Islam ***does not forbid caring for an adopted child***; indeed, caring for orphans is a very noble deed. What was abolished is ***changing lineage*** and the rulings tied to it. An adopted child is still loved, but his lineage remains with his biological father.

Zayd ibn Harithah himself remained honoured. He is ***the only Companion*** whose name is mentioned explicitly in the Qur'an (Al-Ahzab 33:37). He later commanded the Muslim army at Mu'tah and was martyred there (Book 19).

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"ALLAH MARRIED ME OFF"

These verses touched the feelings of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself, and he conveyed them without concealing anything:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 7420

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ، حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ أَبِي بَكْرٍ الْمُقَدَّمِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادُ بْنُ زَيْدٍ، عَنْ ثَابِتٍ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، قَالَ جَاءَ زَيْدُ بْنُ حَارِثَةَ يَشْكُو فَجَعَلَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَقُولُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ، وَأَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ زَوْجَكَ. قَالَتْ عَائِشَةُ لَوْ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم كَاتِمًا شَيْئًا لَكَتَمَ هَذِهِ. قَالَ فَكَانَتْ زَيْنَبُ تَفْخَرُ عَلَى أَزْوَاجِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم تَقُولُ زَوَّجَكُنَّ أَهَالِيكُنَّ، وَزَوَّجَنِي اللَّهُ تَعَالَى مِنْ فَوْقِ سَبْعِ سَمَوَاتٍ. وَعَنْ ثَابِتٍ {وَتُخْفِي فِي نَفْسِكَ مَا اللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ وَتَخْشَى النَّاسَ} نَزَلَتْ فِي شَأْنِ زَيْنَبَ وَزَيْدِ بْنِ حَارِثَةَ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas رضى الله عنه said: Zayd ibn Harithah came complaining (about his wife), and the Prophet ﷺ kept saying: "Fear Allah, and keep your wife." 'A'ishah said: ***"If the Messenger of Allah ﷺ were to conceal anything (of revelation), he would have concealed this verse."*** Anas said: ***Zaynab used to take pride before the other wives of the Prophet ﷺ, saying: "Your families married you off, while Allah the Exalted married me from above seven heavens."*** And from Thabit: the verse "and you concealed within yourself that which Allah is to disclose, and you feared the people" was revealed concerning Zaynab and Zayd ibn Harithah.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Ahmad (ibn Sayyar), from Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr al-Muqaddami, from Hammad ibn Zayd, from Thabit al-Bunani, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Tawhid, Chapter: "And His Throne was upon the water", Hadith No. 7420.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:7420

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

'A'ishah's words are very important: ***if the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had concealed anything of revelation***, he would surely have concealed this verse that admonished him. But he conveyed it in full. This proves his ***trustworthiness*** in conveying the message.

Scholars explain that "what he concealed within himself" was ***knowledge from Allah*** that Zaynab would become his wife, and he feared people would say: "Muhammad has married his son's former wife." This

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is the sound interpretation according to exegetes such as Ibn Kathir and al-Qurtubi, not the weak stories that circulated.

SIRAH NOTE: A REPORT THAT IS NOT AUTHENTIC

There are weak and fabricated reports claiming that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ glimpsed Zaynab and was attracted to her while she was still Zayd's wife. Hadith scholars and exegetes — including Ibn Kathir, Ibn Hajar and Ibn al-'Arabi — ***reject these reports***. Zaynab was his cousin, known to him since childhood; had he wanted her, he could have married her from the start, rather than proposing her for Zayd.

What is authentic is what the Qur'an and Sahih al-Bukhari state: this marriage was ***Allah's decree*** to abolish a pre-Islamic custom.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, Al-Ahzab 33:37; Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari, Book of Tafsir. https://tafsir.app/ibn-katheer/33/37

And Zaynab took pride in this honour: ***"I was married off by Allah from above seven heavens."*** Her marriage needed no guardian on earth, for Allah Himself decreed it in the Qur'an.

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THE WEDDING FEAST AND THE VERSE OF HIJAB

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ held ***a wedding feast*** for this marriage. Anas رضى الله عنه said: "I never saw the Prophet ﷺ hold a better feast for any of his wives than the one for Zaynab; he slaughtered a sheep" (Sahih al-Bukhari 5168). He invited people, and they ate their fill.

After the meal, some people ***kept sitting and chatting*** in the house. He got up and went out several times as if signalling them to leave, but they did not notice. He was too shy to tell them to go (Sahih al-Bukhari 4791).

Then Allah revealed ***the verse of hijab***: ***"And when you ask [his wives] for something, ask them from behind a partition. That is purer for your hearts and their hearts"*** (Al-Ahzab 33:53) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 33:53.

Anas said: "I know best about this verse of hijab" (Sahih al-Bukhari 4792). This verse teaches two manners: ***the etiquette of visiting*** — come when invited and leave after eating — and ***guarding the honour*** of the Prophet's household ﷺ. From then on, the Companions spoke to his wives from behind a screen.

Notice too the Prophet's ***modesty*** ﷺ: he could not bring himself to ask his guests to leave though he was troubled. So Allah Himself stated the truth: "But Allah is not shy of the truth."

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"THE ONE WITH THE LONGEST HAND"

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ once said to his wives: ***"The first of you to join me (after my death) will be the one with the longest hand."*** So they measured their hands to see whose was longest (Sahih Muslim 2452).

'A'ishah said: ***"The one among us with the longest hand was Zaynab, because she worked with her own hands and gave in charity."*** "Long hand" meant ***giving much in charity***. Zaynab tanned hides and sewed, then gave the earnings to the poor.

His words came true: Zaynab was ***the first wife to die after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ***, in ***20 AH*** during 'Umar's caliphate. 'Umar himself led her funeral prayer, and she was buried in al-Baqi'.

'A'ishah, who often rivalled her, praised her honestly: ***"I never saw a woman better in religion than Zaynab, more God-fearing, more truthful in speech, more devoted to ties of kinship, or more charitable"*** (Sahih Muslim 2442). During the slander, Zaynab was asked about 'A'ishah, and she replied: "I guard my hearing and my sight; I know nothing of her but good." 'A'ishah said: "Allah protected her through her piety" (Sahih al-Bukhari 4750).

Zaynab's generosity is also an example for women who ***work and earn***. Islam does not prevent women from working honourably, and the fruits of their effort can become a source of charity with great reward.

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JUWAYRIYAH: DAUGHTER OF THE CHIEF OF BANU AL-MUSTALIQ

Juwayriyah bint al-Harith رضى الله عنها was the daughter of ***al-Harith ibn Abi Dirar***, chief of the tribe of ***Banu al-Mustaliq*** of Khuza'ah. Her original name was ***Barrah***, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ changed it to Juwayriyah (Sahih Muslim 2140).

Banu al-Mustaliq were preparing to attack Madinah. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ forestalled them at the well of al-Muraysi' in the 5th or 6th year AH. Their men were defeated, and many women and children were taken captive (Sahih al-Bukhari 2541). The slander also took place on the way back from this campaign (Book 14).

Juwayriyah, the daughter of a chief, suddenly became ***a captive***. She fell to the share of Thabit ibn Qays ibn Shammas, and made ***a contract of manumission*** — to buy her freedom for an agreed sum. She came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asking for help to pay it.

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A MARRIAGE THAT FREED A PEOPLE

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ offered something better: he would ***pay her ransom and marry her***. Juwayriyah agreed (Sunan Abi Dawud 3931 — hasan).

When the news spread, the Companions said: ***"They (Banu al-Mustaliq) are now the in-laws of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ!"*** And they ***freed all the captives*** in their hands. 'A'ishah said: ***"I know of no woman who was a greater blessing to her people than Juwayriyah; a hundred households of Banu al-Mustaliq were freed because of her"*** (Sunan Abi Dawud 3931 — hasan).

This is ***the political and humane wisdom*** of the Prophet's marriages. Through one marriage, a hostile tribe became kin; captives were freed willingly; and many of them later embraced Islam.

The Companions also showed ***great manners***: they could not bear to own the Prophet's relatives as slaves. Respect for him was translated into real action that freed hundreds of people.

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WORDS THAT WEIGH MORE

Juwayriyah was known as ***a woman of worship***. From her came one of the most beautiful remembrances in Islam:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2726

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، وَعَمْرٌو النَّاقِدُ، وَابْنُ أَبِي عُمَرَ، - وَاللَّفْظُ لاِبْنِ أَبِي عُمَرَ - قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، مَوْلَى آلِ طَلْحَةَ عَنْ كُرَيْبٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، عَنْ جُوَيْرِيَةَ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم خَرَجَ مِنْ عِنْدِهَا بُكْرَةً حِينَ صَلَّى الصُّبْحَ وَهِيَ فِي مَسْجِدِهَا ثُمَّ رَجَعَ بَعْدَ أَنْ أَضْحَى وَهِيَ جَالِسَةٌ فَقَالَ مَا زِلْتِ عَلَى الْحَالِ الَّتِي فَارَقْتُكِ عَلَيْهَا. قَالَتْ نَعَمْ. قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم لَقَدْ قُلْتُ بَعْدَكِ أَرْبَعَ كَلِمَاتٍ ثَلاَثَ مَرَّاتٍ لَوْ وُزِنَتْ بِمَا قُلْتِ مُنْذُ الْيَوْمِ لَوَزَنَتْهُنَّ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ عَدَدَ خَلْقِهِ وَرِضَا نَفْسِهِ وَزِنَةَ عَرْشِهِ وَمِدَادَ كَلِمَاتِهِ.

TRANSLATION:

Juwayriyah رضى الله عنها narrated that the Prophet ﷺ left her early in the morning after praying Fajr, while she was sitting in her place of prayer. Then he returned after the forenoon, and she was still sitting there. He said: "Are you still in the same state as when I left you?" She said: "Yes." The Prophet ﷺ said: ***"After leaving you I said four phrases three times; if they were weighed against all you have said since this morning, they would outweigh it: Subhanallahi wa bihamdihi, 'adada khalqihi, wa rida nafsihi, wa zinata 'arshihi, wa midada kalimatihi"*** (Glory and praise be to Allah, as many times as the number of His creation, as much as pleases Him, as much as the weight of His Throne, and as much as the ink of His words).

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, 'Amr an-Naqid and Ibn Abi 'Umar, from Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, from Muhammad ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman, client of the family of Talhah, from Kurayb, from Ibn 'Abbas, from Juwayriyah bint al-Harith رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Remembrance and Supplication, Chapter: Glorification at the start of the day and at bedtime, Hadith No. 2726.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2726

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith teaches that ***the quality of remembrance*** matters more than its quantity. Four meaningful phrases, said three times, outweigh hours of remembrance. It also shows his ***love*** for his wife: he wanted to make her worship easier and increase her reward.

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This remembrance is well suited to be practised after the Fajr prayer, especially for busy people. Juwayriyah lived until the time of Mu'awiyah and died in Madinah in ***50 AH*** (or 56 AH by another view), and was buried in al-Baqi'.

Juwayriyah was also known for ***voluntary fasting***. Once the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came to her on a Friday while she was fasting, and asked whether she had fasted the day before or would fast the next day. When she said no, he told her to break her fast, because Friday should not be singled out alone for fasting (Sahih al-Bukhari 1986).

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UMM HABIBAH: STEADFAST IN A FOREIGN LAND

Umm Habibah رضى الله عنها, whose real name was ***Ramlah bint Abi Sufyan***, was the daughter of ***Abu Sufyan ibn Harb***, the Quraysh leader who opposed Islam the longest. Yet Ramlah embraced Islam early, against her father's will.

She emigrated to ***Abyssinia*** with her husband, ***'Ubaydullah ibn Jahsh***, and there bore their daughter Habibah — hence she was known as Umm Habibah. Living in a foreign land, far from family, to save one's faith, was a very heavy trial.

> **SIRAH NOTE: A HUSBAND WHO LEFT ISLAM**
>
> According to the books of sirah (Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Sa'd), 'Ubaydullah ibn Jahsh became a Christian in Abyssinia and died there. Umm Habibah ***remained firm in Islam*** though left alone with a small child, in a foreign land, with a father hostile to her faith in Makkah.
>
> In the narration of Sunan Abi Dawud 2107, her husband is named 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh; scholars explain that 'Ubaydullah is meant, since 'Abdullah was martyred at Uhud.
>
> **REFERENCES:**
> Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Prophet's marriages; Ibn Sa'd, at-Tabaqat al-Kubra; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah; Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad.

Umm Habibah's steadfastness teaches us that faith is ***a personal choice*** that does not depend on father or husband. When those closest turn away, a believer still stands on the truth.

Her story also reminds us that ***guidance is a gift from Allah***, not a family inheritance. Umm Habibah was the daughter of the idolaters' leader, yet she preceded her father into Islam by many years. Her husband, who had once emigrated for Islam, eventually turned away. So we always pray that Allah keeps our hearts firm.

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MARRIED BY THE NEGUS

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ heard of Umm Habibah's situation and proposed to her through ***the Negus***, the just king of Abyssinia (Book 4). The Negus himself married her to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and ***paid her dowry of four thousand dirhams*** on his behalf, then sent her to Madinah with Shurahbil ibn Hasanah (Sunan Abi Dawud 2107 — sahih).

This marriage took place around ***the 6th or 7th year AH***. It was the only marriage of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ contracted ***outside Arabia***, by a king, with the highest dowry among his wives.

See how Allah rewarded Umm Habibah's patience. She lost her husband and was alone in a foreign land, but Allah replaced him with ***the best of husbands***, and made her ***a Mother of the Believers***. This reminds us of Umm Salamah's supplication in Chapter 3.

Historians also mention that this marriage ***softened Abu Sufyan's heart***. When he heard the news, he spoke of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ with respect. A few years later, at the opening of Makkah, Abu Sufyan embraced Islam (Book 20).

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FAITH BEFORE FATHER

SIRAH NOTE: THE PROPHET'S MAT ﷺ

Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Sa'd narrate that before the opening of Makkah, Abu Sufyan came to Madinah to renew the Hudaybiyah treaty, and entered the house of his daughter, Umm Habibah. When he was about to sit on the mat of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, Umm Habibah quickly ***folded the mat away***.

Abu Sufyan asked: "My daughter, do you think the mat too good for me, or me too good for the mat?" She said: ***"This is the mat of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and you are an impure idolater; I do not want you sitting on the mat of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ."*** This story is famous in the books of sirah, but it is not found in the authentic hadith collections.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Prophet's marriages; Ibn Sa'd, at-Tabaqat al-Kubra; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah; Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad.

Though this report is from the books of sirah, its meaning accords with the Qur'an: ***love for Allah and His Messenger must come first***, before love for father, children and family (At-Tawbah 9:24). Yet Umm Habibah still respected her father in a way that did not compromise her principles.

Umm Habibah also narrated the hadith on ***the regular sunnah prayers***: "Whoever prays twelve rak'ahs in a day and night, a house will be built for him in Paradise." She said: ***"I have never abandoned them since I heard it from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ"*** (Sahih Muslim 728).

This is the attitude of a Mother of the Believers: ***to hear, then practise without stopping***. One hadith practised consistently is worth more than a thousand merely memorised.

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MOURNING FOR THREE DAYS

Abu Sufyan died during 'Uthman's caliphate. When news of his death came, Umm Habibah showed how a believing child ***balances love for a father with obedience to the Shari'ah***:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 1280

حَدَّثَنَا الْحُمَيْدِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، حَدَّثَنَا أَيُّوبُ بْنُ مُوسَى، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي حُمَيْدُ بْنُ نَافِعٍ، عَنْ زَيْنَبَ ابْنَةِ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ، قَالَتْ لَمَّا جَاءَ نَعْيُ أَبِي سُفْيَانَ مِنَ الشَّأْمِ دَعَتْ أُمُّ حَبِيبَةَ ـ رضى الله عنها ـ بِصُفْرَةٍ فِي الْيَوْمِ الثَّالِثِ، فَمَسَحَتْ عَارِضَيْهَا وَذِرَاعَيْهَا وَقَالَتْ إِنِّي كُنْتُ عَنْ هَذَا لَغَنِيَّةً، لَوْلاَ أَنِّي سَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَقُولُ لاَ يَحِلُّ لاِمْرَأَةٍ تُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ أَنْ تُحِدَّ عَلَى مَيِّتٍ فَوْقَ ثَلاَثٍ، إِلاَّ عَلَى زَوْجٍ، فَإِنَّهَا تُحِدُّ عَلَيْهِ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا.

TRANSLATION:

Zaynab bint Abi Salamah said: When news of Abu Sufyan's death came from Syria, Umm Habibah رضى الله عنها called for yellow perfume on the third day, wiped her cheeks and forearms with it, and said: ***"I had no need of this, were it not that I heard the Prophet ﷺ say: 'It is not lawful for a woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day to mourn for anyone who dies more than three days, except for a husband, for whom she mourns four months and ten days.'"***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from al-Humaydi, from Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, from Ayyub ibn Musa, from Humayd ibn Nafi', from Zaynab bint Abi Salamah, from Umm Habibah رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Funerals, Chapter: A woman mourning for someone other than her husband, Hadith No. 1280; also No. 5334 and Muslim No. 1486.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1280

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Umm Habibah mourned her father for three days, then ***deliberately applied perfume*** to show that the mourning period was over. She had no need of the perfume, but she wanted to ***teach*** the Ummah this ruling through action.

This hadith became the basis of the ruling on ***ihdad*** (mourning) in Islam: three days for the death of a relative, and four months and ten days for a widow. Islam allows grief, but ***regulates it*** so it does not drag on and halt life.

Umm Habibah died in Madinah in ***44 AH***, during the reign of her brother Mu'awiyah, and was buried in al-Baqi'.

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Her action also shows the ***balance of a believing daughter***: she loved her father and grieved for him, yet she would not let that love lead her beyond the limits set by Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. True love for family is shown within the bounds of the Shari'ah.

For us today, this hadith is a gentle reminder in times of loss: grief is natural and permitted, but life must continue, duties must be resumed, and the heart returns to remembrance of Allah, to whom we all belong and to whom we shall return.

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SAFIYYAH BINT HUYAYY: DESCENDANT OF HARUN عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

Safiyyah bint Huyayy ibn Akhtab رضى الله عنها was the daughter of the chief of the Jewish tribe of ***Banu an-Nadir***, a descendant of ***the Prophet Harun*** عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, brother of the Prophet Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. Her father was among Islam's fiercest enemies; he helped rally the Arab tribes at the Battle of the Trench (Book 12) and was executed after the treachery of Banu Qurayzah (Book 13).

After Banu an-Nadir were expelled from Madinah, they settled in ***Khaybar***. Safiyyah married Kinanah ibn ar-Rabi', one of Khaybar's leaders. In the 7th year AH, Khaybar was opened by the Muslim army (Book 16), and her husband was killed.

In an instant, Safiyyah lost ***her father, her husband and her people***. She became a captive, a young woman of about 17. How would the Messenger of Allah ﷺ treat the daughter of his fiercest enemy?

Safiyyah's story also shows that ***a father's sins are not borne by his child***. Allah says: "And no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another" (Al-An'am 6:164). Huyayy fought Islam, but his daughter was fully honoured.

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FREED AND MARRIED

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ chose Safiyyah for himself, offered her Islam, and she embraced it. Then he ***set her free***:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 5086

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادٌ، عَنْ ثَابِتٍ، وَشُعَيْبِ بْنِ الْحَبْحَابِ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم أَعْتَقَ صَفِيَّةَ، وَجَعَلَ عِتْقَهَا صَدَاقَهَا.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrated: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ freed Safiyyah, and made her freedom her dowry."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, from Hammad ibn Zayd, from Thabit al-Bunani and Shu'ayb ibn al-Habhab, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Marriage, Chapter: Freeing a slave woman as her dowry, Hadith No. 5086; also No. 371, 4200 and Muslim No. 1365.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:5086

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

He did not make her a slave, but ***a free wife*** with full honour. Her freedom itself became her dowry — ***the most precious gift*** that could be given to a captive.

Anas رضى الله عنه narrated that on the journey back, ***the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sat beside his camel and placed his knee***, and Safiyyah stepped on his knee to mount (Sahih al-Bukhari 4211). He also covered her with a cloth while riding, as a sign that she was his wife, not a slave.

Imagine Safiyyah's feelings: the man her people had taught her to hate now ***lowered his knee*** to help her. It was this gentleness that changed hearts. Safiyyah went on to become a believer who loved the Messenger of Allah ﷺ deeply.

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"YOU ARE THE DAUGHTER OF A PROPHET"

As a woman of Jewish descent, Safiyyah was sometimes ***taunted*** by her co-wives. Anas رضى الله عنه narrated that it reached Safiyyah that Hafsah had said: "The daughter of a Jew," and she wept. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ came in and asked why she was crying.

He said: ***"You are the daughter of a Prophet, your uncle is a Prophet, and you are the wife of a Prophet. So what can she boast over you?"*** Then he said to Hafsah: "Fear Allah, O Hafsah" (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3894 — sahih).

See his wisdom: he did not deny Safiyyah's origins, but ***changed the way she saw them***. Her Jewish descent was no disgrace — it linked her to ***the Prophets Harun and Musa*** عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. Islam honours the prophets of the Children of Israel, and mocks no one for their origins.

This is also a lesson about ***racism***: insulting someone for their race or ancestry is a trait of ignorance. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ promptly corrected his own wife when it happened, though Hafsah was the daughter of his close friend.

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VISITING HIM IN THE MOSQUE

Safiyyah loved the Messenger of Allah ﷺ dearly, and he returned that love with full attention. An event during his i'tikaf shows this:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 2035

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الْيَمَانِ، أَخْبَرَنَا شُعَيْبٌ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْحُسَيْنِ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ أَنَّ صَفِيَّةَ، زَوْجَ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم أَخْبَرَتْهُ أَنَّهَا جَاءَتْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم تَزُورُهُ فِي اعْتِكَافِهِ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ، فِي الْعَشْرِ الأَوَاخِرِ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ، فَتَحَدَّثَتْ عِنْدَهُ سَاعَةً، ثُمَّ قَامَتْ تَنْقَلِبُ، فَقَامَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم مَعَهَا يَقْلِبُهَا، حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغَتْ بَابَ الْمَسْجِدِ عِنْدَ بَابِ أُمِّ سَلَمَةَ مَرَّ رَجُلاَنِ مِنَ الأَنْصَارِ، فَسَلَّمَا عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَقَالَ لَهُمَا النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم عَلَى رِسْلِكُمَا إِنَّمَا هِيَ صَفِيَّةُ بِنْتُ حُيَيٍّ. فَقَالاَ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ. وَكَبُرَ عَلَيْهِمَا. فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَبْلُغُ مِنَ الإِنْسَانِ مَبْلَغَ الدَّمِ، وَإِنِّي خَشِيتُ أَنْ يَقْذِفَ فِي قُلُوبِكُمَا شَيْئًا.

TRANSLATION:

'Ali ibn al-Husayn narrated that Safiyyah رضى الله عنها, wife of the Prophet ﷺ, told him that she came to visit the Messenger of Allah ﷺ while he was in i'tikaf in the mosque in the last ten nights of Ramadan. She talked with him for a while, then rose to return. ***The Prophet ﷺ rose with her to see her off.*** When they reached the mosque door near Umm Salamah's door, two men of the Ansar passed and greeted the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ said to them: ***"Wait, this is Safiyyah bint Huyayy."*** They said: "Subhan Allah, O Messenger of Allah!" and it weighed on them. The Prophet ﷺ said: ***"Satan circulates in a person like blood, and I feared he might cast something (an evil thought) into your hearts."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Abu al-Yaman al-Hakam ibn Nafi', from Shu'ayb ibn Abi Hamzah, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from 'Ali ibn al-Husayn (Zayn al-'Abidin), from Safiyyah bint Huyayy رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of I'tikaf, Chapter: The one in i'tikaf going to the mosque door, Hadith No. 2035; also Muslim No. 2175.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2035

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LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith contains a great lesson: ***avoid situations that invite suspicion***. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the purest of people, still clarified the situation so that the two Companions would not be influenced by Satan. All the more must we guard ourselves from suspicion.

It also shows his ***affection***: even while in i'tikaf in the last ten nights of Ramadan, he ***got up to walk his wife*** to the door. Worship did not stop him from fulfilling his family's rights.

Safiyyah died in Madinah in ***50 AH*** (or 52 AH by another view) in the time of Mu'awiyah, and was buried in al-Baqi'.

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was gravely ill, Safiyyah showed her love by saying — according to Ibn Sa'd's report — "By Allah, O Prophet of Allah, I wish what you suffer were upon me." When the other wives looked askance, he said: "By Allah, she is truthful." Safiyyah's loyalty was affirmed by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself.

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MAYMUNAH BINT AL-HARITH: THE LAST WIFE

Maymunah bint al-Harith al-Hilaliyyah رضى الله عنها was ***the last wife*** the Messenger of Allah ﷺ married. Her original name was also ***Barrah***, and he changed it to Maymunah — meaning "the blessed one". She was the sister of Umm al-Fadl, wife of al-'Abbas, making her ***the aunt*** of 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas and Khalid ibn al-Walid.

This marriage took place in ***the 7th year AH***, during ***'Umrat al-Qada'*** (Book 18), and married life began at ***Sarif***, a place about ten miles from Makkah, on the way back to Madinah.

SIRAH NOTE: WAS HE IN IHRAM?

Ibn 'Abbas narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ married Maymunah while in ihram (Sahih al-Bukhari 1837). But Maymunah herself said he married her ***while not in ihram*** (Sahih Muslim 1411), and Abu Rafi', the messenger in that marriage, said the same.

The majority of scholars give precedence to the reports of Maymunah and Abu Rafi' because they were ***directly involved***, and because the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "One in ihram may not marry nor give in marriage" (Sahih Muslim 1409).

REFERENCES:
Sahih al-Bukhari 1837; Sahih Muslim 1409, 1411; Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari. https://sunnah.com/muslim:1411

Through this marriage, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ strengthened ties with ***Banu Hilal*** and the family of al-'Abbas. Soon after, Khalid ibn al-Walid — Maymunah's nephew — embraced Islam and became "the Sword of Allah" (Book 19).

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TEACHER OF PURIFICATION

Maymunah narrated many hadiths about the Prophet's ***private life*** ﷺ, especially how he purified himself:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 249

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يُوسُفَ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنِ الأَعْمَشِ، عَنْ سَالِمِ بْنِ أَبِي الْجَعْدِ، عَنْ كُرَيْبٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، عَنْ مَيْمُونَةَ، زَوْجِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَتْ تَوَضَّأَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وُضُوءَهُ لِلصَّلاَةِ غَيْرَ رِجْلَيْهِ، وَغَسَلَ فَرْجَهُ، وَمَا أَصَابَهُ مِنَ الأَذَى، ثُمَّ أَفَاضَ عَلَيْهِ الْمَاءَ، ثُمَّ نَحَّى رِجْلَيْهِ فَغَسَلَهُمَا، هَذِهِ غُسْلُهُ مِنَ الْجَنَابَةِ.

TRANSLATION:

Maymunah رضى الله عنها, wife of the Prophet ﷺ, said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed ablution as for prayer except for his feet, washed his private parts and whatever impurity was on him, then poured water over his body, then moved his feet aside and washed them. This was his bath from janabah."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Muhammad ibn Yusuf al-Firyabi, from Sufyan ath-Thawri, from al-A'mash, from Salim ibn Abi al-Ja'd, from Kurayb, from Ibn 'Abbas, from Maymunah bint al-Harith رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Ghusl, Chapter: Ablution before the bath, Hadith No. 249; also No. 257, 265 and Muslim No. 317.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:249

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith became ***a principal reference*** for jurists on the complete bath from janabah. Such knowledge could only be conveyed by a wife — and Maymunah conveyed it clearly and in detail, without shyness that blocks knowledge.

Maymunah's home was also where ***Ibn 'Abbas learned***. He once spent the night at his aunt's house to watch how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed at night, and the Prophet adjusted his position in the prayer (Sahih al-Bukhari 183). The boy who learned in Maymunah's house later became ***Turjuman al-Qur'an*** — the foremost interpreter of the Qur'an.

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DEATH AT SARIF

Maymunah lived about 40 years after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Feeling her end was near, she asked to be taken out of Makkah. She died at ***Sarif***, the very place where she had begun her life with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, in ***51 AH***, and was buried there.

SIRAH NOTE: 'A'ISHAH'S PRAISE OF MAYMUNAH

Al-Hakim narrates that 'A'ishah said of Maymunah: "By Allah, she was among the most God-fearing of us, and the most devoted to ties of kinship." Al-Hakim and adh-Dhahabi graded its chain sahih. Ibn 'Abbas himself led the funeral prayer for his aunt.

REFERENCES:

al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak; Ibn Sa'd, at-Tabaqat al-Kubra.

This story is very moving: the place of her beginning and her end ***was the same***. It is as if Maymunah wished to return to the most beautiful memory of her life — the day she became the wife of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Maymunah also narrated hadiths on ***women's purity*** and how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not keep away from his wife during menstruation — Maymunah sat beside his place of prayer, and his garment touched her when he prostrated (Sahih al-Bukhari 333). This teaching rejects the practice of some societies of isolating menstruating women completely.

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NOTE: MARIYAH THE COPT

Besides the eleven wives, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ also had ***a slave woman*** who bore him a child: ***Mariyah the Copt*** رضى الله عنها. She came from Egypt, and was sent to him as a gift by ***al-Muqawqis***, ruler of Egypt, in reply to his letter inviting to Islam (Book 17).

SIRAH NOTE: MARIYAH'S STATUS

The majority of scholars hold that Mariyah was an ***umm walad*** (a slave woman who bore her master's child), not a married wife. So she is ***not counted*** among the Mothers of the Believers in the specific sense of the title, though she is honoured as the mother of the Prophet's son.

A minority held that he freed and married her, but this view is not well known. Mariyah embraced Islam, lived in Madinah, and died in ***16 AH*** during 'Umar's caliphate; he led her funeral prayer.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Prophet's marriages; Ibn Sa'd, at-Tabaqat al-Kubra; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah; Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad.

In ***the 8th year AH***, Mariyah gave birth to a son named ***Ibrahim***, after the Prophet Ibrahim عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was overjoyed; Ibrahim was his only child not born to Khadijah. He gave him to a wet-nurse on the outskirts of Madinah, and visited him often.

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"THE EYE WEEPS, THE HEART GRIEVES"

But Ibrahim lived only about ***16 to 18 months***. Anas رضى الله عنه relates that they went with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to the house of Abu Sayf, husband of Ibrahim's wet-nurse, while Ibrahim was dying. Tears flowed from his eyes. 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Awf asked: "You too (weep), O Messenger of Allah?" (Sahih al-Bukhari 1303)

He said: ***"O Ibn 'Awf, this is mercy."*** Then he said: ***"The eye weeps and the heart grieves, but we say only what pleases our Lord. And we are deeply saddened by your parting, O Ibrahim"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 1303).

On the day Ibrahim died, there was ***a solar eclipse***. People said the eclipse happened because of Ibrahim's death. He immediately corrected them: ***"The sun and the moon do not eclipse for the death or life of anyone"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 1043). Even in grief, he ***protected the creed*** of the Ummah from superstition.

He also said: "He (Ibrahim) has a wet-nurse in Paradise" (Sahih al-Bukhari 1382). From this story we learn that ***weeping at death*** does not contradict patience; what is forbidden is wailing and saying words that displease Allah.

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OUR MOTHERS AFTER THE PROPHET ﷺ

After the death of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, nine of his wives were still alive. Allah had decreed that they ***could never be married*** after him (Al-Ahzab 33:53). They remained in their homes beside the Prophet's Mosque, as mothers to the whole Ummah.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ once said to them: ***"Your affair is among what concerns me after I am gone, and none will be patient in caring for you except the patient and truthful"*** (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3749 — hasan).

The caliphs fulfilled this trust. Abu Bakr and 'Umar رضى الله عنهما honoured them, and 'Umar set ***the highest annual stipends*** from the treasury for the Prophet's wives ﷺ. Yet most of them gave those stipends away to the poor.

Their homes became ***centres of knowledge***. Companions and Successors came to ask about the Sunnah, and they answered from behind a screen. Without them, much of the knowledge about the ***private life*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would have been lost.

The wives of the Prophet ﷺ were also ***united in great matters***, despite jealousy among themselves.

When strife and political disputes arose after 'Uthman's time, they advised the Ummah to protect Muslim blood and return to the Qur'an and Sunnah.

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MANY BACKGROUNDS, ONE HOME

If we lay out the lineages of the Prophet's eleven wives ﷺ, we see ***a map of Arab society*** at the time.

Through these marriages he was linked to the families of Abu Bakr (Banu Taym), 'Umar (Banu 'Adi), Abu Sufyan (Banu Umayyah), Banu Makhzum, Banu Asad, Banu 'Amir, Banu Hilal, Banu al-Mustaliq and Banu an-Nadir.

In tribal society, marriage was ***the strongest bond*** between families. In-law ties turned yesterday's enemies into today's kin, and opened hearts to the message. Banu al-Mustaliq were freed because of Juwayriyah; Abu Sufyan's heart softened through Umm Habibah; Banu Hilal were drawn near through Maymunah.

Yet what united them all was not lineage, but ***piety***. Allah says: ***"Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you"*** (Al-Hujurat 49:13) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 49:13.

In one home lived the daughter of Abu Bakr and the daughter of Abu Sufyan, the daughter of a Jewish chief and the cousin of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, a former captive and a noblewoman of Quraysh. They competed, sometimes felt jealous, yet in the end ***chose Allah and His Messenger*** together (Al-Ahzab 33:29).

A lesson for today's multi-ethnic societies: differences of origin ***are no barrier*** to unity. When faith is the foundation, homes, mosques and nations can bring together people of many backgrounds in love.

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OUR MANNERS TOWARDS THE MOTHERS OF THE BELIEVERS

The wives of the Prophet ﷺ are ***among his Companions***, indeed the closest to him. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Do not revile my Companions; if one of you spent gold equal to Mount Uhud, it would not equal a handful spent by one of them, nor even half of it"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3673).

So a Muslim's manners towards the Mothers of the Believers are: (1) ***to love and honour*** all of them without distinction; (2) ***to pray*** for them, including in the salawat — "O Allah, send blessings on Muhammad, his wives and his offspring" (Sahih al-Bukhari 3369); and (3) ***to defend their honour*** from any insult.

We also ***study their narrations***. Whenever we perform wudu', bathe, pray at night, fast voluntarily or say the supplication in calamity correctly, we are practising knowledge conveyed by our mothers. They are ***our teachers***, though we never met them.

Finally, we ***follow their example*** in life: Khadijah's loyalty, the generosity of Sawdah and Zaynab, the knowledge of 'A'ishah and Umm Salamah, the worship of Hafsah and Juwayriyah, Umm Habibah's steadfastness, Safiyyah's resilience, and Maymunah's love of knowledge. Every woman — and every man — can find a model in them.

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A SUMMARY TABLE OF THE SIX MOTHERS OF THE BELIEVERS

The previous chapters told the story of the six Mothers of the Believers in this part one by one. This chapter gathers the basic facts about them into a single table, as was done for the five mothers in Part 1 (Book 32).

The years in this table are the well-known opinions in the books of sirah and tabaqat. Some are disputed among historians, and other opinions are given in brackets.

MOTHER OF THE BELIEVERS	LINEAGE	BEFORE MARRIAGE	MARRIAGE	DEATH AND BURIAL
Umm Salamah (Hind bint Abi Umayyah)	Banu Makhzum, Quraysh	Widow of Abu Salamah, who died of a wound from Uhud	4 AH, in Madinah	61 or 62 AH; al-Baqi‘
Zaynab bint Jahsh	Banu Asad ibn Khuzaymah; her mother was Umaymah bint ‘Abd al-Muttalib	Divorced by Zayd ibn Harithah	5 AH (another view: 4 AH), in Madinah	20 AH, in ‘Umar’s time; al-Baqi‘
Juwayriyah bint al-Harith	Banu al-Mustaliq, Khuza‘ah	Widow; taken captive in the campaign of al-Muraysi‘	5 or 6 AH, in Madinah	50 AH (another view: 56 AH); al-Baqi‘
Umm Habibah (Ramlah bint Abi Sufyan)	Banu Umayyah, Quraysh	Widow of ‘Ubaydullah ibn Jahsh; emigrant in Abyssinia	6 or 7 AH; contract concluded in Abyssinia	44 AH, in Mu‘awiyah’s time; al-Baqi‘
Safiyyah bint Huyayy	Banu an-Nadir; descended from Prophet Harun عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ	Widow of Kinanah ibn ar-Rabi‘; captive of Khaybar	7 AH, after the conquest of Khaybar	50 AH (another view: 52 AH); al-Baqi‘
Maymunah bint al-Harith	Banu Hilal ibn ‘Amir	Widow	7 AH, during the Compensatory ‘Umrah	51 AH; Sarif, near Makkah

From this table we see that all six were widows. Three were from Quraysh, and three from other tribes: Banu al-Mustaliq, Banu an-Nadir and Banu Hilal. All these marriages took place in Madinah between the 4th and 7th years of the Hijrah — the busiest period of battles, treaties and da‘wah.

Five of them are buried in al-Baqi‘, beside the Prophet’s Mosque. Only Maymunah was buried at Sarif, the place where she had begun her life with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (chapter 26). Taken together with Part 1, only two wives are not buried in al-Baqi‘: Khadijah at al-Hajun in Makkah, and Maymunah at Sarif.

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SIRAH NOTE: THE NUMBER OF THE PROPHET'S ﷺ WIVES

The scholars of sirah state that the wives whom the Messenger of Allah ﷺ married and lived with numbered eleven: five in Part 1 and six in Part 2. Two died during his lifetime (Khadijah and Zaynab bint Khuzaymah), and nine were alive when he passed away.

Some other names appear in the books of sirah — women with whom a contract was made but who did not live with him, or who were proposed to but not married — and the information about them is disputed. Rayhanah bint Zayd is described by Ibn Ishaq as a bondwoman of his, while Ibn Sa'd describes her as a freed wife. For this reason, most scholars hold to the number eleven.

References: Ibn Sa'd, at-Tabaqat al-Kubra, vol. 8; adh-Dhahabi, Siyar A'lam an-Nubala', vol. 2; Ibn Hajar, al-Isabah fi Tamyiz as-Sahabah; Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad, section on the wives of the Prophet ﷺ; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

LESSONS

These six mothers came to the home of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ by different paths: the loss of a husband, the decree of revelation, captivity in war, emigration to a foreign land, and the treaty of an 'umrah. Yet every path ended in the same place: the honour of being a Mother of the Believers.

This teaches us that Allah can open the door of good through circumstances that seem bitter on the surface. Loss, captivity and exile became the beginning of an honour that will last until the Day of Resurrection.

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THE WISDOM BEHIND THESE MARRIAGES

Chapter 34 of Part 1 answered the question of whether the marriages of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ were driven by desire. In this part we look at another side: every marriage carried a clear wisdom — establishing a ruling of the Shari'ah, protecting a wronged woman, or uniting tribes with Islam.

MOTHER OF THE BELIEVERS	MAIN WISDOM	EFFECT
Umm Salamah	Protecting the widow of an emigrant and hero of Badr, together with her orphaned children	Her children grew up in the Prophet's ﷺ home; she became a reference of knowledge (chapters 4, 7)
Zaynab bint Jahsh	Abolishing the pre-Islamic ruling on adopted sons (Al-Ahzab 33:37)	An adopted child keeps the lineage of his real father; his former wife is not a mahram (chapter 9)
Juwayriyah	Uniting Banu al-Mustaliq with the Muslims	A hundred families freed; many embraced Islam (chapter 14)
Umm Habibah	Protecting an emigrant woman abandoned by her husband in a foreign land	Softening the hearts of Banu Umayyah and Abu Sufyan (chapter 17)
Safiyyah	Honouring the daughter of an enemy chief who had lost her father, husband and people	An example of treating captives; a rejection of racism (chapters 21, 22)
Maymunah	Strengthening ties with Banu Hilal and the family of al-'Abbas	Her home became the school of Ibn 'Abbas (chapter 25)

A RULING ESTABLISHED BY DEED

The marriage to Zaynab bint Jahsh is the clearest example. Allah Himself states its purpose: "We married her to you so that there would be no blame upon the believers concerning the wives of their adopted sons" (Al-Ahzab 33:37) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 33:37.

A custom rooted for centuries is not easily removed by words. It needs an example from the most respected of people. So Allah made His own Messenger the first to carry out this new ruling, even though he knew that people would talk (chapter 10).

A BRIDGE BETWEEN TRIBES

In Arab society, ties by marriage were very strong bonds. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ married Juwayriyah, the Companions said, "They are now the in-laws of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ," and freed all the captives of Banu al-Mustaliq. 'A'ishah said that she knew of no woman who was a greater blessing to her people than Juwayriyah (Sunan Abi Dawud 3931).

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The marriage to Umm Habibah linked him to Abu Sufyan, the leader of Quraysh at that time. The marriage to Safiyyah showed the Jews that Islam does not take revenge on the children of its enemies. And the marriage to Maymunah strengthened ties with the family of al-'Abbas and Banu Hilal; not long afterwards, her nephew Khalid ibn al-Walid embraced Islam.

SIRAH NOTE: THE WORDS OF ABU SUFYAN

Ibn Sa'd and some historians report that when Abu Sufyan heard that his daughter had been married to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he praised him as a noble man who could not be refused. This report is found in the books of sirah and has no authentic chain.

What is certain is that Abu Sufyan embraced Islam at the conquest of Makkah in 8 AH (Book 20), and died a Muslim in the time of 'Uthman. Umm Habibah mourned him for three days (chapter 19).

References: Sunan Abi Dawud 3931; Sunan Abi Dawud 2107; Sahih al-Bukhari 5086; Sahih Muslim 1411; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim (Al-Ahzab 33:37); Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad.

LESSONS

Every marriage of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was part of the message. He did not only teach rulings by word, but also through his own household life. So to study his household is to study how Islam protects women, abolishes unjust customs and unites people.

This wisdom also reminds us to judge a historical event in its full context. When that context is understood, what at first looked like a question becomes evidence of wisdom and mercy.

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JUSTICE IN A LARGE HOUSEHOLD

How did the Messenger of Allah ﷺ manage a household with nine wives at one time? The authentic hadiths give a clear picture: he was very careful to be just in everything within his control, even though Allah had given him latitude (Al-Ahzab 33:51; chapter 32 of Part 1).

AN ORDERLY ROTA

Each wife had her turn. When Sawdah bint Zam'ah grew old, she willingly gave her turn to 'A'ishah, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ accepted the gift, giving 'A'ishah two days: her own day and Sawdah's (Sahih al-Bukhari 5212; Sahih Muslim 1463).

Even so, he did not neglect his other wives on days that were not their turn. 'A'ishah narrated that when he finished the 'Asr prayer, he would visit his wives and come close to each of them (Sahih al-Bukhari 5216). It was from this habit that the honey episode in the house of Zaynab bint Jahsh occurred, which became the occasion of Surah At-Tahrim (chapter 32 of Part 1).

DRAWING LOTS FOR JOURNEYS

When he wished to travel, he would draw lots among his wives, and whoever's name came out would accompany him (Sahih al-Bukhari 2593). In this way no one felt left out. It was such a draw that took 'A'ishah on the journey of Banu al-Mustaliq (Sahih al-Bukhari 2661; Book 14).

ASKING PERMISSION DURING ILLNESS

During his final illness, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ kept asking, "Where am I tomorrow? Where am I tomorrow?" — because he wished to be in 'A'ishah's house. So his wives allowed him to stay wherever he wished, and he was nursed in 'A'ishah's house until he passed away (Sahih al-Bukhari 4450; Book 30). Even when gravely ill, he did not move without their permission.

JUSTICE AND THE LOVE OF THE HEART

Allah says: "And you will never be able to be equal between wives, even if you should strive to do so. So do not incline completely towards one and leave another hanging" (An-Nisa' 4:129) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 4:129.

Ibn Kathir explains that the equality that cannot be achieved is equality of love and the inclination of the heart, since the heart is beyond a person's control. What is obligatory is justice in outward matters: the rota, maintenance, housing and treatment. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also warned: "Whoever has two wives and inclines towards one of them will come on the Day of Resurrection with one side of his body leaning" (Sunan Abi Dawud 2133 — sahih).

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SIRAH NOTE: THE SUPPLICATION "THIS IS MY DIVISION"

There is a report that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would divide the turns justly and then supplicate: "O Allah, this is my division in what I control, so do not blame me for what You control and I do not" (Sunan Abi Dawud 2134).

At-Tirmidhi mentions that this report is more correctly mursal, and many hadith scholars, among them al-Albani, graded its chain weak. Yet its meaning agrees with An-Nisa' 4:129: one is not held accountable for the love of the heart, but outward conduct must be just.

References: Sahih al-Bukhari 5212; Sahih al-Bukhari 5216; Sahih al-Bukhari 2593; Sahih al-Bukhari 4450; Sunan Abi Dawud 2133; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim (An-Nisa' 4:129); an-Nawawi, Sharh Sahih Muslim, Book of Suckling.

LESSONS

The justice of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was not just dividing days. It included daily visits, transparent lots, asking permission, and honouring one wife's gift to another. This is a high standard for every husband with more than one wife — and also for every parent with more than one child.

These events also show that the Prophet's ﷺ household was a human home, with human jealousy and feelings. What makes it an example is not the absence of problems, but the way problems were handled: justly, gently and guided by revelation.

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THE KNOWLEDGE OUR MOTHERS BEQUEATHED

Chapter 33 of Part 1 showed how 'A'ishah and the other wives carried out Allah's command to remember "the verses of Allah and wisdom" (Al-Ahzab 33:34). The six mothers in this part also left a great legacy of knowledge, and some of it we practise every day without realising.

MOTHER OF THE BELIEVERS	ESTIMATED HADITHS	AMONG HER STUDENTS	EXAMPLE NARRATION
Umm Salamah	About 378	Her children 'Umar and Zaynab, Sa'id ibn al-Musayyib, 'Abdullah ibn Rafi' (her freed slave)	Supplication in calamity (Sahih Muslim 918); bathing for a woman with braided hair (Sahih Muslim 330)
Maymunah	About 76	Ibn 'Abbas, Kurayb, Yazid ibn al-Asamm (her nephew)	How to perform ghusl (Sahih al-Bukhari 249)
Umm Habibah	About 65	Zaynab bint Abi Salamah, 'Anbasah ibn Abi Sufyan (her brother)	Twelve regular sunnah rak'ahs (Sahih Muslim 728); mourning (Sahih al-Bukhari 1280)
Zaynab bint Jahsh	About 11	Zaynab bint Abi Salamah, Umm Habibah	Warning of the trials of the end times (Sahih al-Bukhari 3346)
Safiyyah	About 10	'Ali ibn al-Husayn (Zayn al-'Abidin)	Avoiding places of suspicion (Sahih al-Bukhari 2035)
Juwayriyah	About 7	Ibn 'Abbas, Abu Ayyub al-Maraghi	Dhikr after Fajr (Sahih Muslim 2726); fasting on Friday (Sahih al-Bukhari 1986)

The numbers above are estimates reported by adh-Dhahabi in Siyar A'lam an-Nubala' from Baqi ibn Makhlad, including narrations repeated through different chains. Umm Salamah is the second most prolific narrator among the wives of the Prophet ﷺ after 'A'ishah.

UMM SALAMAH: ASKING WITHOUT SHYNESS

Umm Salamah once asked: "O Messenger of Allah, I am a woman who braids my hair tightly; must I undo it for the bath of janabah?" He replied: "No, it is enough for you to pour water over your head three times, then pour water over the rest of your body, and you are purified" (Sahih Muslim 330).

A question that many might feel shy to ask became a ruling that eases the lives of millions of women to this day. 'A'ishah herself praised this attitude: "The best of women are the women of the Ansar; shyness did not prevent them from gaining understanding of the religion" (Sahih Muslim 332).

ZAYNAB BINT JAHSH: A WARNING ABOUT CORRUPTION

Zaynab narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ woke from sleep alarmed and said: "There is no god but Allah! Woe to the Arabs from an evil that has drawn near." Zaynab asked: "O Messenger of Allah, shall

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we be destroyed while there are righteous people among us?" He replied: "Yes, when wickedness becomes widespread" (Sahih al-Bukhari 3346).

Zaynab's question was very sharp, and his answer became an important principle: the presence of righteous people alone is not enough to save a society if evil is left to spread unchecked.

SIRAH NOTE: AL-HASAN AL-BASRI IN THE HOUSE OF UMM SALAMAH

The mother of al-Hasan al-Basri, Khayrah, was a freed slave (mawlah) of Umm Salamah. Historians mention that al-Hasan grew up in the house of Umm Salamah, and that she would sometimes nurse him when his mother went out. This is mentioned by Ibn Sa'd and adh-Dhahabi.

Al-Hasan later became one of the most learned and ascetic of the Tabi'in. Just like Ibn 'Abbas in the house of Maymunah, the homes of the Mothers of the Believers became the birthplace of great scholars of this Ummah.

References: Sahih Muslim 330; Sahih Muslim 332; Sahih al-Bukhari 3346; Sahih Muslim 728; Sahih al-Bukhari 249; adh-Dhahabi, Siyar A'lam an-Nubala'; Ibn Sa'd, at-Tabaqat al-Kubra.

LESSONS

The supplication in calamity, the method of ghusl, the regular sunnah prayers, dhikr after Fajr, the rulings of mourning — all of these reached us through the mothers in this part. Every time we practise them, reward flows to them as knowledge that benefits.

They also taught the manners of seeking knowledge: asking boldly but politely, acting on what one hears, and passing it on to the next generation.

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POPULAR REPORTS THAT NEED CHECKING (PART 2)

As in Part 1, there are stories about these six Mothers of the Believers that are widely spread but not all authentic. The table below gathers reports that are often mentioned, together with their grading.

REPORT	GRADE	EXPLANATION
The Messenger of Allah ﷺ caught sight of Zaynab while she was still Zayd's wife and was attracted to her	False; rejected by scholars	Rejected by Ibn Kathir, Ibn Hajar and Ibn al-'Arabi. The authentic account is Sahih al-Bukhari 7420 (chapter 10).
"The first of you to join me will be the one with the longest hand" — referring to Sawdah	A narrator's confusion	The wording of Sahih al-Bukhari 1420 seems to point to Sawdah, but Ibn Hajar explains that the correct view is Zaynab, as in Sahih Muslim 2452 (chapter 12).
The supplication "O Allah, this is my division in what I control…"	Weak (more correctly mursal)	Sunan Abi Dawud 2134; its meaning is true (chapter 34).
Umm Habibah folding away the Messenger's ﷺ mat from her father	Sirah report	Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Sa'd; not found in the authentic hadith collections (chapter 18).
Abu Sufyan's words praising the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on hearing of his daughter's marriage	Sirah report without an authentic chain	Ibn Sa'd (chapter 33).
Safiyyah's dream that the moon fell into her lap, and her husband striking her	Well-known; chain disputed	Reported by Ibn Ishaq and some hadith books; some scholars accept it and others weaken it.
The Messenger of Allah ﷺ married Maymunah while in ihram	Disputed; rejected by the majority	Sahih al-Bukhari 1837 versus Sahih Muslim 1411 and the report of Abu Rafi' (chapter 24).
Mariyah the Copt was freed and married as a wife	A minority opinion	The majority of scholars: she was an umm walad, not a married wife (chapter 27).
Rayhanah bint Zayd as his wife	Disputed	Ibn Ishaq: a bondwoman; Ibn Sa'd: a freed wife (chapter 32).
Umm Salamah was the last of the wives to die	The well-known view	Died 61 or 62 AH; some historians give an earlier year (chapter 7).

SIRAH NOTE: WHY ARE SIRAH REPORTS STILL MENTIONED?

Books of sirah such as the Sirah of Ibn Ishaq and the Tabaqat of Ibn Sa'd contain historical information not found in the hadith collections. Scholars accept sirah reports in general historical matters as long as they do not contradict authentic narrations and do not touch on creed or rulings.

That is why this eBook mentions sirah reports in Sirah Note boxes, stating their grade, so that the reader can distinguish between what is certain and what is still discussed.

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References: Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari (Book of Zakah, hadith 1420; Book of Tafsir, Al-Ahzab 33:37); Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim; Sahih al-Bukhari 1420; Sahih Muslim 2452; Sunan Abi Dawud 2134.

LESSONS

The hadith scholars did not leave reports about the wives of the Prophet ﷺ unexamined, whether in praise or in blame. They weighed every chain fairly. So we too must be fair: we do not accept false reports that stain the honour of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, nor do we invent stories to glorify anyone.

The honour of our mothers is already established by the Qur'an and authentic hadith. That is more than enough.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (PART 2)

Below are questions often asked about the six Mothers of the Believers in this part, and about the household of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in general. Questions about Part 1 were answered in chapter 36 of Book 32.

1. HOW MANY WIVES DID THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ HAVE?

According to the well-known view, eleven wives whom he married and lived with. Two died during his lifetime, and nine were alive when he passed away (chapter 32).

2. IS MARIYAH THE COPT COUNTED AMONG THE MOTHERS OF THE BELIEVERS?

The majority of scholars hold that she was an umm walad, not a married wife, so she is not included in the specific title Ummahat al-Mu'minin. Yet she is still honoured as the mother of Ibrahim, the son of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (chapter 27).

3. WHY DID THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ MARRY ZAYD'S FORMER WIFE?

Because Allah commanded it in order to abolish the pre-Islamic ruling that treated an adopted son like a biological son. Allah Himself states the purpose in Al-Ahzab 33:37 (chapters 9, 10 and 33).

4. MAY WE ADOPT CHILDREN TODAY?

Yes — indeed, caring for orphans and children in need is a very noble deed. What is forbidden is changing the child's lineage to the adoptive father. The child keeps the name of his biological father, and the rules of 'awrah and mixing with him follow the Shari'ah (Al-Ahzab 33:5).

5. WHEN DID THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ BEGIN LIVING WITH SAFIYYAH?

After the period of istibra' (waiting to establish that the womb is clear) was complete. Anas narrated that he waited until they reached Sadd ar-Rawha', when Safiyyah had become pure, and only then did he live with her (Sahih al-Bukhari 4211). The rulings of the Shari'ah were fully observed.

6. WHAT IS THE RULING ON MARRYING WHILE IN IHRAM?

The majority of scholars (the Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali schools) hold that a marriage contract made in ihram is invalid, based on his saying: "The one in ihram may not marry, nor give in marriage" (Sahih Muslim 1409). The Hanafi school holds that it is valid, based on Ibn 'Abbas's report about Maymunah (chapter 24).

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7. HOW LONG IS A WOMAN'S PERIOD OF MOURNING?

Three days for the death of a relative other than her husband, and four months and ten days for a wife whose husband has died, based on the hadith of Umm Habibah (Sahih al-Bukhari 1280; chapter 19).

8. DID THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ LOVE ALL HIS WIVES EQUALLY?

The love of the heart is not within human control, and he loved 'A'ishah most. Yet he was just in all outward matters: the rota, maintenance, visits and the drawing of lots (An-Nisa' 4:129; chapter 34).

9. WHICH OF THE WIVES OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ DIED LAST?

According to the well-known view, Umm Salamah, in 61 or 62 AH, at an age of over 80 (chapter 7).

10. WHERE ARE THE MOTHERS OF THE BELIEVERS BURIED?

All of them in al-Baqi', Madinah, except Khadijah at al-Hajun in Makkah, and Maymunah at Sarif (chapter 32).

11. MAY A WOMAN ASK RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS THAT FEEL EMBARRASSING?

Yes — and she is praised for it. Umm Salamah asked about ghusl for a woman with braided hair, and 'A'ishah praised the women of the Ansar because shyness did not stop them from gaining understanding of the religion (Sahih Muslim 332; chapter 35).

12. WHAT SHOULD ONE READ AFTER THIS SERIES?

The series The Prophet's Sirah ends with this book. The life of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ can be known more closely through the series The Shama'il of the Prophet ﷺ, which describes his features, character and daily habits.

LESSONS

Every answer in this chapter returns to one principle: the household of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was built on revelation, justice and mercy. When we understand this principle, many questions answer themselves.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

With this Part 2, the story of ***the eleven Mothers of the Believers*** is complete. Each has her own distinction and lesson:

MOTHER OF THE BELIEVERS	KEY LESSON
Khadijah	Early faith and sacrifice; greetings from Allah
Sawdah	Generosity; putting the Hereafter first
'A'ishah	Knowledge; declared innocent by the Qur'an
Hafsah	Worship; guardian of the Qur'an sheets
Zaynab bint Khuzaymah	"Mother of the poor"
Umm Salamah	Supplication in calamity; wise counsel at Hudaybiyah
Zaynab bint Jahsh	Submitting to Allah's decree; "the longest hand"
Juwayriyah	A blessing to her people; words that weigh more
Umm Habibah	Steadfast abroad; constancy in the regular sunnah prayers
Safiyyah	"Daughter of a Prophet"; Islam abolishes racism
Maymunah	Teacher of purification; the home where Ibn 'Abbas learned

A MESSAGE FOR US

Our mothers came from different backgrounds — rich and poor, Quraysh and non-Quraysh, Arab and of Israelite descent, widowed and unmarried — yet they were ***united by faith***. This is the beauty of Islam: honour is measured not by lineage, but by ***piety and deeds***. May Allah be pleased with them all, and gather us with them in Paradise.

With this book, the series **The Prophet's Sirah** comes to an end. Alhamdulillah. In sha Allah, our journey with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ will continue with a new series, ***The Shama'il of the Prophet*** ﷺ, following the chapter order of Imam at-Tirmidhi's ***ash-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyyah***. And Allah knows best.

To every reader who has followed this journey from Book 1 to Book 32B — from the birth of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ until he returned to the Highest Companion, and to the Mothers of the Believers who carried on his legacy — the author offers his deepest thanks. All the good in this series comes from Allah, and every shortcoming comes from the author's own weakness. Please forgive him, and kindly point out any mistakes you find.

O Allah, accept this small effort, and make it beneficial knowledge and an ongoing charity for the author, his family and everyone who reads and shares it. Plant in our hearts love for Your Prophet Muhammad

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ﷺ, for his family and his wives, and for his Companions. Gather us with them in Your Paradise, and let us drink from the Pool of Your Prophet from his noble hand, one sip after which we shall never thirst again. Amin, O Lord of the worlds.

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Sahih al-Bukhari 1420 (the one with the longest hand). https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1420

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SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2:261

مَّثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمۡوَٰلَهُمۡ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنۢبَتَتۡ سَبۡعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنۢبُلَةٖ مِّاْئَةُ حَبَّةٖۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُضَٰعِفُ لِمَن يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٢٦١

The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/2:261

SURAH SABA' 34:39

قُلۡ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَبۡسُطُ ٱلرِّزۡقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنۡ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَقۡدِرُ لَهُۥۚ وَمَآ أَنفَقۡتُم مِّن شَيۡءٖ فَهُوَ يُخۡلِفُهُۥۖ وَهُوَ خَيۡرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ٣٩

Say, "Indeed, my Lord extends provision for whom He wills of His servants and restricts [it] for him. But whatever thing you spend [in His cause] - He will compensate it; and He is the best of providers."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/34:39

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2588

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ، وَابْنُ، حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - وَهُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « مَا نَقَصَتْ صَدَقَةٌ مِنْ مَالٍ وَمَا زَادَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا بِعَفْوٍ إِلاَّ عِزًّا وَمَا تَوَاضَعَ أَحَدٌ لِلَّهِ إِلاَّ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Charity does not decrease wealth.

Allah does not increase a servant who forgives except in honour. And no one humbles himself for the sake of Allah except that Allah raises him in rank."

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CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya bin Ayyub, Qutaibah bin Sa'id and 'Ali bin Hujr, from Isma'il bin Ja'far, from al-'Ala' bin 'Abd al-Rahman, from his father 'Abd al-Rahman bin Ya'qub, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه .

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Virtue, Good Manners and Joining the Ties of Kinship (Kitab al-Birr wa al-Silah wa al-Adab), chapter on the encouragement of forgiveness and humility, Hadith No. 2588.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2588

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1631

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ - يَعْنِي ابْنَ سَعِيدٍ - وَابْنُ حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - هُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « إِذَا مَاتَ الإِنْسَانُ انْقَطَعَ عَنْهُ عَمَلُهُ إِلاَّ مِنْ ثَلاَثَةٍ إِلاَّ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ جَارِيَةٍ أَوْ عِلْمٍ يُنْتَفَعُ بِهِ أَوْ وَلَدٍ صَالِحٍ يَدْعُو لَهُ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "When a person dies, his deeds come to an end except for three: an ongoing charity, knowledge that is benefited from, or a righteous child who prays for him."

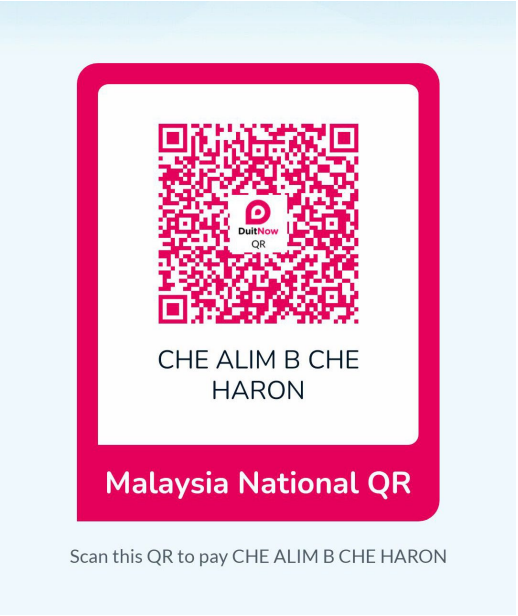
CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya bin Ayyub, Qutaibah bin Sa'id and 'Ali bin Hujr, from Isma'il bin Ja'far, from al-'Ala' bin 'Abd al-Rahman, from his father 'Abd al-Rahman bin Ya'qub, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه .

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Wills (Kitab al-Wasiyyah), chapter on the reward that reaches a person after his death, Hadith No. 1631.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1631

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