

Marriage of Hazrat Fatima al-Zahra (s.a.) and Imam Ali ibn Abi (.Talib (a.s

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Many of us have probably placed ourselves and even others in difficult conditions and unnecessary expenses only to pass through the regular routines of life. Interestingly enough if we think clearly, many of these hardships we put ourselves through are rootless, and derive only from an unnecessary norm and culture that have found its way into society affecting our .lives either willingly or unwillingly

**Congratulations on the Happy Wedding
Day of Lady Fatima al-Zahra (S.A) and
Imam Ali (A.S)!**



During the era of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) there lived a rich man by the name of Abdur Rahman ibn Awf, whom as the custom of the pre-Islamic era believed a large dowry [Dowry, also known as Sidaq refers to a wealth that a husband offers his wife as a gift to show his true intention.] to present a woman's value and her husband's superiority in society. Abdur Rahman ibn Awf visited Prophet Muhammad (saw) and said, "If you give Lady Fatimah's (sa) hand in marriage to me, I will put as her dowry a hundred camels covered with expensive Egyptian cloth followed by a thousand gold Dinars!"

Prophet Muhammad (saw) asked, "Do you think I am the servant of wealth and money that you try to impress me with these things?"

Other than Abdur Rahman ibn Awf, there were many other men like Abu Bakr, Umar ibn al-Khattab, Uthman from the companions (Sahabah) of Prophet Muhammad (saw) who would ask Lady Fatimah's (sa) hand in marriage for reasons ranging from her well-known virtues to her relation to Prophet Muhammad (saw) and a noble family. However, all suitors were refused

for as Prophet Muhammad (saw) had said, Lady Fatimah's (sa) marriage had been decreed by Allah (SWT). And with the descent of the angel of revelation, Hazrat Jibril (Gabriel) Prophet Muhammad (saw) had been commanded to marry Lady Fatimah to Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (as). Prophet Muhammad (saw) has said in this regards, an angel came to me from Allah (SWT) and said, "The Lord sends his greetings unto you and has said, I have wedded your daughter Fatimah in the heavens to Ali ibn Abi Talib; you too therefore wed Fatimah to Ali ibn Abi Talib!"

It is mentioned in the narratives that Prophet Muhammad (saw) said: "If Ali didn't exist, there would be no mate for Fatimah."

This Prophetic attitude, connected to providence, Divine inspiration and will, draws our attention and makes us stop to ponder a little. It raises very critical and significant questions. Why didn't Prophet Muhammad (saw) leave the matter of Lady Fatimah's (sa) marriage to herself? Why was the Messenger of Allah (saw) not allowed to give Lady Fatimah (sa) to any of those who sought her hand until Allah (SWT), the All Wise, had ordered him to do so? Why was Lady Fatimah's (sa) marriage so distinguished by these characteristics? There must be a Divine secret and wisdom related to this marriage, and connected with this critical human relationship between Lady Fatimah (sa), the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (saw), and Ali bin Abi Talib (as), his cousin, "brother and self", as the Messenger of Allah used to refer to Imam Ali (as).

Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) was raised by Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) from infancy. He lived with the Messenger of Allah (saw) and Lady Khadija tul Kubra (s.a.). He was brought up in the shade of Divine inspiration and graduated from the prophetic school. While still a boy, he was the first male believer in the mission and message of Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). It was this unique relationship that Imam Ali (as) describes in these words :

"You know that due to my close relationship, and my special rank I enjoyed with the Messenger of Allah (saw), I have a distinguished position with him. He took me in his lap when I was a baby. He often kept me embraced to his heart. He used to make me sleep next to him. We used to be so close to each other that I felt the warmth of his body and smelled the fragrance

of his odor. When I was a baby, He fed me from his mouth, chewing hard bits for me. He never found me lying or making a mistake."

Imam Ali (as) continued in the same speech, "I followed Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) step by step as a baby camel follows its mother. He used to place a fresh code of behavior before me daily and used to order me to follow it. Every year he used to stay in the cave of Hira. Nobody used to be with him but me. No single house gathered, at the time of early Islam, but the Messenger of Allah's (saw), with Lady Khadija tul Kubra (sa) and me, the third of them. I used to see the light of revelation and smell the fragrance of prophethood."

The secret of this training was not vague. Nor was this care merely out of the blood relationship. It is a matter related to the life of the whole Ummah (Community/Nation). The relationship went as far as the branches of prophethood and Imamah went. Thus Allah (SWT), the Eternal, gave the best woman of this Ummah, in marriage to the best of its men. Glory be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds!

Imam Ali (as) was the one Prophet Muhammad (saw) praised before Hadrat Fatimah (sa) saying: "I asked my Lord to marry you to the best of his creatures."

And he said to Imam Ali (as): "Aren't you satisfied that you are holding, in respect to me, the rank of Haroon (Aaron) to Musa (Moses) (as) except that there is no prophet after me?" Similarly, he asked Lady Fatimah (sa): "Aren't you satisfied that you are the believing women?" So, both of them were the most loved by Prophet Muhammad (saw) and the closest of people to him.

Ayesha, the wife of Messenger of Allah (saw) is reported to have been asked: "Who is, from among all people, most loved by Prophet of Allah (saw)?" "Hadrat Fatimah," she said.

"And from among the men?" they asked. "Her husband," she replied, "for I know him to be a fasting and praying one."

With the consummation of the marriage, the household of the relatives of Prophet of Allah (saw) was established. Prophet Muhammad (saw) cared for this household and often spoke about it, stressing that Imam Ali bin Abi Talib, Lady Fatimah and their descendants were his family and that from Imam Ali bin Abi Talib and Lady Fatimah his offspring and children would descend.

It was Allah's (SWT) Will that the offspring of the Messenger of Allah (saw) descend from Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (as) and Lady Fatimah (sa), and that Imam Hassan (as) and Imam Hussain (as), and the pure progeny be Imams and guides for this Ummah. That is why the

marriage of Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (as) and Lady Fatimah (sa) was achieved upon a Divine order.

Although it is true this marriage is a divine marriage, however Lady Fatimah's (sa) character and in general women rights in Islam for choosing their own husbands provided that Prophet Muhammad (saw) not proceed to this act without having his daughter's word in this matter. When Prophet Muhammad (saw) discussed Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib's (as) proposal to her, he clearly explained his characteristics.

Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (as), a man whose worldly goods and wealth were to the least, and who did not meet the criteria for marriage that the pre-Islamic era required of him, had however a character that was full of faith and religious virtues. This time, unlike the previous cases Lady Fatimah (sa) agreed. Once Prophet Muhammad (saw) saw Lady Fatimah's (as) agreement in marriage, he asked Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) if he has anything to place as his wife's dowry. Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) replied, "May my parents be sacrificed for you, you are well aware that my belongings are nothing more than a sword, a shield, and a Camel."

Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw), who believed a small dowry to increase a woman's value as opposed to a large one, replied, "You are correct. You will need your sword for battles with the enemies. And with your Camel you must water the palm trees and travel with it on your trips. Thus you can only give your shield as her dowry."

Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) ordered to sell Imam Ali's (as) shield. He divided its money into three sections. He gave a part of it to Hazrat Bilal (ra) to purchase a decent perfume, and he spent the other two to purchase some household items and clothes for Lady Fatimah (sa). Obviously with the money from the shield the material that could be bought were very cheap and simple!

History has recorded the material that were purchased with the money consisted of these items: a large scarf for four Dirham, material for a dress for seven Dirham, a bed made of wood and leaves from a date palm, four pillows made from sheep skin and filled with leaves from an aromatic plant, a woolen curtain, a small mat, one hand mill, a leathern sac for water, one copper flat wash, a container for milking the Camel, and a pitcher made from clay. Lady Fatimah's (sa) simple dowry and its usage for purchasing necessities of the home can be the biggest lesson for decreasing our expenses and remaining satisfied with what we are capable of purchasing.

A marriage so divine, yet so simple? What are its criteria? Where then can virtues be found? And amidst all these, how should we act? Let us be the judge?

Hence during the second year after the migration, marriage of Imam Ali (as) with Lady Fatimah

(sa) took place. Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) did not send Lady Fatimah (sa) the same day to Imam Ali's (as) house. Imam Ali (as), on his part, started preparing his house for Lady Fatimah (sa) and furnishing it in a simple and neat way. He covered the floor with soft sand and placed a wooden bar between two walls for hanging their laundry on. He decorated Lady Fatimah's room with a sheep skin and a pillow, stuffed with palm leaves. He got his house ready and was awaiting Lady Fatimah's arrival.

Twenty-nine days (in another narration more than five months) passed, but Lady Fatimah Zahra (sa) had not moved to her new house yet. Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) was too shy to discuss the matter with the Messenger of Allah (saw). So he asked his brother Aqil to go with him to the house of the Prophet of Allah (saw). On their way, they met Umm Ayman, the maidservant of the Prophet of Allah (saw).

They explained to her Imam Ali's (as) desire. Umm Ayman conveyed Imam Ali's (as) request to Umm Salamah, the wife of the Messenger of Allah (saw). She also told the rest of Prophet Muhammad's (saw) wives about the matter. They got together and decided to go, all of them, to the Messenger of Allah (saw).

Informed of Imam Ali's (as) request, Prophet Muhammad (saw) consented. On an occasion like this, a mother has place which cannot be filled by another. Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) was very eager to make compensation to Lady Fatimah Zahra (sa) for the absence of her mother. He (saw) himself took part in the preparations for the nuptials.

Prophet Muhammad (saw) ordered his wives to prepare Lady Fatimah (sa) for her husband as any girl should be. They did it with happiness and joy. The Messenger of Allah (saw) called for a festival. Imam Ali (as) prepared a befitting feast. Both Muhajirs (immigrants) and Ansars (helpers), shared in the blessed occasion with their Prophet Muhammad (saw).

And thus the married life of Hazrat Fatima al-Zahra (sa) and Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) began. The establishment of the new house was completed, and its firm pillars were fixed by the Messenger of Allah (saw). By them he had secured the basis of the new legislation, life and philosophy of marriage and family. It was an example set for the coming generations to follow. The Messenger of Allah (saw), throughout his lifetime personified the principles of his message, and the values of his Shariah (Islamic Law), which specify the position of woman and her worth and rights in life through the person of Hazrat Fatima al-Zahra (sa). The father loved his little girl and filled her with tenderness and affection. He (saw) took the responsibility of the marriage, the purchase of her needs, her nuptials and the festival. What kind of extraordinary care Prophet of Islam (saw) displayed towards women? How high is the position of the family, woman and marriage in his noble, eternal Shariah (Islamic Law)?

These are the lessons, pioneering social ideals, and the Islamic system for the behavior of the Muslim family which would produce the high principled generations. They are the practical applications of the social and family ties, and the sound relationships and conduct ordered by Allah (SWT), and personified by His noble Messenger (saw). Hazrat Fatima al-Zahra (sa) and Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (as), had 4 children: Imam Hassan, Imam Hussain, Hazrat Zainab and Hazrat Umm Kulthum (pbut). Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain (pbut), who are trained by such mother, are of the 12 Imams and the other 9 Imams [except Imam Ali and Imam Hassan (pbut)] are of Imam Hussain's (pbuh) progeny and are related to Prophet Muhammad (saw) by Lady Fatimah (sa). This is the reason we call her Umm al-A'immah (Mother of Imams).

Hadrat Fatimah (sa) was pregnant one other time, after the death of her dear father, Prophet Muhammad (saw). This child, however, never was given the chance to live. Mohsin, the stillborn son of Hazrat Fatima al-Zahra (sa) was aborted when the door of her house was pushed down upon her by those opposing her husband regarding successor ship after the death of the Messenger of Allah (saw).

So all of Lady Fatimah's living children were four. She herself didn't live long. She passed away while still in the prime of her life. She joined her father, the Messenger of Allah (saw) in the other world. She left behind her little children, the oldest was hardly seven years old