

# An introduction to the Prophet's children



## 1.0 Introduction - why is this topic area important?

The main purposes of our life is to please Allah and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). We can perform this duty in many ways. One way we can do this is talk about the Prophet's blessed children, for certainly this will ensure his happiness. When people mention our children in a positive way in our presence, we experience unbelievable joy and peace. So if we talk about the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) children, will he not show happiness and joy? Of course he will.

Secondly, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and his family are a perfect blueprint for us on how to live our lives. They are a radiant example for us all.

And this relates to the third reason, that his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) family is the most perfect family ever to have existed. It has a seal of approval from Allah Almighty who has purified and will continue to purify this family till the Day of Judgement (Qur'an, 33:33).

## 2.0 HIS DAUGHTERS

His daughters were Sayyida Zainab, Sayyida Ruqayyah, Sayyida Umm Kulthum and Sayyida Fatima. All were from Sayyida Khadija (may Allah be pleased with her).

We will start not in age order, but with Fatima, as she was the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) most beloved.

### 2.1. Sayyida Fatima (may Allah be pleased with her)

She was the youngest daughter of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and his most beloved. She was born in Makka five years before the public announcement of Nabuwwa. Unlike the traditional custom, she was not sent for breast feeding outside in the countryside. She grew up in the best possible household, one full of radiance and Nur. During her early years, she saw the respect and admiration his father held in Makkan society - he was from the respected tribe of Quraysh and he was affectionately known as al-Amin. However, that changed quickly and she witnessed much hardship.

\*She was only ten when she witnessed the social boycott of Muslims (Sh'ib Abi Talib), when the Muslims had to live in restricted conditions for three whole years.

\*Fatima removed the camel intestines that had been placed on Prophet Muhammad's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) back during Salah at the Ka'ba. It has been placed there by Uqba ibn Abi Mu'it, encouraged by Abu Jahl, Shaiba ibn Rabi'a and Umayya ibn Khalaf.

\*Fatima also witnessed the Year of Sorrow (Aam al-Huzn).

\*In the battle of Uhud, she helped the wounded.

She was a workaholic; grinding wheat for bread, fetching water, cooking, cleaning, helping her father and so on. When she asked for help in this matter, her father (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) gave her Tasbih Fatima; namely to recite Subhanallah 33 times, Alhamdulillah 33 times and Allahu Akbar 34 times after every obligatory Salah.

In the second year of Hijra, after Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) had shown unparalleled bravery at Badr, he approached the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and asked for his daughter's hand in marriage. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked Fatima and she wept in agreement. This shows that there is no forced marriage in Islam. The Mahr was four hundred Dirhams.

At first, a home was set up for Ali and Fatima that was a prolonged distance from the Prophet's mosque. One companion Haaritha ibn Nu'man had a number of properties near the Prophet's mosque and so he offered one to Ali and Fatima. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was moved by this offer.

Hasan was born to Ali and Fatima in the third year of Hijra. A year later, Hussain was born. Ali and Fatima had two other daughters, Zainab and Umm Kulthum (though other reports suggest they had three sons and three daughters).

She passed away six months after the Messenger of Allah. She is buried in Jannat al-Baqi. In outward appearance, she was a reflection of her father, the way she walked, spoke, sat and stood.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) dearly loved her. On occasions, he would stand for her as she came in. All this in a very patriarchal society. It was unheard of to lend titles to women in those days, but the Prophet gave her the title of 'Leader of the women in Paradise.'

## 2.2. Sayyida Zaynab (may Allah be pleased with her)

She was the eldest daughter of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). She was born when the Prophet was about thirty, ten years before the public announcement of Nabuwwa. She accepted Islam and migrated too.

She married Abu'l Aas, who at first was not a Muslim, but later did accept Islam (one year before Zaynab passed away (8AH)).

She passed away in the 8th year of Hijrah. The cause of her death was a wound she received whilst on the Hijra to al-Madina.

She had a son called Ali and a daughter called Umamah, who was looked after by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Companions report that the Prophet used to perform Salah al-Fajr with her on his shoulders. Ali married her after the death of Fatima.

## 2.3. Sayyida Ruqayyah (may Allah be pleased with her)

She was the second daughter of Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). When she was born, the Prophet was 33 years old, 7 years before Nabuwwa. Ruqayyah was engaged to Utba, Abu Lahab's son, before her father's public announcement of prophethood. She did not live with her. When Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) started calling people to Islam, Abu Lahab summoned his son and told him to break the Nikah. Ruqayyah then married Sayyiduna Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him). Uthman and his wife Ruqayyah joined the first group of people who migrated to Ethiopia. Uthman returned to Makkah from Ethiopia and from there migrated to Madinah. Ruqayyah became ill during the preparation of the Battle of Badr. Uthman asked permission to fight since manpower was required. He was not given permission. He was counted among the excused because he had to stay with his wife. All books consider Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) as a Badri.

The day when Zayd Ibn Haritha brought the news of Badr victory to Madinah, Ruqayyah passed away (2AH). Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) could not

take part in his daughter's, Ruqayya's, funeral because of the Battle of Badr. They had one son called Abdullah who passed away at the age of six.

#### 2.4. Sayyida Umm Kulthum (may Allah be pleased with her)

She too was born before the official appearance of Islam. She too married Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) in 3 AH, though she too was engaged to Abu Lahab's son prior to this (Utayba). This is why Uthman is given the title of Dhur-Nurayn (the possessor of two lights). Two of the Prophet's daughters were married to the Prophet, he himself said that if he had one hundred daughters, they would marry Uthman (Kanz al-Ummal, al-Mawahib, I; 394):

و الذي نفسي بيده لو أن عندي مائة بنت يمتن واحدة بعد واحدة زوجتك أخري بعد أخري هذا جبريل أخبرني أن الله يأمرني  
أن أزوجهها

Having said that, all the Khulafa Rashidun (the Rightly-Guided Caliphs) developed close ties with the Messenger. Abu Bakr's daughter Aisha married the Prophet. Umar's daughter Hafsa bint Umar married the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Uthman married Ruqayyah and Um Kulthum and Ali married Fatima (may Allah be pleased with them all).

Umm Kulthum passed away in the 9th year of Hijra, the Prophet performed her Janaza and she is buried in Jannatul Baqi. She did not have any children.

### 3.0 HIS SONS

Qasim, Abdullah and Ibrahim (may Allah be pleased with them all)

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had three sons, two of which were born to Sayyida Khadija (may Allah be pleased with her). The other was born from Sayyida Maariya, namely Ibrahim. All three passed away in infancy.

#### 3.1. Qasim (may Allah be pleased with him)

The first child to be born to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was Qasim. This is why the Prophet is sometimes referred to as Abu'l Qasim. Qasim was only two years old (other reports say 16 months) when he passed away, this was before the public announcement of Nabuwwa.

In a hadith sharif, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) declared himself to be Qasim, meaning the divider. He said, 'Allah gives and I am the divider.'

والله يعطي و انا قاسم

#### 3.2. Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him)

He is also referred to as Tayyib and Tahir. He was less than two years old when he passed away.

We learn to name your children after your fathers and forefathers is Sunna. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) named his own child after his father. Would he have done that if he knew his father was a non-Muslim? Never. This point is sufficient to refute those who claim the parents of the Prophet (peace be upon him) were not Muslims.

#### 3.3. Ibrahim (may Allah be pleased with him)

In the month of Muharram in the seventh year of Hijrah, the Prophet (peace & blessings of Allāh be upon him) sent letters to different rulers of the world. All the letters were simple and had one purpose, to invite them to accept Islam.

In Alexandria, Muqawqis received the Prophet's letter via Hātib ibn Balta'ah (may Allāh be pleased with him). Muqawqis treated the letter with respect by placing it in an ivory box. He sent two female servants, a mule, some garments and a mule back to the Prophet as gifts.

The slave girl was Māriya, who later became the bondmaid of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). After she gave birth to Ibrāhīm, she was freed. The other girl was called Sīrīn, who married the poet Hassān ibn Thābit, and was the mother of Abd al-Rahmān.

Ibrahim passed away at the age of about eighteen months, in the tenth year of Hijra. On the day he died, there was a solar eclipse. All ancient cultures had their own views on a solar eclipse. Because it leads to darkness, many saw this as a bad omen. In the time of Ignorance (*Jāhiliyya*) the Arabs believed that a solar eclipse occurred upon the death of someone important, or to warn of a forthcoming calamity.

In the time of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), there was a solar eclipse just after his son Ibrāhīm passed away. This reinforced the suspicion that this phenomenon occurred when someone important passed away. However, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) reassured Muslims this was not the case, but rather it is a sign of Allāh's power and might. He said,

Verily the Sun and the Moon do not eclipse on the death of someone nor their birth. But rather they are signs from the signs of Allāh. So when you see an eclipse, perform Salāh (*Sahīh Muslim*).

### 3.4. Why did his sons pass away in infancy?

Was there any wisdom from Allah behind this? Seemingly, this was unfair on Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), that his daughters bore him children but his sons did not. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) lived in a very male-orientated society. The fact that Prophet Muhammad's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) sons passed away in infancy gave some infidels a reason to mock and ridicule him.

But there is great wisdom in this very fact. It worked out better for him. It protected the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in many ways. Why did the Prophet's sons die in infancy?

Many prophets and messengers existed in the past whereas Nabuwwa was carried on and continued in their children. Ibrahim and Ismail is an obvious example, Yaqub & Yusuf, Dawud and Sulaiman are others. If Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had sons and they reached full age, then the fact that they did not become prophets after him would be seen as deficient and disrespectful amongst the people. Ibrahim's son Ismail become a prophet so why didn't Muhammad's, people may have asked. To stop this from happening, his sons passed away in infancy.

The second reason is more important. If he had sons that reached full age, and they did become prophets after him (just like Ismail after Ibrahim), then this would be a direct infringement on Khatm Nabuwwa. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is the last Messenger. No one can be a messenger after him. Not even his own son.

#### **4.0 Concluding remarks**

\*Always recite the *Tasbih* of Sayyida Fatima (may Allah be pleased with her) after every obligatory Salah. This method is to recite Subhanallah thirty-three times, Alhamdulillah thirty-three times and AllahuAkbar thirty four times.

\*Learning about the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) children and learn about good parenting too.

\*To the youngsters: you do not know what your parents have done for you till you become parents yourself.

\*To the elders. No one will remember you (i) for the number of awards you amounted (ii) for the amount of money you have amassed (iii) the size of your house, either here or abroad. The only criteria you will be judged on is your children. If your children turn out bad, then people will say 'but his children turned out bad', even if you become prime minister. If your children are good, then people will remember that, not the size of your house.

\*The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) declared 'good children' as a form of sadaqa jariya.

\*The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw the death of six of his seven children during his own lifetime. It is hard enough to forbear one, yet he endured six, including a grandchild of his. He is undoubtedly a role model for us in each and every way.

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