

HADRA
**ZAINAB BINT
JAHASH**

May Allah be pleased with her

The Generous One



CHILDREN
RSEIES
#8/10

Department of Ishā`at, Lajna Imā`illah Canada

2015

Stories of Şahābiyāt

Ḥaḍrat Zainab bint Jahash^{RA}

Other book in this series:

1. ḤAḌRAT UMMUL-MASĀKĪN ḤAḌRAT ZAINAB BINT KHUZAIMAH^{RA}
2. ḤAḌRAT UMMI HĀNĪ^{RA}
3. ḤAḌRAT UMMI ḤARĀM BINT MILḤĀN^{RA}
4. ḤAḌRAT SUMAIYYAH BINT KHABĀṬ^{RA}
5. ḤAḌRAT MAIMŪNAH^{RA}
6. ḤAḌRAT UMMUL-FADL LUBĀBATUL-KUBRĀ^{RA}
7. ḤAḌRAT FĀṬIMAH BINT AL-KHATTĀB^{RA}
8. ḤAḌRAT ḤAFṢAH^{RA}
9. ḤAḌRAT FĀṬIMAH-UL ZUHRA^{RA}



An adaptation of Urdu book by Lajna Imā'illah

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Message from the National President Lajna Imā'illah Canada

In the name of Allah the Gracious, the Merciful

It is with great joy, I am writing these lines that Allah Almighty has enabled Lajna Imā'illah Canada to publish the series of these books for children. The objective of publishing these books is to provide children with a basic knowledge and understanding of revered personalities from our religious history and to develop a desire in their hearts to imitate them.

During several *tarbiyyati workshops* that I had with girls, they expressed their desire that they would like to know about the life of Ṣahābiyāt, of Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him). I hope these books can provide them valuable insight about these personalities *inshaAllah!* Moreover, these may be able to help and motivate readers to develop their bond with Allah Almighty – the Lord of all the worlds.

I am thankful to National Secretary Ishā`at Lajna Imā'illah Canada Dr. Amtul Qudoos Farhat Sahiba for gladly taking up this project and working hard until its completion. I pray that may Allah accept her humble efforts and reward her abundantly *Ameen!* Along with her there is a team who has helped in adapting the translation of these books in English. I am thankful to Rasheda Sial Sahiba, Nasim Sahi Sahiba, Ansa Talat Sahiba, Mansoorah Rauf Sahiba, Munazza Khan Sahiba and all other members of the team. May Allah reward them abundantly *Ameen!*

I hope and pray that these books will be beneficial for children *inshaAllah* and they will be able to gain knowledge about the revered personalities from the history of Islam after reading these.

May Allah accept this humble effort of Lajna Imā'illah Canada and enable us to further excel in our abilities *Ameen!*

Wassalam,

Amtul Noor Daud

Sadr Lajna Imā'illah Canada

August 19, 2015

FOREWORD

It has long been felt by Lajna Imā'illah Canada that there is scarcity of books for English speaking Ahmadi children. As a humble effort to meet the needs of our children Lajna Imā'illah Canada has planned for a series of Islamic books for children in English language. The first in this series is entitled **Ṣaḥābiyāt** (the she- Companions of the Holy Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)). It includes stories of selective Ṣaḥābiyāt and some noble wives of the Holy Holy Prophet^{sa}.

Most of these stories have been translated and adapted from Urdu books previously published by Lajna Imā'illah. A team of dedicated members have worked on this project under continued inspiration, guidance and advice by our National President Respected Amtul Noor Daud Sahiba. I am grateful to all of them from the bottom of my heart. Jazakum Allah wa Ahsanal Jaza!

Dear children we hope that you enjoy reading these stories of noble women in Islam and derive knowledge and maximum benefit out of their lives and character. Inshā Allah!

Happy Reading! And kindly keep praying for successful completion of future series on other topics. Inshā Allah!

Amtul Qudoos Farhat
National Secretary Ishā`at
Lajna Imā'illah Canada

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

In the name of Allāh, the Gracious, the Merciful

Ummul-Mu'minīn (The mother of the Believers)

Ḥaḍrat Sayyeda Zainab bint Jaḥsh^{ra}

May Allāh be pleased with her!

Dear children!

Allāh the Almighty created the world and everything within it. He created the sun so that we may have light and warmth. He created the moon and stars so that we can see and find our way in the dark. He created a variety of fruits and vegetables for us to eat. As He took care of our physical needs, similarly He sent prophets for the guidance and spiritual nourishment of His people. Prophets are chosen by Allāh to convey His message to mankind to do moral deeds. Prophets also warn people of the consequences of their bad deeds. Allāh favors His prophets by granting them noble wives who, under their guidance excel in piety and virtues.

Noble wives of the Holy Prophet^{sa}:

Every nation and every religion have had notable women who performed great and heroic deeds. Islām in particular has many such fortunate women whose magnificent lives and deeds are recorded in history. Among them are the wives and the daughters of the Prophet Muhammad^{sa} and the Ṣaḥābīyāt (female companions) who stood tall in character and faith.

You must be wondering who Ṣaḥābīyāt are? This is a title given to those women who took the oath of allegiance at the hand of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Having taken their oath, they not only practiced their faith diligently but also became helpers of the Prophet^{sa} in spreading the message of Islām to others.

So pious and righteous were the wives of our dear Prophet Ḥaḍrat Muhammad^{sa} that Allāh, the Exalted, mentioned their high status in the Holy Qur’ān and we will explain that a little later.

Allāh says:

“The Prophet is nearer to the believers than their own selves, and his wives are as mothers to them” (33:7)

“O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any other women... [i.e. you have a very high status] (33:33)

Prophet's wives are Mothers of Believers

Prophets wives are called *Ummahat al-Mu'minīn* which means Mothers of Believers. The prophets are the spiritual fathers of the believers, so their wives become the spiritual mothers of the believers.

The Holy Qur'ān states:

“The Prophet is nearer to the believers than their own selves, and his wives are as mothers to them” (33:7)

The wives of the Holy Prophet^{sa} played a great role in the history of Islām. They were the teachers of faith. Being wives they always remained in the company of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and learnt knowledge of the religion directly from the Prophet^{sa} himself. After his death they imparted that knowledge to believers.

Ummahāt al-Muminiin were very virtuous women. Their example is a model for all women to excel and prosper both in the spiritual and worldly sphere of life

Family and Heritage of Ḥaḍrat Zainab bint Jaḥsh^{ra}

Today we will tell you about the life, conduct and disposition of Ḥaḍrat Zainab bint Jaḥsh^{ra} who was one of the wives of Prophet Muhammad^{sa}. The marriage of Ḥaḍrat Zainab bint Jaḥsh^{ra} to the Holy Prophet^{sa} was commanded by Allah Almighty Himself and we will explain that little later.



Zainab^{ra} was known by the name of Ummul-Hakeem. She belonged to the family of Assad bin Khazima of Quraish tribe. Quraish is the same tribe in which our beloved Holy Prophet^{sa} was born. The tribe comprised of the progeny of Hadrat Ismail^{as}. Quraish is an Arabic word and it means to “collect”. Qusai bin Kalab, a great elder of the Quraish, gathered different families of his tribe and settled them in Makkah. The clan came to be known as Quraish. The clan always had a respectable status in Arabia (1)

Ḥaḍrat Zainab's^{ra} father's name was Jahash Ibn Riyāb and the name of her mother was Ummimah. Ummimah was the daughter of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib and the real paternal aunt of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Therefore Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} was also the first cousin of the Holy Prophet^{sa}.

After the Holy Prophet^{sa} proclaimed prophet-hood, many people turned into his sworn enemies; even those who used to address him^{sa} as *Sadiq* (Truthful) and *Āmīn* (Trustworthy). However the virtuous people of Makkah believed the Holy Prophet^{sa} to be on the right path. They accepted the invitation to Islām and received the pleasure of their Lord.

'Abdullāh bin Jahsh, the real brother of Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra}, was among those blessed people who said *labbaik*, (here I am) to the call of Islām. He took oath of allegiance at the hand of his maternal cousin. Along with him, his family members including his sister Ḥaḍrat Zainab bint Jahsh^{ra} also accepted Islām and became one of the *Assabiqoonul Awwaloon* (foremost among the earlier believers). History books have recorded her as one of the early converts of Islām. [2].

Ummul-Mu'minīn Ḥaḍrat Zainab bint Jahsh^{ra} had piety and righteousness in her character. The greatest superiority and honour she had, was of being the wife of Ḥaḍrat Muhammad^{sa} who was the most superior and perfect being of God.

Her brother ‘Abdullāh^{ra} bin Jaḥsh, had the distinction of holding and waving the flag of Islām for the first time. Her second brother, Abū Aḥmad bin Jaḥsh, is counted among the famous poets of Islām.

Ḥaḍrat Hamna^{ra} the sister of Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} was also among the early converts of Islām. Ummimah binnat ‘Abdul-Muṭṭalib, the respected mother of Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} was the real paternal aunt of the Holy Prophet of Allāh^{sa}.

Hostility of Makkans

The early converts of Islam were righteous people. They followed the commandments of the Holy Prophet^{sa} diligently so that they could earn the pleasure of Allāh. They left all evil deeds and strictly adhered to righteous actions. They began to offer five daily prayers and recite the Holy Qur’ān. They abandoned lies and spoke the truth. They gave up drinking, gambling, singing and listening to frivolous songs. Instead they would keep the company of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and listen to his moral advices which totally transformed their lives. There were other Makkans who continued to worship idols and did not believe in the unity of God. They considered every vice legitimate for them. These people felt threatened when the Muslims abandoned the ancient Arab rituals and customs.

The chiefs of Makkah felt insulted that the people of Makkah would listen to Ḥaḍrat Muhammad^{sa} instead of listening to them. They could not oppose the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} vehemently as he was also the son and grandson of a chief of the Quraish. However, they began to treat the new converts harshly. The new converts were mercilessly tortured in several ways. Sometimes they were dragged over hot sand. At times a helpless Muslim would be wrapped in a mat and engulfed in smoke to cause suffocation.

Hijrah (Migration) to Habshah

At the height of persecution, the Holy Prophet^{sa}, under Divine guidance, advised Muslims to do Hijrah to Habshah (present day Ethiopia- see in the map below)

Hijrah is the migration to another place. Hijrah is allowed when Muslims are persecuted and prohibited to practice their faith in their home town. When Muslims were not allowed to practice their faith in Makkah, Allah Almighty commanded believers to migrate to a place where they could find peace and worship freely.



When the atrocities of the Quraish intensified, the family of Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} was also victimized. At that point the Holy Prophet^{sa} asked his cousins (males and females) to migrate to Habshah. Habshah is the same country which is known as Ethiopia these days. It was ruled by King Najashi (Negus) who was a kind-hearted person. The Holy Prophet^{sa} had already sent a few people to Habshah who were treated nicely by the King Najashi. When the second caravan of Muslims was about to migrate, the entire family of Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} joined them under the leadership of her brother ‘Abdullāh bin Jaḥsh. Besides Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra}, her three brothers Abū Aḥmad^{ra}, Ubaid Ullah^{ra} and ‘Abdullāh^{ra}, her sister Hamna^{ra} and Ummi Ḥabībah^{ra}; the wife of her brother Ubaid Ullah bin Abū Suffian were also in this caravan. During their stay in Habshah, Ubaid Ullah, one of the brothers of Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} passed away.

After some time, people started hearing news that the conditions in Makkah had improved and they could return to Makkah. Despite many comforts in Habshah, their memories of the hometown were still fresh. They really wished to go back.

As soon as they heard that the conditions in Makkah had taken a turn for the better, Ḥaḍrat ‘Abdullāh bin Jaḥsh^{ra} led his family back to Makkah. However, when they arrived back in Makkah they were dismayed and disappointed to find that there was no change in their behaviours and treatment of Muslims. This persisting persecution led to another Hijrah; but to a different destination.

Second Hijrah - to Medina

At that time there were no modern means of communication. Information about distant places could not be reached. The journeys were made under harsh conditions and by difficult means. People used to travel on foot or on the backs of camels. It would take several days to travel even small distances.

Ḥaḍrat ‘Abdullāh bin Jaḥsh^{ra} realized that the state of affairs in Makkah was deteriorating and it was not possible for Muslims to live in peace and harmony. With the permission of the Holy Prophet^{sa} he migrated to Medina along with his entire family.

The people of Medina had already accepted Islām and had invited the Holy Prophet^{sa} and his followers to migrate there and live in peace.

When ‘Abdullāh bin Jaḥsh^{ra} the brother of Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} arrived in Medina along with his family, ‘Āṣim bin Thābit^{ra} bin Abī al-Aflaḥ Anṣārī^{ra} took all of them as guests. ‘Āṣim bin Thābit^{ra} bin Abī al-Aflaḥ Anṣārī^{ra} was a sincere Muslim of Medina. When the Holy Prophet^{sa} arrived in Medina he established a relationship called *relationship of fraternity* between local Muslims and migrant Muslims. In Islamic history, it is called the pact of brotherhood between Ansar (Muslims of Medina) and Muhajirin (migrant Muslims from Makkah).

Islām emphasises on virtues of all types; howsoever insignificant it may look. It requires Muslims to abstain from all kinds of vices. Islām also had another greater mission and that was to eradicate the evil traditions and customs .which were prevalent in Arabia from the age of ignorance. For example, Arabs gave great importance to wealth, cast, creed, colour and ancestry. But our Dear Master^{sa} invited them to the religion of Allāh and explained the difference between virtue and vice.

The Holy Qur’an states, “*The most honourable among you is the one who is righteous*” (Ch 49: Verse 14). This was the Divine decree.

A righteous person is called Muttaqī. A Muttaqī is always cautious, fears Allāh and loves Him. He is the person who does only what Allāh commands and desists from doing what Allāh forbids. He only does good deeds and refrains from doing bad ones.



Our dear Master^{sa} established a relationship of equality among mankind. Superiority was based on their righteousness. His own practical model set up a living example for others to follow.

First marriage to Ḥaḍrat Zaid Bin Harsa^{ra}

It was customary among the Arabs of that time to have slaves, just as some people in some cultures have servants or maids to do work. However, in current times, the servants and the maids are masters of their own will; they work when they choose to and get paid for their work. But things were different in Arabia at that time. The poor people used to sell their children to get some money and rich people would buy them. These children remained slaves to their master for their life time. They were given little food and hardly any clothes and were paid no compensation for the work they did round the clock. They had no rights and had to work for their masters even if they did not wish to. Many of them were maltreated and tortured.

Our dear prophet Ḥaḍrat Muhammad^{sa} did not approve of slavery. He said, “All human beings are the creatures of Allāh and no one has any superiority over anyone else. Superiority as defined by Allāh with respect to one’s virtuous and righteous deeds.”

When the Holy Prophet^{sa} married his first wife; Ḥaḍrat Khadijah^{ra} she gifted all her wealth and slaves to her husband. The Holy Prophet^{sa} at once freed all the slaves.

Ḥaḍrat Zaid Bin Harsa^{ra} was a slave. It was also customary not to marry a slave. They were considered inferior and not of worthy status. Islam abolished slavery and such customs were ended . The Holy Prophet^{sa} sent the marriage proposal of his slave Ḥaḍrat Zaid^{ra} for his paternal cousin Ḥaḍrat Zainab bint Jaḥsh^{ra}. The criteria for this proposal was righteousness and not the worldly status. The Holy Prophet^{sa} wished to set up an example from within his own family before he asked others to follow his message.

Ḥaḍrat Zaid^{ra} Bin Harsa was also presented to the Holy Prophet^{sa} by Ḥaḍrat Khadījah^{ra} as a gift. Zaid^{ra} was highly impressed by the kind treatment of his beloved Master^{sa}. He developed a very strong bond of love and respect for the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Once his father and uncle came to take him with them but Zaid^{ra} clearly refused to go with his father and uncle. He did not wish to be separated from his beloved Master^{sa}. The Holy Prophet^{sa} was so pleased with his sincerity that he adopted Ḥaḍrat Zaid^{ra} as his son.

The same Zaid bin Harsa^{ra} was now proposed to marry the cousin of the Holy Prophet^{sa} Ḥaḍrat Zainab bint Jaḥsh^{ra}. Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} did not like this proposal due to difference in status. Ḥaḍrat Zainab bint Jaḥsh^{ra} belonged to the family of Banū Hāshim who were the custodians of the Holy Ka‘bah.

You may be wondering who the custodian are. The **Custodian** of the Holy Ka‘bah is the family that is responsible for looking after the affairs of the Holy Ka‘bah. Such family is especially responsible to take care of the Pilgrims or *Hajjis* and provide them clean drinking water and food during the Hajj season. They were also responsible for the security and the cleanliness of the Holy Ka‘bah during the Hajj. To be a custodian of the Holy Ka‘bah was considered a matter of pride.

Ḥaḍrat Ismail^{as} was the first custodian of Ka‘bah. After him his sons and then other families became the custodians. After a long time the trusteeship of the Holy Ka‘bah was entrusted to Qusai bin Kalab who was the descendent of the Ḥaḍrat Ismail^{as}. Qusai bin Kalab was the great great grandfather of our Prophet Muhammad^{sa}. Because of the custodianship of the Holy Ka‘bah, Quraish were considered a respectable tribe.

Even though Ḥaḍrat Zaid^{ra} was a liberated slave, Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} was not satisfied with his proposal. She said to the Holy Prophet ^{sa}, “O’ the Prophet of Allāh! I am not satisfied at this proposal.”

However the Holy Prophet^{sa} visualised blessing in this marriage. The Prophet^{sa} wanted to eradicate the difference between the master and the slave and Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} had great respect for his wish.

Allāh the Almighty revealed following verse to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Its translation is:

And it behoves not a believing man or a believing woman, when Allāh and His Messenger have decided a matter, that there should be choice for them in the matter concerning them and who so disobeys, Allāh and His Messenger, surely strays away in manifest error. (33:37)

When Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} heard this Divine injunction, she reconciled herself to accept the proposal of marriage. For Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra}, the commandment of God and wish of the Holy Prophet^{sa} was dearer than her own desire.

So Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra}, in spite of the fact that she did not like this relationship, accepted this marriage for the sake of her Lord and the Prophet of Allāh.

Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} sincerely and honestly tried to keep this marriage. But the gulf between their natures and the attitudes was too wide and became wider with time. When Ḥaḍrat Zaid^{ra} realised that the two of them cannot live together any longer, he requested his dear Master^{sa} for permission to divorce.

The Holy Prophet^{sa} advised him to keep the relationship and not to divorce. The Holy Prophet^{sa} disliked divorce very much. On one occasion the Prophet^{sa} said:

“Of all the legitimate things divorce is the most hateful thing to Allāh”. (4)

When the Holy Prophet^{sa} advised Zaid^{ra} to observe Taqwa (righteousness) and forbade him to divorce, he accepted his advice and returned home. But it was difficult to reconcile the disparate nature of the two, and after some time Ḥaḍrat Zaid^{ra} divorced. (5)

Marriage to the Holy Prophet^{sa}

When the *iddat* (the stipulated time after divorce) of Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} came to an end, the Holy Prophet^{sa} received a revelation about the marriage of Hadzat Zainab^{ra} in which he^{sa} was directed by Allāh that he himself should marry her.

There were three gems of wisdom in this Divine decree.

Firstly, to assuage Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{sra} grief, secondly, to let the people understand that marrying a divorced woman is not bad, and thirdly, if the Holy Prophet^{sa} married the divorced wife of his own adopted son then it would practically demonstrate to the Muslims that an adopted son is not like a real son and the laws concerning a real son are not applicable to an adopted son.

Then Allāh the Almighty, explained it further in His Sacred Words:

Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allāh and the Seal of the Prophets; and Allāh has full knowledge of all things (33:41)

In this verse, Almighty God has explained that the Holy Prophet^{sa} did not have a real or biological son. Therefore, Ḥaḍrat Zaid^{ra} being his adopted son, did not have the status of a real son. In order to completely eradicate the ignorant customs of the Arabs, God said:

When Zaid had accomplished his want of her so as to have no further need of her, We joined her in marriage to thee, so that there may be no hindrance for the believers with regard to the wives of their adopted sons, when they have accomplished their want of them and Allāh's decree must be fulfilled. (33:38)

When Ḥaḍrat Zaid^{ra} conveyed the proposal of marriage to Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra}, she replied, “I cannot come to any definite decision until I am satisfied after *Istakhara*. After being satisfied by *Istikhara*, she gave her consent.”

This marriage of Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} was solemnized in 5 A.H. with the Holy Prophet^{sa} by her brother Abū Aḥmad^{ra} bin Jaḥsh at dower money of 400 dirham.

In this way this fortunate pious lady entered the *Haram* of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and got the title of *Ummul Mu'minīn* (mother of the believers).

On the next day of the marriage the Holy Prophet^{sa} arranged the *walima* (marriage feast). The *walima* meal consisted of bread and kind of curry. However from the *Anşār*, Ḥaḍrat Umm Salaim^{ra} who was the maternal aunt of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and the mother of Ḥaḍrat Anas^{ra}, sent *maleeda* (a special kind of sweet).

When all the things had been prepared the Holy Prophet^{sa} sent Ḥaḍrat Anas^{ra} to invite the people. Approximately 300 hundred people participated in the *walima*. When the meal was ready the Holy Prophet^{sa} divided people in groups of ten. Each group of people came in turn and after eating returned back.

Revelation about Purdah on her wedding



At the occasion of this *walima* the verses about *purdah* were revealed.

Once the guests had finished their meal they kept hanging around and started to gossip. The Holy Prophet^{sa} out of courtesy did not tell them to leave but he kept moving in and out of the room. In the same house Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} was also sitting with her face towards the wall. When it became very late the Holy Prophet^{sa} began to feel very uncomfortable. At that time Allāh, the Exalted revealed these verses in which Allāh said:

O ye who believe! Enter not the houses of the Prophet unless leave is granted to you for a meal without waiting for its appointed time. But enter when you are invited, and when you have finished eating, disperse, without seeking to engage in talk. That causes inconvenience to the Prophet, and he feels shy of asking you to leave. But Allāh is not shy of saying what is true. And when you ask them (the wives of the Prophet) for anything, ask them from behind a curtain. That is purer for your hearts and their hearts. (33:54)

After the revelation of this verse the Holy Prophet^{sa} hung a curtain in front of the door of his house and people refrained from going into the house. This happened in the 5th year of Hijrah. (7)

Life after marriage to the Holy Prophet^{sa}

The Holy Prophet^{sa} had separate dwellings for his wives. The dwellings of the dear Master Ḥaḍrat Muhammad^{sa} were the cradle of righteousness and virtuousness. The wives of the Prophet^{sa} took pride in his companionship. They loved him truly and immensely. His company enhanced them immensely in spirituality.

Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} also loved her husband^{sa} dearly. She took pride that Allāh from heaven had made her the Prophet's spouse. (8).

The Holy Prophet^{sa} held *Ummul- Mu'minīn* Zainab^{ra} in high esteem and he valued her very much. A great blessing which Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} had was that the Holy Prophet^{sa} used to offer prayers in her cubical.

The Holy Prophet^{sa} used to visit his wives after *Asr* prayer. While visiting Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} the Holy Prophet used to bring honey for her. (9).

Like the Holy Prophet^{sa} himself, all his wives lived a very simple life. *Ummul-Mu'minīn* Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} had no desire for worldly pomp and show, nor wealth or other amenities. On the other hand she worked with her own hands. She used to make silk out of wool and sell it. She used to spend all her income in the way of Allah. To serve the Holy Prophet^{sa} was a blessing and a fortune to her!

Ummul-Mu'minīn Ḥadrat Zainab^{ra} had a very high level of righteousness, purity and piety.

Generosity

She was very generous lady. She used to spend all her income to support the needy and poor. She did not even care for own needs.



The extent of her generosity and big heartedness can be understood by following ḥadīth:

Once someone from the pious wives of the Holy Prophet^{sa} asked the Holy Prophet^{sa}, “O’ the Prophet of Allāh^{sa}! Who from among us will die first to meet you”. The Holy Prophet^{sa} replied,

“The one who has the longest hands of all of you.” (10)

The pious wives could not understand the saying of the Holy Prophet^{sa} at that time. After the demise of the Holy Prophet^{sa} all his wives were keen to know who will be meeting him first. Everyone had the same wish; to meet him first! In this regard Ḥaḍrat ‘Ā’ishah^{ra} narrated as follows:

After the death of Sarkār-e-Do-‘Ālam (the Chief of both the Worlds^{sa}) whenever we, the wives, gathered together at some house we used to stretch our hands along a wall and measure them. We inferred that Ḥaḍrat Sauda^{ra} who was tallest amongst us, had the longest hands.

Ummul-Mu’minīn Ḥaḍrat ‘Ā’ishah^{ra} stated, “When after the passing away of Sarkār-e-Do-‘Ālam (the Chief of both the worlds), Ḥaḍrat Syeyda Zainab bint Jaḥsh^{ra} died first then we understood the meaning of “long hands”. It meant *sadqa*, charity and generosity. Ḥaḍrat Syeyda Zainab^{ra} was not of big physical structure. She was rather slim and had a short stature.”

A skilful artisan

Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} was an artisan. The money she earned with this skill was also spent in Allah’s way. *Ummul-Mu’minīn* Ḥaḍrat ‘Ā’ishah^{ra} says, “I have not seen any woman like Zainab^{ra} who works so hard to earn money and then gives it away in charity only to earn a place near God.”

Mutual respect between sister wives

Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} also praised Ḥaḍrat ‘Ā’ishah^{sra} sincerity fidelity, purity and truthfulness. On one occasion (incident of ifk) when the Holy Prophet^{sa} inquired from Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} about Ḥaḍrat ‘Ā’ishah she replied candidly: O Prophet of Allāh^{sa}! I swear by God I do not know anything except goodness and virtue in ‘Ā’ishah. (12)

Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} knew that Ḥaḍrat ‘Ā’ishah^{ra} was her co –wife and she was also aware that of all the wives Ḥaḍrat ‘Ā’ishah^{ra} was dearest to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Had she desired she could easily have uttered some words that could degrade Ḥaḍrat ‘Ā’ishah^{ra} in the eyes of the Prophet^{sa}. But her sincerity and righteousness did not allow her, not even to keep quiet. She spoke out with great certainty, “By God I do not know anything but goodness and virtue.”



Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} was very frugal for herself but generous for others. Like her very dear husband she found solace and comfort in serving the orphans and the widows. At her death great uneasiness spread among the poor and the needy of Medina.

This situation was expressed by Ḥaḍrat ‘Ā’ishah^{ra} in this way:

Such a fortunate and unique lady has passed away that the orphans and the widows have become worried and uneasy. (13)

Ḥaḍrat ‘Ā’ishah^{ra} was greatly shocked and aggrieved. She expressed the traits of Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} in these words:

I have seen no other woman more religious, more abstinent, more truthful, more generous, giver of alms and more diligent in seeking pleasure of God than Zainab^{ra}. Although she had bit of short temper but soon she would feel sorry for it. (14)

There is another narration in which Ḥaḍrat ‘Ā’ishah says:

May Allāh have mercy on Zainab bint Jahsh^{ra}. She truly had a unique position in this world. Allāh married her to His Prophet^{sa} and some verses of the Holy Qur’ān were revealed for her. (15)

Ḥaḍrat Ummi Salma praised her and said. (16) Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra}, used to keep fast and was a great worshipper. (17)

Hazrat Zainab^{ra} bint Jahash used to worship with great humility and submission. She worshipped even when she had an aching body. She had suspended a rope at the place of her worship to take support if she felt tired. When the Holy Prophet^{sa} came to know about the rope, he forbade her to worship in this manner. (18) However the Holy Prophet^{sa} acknowledged Hazrat Zainab^{ra} as a great worshiper.

Hafiz ibn-e-Hijar in his book *Asabah reports*:

Once the Holy Prophet^{sa} was distributing the spoils of war among a group of Migrants (*muhajreen*), Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} was also present on that occasion. She said something which Ḥaḍrat ‘Umar^{ra} did not like and he forbade Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} in a bitter tone not to interfere. At this, The Prophet of God said, “‘Umar don’t say anything to her, she is *Awwahun* (she is great worshipper and fearful of God).”

Some distinctions as a noble wife of the Prophet

Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} had some distinctions over the other noble wives.

The first distinction that she was the only wife who had a blood relation with the Holy Prophet^{sa} before becoming his wife. She was the paternal cousin of the Holy Prophet^{sa}.

The second distinction was that Allāh Himself directed the Holy Prophet^{sa} to marry her. Some verses of the Holy Qur’ān were revealed in this context.

The third distinction was that in her marriage with Ḥaḍrat Zaid^{ra} a great model of Islāmic equality was demonstrated; a model that eliminated the difference between a free man and a slave.

The fourth distinction was that when Ḥaḍrat Zaid^{ra} divorced Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} the verses pertaining to adopted sons were revealed. The Holy Prophet^{sa} was permitted to marry wife of his adopted son. It negated the status and equality of an adopted son with a real son. Alongside this verse, the verse of the Khātamun-Nabīyyīn (seal of the prophets) was also revealed.

Another distinction that she had was that Allāh revealed commandments regarding *Purdah* (veil) on her *walima day*. Yet another distinction was at this occasion was that a very little amount of food miraculously became sufficient for a large number of people who all ate to their satisfaction.

A prayer accepted



Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} had foreseen time of her death. On one occasion when Ḥaḍrat ‘Umar^{ra} presented to her the annual stipend she covered it with a cloth. She ordered Buzrah bint Raafay to distribute it among her relatives and the orphans. Buzrah said to her that she too had some right over this money. Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} said, “Whatever is under the cloth is yours.” it was 85 dirham. When all money was distributed, she prayed to Allāh after this she should not take advantage of the gift of ‘Umar^{ra}. (20) Her prayer was accepted and she passed away in the same year.

Death

Ḥaḍrat Zainab bint Jaḥsh^{ra} died at the age of 53 in 20 A.H. At the time of her death she had nothing except a house. This house was bought by Walīd bin ‘Abdul Malik from her relatives for 50000 dirham to include it in the expansion of *Masjid-e-Nabwī* [i.e. Mosque of the Prophet^{sa}].

‘Amīrul Mu’minīn (Commander of the believers) Syyedna ‘Umar Fārūq^{ra} led the funeral prayer. Ḥaḍrat ‘Umar^{ra} had the wish to lower her body into the grave, but the *Ummahat ul Mu’minīn* said that the task of lowering the body into grave should be entrusted to only those people who had been visiting her when she was alive, that is, no law of *parda* applied to them.

So Usama bin Zaid^{ra}, Muhammad bin ‘Abdullāh bin Jaḥsh, ‘Abdullāh bin Aḥmad and Muhammad bin Ṭalḥah bin ‘Abdullāh lowered the body of Ḥaḍrat Zainab^{ra} in the grave in *Jannat ul Baqee*. When the body was being lowered into the grave a cloth was hanged for *purdah*. As it was extremely hot, Ḥaḍrat ‘Umar Fārūq^{ra} pitched a tent at the site where the grave was being dug. It is said to be the first tent to be pitched on any grave in *Jannat ul Baqee* (name of the grave yard).

May Allāh shower His innumerable blessings and mercy upon this great woman who was the *Murabbi*, (trainer and teacher) and helper of the orphans, widows, poor and needy, and a special righteous wife of the Prophet^{sa} of God.

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