

Reflections

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Sayyidatuna Mariyah Qibtiyyah (May Allah be pleased with her)

Mariyah, our beloved Prophet's Coptic wife, gave birth to a son whom the Prophet named Ibrahim after the ancestor father of the Arabs as well as of **hanifism** and Islam. Since the Archbishop of Alexandria had presented her to the Prophet as a gift, Mariyah had the status of a slave. She did not enjoy the benefits of a living quarter by the mosque as did the other wives of the Prophet, "the Mothers of Believers." Muhammad had provided Mariyah with a second-story residence in one of the outskirts of Madinah, called today Mashrabat Umm Ibrahim. Her house, which was surrounded with vineyards, was where Muhammad (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) used to visit her every now and then. He had chosen her for himself and gave her sister Sirin to Hassan ibn Thabit. The Prophet did not expect to have any more children as none of his wives except the late Khadijah had ever conceived, though some of them were quite young and capable of bearing children. When Mariyah gave birth to Ibrahim, the event brought to Muhammad, a man past sixty years of age, great joy and filled his heart with reassurance and jubilation. By giving birth to a child, the status of Mariyah was raised in the Prophet's esteem; indeed, as one enjoying a most favoured position.

But our western-orientated modernists say that according to a Hadith in Imam Muslim's collection, there is the following Hadith: **"The Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said: There are three (classes of persons) who would be given a double reward. One who is amongst the People of the Book (Jew or Christian) and believed in his apostle and (lived) to see the time of Prophet Muhammad (may peace be upon him) and affirmed his faith in him and followed him and attested his truth, for him is the double reward. And the slave of the master who discharges all those obligations that he owes to Allah and discharges his duties that he owes to his master, for him there is a double reward. And a man who had a slave-girl and fed her and fed her well, then taught her good manners, and did that well and later on granted her freedom and married her, for him is the double reward."**
(Kitab-ul-Imaan: Book 001, Hadith Number 0285).

The modernist Muslim says that if this was the Prophet's instruction, did the Prophet free Mariyah Qibtiyyah and then married her? If he did, then why those who wrote the biography of the Prophet do not include Mariyah Qibtiyyah amongst the Prophet's wives? If the Prophet did not free Mariyah Qibtiyyah and then married her, then why did he give such instructions to others? These modernists therefore say that this story of Mariyah Qibtiyyah staying in the Prophet's home and his son Ibrahim (alayhis salaam) born from her is completely false.

Let these modernists be informed that right from the Prophet's time to this age, including all categories of people i.e. muhaddithoon (traditionists), mu'arrikhoon (historians), mufasssiroon (Quran commentators), fuqahaa (Islamic jurists) and awliyaa (saints); without any differences of opinion have reported that amongst the Prophet's slave women, Mariyah Qibtiyyah was one of them from whom Ibrahim (alayhis salaam) was born and who passed away during infancy, then how can today's modernists say that this whole story is false and baseless. Because the Western Pope and Priests use the polygamy and slave women issue and pass insulting remarks about our beloved Prophet, these modernists Muslims therefore try to dodge this issue and say that this is all false stories.

Let us examine the two main arguments of these modernists:

Argument No 1: If the Prophet instructed his companions to free the slave women that were captured as prisoners of war and then marry them, then why did the Prophet not do what he instructed others to do? He would have also freed Mariyah Qibtiyyah and then married her.

Argument No 2: Mariyah Qibtiyyah's staying in the Prophet's home and Ibrahim (alayhis salaam) being born from her is not only a concocted story but also completely false.

Refuting Argument No 1:

Allah, Glorified be His Name, says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَحْلَلْنَا لَكَ أَزْوَاجَكَ اللَّاتِي آتَيْتَ أُجُورَهُنَّ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ مِمَّا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ

O Prophet! Verily We have made lawful to you your wives, to whom you have paid their *Mahr* (bridal money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage), and those (captives or slaves)

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whom your right hand possesses - whom Allah has given to you (as spoils of war). (Surah Al-Ahzaab Chapter 33: Verse 50).

The great Quranic commentator (Mufassir), **Allamah Hafiz ibn Kathir** in his **Tafsir al-Quran al-Azeem** says:

Allah says, addressing His Prophet that He has made lawful for him of women his wives to whom he has given the Mahr (dowry), which is what is meant by "their due", which is used here, as was stated by Mujahid and others. The dowry which he gave to his wives was twelve and half 'Uqiyah (measures of gold) so they all received five hundred Dirhams except for Umm Habibah bint Abi Sufyan, to whom An-Najashi, may Allah have mercy on him, gave four hundred Dinars (on behalf of the Prophet). Safiyyah bint Huyayy was chosen from among the prisoners of war of Khaybar and then set her free. This release was considered as her dowry. A similar case was that of Juwayriyah bint Al-Harith Al-Mustalaqiyyah -- he paid off the contract to buy her freedom from Thabit bin Qays bin Shamma and married her. He therefore owned Safiyyah and Juwayriyah; he freed them and then married them. May Allah be pleased with them all. This fact is recorded in many books of Ahadith and Islamic History as well. Therefore, whatever the Prophet instructed, he also practised and shown his ummah by example. This breaks the first argument of the modernist Muslims of today who just want to appease the West and the Orientalists in spite of there being concrete proofs against their argument from authentic reliable historical and Hadith reports.

Refuting Argument No 2:

Allah, Glorified be His Name, says:

وَمَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ مِمَّا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ

"and those (captives or a slave) whom your right hand possesses - whom Allah has given to you (as spoils of war)".

Commenting on this part of the ayah, **Allamah Hafiz ibn Kathir** in his **Tafsir al-Quran al-Azeem** says:

This means 'the slave-girls whom you (O Prophet) took from the war booty are also permitted to you and that which Allah has favoured you with.' He thereby owned Rayhanah bint Sham'un An-Nadariyyah and Mariyah Al-Qibtiyyah, the mother of his son Ibrahim, upon him be peace; they were both captured amongst the prisoners of war. May Allah be pleased with them!

From this, it clearly evident that there were captured slave women in the Prophet's household and which Allah had permitted and made lawful for our beloved Prophet. Therefore, the staying of slave women in the Prophet's harem is not a concocted story or a fallacy as argued by today's modernist Muslims.

Allah, Glorified be His Name, further clarifies this issue by saying:

لَا يَحِلُّ لَكَ النِّسَاءُ مِنْ بَعْدُ وَلَا أَنْ تَبَدَّلَ بِهِنَّ مِنْ أَزْوَاجٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ حُسْنُهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ رَقِيبًا

It is not lawful for you (to marry other) women after this, nor to change them for other wives even though their beauty attracts you, except those (captives or slave women) whom your right hand possesses. And Allah is Ever a Watcher over all things. (Surah Al-Ahzaab Chapter 33: Verse 52).

Allamah Hafiz ibn Kathir in his **Tafsir al-Quran al-Azeem** says:

More than one of the scholars, such as Ibn Abbas, Mujahid, Ad-Dahhak, Qatadah, Ibn Zayd, Ibn Jarir and others stated that this Ayah was revealed as a reward to the wives of the Prophet expressing Allah's pleasure with them for their excellent decision in choosing Allah and His Messenger and the Home of the Hereafter, when the Messenger of Allah, gave them the choice, as we have stated above. When they chose the Messenger of Allah their reward was that Allah restricted him to these existing wives, and forbade him to marry anyone else or to change them for other wives, even if he was attracted by their beauty -- apart from slave-girls and prisoners of war, with regard to whom there was no sin on him (and here he is given permission to own more slave-girls than what he already had).

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Another objection could be raised here by these anti-Hadith modernists that why the Prophet freed some slave women and married them whilst others were not freed.

Our response is that this case of Maria the Coptic, a maiden gifted by *Maqawqus* - the king of Egypt - to the Prophet must be understood in its proper perspective.

The Prophet could not marry her, since, according to the following verse of the Noble *Qur'an*, the Prophet could only free and marry slave girls who had been captured as prisoners in war.

"O Prophet! Verily, We have made lawful to you your wives, to whom you have paid their *Mahr* (bridal money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage), and those (captives or slaves) whom your right hand possesses - whom Allah has given to you..." (Chapter 33:50)

In the above verse, the Arabic word used here for the spoils of war is **FAI'** which in its technical sense is restricted to the wealth acquired from the enemy without actual fighting. But at times it is used for the spoils of war acquired through actual fighting.

Firstly, he was not allowed to marry (make nikaah) to gifted slave women that had already been set free. Returning a royal gift, of course, would be against courtesy.

Secondly, an example had to be set as to how Muslims should treat their slave girls who - in those initial periods of Islam when it was legal - were treated very badly.

This is the reason why the Prophet freed some slave women and married them whilst others - who were gifted to him - were not freed and therefore the confusion arose with historians. But the authentic Hadith of Imam Muslim quoted is correct if it is read in its correct perspective.

From the above, it quite clear that those modernists who reject the authentic reports of the Ahadith are also guilty of rejecting the above verses of the Glorious Quran. Which Qur'an are they really reading?

May Allah protect our Imaan from such anti-Hadith modernist Muslims! Ameen!

I request your humble du'as.

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