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Research Article

Why Did Prophet Muhammad Marry Zaynab Bint Jahsh Who Was His Cousin and Stepson's and Adopted Son's Wife?

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Abstract. According to many Jewish, Christian, and Hindu opponents of Islam, Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) was a sexual pervert and incestuous father-in-law because he married his cousin and adopted son's wife called Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra). Many Muslim Scholars, Ulemas, Mawlanas, and Clerics have refuted such a blasphemous allegation through the statement that the marriage of Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra) with Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) occurred due to a Divine Revelation from ALLAH, The Most Merciful and Most Gracious as stipulated in Surah Al-Ahzab 33:37, 33:38, and 33:39 of The Glorious Quran.

Keyword: Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him), Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra), Zayd, Judaism, Hinduism.

INTRODUCTION

“The event of the marriage of Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) with Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra) is mentioned in Surah Al-Ahzab 33:37, 33:38, and 33:39 of The Glorious Quran where ALLAH, The Most Merciful and Most Gracious highlights the fact HE wants to apprise the world of the sacrifices Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) made to raise the standard of slaves in a society where they were at the very bottom and also what Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) went through to abolish unintelligible and fallacious customs to give the world a religion which was completely rational and free from any absurdity.” – (Prophet Muhammad's (Peace Be Upon Him) marriage to Hazrat Zaynab [bint Jahsh] (ra))

Surah Al-Ahzab 33:37, 33:38, and 33:39 of The Glorious Quran:

“And ‘remember, O Prophet,’ when you said to the one for whom ALLAH has done a favour and you ‘too’ have done a favour, “Keep your wife and fear ALLAH,” while concealing within yourself what ALLAH was going to reveal. And ‘so’ you were considering the people, whereas ALLAH was more worthy of your consideration. So, when Zayd totally lost interest in ‘keeping’ his wife, We gave her to you in marriage, so that there would be no blame on the believers for marrying the ex-wives of their adopted sons after their divorce. And ALLAH’s command is totally binding.” - Surah Al-Ahzab 33:37

“There is no blame on the Prophet for doing what ALLAH has ordained for him. That has been the way of ALLAH with those ‘prophets’ who had gone before. And ALLAH’s command has been firmly decreed.” - Surah Al-Ahzab 33:38

“‘That is HIS way with’ those ‘Prophets’ who deliver the messages of ALLAH, and consider HIM, and none but ALLAH. And sufficient is ALLAH as a ‘vigilant’ Reckoner.” - Surah Al-Ahzab 33:39

Exceptional Circumstance

“Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) had urged Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra) who was his cousin, to marry Zayd who was a freed slave. Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) then adopted Zayd as his son. The reason Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) wanted this marriage to take place was to give respectability to slaves in the Arab society as Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra) belonged to the elite of *Makkah* and this marriage could have removed a lot of disparity which existed in the Arab society between the slaves and free people. Unfortunately, the marriage remained on rocks throughout the period that they lived together because Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra) considered herself socially superior to *Zayd* and could not reconcile to the fact that she is wife of a freed slave.

Tired by their regular clashes and Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra)'s indifference towards him, *Zayd* showed his intention to divorce Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra) time and again.

However, Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) persuaded him not to do so, because he felt responsible for any mishap, as the marriage had taken place on his insistence. Secondly, the message of equality of slaves and free humans that he wanted to practically communicate through this marriage would fail in case of divorce. Nevertheless, because of these troubles of the marriage, foreseeing divorce as inevitable in the near future, Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) thought that the only way to console Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra) would be to marry her. This was an incredibly difficult decision to make but Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) was guided by ALLAH, The Most Merciful and Most Gracious to do this as HE had decided to raise status of slaves in the society and also wanted to put an end to this custom that the adopted sons be considered as real sons of their adopted fathers. Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) was also aware, bearing in mind the social status of slaves, that it was highly unlikely that any person of a good social standing would take Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra) in marriage, as she would then be a divorcee of a slave. The only reluctance, which the Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) had in this regard, was that marriage with the divorcee or the widow of one's adopted son was considered prohibited, exactly like marriage with the divorcee or the widow of one's real son.

However, when ultimately Zayd divorced Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra), Surah Al-Ahzab 33:37, 33:38, and 33:39 of The Glorious Quran was revealed and in order to correct the wrong tradition (of holding the divorcee or the widow of one's adopted son prohibited), Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) was directed to marry Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra). While directing Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) to marry Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra), The Glorious Quran has specifically corrected a wrong tradition that was followed in the name of the *Shariah* and thereby the [infallible legislation and regulation] of ALLAH, The Most Merciful and Most Gracious was established in its entirety. Therefore, a wrong tradition was corrected by Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) when he married his divorced cousin, Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra)." - (['Prophet Muhammad's \(Peace Be Upon Him\) marriage to Hazrat Zaynab \(ra\)'](#))

It is important to note that the age difference between Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) and Zayd was 3 to 7 years. Rationally speaking, how could 2 men of this age difference be father and son? And at the time of marriage, Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra) was also 35 to 40 years old. Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam

(The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) and Zayd were like 2 brothers based on their ages.

Marriage with stepson's [and adopted son's] wife in Judaism and Hinduism

"In Judaism, a woman is allowed to marry her cousin and a man is allowed to marry his cousin. In addition to that, a man is allowed to marry his stepson's [and adopted son's] wife (divorced or widowed)." - The Jewish Wedding and Marriage.

This shows that even Judaism recognizes that the marriage of Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) with Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra) was NOT incestuous.

However, this recognition of Judaism regarding the marriage of Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) with Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra) is NOT legitimate according to radical, fanatic, and extremist Hindu opponents of Islam (especially the Arya Samajists who claim to follow a monotheist religion which is NOT based on idolatry). According to them, a father-in-law is like a father to his daughter-in-law who in turn is like a daughter to her father-in-law. Therefore, Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) was incestuous! It is to be noted that the Founder of Arya Samaj known as Swami Dayanand Saraswati himself had sacrilegiously, blasphemously, and vehemently criticized Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) in his book titled 'Satyarth Prakash' - AN

EXAMINATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF ISLAM.

There is only 1 way to refute the argument of the radical, fanatic, and extremist Arya Samajists. We have to quote the verses from their own book of authority called Rig Veda 10.61.5, 10.61.6, and 10.61.7 (Wisdom Library): -

"(Rudra [also known as Shiv and Mahadev, the God of all Hindu polytheists who worship idols], the benefactor of man, whose eager, virile energy was developed, drew it back when disseminated (for the genitive ration of offspring); again, the irresistible (Rudra) concentrates (the energy) which was communicated to his maiden daughter."

"When the deed was done in mid-heaven in the proximity of the father working his will, and the daughter coming together, they let the seed fall slightly; it was poured upon the high plural of sacrifice."

"When the father united with the daughter, then associating with the earth, he sprinkled it with the effusion; then the thoughtful gods begot Brahma; they fabricated the lord of the hearth (of sacrifice); the defender of sacred rites."

Now, these Vedic verses firstly indicate that the Hindu God, Rudra, had incestuous relationship with his maiden daughter to create humankind! Secondly, that the Vedas does not propagate monotheism, but polytheism based on idolatry!

As such, the Arya Samajists are living in a house made of spider's web and they should refrain from throwing stones on pious Muslims who strongly abide by an infallible legislation and regulation such as Islam which is codified in The Glorious Quran by ALLAH, The Most Merciful and Most Gracious and expounded by Prophet

Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) in The Authentic Hadiths such as Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim!

Another verse of Rig Veda 3.31.1 (Wisdom Library) also indicates incest: -

“The sonless father, regulating (the contract), refers to his grandson, (the son) of his daughter, and relying on the efficiency of the rite, honours (his son-in-law) with valuable gifts; the father, trusting to the impregnation of the daughter, supports himself with a tranquil mind.”

CONCLUSION

“This is the background of the marriage of Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) with Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra). It is disappointing that such a great sacrifice of Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) is often seen in a negative way. Hazrat Zaynab bint Jahsh (ra) being Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him)'s cousin was seen by him grow up as a child into womanhood. If he, at any stage of his life, wanted to marry her she would never have refused but, instead Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam (The Last and Final Prophet of Islam - Peace Be Upon Him) got her to marry his freed slave to eradicate the class division in that society.” - (‘Prophet Muhammad's (Peace Be Upon Him) marriage to Hazrat Zaynab (ra)')

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