

# Fruits for the Week

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## The Household of the Prophet (SAW)

(continued from last week)

Anisa Ahmad

Let us see how the Prophet (SAW) deals with his wives in their household matters. The leader of humanity, the greatest personality history has ever known, did not hesitate in helping his wives in lighting the fire for cooking. He even did not mind sweeping the floor or mending his slipper himself.

Anas, who joined the Prophet (SAW) as a household helper at the age of ten, told us that he had lived with the Prophet (SAW) for around ten years. Throughout the period he did not hear any harsh words or receive any punishments from him. Once he broke something of glassware. When Syeda Ayisha showed anger, the Prophet (SAW) pacified her. He said Anas was just a child and the breakage did not matter.

The Prophet (SAW) was kind and compassionate to his family, but he was just and firm, allowing only what was righteous, and not being carried away by compassion. Once when his daughter, Fatimah, complained about needing a helper for household chores, he told her to bear in patience. In another instance, his sister-in-law, Asma was dressed in a revealing gown. He requested her to clothe herself in a decent outfit as Islam required. Unlike most of the twenty-first-century youth's attitude towards their parents, the daughters of the Prophet (SAW) responded to their father with respect and obedience. Take Ruqayyah as an example. She obeyed her father, the Prophet (SAW), at once when he advised her to leave for Abyssinia at the height of persecution. Her attachment to Makkah, where she was born and bred, did not compare with her obedience to her father.

A question which is often raised by non-Muslim writers and sometimes even by less informed Muslims, is: why the Prophet (SAW) had several wives? Let me give the reasons briefly. First and foremost, let us talk about Syeda Kahdijah, the wife the Prophet (SAW) loved most. She was a noble lady known for her morality, business

acumen and wisdom. The Prophet (SAW) worked for her, and, on her behalf, took trade caravans to various places before Allah (SWT) appointed him as the final messenger. Impressed by the Prophet's (SAW) honesty, devotion and expertise, she proposed to him and became his first wife despite that she was senior in age and was a widow.

The Prophet (SAW) got all possible support from her when he received the divine revelation. She was the first lady to embrace Islam. When the Prophet (SAW) received the revelation for the first time, he was frightened and was unsure of what it was. She assured him that his Lord would not put him to shame because he was the most honest, truthful and trustworthy person on earth. When the revelation came to a pause for a long time, so much so that the Prophet (SAW) suffered intense anxiety, she assured him that Allah would not abandon him.

The Prophet (SAW) asked Syeda Kahdijah's opinion about the genuineness of the revelation he was receiving through the angel, Jibreel. With her profound wisdom, she told the Prophet (SAW) to inform her when the angel approached him. And when he told her that the angel was approaching him, she asked him to come close to her and watch its reaction. The Prophet (SAW) told her that the angel disappeared when he came close to her. She asked him to repeat doing the same. But each time the angel disappeared. With full confidence, she told the Prophet (SAW) that it was a true angel, and not Satan: the angel disappeared due to shyness when the Prophet (SAW) came close to her. On the other hand, if it was Satan, it would not disappear in such case. This is only one example of her wisdom and of the mutual understanding, trust and complementarity we see in the relationship the Prophet (SAW) had with Syeda Kahdijah.

(to be continued)