

Fruits for the Week

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2 September 2005

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The Household of the Prophet (SAW)

(continued from last week)

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When the Prophet (SAW) and his Companions encountered persecution and torture at the hands of the Makkans, the Prophet (SAW) allowed his companions, including their families, to migrate to Ethiopia. While in exile, these companions heard a rumour that the Makkans had made peace with the Prophet (SAW). Umm Salma and her husband, having heard this rumour, returned to Makkah. However, when they reached Makkah, they discovered that the rumour was unfounded. They then wanted to migrate to Madinah, but the family of Umm Salma did not allow her to do so. Thus, her husband moved to Madinah while she was forced to stay in Makkah with her family. To add to her agony, her child was taken away by her in-laws. She suffered the pain of being separated from her husband and her child. Afterwards, with the help of some kind-hearted people, she got back her child, and eventually she managed to join her husband in Madinah. Unfortunately he passed away after about eight months. In view of her sacrifices for Islam, the Prophet (SAW) took her for marriage. So, the reason behind this marriage was to honor a brave lady who faced persecution for the sake of Islam and who, after having migrated, was left without family support.

Another reason for these marriages was the important role the Prophet (SAW)'s wives played in the propagation of Islamic knowledge, both during his lifetime and after his death. For example, Syeda Hafsa was the custodian of the first complete written copy of the Qur'an, from which the third rightly-guided caliph, Uthman ibn Affan, made copies and sent them to the

major cities of the Muslim world at that time.

The household of the Prophet (SAW) is our ideal. The Prophet (SAW)'s wives presented in their personal behaviour a workable model for Muslim women. We can learn from them how to live a life of compassion, love, sacrifice and contentment. Simplicity and strength of character are the two most outstanding virtues that shine in this exemplary household.

The wives of the Prophet (SAW) lived a simple life without comfort or luxury. They rarely had their stomachs full. Often there was hardly anything at home to be cooked; they survived on dates and water. They had patience, but Allah (SWT) asked them to have more patience as they were the role model for the *ummah*. After the death of the Prophet (SAW), they were given stipends, which they preferred to spend in the way of Allah. Their lifestyle did not change. They preferred to live a simple life as they had lived with the Prophet (SAW) despite Muslims' becoming richer as Islam spread far and wide.

This household is a model for Muslims, even in the modern world. We only have to lift the curtain of history and have a glimpse into the treasures shining from our glorious past.

We should do our best to follow in the footsteps of the wives of the Prophet (SAW) as they are the best example for both believing and non-believing women.

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