

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

What Was The Age of Ummul Mo'mineen Ayesha (May Allah be pleased with her) When She Married To Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him)? 18 + Plus

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<http://www.islamicsupremecouncil.com/ayesha.htm>

Some people believe that Ayesha (May Allah be pleased with her) was nine years old at the time of her marriage with Mohammad (peace be upon him) was consummated.

The age of Ayesha (ra) has been grossly mis-reported in the *ahadith*. Not only that, I think that the narratives reporting this event are not only highly unreliable but also that on the basis of other historical data, the event reported, is quite an unlikely happening. Let us look at the issue from an objective standpoint. My reservations in accepting the narratives, on the basis of which, Ayesha's (ra) age at the time of her marriage with the Prophet (pbuh) is held to be nine years are:

- Most of these narratives are reported only by *Hisham ibn `urwah* reporting on the authority of his father. An event as well known as the one being reported, should logically have been reported by more people than just one, two or three.
- It is quite strange that no one from *Medinah*, where *Hisham ibn `urwah* lived the first seventy one years of his life has narrated the event, even though in *Medinah* his pupils included people as well known as *Malik ibn Anas*. All the narratives of this event have been reported by narrators from Iraq, where *Hisham* is reported to have had shifted after living in *Medinah* for seventy one years.
- *Tehzibu'l-tehzib*, one of the most well known books on the life and reliability of the narrators of the traditions of the Prophet (pbuh) reports that according to *Yaqub ibn Shaibah*: "narratives reported by *Hisham* are reliable except those that are reported through the people of Iraq". It further states that *Malik ibn Anas* objected on those narratives of *Hisham* which were reported through people of Iraq. (vol 11, pg 48 - 51)
- *Mizanul'ai`tidal*, another book on the narrators of the traditions of the Prophet (pbuh) reports that when he was old, *Hisham's* memory suffered quite badly. (vol 4, pg 301 - 302)
- According to the generally accepted tradition, Ayesha (ra) was born about eight years before *Hijrah*. But according to another narrative in *Bukhari (kitabu'l-tafseer)* Ayesha (ra) is reported to have said that at the time *Surah Al-Qamar*, the 54th chapter of the Qur'an, was revealed, "I was a young girl". The 54th surah of the Qur'an was revealed nine years before *Hijrah*. According to this tradition, Ayesha (ra) had not only been born before the revelation of the referred *surah*, but was actually a young girl (*jariyah*), not an infant (*sibyah*) at that time. Obviously, if this narrative is held to be true, it is in clear contradiction with the narratives reported by *Hisham ibn `urwah*. I see absolutely no reason that after the comments of the experts on the narratives of *Hisham ibn `urwah*, why we should not accept this narrative to be more accurate.
- According to a number of narratives, Ayesha (ra) accompanied the Muslims in the battle of *Badr* and *Uhud*. Furthermore, it is also reported in books of *hadith* and history that no one under the age of 15 years was allowed to take part in the battle of *Uhud*. All the boys below 15 years of age were sent back. Ayesha's (ra) participation in the battle of *Badr* and *Uhud* clearly indicate that she was not nine or ten years old at that time. After all, women used to accompany men to the battle fields to help them, not to be a burden on them.
- According to almost all the historians *Asma* (ra), the elder sister of Ayesha (ra) was ten years older than Ayesha (ra). It is reported in *Taqri'bu'l-tehzi'b* as well as *Al-bidayah wa'l-nihayah* that *Asma* (ra) died in 73 hijrah when she was 100 years old. Now, obviously if *Asma* (ra) was 100 years old in 73 hijrah she should have been 27 or 28 years old at the time of *hijrah*. If *Asma* (ra) was 27 or 28 years old at the time of *hijrah*, Ayesha (ra) should have been 17 or 18 years old at that time. Thus, Ayesha (ra), if she got married in 1 AH (after *hijrah*) or 2 AH, was between **18** to **20** years old at the time of her marriage.
- *Tabari* in his treatise on Islamic history, while mentioning *Abu Bakr* (ra) reports that *Abu Bakr* had four children and all four were born during the *Jahiliyyah* -- the pre Islamic period. Obviously, if Ayesha (ra) was born in the period of *jahiliyyah*, she could not have been less than 14 years in 1 AH -- the time she most likely got married.
- According to *Ibn Hisham*, the historian, Ayesha (ra) accepted Islam quite some time before *Umar ibn Khattab* (ra). This shows that Ayesha (ra) accepted Islam during the first year of Islam. While, if the narrative of Ayesha's (ra) marriage at seven years of age is held to be true, Ayesha (ra) should not have been born during the first year of Islam.
- *Tabari* has also reported that at the time *Abu Bakr* planned on migrating to *Habshah* (8 years before *Hijrah*), he went to *Mut'am* -- with whose son Ayesha (ra) was engaged -- and asked him to take Ayesha (ra) in his house as his son's wife. *Mut'am* refused, because *Abu Bakr* had embraced Islam, and subsequently his son divorced Ayesha (ra). Now, if Ayesha (ra) was only seven years old at the time of her marriage, she could not have been born at the time *Abu Bakr* decided on migrating to *Habshah*. On the basis of this report it seems only reasonable to assume that Ayesha (ra) had not only been born 8 years before *hijrah*, but was also a young lady, quite prepared for marriage.

- According to a narrative reported by *Ahmad ibn Hanbal*, after the death of *Khadijah (ra)*, when *Khaulah (ra)* came to the Prophet (pbuh) advising him to marry again, the Prophet (pbuh) asked her regarding the choices she had in her mind. *Khaulah* said: "You can marry a virgin (*bikr*) or a woman who has already been married (*thayyib*)". When the Prophet (pbuh) asked about who the virgin was, *Khaulah* proposed Ayesha's (ra) name. All those who know the Arabic language, are aware that the word "*bikr*" in the Arabic language is not used for an immature nine year old girl. The correct word for a young playful girl, as stated earlier is "*Jariyah*". "*Bikr*" on the other hand, is used for an unmarried lady, and obviously a nine year old is not a "lady".
- According to *Ibn Hajar*, *Fatimah (ra)* was five years older than Ayesha (ra). *Fatimah (ra)* is reported to have been born when the Prophet (pbuh) was 35 years old. Thus, even if this information is taken to be correct, Ayesha (ra) could by no means be less than 14 years old at the time of hijrah, and 15 or 16 years old at the time of her marriage.

These are some of the major points that go against accepting the commonly known narrative regarding Ayesha's (ra) age at the time of her marriage.

Neither was it an Arab tradition to give away girls in marriage at an age as young as nine or ten years, nor did the Prophet (pbuh) marry Ayesha (ra) at such a young age. The people of Arabia did not object to this marriage, because it never happened in the manner it has been narrated.

In the presence of all these historical narratives that contradict the narrative of Ayesha's age at the time of her marriage, anyone who wants to prove that Ayesha (ra) was nine years at the time of consummation of her marriage has the responsibility of telling others, why is he/she rejecting all the other historical narratives and accepting only the one that states Ayesha's age to be nine at the time of her marriage.

Rasool Allah (Peace-Be-Upon-Him) is a Global Role Model for the whole world, (Ref: Al_Quraan_033.021). So, can you ever marry your own 6 year old girl to a 50 year old man to follow as a Role Model? If not then you must need to correct yourself.

Read Al-Quraan, the Miracle of Miracles and free from contradictions and errors

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