

HADRAT MAIMOONA

BINT-E-HARITH (R.A)

Hadrat Maimoona was the last wife of the Holy Prophet (SAW). She belonged to the tribe of Banu-Hilala. The Holy Prophet (SAW) had another wife from the same tribe. The other wife's name was Zainab, commonly known as Ummul-Masakeen (*Mother of the needy and poor*). Maimoona was her second adopted name. Her first name Barra was changed by the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the new name Maimoona was given. Her father Harith bin Hazam was one of the respected chief of tribe Banu-Hilala and he had sixteen daughters. One of his daughters namely Umm-ul-Fazal was the wife of Hadrat Abbas, who was the Holy Prophet's uncle. His another daughter namely Umm-e-Salma was married to Hadrat Hamza, another uncle of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Another daughter Lubaba was the mother of Hadrat Khalid bin Walid (*A renowned General of Muslims who fought against Iranians and was given the title of 'Sword of Allah' by the Holy Prophet (SAW)*). Harith's some other daughters were later married to Hadrat Umar, the second Caliph and Hadrat Ali, the fourth Caliph. Another daughter Asma was married to Hadrat Jafar. Thus most of Hadrat Maimoona's sisters were married to the pioneering revolutionary leaders of Islam.

Hadrat Maimoona was the last wife of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and he did not marry afterwards. The Prophet (SAW) was about sixty years old at the time of his marriage with Hadrat Maimoona. She lived three years' married life with the Holy Prophet (SAW). Prior to her marriage twice. Her first marriage took place with Masood bin Amr. Masood divorced her and then she was married to Abu Rahim bin Abdul Aza. Abu Rahim died in the seventh year of Hijra. After Abu Rahim's death the Holy Prophet's Uncle Hadrat Abbas persuaded the Holy Prophet Mohammad (SAW) to marry Maimoona.

In the month of Ziqaad, the Holy Prophet (SAW) started for Makka to perform Umra. At that time he sent his cousin Hadrat Jaffar bin Abi Talib to Hadrat Maimoona for proposing her. Hadrat Jafar was her sister's husband. Hadrat Maimoona listened and weighted the proposal. She nominated Hadrat Abbas as her attorney in the matter and conveyed her consent. The Holy Prophet (SAW) was wearing Ihram (*Ihram is the dress for performing Hajj or Umrah comprised of two sheets of cloth, one wrapped around the waist and the other around the shoulder. After putting on Ihram, one can not trim his hair, cut his nails,*

abuse or have sex etc.). In the same condition he sent five hundred Dirhams as Mehr to Hadrat Maimoona and the Nikah ceremony was Performed While on return after Umra from Makkah to Madina, he stayed at a place called Saraf. This place is ten miles away from Makkah on way to Madina. At Saraf, the feast of Walima (*The feast, i.e. lunch or dinner offered to friends and guests on the next day of the marriage*) was held.

A great even followed the marriage of Hadrat Maimoona's to the Holy Prophet (SAW). Hadrat Maimoona's nephew Hadrat Khalid bin Walid embraced Islam. He was a very talented and brave man from the Quraish tribe. He was also a great warrior and renowned soldier. After her marriage when Hadrat Maimoona went to Medina with the Holy Prophet (SAW), Hadrat Khalid bin Walid addressed his tribe and declared, "I can no longer remain in your fold". Thus a great force in the shape of Hadrat Khalid came to Islam's side. After marriage Hadrat Maimoona kept herself grooming to the tenets of Islam and fully grasped religious knowledge. She acquired a clear and straight-forward vision of Islam. As said earlier in other sketches of the wives of the Holy Prophet (SAW) women easily fall prey to superstition. A great weakness in the Arab women in those days was to vow or pledge for certain fulfillment of their ambitions on the graves and tombs of pious people. Fulfillment of their pledge so made on any tomb was taken as obligatory. This practice had made the graves of the pious dead holier than mosques or the Kaaba. This trend was greatly discouraged by Hadrat Maimoona. She told the women that the practice of going to the graves to ask for the fulfillment of wishes is satanic and tantamount to negation of Almighty Allah, which is the biggest evil; since in Islam, asking for something from other than Allah is *Shirk* (*Shirk is the ugliest sin. It means sharing anybody else in the authority and powers of Allah*) and it is the worst sin.

There is quite a famous incident attached to this concept of *Shirk*. Once an ailing woman vowed that if she recovered from the disease, she will offer prayers at Aqsa Mosque, at Jerusalem. On regaining her health, she started making preparation for her journey to Aqsa Mosque. Hadrat Maimoona came to know about it. She called that woman, expressed her anger and said,

"What is there in vows and pledges? Aqsa is not better than Masjid-e-Nabvi. Go and offer your prayers in Masjid-e-Nabvi".

This incident shows how much she knew about the progressive spirit of Islam. She was very particular about the commandments of Islam. Once one of her relatives came to visit her. The pungent odour of wine was coming out of his mouth. She rebuked him and broke off all relations with her relative for the rest of her life. She asked him never to visit her again. Due to these qualities,

Hadrat Ayesha remarked about her:

"Maimoona was more God-fearing and kind hearted than all of us (wives)".

Annalists have reported that occasionally she borrowed money from others. It seems that she never liked to be financially tight. Once she took a large amount from someone who asked that how it would be returned. She replied,

“The Holy Prophet had said anybody who intends repaying a debt; Allah comes to his help and pays his debt”.

This shows that borrowing was not a matter of routine for her but she was always careful to repay the debt.

Hadrat Maimoona had a great love for teaching and preaching of Islam. She has narrated forty-six traditions and according to some, seventy-six traditions. People used to come to her for the solution of their various religious problems and she always guided them with intelligent replies to their questions. In those days, the period of a woman’s menstruation was considered as a bad omen. A biological change in human body can’t be a reason for a curse or bad luck. Some illiterate women used to discontinue their daily routine assuming themselves filthy. One day her nephew, Hadrat Ibn-e-Abbas came to pay his regards to Hadrat Maimoona. His hairs were not properly combed”. He said: “My wife is having menses and since she is the one who combs my hair and now she can’t touch me, so my hair is uncombed”.

“I see. The Holy Prophet (SAW) used to lie with us during our menses and recited holy verses. We even handled the mats of the mosque. Son, the hands are not dirty during the menses, are they”?

This small example indicated that Islam shuns every kind of superstition. Even now-a-days, the Muslims women do not touch the Holy Quran even wrapped in cloth, and avoid heaving the Holy verse etc. This sort of wrong thinking should be discarded.

Hadrat Maimoona lived only three years with the Holy Prophet (SAW). After the Holy Prophet’s death, she lived for forty-one years. Hadrat Maimoona died in 51st year of Hijra. It is a strange coincidence that she died on the same place where she got married with the Holy Prophet (SAW). She died at Saraf and was buried at the same place. Saraf which, forty-four years ago, had become a happy place of merriment, later became her burying place. Perhaps this was to prove the height of her love for her husband.

Hadrat Ibn-e-Abbas led her funeral prayers. When her coffin was lifted and was carried towards the grave, Hadrat Ibn-e-Abbas said: “Don’t shake her bed. Be respectful and carry her with ease. She is the wife of the Holy Prophet (SAW)”.

She was the last wife of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and was the last to die among his wives. She was a kind and very pious lady. During her life, she set many a

slaves free. Once during the life of the Holy Prophet (SAW), she set a slave free to enjoy the rights of a free citizen, the Holy Prophet (SAW) praised her saying, "Maimoona, Allah will reward you for this act".

She was also a great scholar of religion. Even her nephew Ibn-e-Abbas who later became a great scholar interpreter and commentator of the Holy Quran, was her pupil.