Fatimah Marriage

events of Prophet's daughter marriage to Ali

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The early years of migration to Medina was a special period of time for Muslims because after tolerating difficult time, hardship and torture in Mecca, they could settle down in Medina, and experienced Islamic honor. In this newly born society, Fatimah had a special place. She was the daughter of Prophet, the most important person of Islamic society. Prophet's love towards Fatimah also increased her place. Fatimah, in addition to having spiritual virtues, was counted as the most beautiful women of her time.[1] Regarding these features naturally she had good options for marriage; some people really wanted to marry a morally and spiritually honored woman, and some others wanted to be closer to Prophet in order to enjoy political power.

The marriage story of Hazrat Fatimah and Ali (a.s.) has been narrated differently in history books and tradition books of Shia and Sunni. Some sources just mentioned a part of it and others have reported it completely including Manaqib Ale Abi Talib[2] , Kashf al-Ghamah[3] and Bihar Al-Anwar [4]. In the works focusing on the life of hazrat Fatimah this event had a special reflection.[5]

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[1] Kulayni, 8/165; Maghribi, Sharh al-Akhbar, 3/29; Sahmi, 171; Tabari imami, Shar Ashub, 150-151; Majlisi, 41/ 131

[2] Ibn Shar Ashub, 3/122-132

[3] Arbali, 1/357-384

[4] Majlisi, 43/92- 134

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[5] Refer to Ghazvini; Rahmani Hamdani

Proposing hazrat Fatimah:

It is already customary in all cultures that men propose a girl to marry. Because this is closer to Fitra of men and women.[1] Among Arabs the culture was a boy sent his father or one of his relatives to the father of the girl or close relatives of the girl.[2] In this way, before asking a girl for marriage, families evaluate the family suitability for marriage.

It is narrated from Ali that after the daughter of Prophet reached the suitable age for marriage, heads of Quraish and those who had good record in islam and enjoyed wealth, honor and fame decided to propose her.[3] Among those who proposed Fatimah was Abu-Bakr.[4] He gave his young daughter, Aisha, in marriage to Prophet and expected that Prophet gave his daughter to him.

'Umar [5] and Abdul Rahman ibn 'Uof[6] also were among Fatimah's suitors. Of course Abdul Rahman was wealthy and other Mohajers were mostly poor. He offered extravagant marriage portion, so he did not expect his suggestion for marriage be declined.[7]

But all suitors heard a no.[8] Sometimes Prophet got so sad by their offering that they thought a verse had been sent down blaming them.[9] Prophet rejected them and said Fatimah's marriage is a heavenly issue which needs God's verdict.[10] And to answer some others he mentioned Fatimah's young age. [11] In Arab culture, parents said yes or no to the suitors and a girl had no free will.[12] The number of those who consulted their daughter at the time of their marriage was very few to the extent that the name of those who were consulted with were recorded in Arab history.[13] This trend was also in progress in ancient Rome. (Durant, 7/109). The holy Prophet opposed this custom and emphasized that in marriage, a girl's opinion should be asked.[14] This is completely clear in the marriage of Hazrat Fatimah.

The Prophet asked his daughter's opinion about each suitor and she politely refused their offer.[15] The characteristics and virtues of suitors were not comparable with the virtues and personality of Fatimah. In fact, they were not suitable for her. But it was out of Prophet's politeness and greatness to pointed out to this tacitly.

Hazrat Ali, at the beginning of migration to Median, was 24 which is a good age for marriage. But the hardship after migration to Medina, including joblessness and being homeless, could be regarded as a barrier for Ali who was living with his mother, Fatimah bint Asad, in that time.[16] Ali's interest in the daughter of Prophet was natural. Fatimah was not only his cousin

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but also the daughter of Prophet and had virtues which made Ali more interested in her. Ali pointed out to this interest in reply to those who encouraged him proposing Fatimah, he said, I swear by God Fatimah deserves to be loved.[17] In another place, he asserted that thinking about marring her occupied his mind days and nights.[18] Meanwhile, Ali regarded a high position for Prophet and did not have enough bravery to propose his daughter. Therefore, he answered those who encouraged him to propose like this I do not let myself propose Prophet's maid let alone his daughter.[19] Sa'd ibn Ma'az retold this word of Ali to Prophet and Prophet sent a message to Ali by Sa'd that he agreed. Hearing this massage made him so happy that he burst into tears.[20] He took minor ablution, then major ablution, wore his best clothes, said two-round prayer and then went to propose Prophet's girl from Prophet.[21] While no one was accompanied him. In reports, there is no word about anyone accompanied him.

Ali's manner to propose is recorded differently in books. Some said, Ali said, I came to Prophet to propose his daughter, as I know him great and honored, when I sat in front of him, I couldn't talk. Prophet asked, do you have any request? I stayed silent. He repeated this three times. Then said, maybe you come to propose Fatimah? I said, yes.[22] Tabarsi also reported that Ali went to propose Fatimah three times, but in the first two times he was ashamed of speaking and returned. The third day, Prophet said, do you have a request? Ali confirmed. But he did not say anything else. Prophet said, maybe you want to propose her? He confirmed.[23] Some sources claimed Ali directly asked for marriage and wrote his words.[24]

After Ali's offer, Prophet talked about it with Fatimah, he said, Ali ibn Abu-Talib is the one you know his relatives, virtues and beliefs. I ask God marry you to someone who is the best of his creatures and the dearest one. Now Ali has proposed you. What is your opinion? Fatimah was silent, but she did not turn her face and Prophet saw satisfaction in her face. Then Prophet stood up, said God is great and said, her silence is a sign of her satisfaction.[25]

Accepting Ali's request did not need any reason. His great personality was known to every one and made logical to accept him as a son in law. Ali grew up in Prophet's home and he was trained by him.[26] Mutual love between Prophet and Ali was open to every one and some believed that Prophet loved Ali more than his sons.[27] Prophet announced his dissatisfaction with previous marriage suggestions and his satisfaction with Ali's suggestion to everyone to make reasons clear: among the reasons was Fatimah's satisfaction. In addition, the main condition in making a successful marriage is equality and similarity between spouses. The special character of Fatimah was only suitable for Ali, as Prophet

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asserted this by telling God's word, " if I did not create Ali, there was no one suitable for marrying her since the time of creation of Adam to now.[28] Meanwhile, Prophet said in response to those who were against this marriage that I swear God I did not prohibit Fatimah from you but God, the Almighty, prohibited her and gave her to Ali.[29] Prophet announced this marriage a holy affair and said, by the permission of God, I gave Fatimah to Ali.[30]

Marriage Portion:

Before Islam, marriage portion and Sedaq were customary among Arabs. Some said at the time of ignorance Sedaq was a gift that a man gave to his wife but marriage portion was given to the girl's parents. In Islam they are both one thing which is a gift should be given to the girl. God ordered in Quran that marriage portion should be given to them deliberately. (Nesa, 4) In Ali and Fatimah marriage also a marriage portion was set, but as Ali, like other Mohajirs from Medina had a poor life, Prophet advised him to sell his war clothes for paying her marriage portion.[31]

The price of this clothes has been recorded differently from 400 dirham[32], 480 dirham[33] and in more reports 500 dirham[34] or 12.5 Oughiya (equal to 500 dirham)[35] equal to the marriage portion of wives of Prophet.[36] Imam Jawad also gave this much marriage portion to his wife and called it Fatimah's marriage portion.[37] In that time, each dirham was equal to one Mesghal of silver and about one tenth of Dinar.[38] According to a record, Ali sold his armor to Dehya, a Jewish person.[39], but this man returned his armor to Ali after he paid its price to him. In a tradition, it is narrated that Zahra (a.s.) asked Prophet that he requested God to let her dowry be her intercession for sinful people of her nation.[40]

Marriage ceremony: their ceremony was held in mosque at the presence of Muslims. Imam Sadiq quoted from his fathers that when Prophet decided to give Zahra (a.s.) to Ali, he sent some messengers to Medina's suburb to invite people to the ceremony. Then he went on a pulpit, after praising God, he said, " by an order from God , I gave my dear girl to my brother and my cousin in marriage. God held their marriage ceremony in front of the angels and ordered me to give my daughter to Ali in this world and invited you to be witness." Then Prophet asked Ali to deliver the speech of marriage. Ali announced his marriage and his satisfaction from this marriage.[41] This event with some differences have been narrated in source books.[42]

Based on the acceptance of Zahra's birth in the fifth year of Bethat in Shia belief, she was about nine years old in the first year of Hijrah.[43] This idea is in accordance with the report of imam Sajjād.[44] But in Sunnitte belief different ages were reported: five

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years before Bethat, four year before Bethat, and in general they believe it happened before Bethat. Therefore, according to their ideas, she was about fifteen or nineteen years old. This, of course, contradicted the ruling culture of that time. In addition, Prophet to refuse some of her suitors pointed out to her young age.[45] While it is not logical prophet knew his nineteen-year-old daughter too young for marriage but he married a nine-year-old daughter of Abu Bakr. Therefore, the accepted idea among Sunnitte about this marriage before Bethat is not acceptable.

The wedding ceremony was held after battle of Badr.[46] This battle was in the month of Ramadan, the second year of Hijrah.[47] Therefore, possibly the wedding ceremony was held in Shawal or Zil Hajah. And in some sources Moharram of the third year has been mentioned.[48]

After their engagement, and Muslim's victory in the battle of Badr and special role of Ali in this battle, a good picture of Ali was carved in hearts of Muslims.[49] Ali did not bring his wife to his home yet. Historians mentioned various time gap between engagement and wedding : 29 days, one month, three months, seven months and a half, nine months and a half, eleven months, and one year.

Due to Ali's respect and modesty, he did not suggest to hold ceremony and take Fatimah to his home. It was difficult for him to say. Meanwhile, Umme Ayman who was the servant of Aminih and the nurse of Prophet in his childhood, and was like his mother[50] took this responsibility. She reminded Prophet if Khadijah was alive she would become happy of her daughter's marriage; Prophet agreed. Ali in response to Prophet why he did not ask for this himself , said, he was ashamed to ask.[51] In some other sources, other people have been mentioned.

Prophet ordered to prepare a home for Zahra, beautify her and made her ready.[52] Zahra (a.s.) perfumed herself with a perfume given to her by Gabriel.[53]

Dowry:

Arabs did not like brides bring dowry to grooms' home and felt ashamed; it was men's duty to prepare home and whatever in it. Though in ancient Egypt and Iran women brought dowry with themselves.

The holy Prophet also did not prepare any dowry for Zahra (a.s.); he gave the money of Ali's armor to Bilal to buy perfume.[54] He gave some money to Abu-Bakr to buy clothes and things for home; he sent 'Ammar and some other companions of him to accompany him.[55]

The dowry was as the following: a dress (7 dirham), a scarf (4 dirham), a black towel made in Kheibar area, a bed with bed cloth, two pillows from Egypt, one from palm

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fiber, one from fleece, four backrests from Taef filled with Azkher leaves, a woolen curtain, a mat made in Hijr, quern, one big copper pan, a wooden bowl to milk, one bowl to drink water, one waterskin, tarred pitcher, a green overglazed pitcher, and clay jugs[56] in some sources a leather mat and a cloak. Prophet asked God to bless this simple dowry for them.[57]

Ali , also, prepared some simple things in his home: a sheep skin to be used as mat[58] and also a place to give food to camels.[59] He covered the floor by soft sands, and put up a stick to be used as a cloth holder.[60]

Prophet ordered some women prepare Ali's home for wedding party.[61] After the Isha pray, Prophet went to see the home and prayed for them.

Wedding reception: in Islam, it is advised to serve on guests for wedding. Prophet mentioned it is custom of Prophets to give food in wedding ceremony.

In marriage of Zahra (a.s.) Prophet gave food to all.[62] It is narrated from imam Sadiq that in this ceremony Prophet asked Ali to prepare a lot of food. Meat and bread were given by Prophet and dates and oil prepared by Ali. When dates and oil were prepared Prophet himself rolled up his sleeves and beat dates with oil and made cookies. Then he ordered to kill a sheep and cooked. A lot of bread was made. Then he asked Ali to invite whoever he likes. After his public invitation, a lot of people attended this wedding, Prophet asked God's His blessing to increase food. Then Prophet prepared some dishes of food, sent them to his wives and finally he prepared a dish for Fatimah and her husband.[63]

This party was held during a day and continued till sunset. Prophet called for Fatimah. Modest and shameful, she approached her father. Prophet prayed for her, put her hand in Ali's hand, congratulated him, and sent them to their home and said, "Wait for me there." Ali took his wife's hand going to their home. Fatimah could look at him and Ali could not look at her. Prophet came and sat between them and asked for water. She filled a bowl. Prophet poured some water on Fatimah. Then he asked God's blessing for them and left there.[64] Some sources reported that Prophet asked women of Mohajir and Ansar to accompany bride. Fatimah was on a camel or a horse, his bridle on the hand of Salman. Prophet, Aghil,and Jafar were following her and Prophet's women in the back. When the bride and groom entered home, all evacuated there except Asma who promised Khadijah to do whatever mothers do at the night of their daughters' marriage. Prophet cried by hearing khadijah's will from Asma's tongue, prayed for Asma and let her stay.[65]

This event which is well-known among people and recent books which include names of attendances in this ceremony

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have historical problems. Salman and Jafar could no be present in this ceremony, because Salman went to Medina in third or fourth year of Hijri and converted to Islam; he was not present in Badr and Uhud battle and his first presence was in Ahzab battle. Therefore, it was not feasible to take part in the ceremony of Zahra's wedding in second year of Hijrah and months before Uhud battle. Jafar was in Habashah at that time and in seven year of Hijrah, after conquering Kheibar, went to Medinah. Umm Salman and Hafsah were not Prophet's wives at that time. Asma bint 'Umays also was not present in this ceremony, because she was the wife of Jafar ibn Abi Talib. They migrated to Ethiopia in the year seven of Bethat (i.e. six years before migration to Medina) accompanied with her husband and a group of other Muslims and in the seventh year of Hijrah after conquering Kheibar went to medina with her husband. Therefore, the presence of Asma in the wedding ceremony of Zahra and at the time of Khadija death are unacceptable. In addition, her presence at the time of Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn can not be true.

Some suggested that in this long period of time, Asma, had commuted between Mecca and Medina several times and then returned Ethiopia. But it can not be true if we pay attention to the far distance of Ethiopia and Arabia and the water way between them. And after her return to Medina she had no reason to go through this long way to return to Ethiopia.

Some accepted this possibility that Asma here is Asma bint Yazid ibn Sakan Ansari. It is possible but as she was from Medina and one of Ansars, she could not be present in Mecca in the year tenth of Bethat because at that time none of Medinians were Muslims. It seems that Asma here was Salmi bint 'Umays (sister of Asma and wife of Hamzah). Therefore, her presence at the time of Khadijah death and Zahra's wedding was natural. She was the wife of Hamzah, uncle of Prophet, and went to Prophet's home. Her presence at the birth time of Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn was also expected. It is also possible that the person who was present at the time of giving ablution to Zahra and wrapping shroud around her was this Salmi bint 'Umays. But as Asma bint 'Umays (the wife of first caliph and imam Ali and mother of Mohammad ibn Abi Bakr who was a deserved tradition narrator) was famous could be mistaken with her sister.

The other possibility is that she was Salmi the wife of Abu-Rafe' who was the servant and maid of Prophet and lived in Prophet's home. She was a midwife and helped Zahra to give birth to her babies.

Presence of angels: in this marriage, Fatimah, Gabriel and Michal, each one, accompanied by seven thousand angels to the earth. They said Takbir (God is great)

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Prophet. Prophet who could hear their voices, said Takbir as well. Muslims did the same. It was the first time that in a wedding, Takbir was said. After that it became a custom.

Nethar: it was a tradition that to pour something over bride and groom' s head which was called Nethar. It seems that in this wedding there was no Nethar. Regarding this, Prophet told Umme Ayman who complained about this, when I gave Zahra (a.s.) in marriage to Ali God ordered to trees of Heaven to scatter emerald, rubies, and gems for Fatimah.

After marriage: the next morning, Prophet went to visit them and took milk for them. After they drank milk, he asked their idea about each other. Ali said his wife is a good companion to obey God and Fatimah said he is the best husband. Then Prophet prayed for them to have a good life and good children[66]

The result of this marriage was five children: Hasan, Husayn, Umme Kulthum, Zeinab, and Mohden who was murdered before his birth.

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[1] Tabatabai, 4/263; Shams al-Din, 79, 81.

[2] Alusi, 2/3; Jawad Ali, 4/644

[3] Kharazmi, Al- Manaqib, 343; Arbali, 1/ 363; Majlisi, 43/124

[4] Nisa'i, 5/143; Hakim Neyshaburi, 2/167-168

[5] Nisa'i, 5/143; Hakim Neyshaburi, 2/167-168

[6] Tabari imami, Shar Ashub, 82; ibn Shahr Ashub, 3/123

[7] Tabari imami, Shar Ashub, 82; ibn Shahr Ashub, 3/123

[8] Kharazmi, al-Manaqib, 343; Deilami, 2/232

[9] Kharazmi, al- Manaqib, 343; Arbali, 1/363; Majlisi, 43/124

[10] ibn Sa'd, 8/19; ibn Shahr Ashub, 2/30; Majlisi, 43/107

[11] Nisa'i, 6/62; Hakim Neyshaburi, 2/167-168; ibn Shahr Ashub, 3/123; Majlisi, 40/68

[12] Jawad Ali, 4/636

[13] Jawad Ali, 4/636-637

[14] Hakim Neyshaburi, 2/ 167; ibn Hujr 'Asqalani, al-Isabah, 8/108

[15] Tusi, Al-Amali, 39; Tabari, Basharat al-Mustafa, 401; Majlisi, 43/93

[16] Ibn Athir Jazri, Usdul al-Ghabah, 5/517; Hujr 'Asqalani, al-Isabah, 8/269

[17] Arbali, 1/364; Majlisi, 43/125

[18] Saduq, Al-Amali, 653; ibid, 'Uyun Akhbar al-Ridha, 2/201; Majlisi, 43/101-102

[19] Mufid, Al-Ikhtisas, 148

[20] Mufid, Al-Ikhtisas, 148; Majlisi, 43/140

[21] Arbali, 1/379; Majlisi, 43/140

[22] Kharazmi, al- Manaqib, 335; Arbali, 1/358, 374; Majlisi, 43/118-119

[23] Alam al-wari, 1/160; refer to Majlisi, 19/113

[24] Tusi, Al-Amali, 39; Tabari, Bisharat al-Mustafa, 401; Arbali, 1/365; Majlisi, 43/93

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[25] Tusi , Al-Amali, 40; Tabari, Bisharat al-Mustafa, 401; ibn Shahr Ashub, 3/127

[26] Refer to ibn Abi Al- Hadid, 13/200; Majlisi, 38/323-324

[27] Ibn Abi Al- Hadid, 13/200; Majlisi 38/323

[28] Kulayni, 1/461; Saduq, 'Uyun Akhbar al-Ridha, 2/203; Tusi, Tahdhib al –Ahkam, 7/470

[29] Saduq, 'Uyun Akhbar Al- Ridha, 2/203; Majlisi, 43/92

[30] Maghribi, Sharh Al-Akhbar, 2/576; Saduq, 'Uyun Akhbar Al- Ridha, 2/202; ibn 'Asakir, 37/13; Majlisi, 43/93

[31] Dolabi, 93-94; Arbali, 1/358; Majlisi, 43/136

[32] Tabarsi, Makarim al-Akhlaq, 207; ibn Shahr Ashub, 3/127

[33] Sanaani, 6/176; ibn Shahr Ashub, 3/128

[34] Kulayni, 5/376; ibn Shahr Ashub, 3/128

[35] Zeyd ibn Ali, 303; Saduq, man la-Yahzaruhul Faqih, 3/398; Majlisi, 100/264

[36] Kulayni, 5/376; Maghribi, Daaim al-Islam, 2/221; Saduq, Ma'ani al-Akhbar, 214

[37] Mufid, al-Irshad, 2/284; Tabarsi, Makarim al-Akhlaq, 206

[38] Abu al-Salah Halabi, 293 .

[39] Tabari imami, Shar Ashub, 84

[40] Ghormani, 88; Kajori, 2/546; Marashi Najafi, 10/367;19/129

[41] Tabari, Shar Ashub, 88-90, navader al-Mojezat, 87-89; Majlisi, 100/269-270

[42] Kharazmi, al-Manaqib, 335-338; Arbali, 1/357-384

[43] Tabarsi, Taj al-Mavalid, 21-22

[44] Kulayni, 8/340; Helli, 130

[45] ibn Shahr Ashub, 3/123; ibn Tarigh, 287, 389

[46] ibn Sa'd, 8/22; Tusi, Al-Amali, 43

[47] Yaghubi, 2/54; Tabari, Tarikh, 2/148; Diyar Bakri, 1/368

[48] ibn Tawus, Iqbal Al-Amali, 3/92

[49] Mufid, al-irshad,1/70-72; Arbali, 1/183-184; Majlisi, 19/277-279

[50] ibn Athir, Usdul al-Ghabah, 5/567; Dhahabi, 2/223/224

[51] Tusi, Al-Amali, 1; Majlisi, 43/95

[52] ibn Shahr Ashub, 3/129; Arbali, 1/371

[53] Tusi, Al-Amali, 41; Shahr Ashub, 3/130; Majlisi, 43/95

[54] Tabari, Shar Ashub, 87; Majlisi, 101/88

[55] Tusi, Al-Amali, 40; Majlisi, 43/94

[56] Tusi, Al-Amali, 40-41; Shahr Ashub, 3/129; Majlisi, 43/94

[57] Tusi, 41; Majlisi, 43/94

[58] ibn Sa'd, 8/22; ibn Majah, 2/1391; Tabari, Zakhaer al-Ughba, 35

[59] ibn Sa'd, 8/22; ibn 'Asakir, 42/376

[60] ibn Shahr Ashub, 3/129; Majlisi, 43/114

[61] ibn Majah, 1/616; diyar Bakri, 1/411-412

[62] Nisa'i, 6/73; Tabarani, al-Mu'jam al_Kabir, 2/20; ibn 'Asakir, 36/438

[63] Tusi, 42

[64] Tusi, Al-Amali, 42-43

[65] Arbali, 1/376; Majlisi, 43/138

[66] ibn Shar Ashub, 3/131-132; Majlisi, 43/117

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