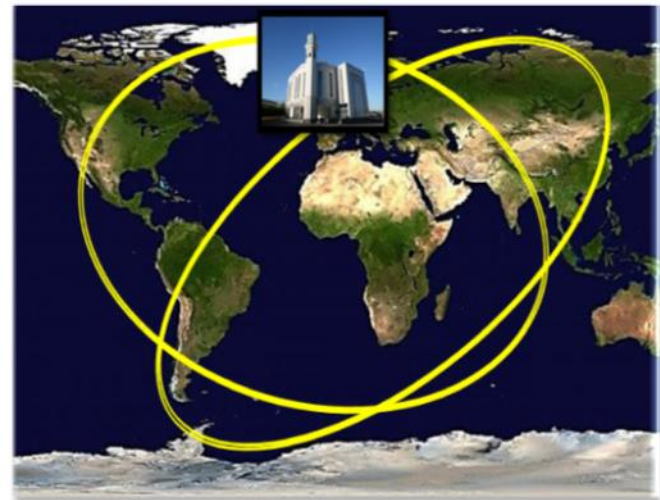


Men and Women of Excellence



**Sermon Delivered by Hadhrat
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Head of the Ahmadiyya
Muslim Community**



**relayed live all across the
globe**

June 14th 2019

Men and Women of Excellence

In the previous sermon, I began narrating incidents from the life of Hazrat Zaid (ra) and mentioned that Hazrat Zaid (ra) accompanied the Holy Prophet (sa) during his journey to Taif.

When the Holy Prophet (sa) came out from the years of incarceration in Valley of Abu Talib, he travelled to Taif to invite its people to Islam. Ta'if is a famous place situated forty miles to the south-east of Makkah, with well to do and respected population.

Therefore, in *Shawwal* of 10 *Nabawi*, the Holy Prophet (sa) took a journey to Ta'if, some narrations say, on his own and others say that Zaid bin Ḥarithah (ra) accompanied him. During the ten days stay in Ta'if, the Holy Prophet (sa) met many chieftains but the people of Ta'if refused to accept his message.

At last, the Holy Prophet (sa) approached the grand chieftain of Ta'if named 'Abdu Yalail and invited him to Islam, but he also refused and concerned that the youngsters of the city may become influenced by the Holy Prophet (sa), he said, "*It is best that you leave this place, for there is nobody here who is willing to listen to you.*"

After that, this evil man set the had the reprobates of the city to pelt the Holy Prophet (sa) with stones, due to which the entire body of the Holy Prophet (sa) became drenched in blood.

According to another narration, Zaid bin Haritha, who was with the Holy Prophet (sa) was also hit with rocks.

At a distance of three miles from Ṭa'if, there was an orchard, which belonged to a Chieftain of Makkah named 'Utbah bin Rabi'ah. The Holy Prophet (sa) took refuge in this orchard, and his ruthless enemies returned exhausted. Standing beneath a shadow, the Holy Prophet (sa) prayed before Allah:

“Meaning, “O My Lord, I complain to you of my helplessness, and my inability, and my helplessness before the people. O My God, You are the most merciful, for You are the guardian and protector of the feeble and helpless – You are my Lord. I seek refuge in the light of Your countenance. It is You who dispels all darkness and it is You who bestows the inheritance of favour in this world and in the next.”

Utbah and Shaibah were in their garden at this time and so sent the Holy Prophet (sa) a tray of grapes in the hand of their Christian slave named 'Addas

The Holy Prophet (sa) took them and addressed 'Addas saying, *"Where are you from, and a follower of which religion?"* *"I am from Nineveh,"* responded 'Addas, *"and a Christian."*

'Addas was the brother of the prophet Jonah (as), and the Holy Prophet (sa), preached the message of Islam to him, which moved him greatly. In his passion of sincerity, he moved forward and kissed the hands of the Holy Prophet (sa).

He then departed from here and arrived at Nakhlah, which is situated at a distance of approximately one day's journey from Makkah and remained there for a few days. After this, the Holy Prophet (sa) return to Makkah in the protection of Muṭ'im bin 'Adiyy. Later, Muṭ'im died in a state of disbelief but was responsible for this noble deed.

When Hazrat Zaid arrived in Medina after the Migration, the Holy Prophet (sa) established a bond of brotherhood between him and Hazrat Usaid bin Hadeer (ra)

Hazrat Zaid bin Haritha married Hazrat Umme Aiman. Hazrat Umme Aiman's name was Barakah. She was known by the title of Umme Aiman due to her son, Aiman. She was originally from Abyssinia. Once the Holy Prophet (sa) said that whoever wishes to rejoice by marrying a woman from among the inhabitants of paradise, he should marry Umme Aiman. Upon this, Hazrat Zaid bin Haritha married her as a result of which, Hazrat Usama was born, who was known as *Al-Hibb Ibn al-Hibb* that is, 'the dear son of the beloved.

According to another narration, the Holy Prophet (sa) would state, [Arabic] Meaning, "After my actual mother, Umme Aiman holds the status of being my mother." The Holy Prophet (sa) would also visit her house to meet her.

Whilst migrating to Medina on foot, Hazrat Umme Aiman (ra) became extremely thirsty. At the time, she did not have any water with her, and it was extremely hot, however she heard a sound from above her head and saw a pail like vessel descend upon her from the heavens from which clear drops of water began to fall upon her. She drank from it until her thirst was quenched.

The women who were related to these Badri Companions are also mentioned so that we may become aware of their lofty status

Hazrat Umme Aiman had a slight stammer in her speech. Whenever she would meet someone, instead of saying *Salamullahi Alaikum*, as was the custom at the time, she would say *Salamullah Alaikum* due to her stammer. The Holy Prophet (sa) permitted her to say *Salamun Alaikum* or *Assalamu Alaikum*, which is now the custom.

Hazrat Anas (ra) relates that when the Holy Prophet (sa) passed away, Hazrat Umme Aiman was inconsolable saying that the word of God and the revelation of the Holy Qur'an which would descend upon the Holy Prophet (sa), had come to an end.

Hazrat A'isha (ra) narrates that one day, whilst the Holy Prophet (sa) was drinking water, Hazrat Umme Aiman was also present and said, "O Messenger of Allah, give me water so I may drink also." Hazrat Ai'sha (ra) states that she questioned her saying, "Is this the manner in which you ask the Messenger of Allah (sa) for something?" To this she replied, "Have I not served the Holy Prophet (sa) for a long time?" The Holy Prophet (sa) then said, "You speak the truth" and gave her water to drink.

There was a visible difference between the complexion of Hazrat Usama and Hazrat Zaid, because the mother of Zaid was from Abyssinia and of African descent. Due to this, people would raise objections about the lineage of Hazrat Usama saying that he was not the son of Hazrat Zaid and the hypocrites would raise these false heinous allegations.

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Hazrat Zaid (ra) was the freed slave of the Prophet of Allah (sa) and his adopted son as well

- The Prophet (sa) arranged Hazrat Zaid's (ra) marriage with Hazrat Zainab bint Jahash. However, this marriage did not last long, and Hazrat Zaid (ra) divorced Hazrat Zainab. This marriage lasted a year or a little more than that after which the Prophet of Allah (sa) himself married Hazrat Zainab bint Jahash (ra). "In 5 A.H., shortly before the *Ghazwah* of Bani Muṣṭaliq, which took place in *Sha'ban* 5 A.H., the Holy Prophet (sa) married Zainab bint Jahash (ra).

Haḍrat Zainab (ra) was the daughter of the paternal aunt of the Holy Prophet (sa)

- The Holy Prophet (sa) proposed the marriage of this dear one, i.e., Zainab bint Jahash (ra) to his freed slave and foster-son Zaid bin Harithah (ra) without any hesitation. At first, Zainab (ra) did not accept this match considering her family status to be greater, but ultimately, according to the proposal and desire of the Holy Prophet (sa), the marriage of Zainab (ra) and Zaid (ra) took place.
- Although Zainab (ra) fulfilled her vows with goodness, in his own heart, Zaid (ra) felt that Zainab (ra) still harboured hidden feelings that she was from a noble family, a close relative of the Holy Prophet (sa).

The Holy Prophet (sa) counselled Hazrat Zaid (ra) against divorce and advised him,, "*Fear God, and settle your differences however you may,*" recorded in the Holy Quran

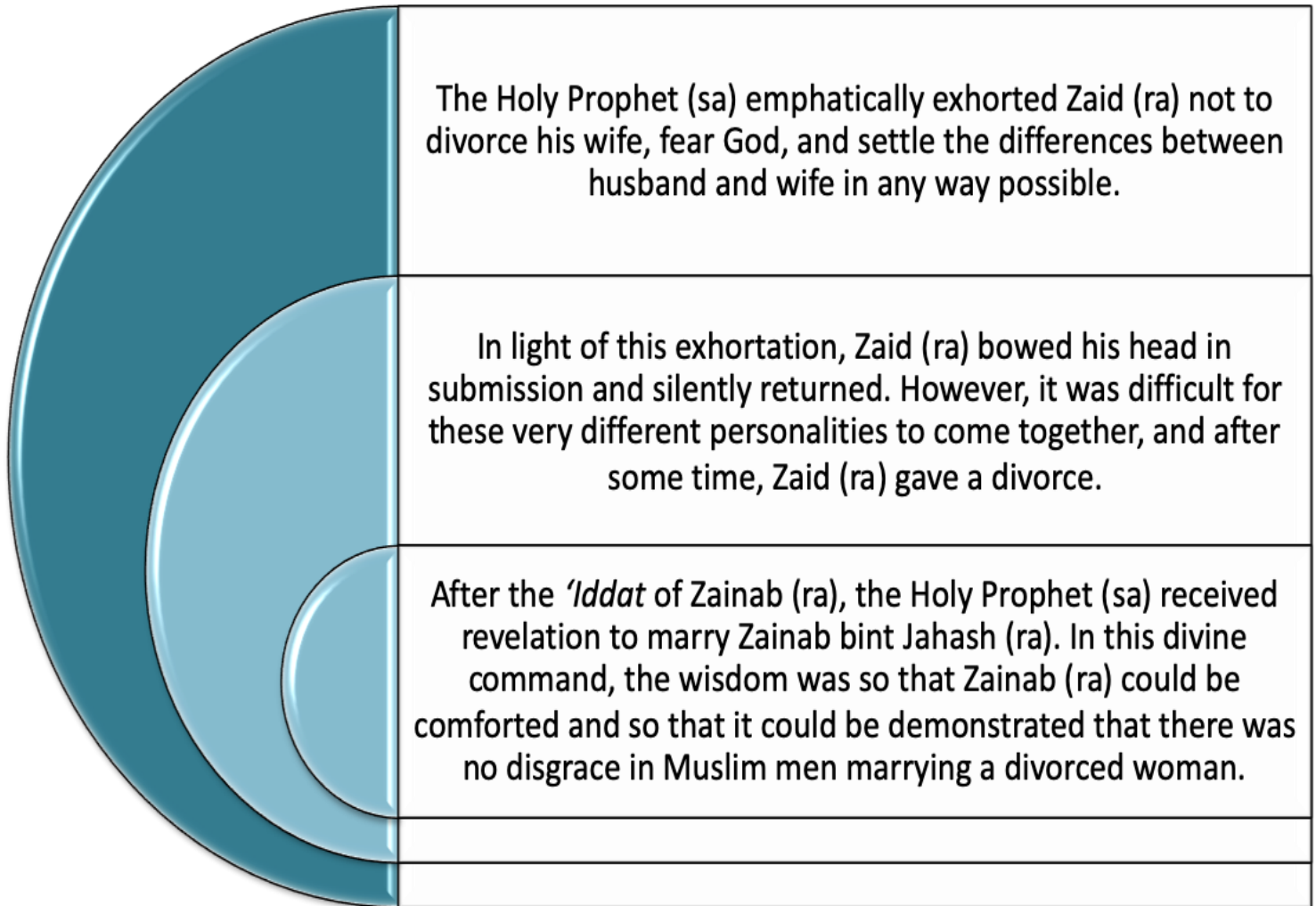
- While Zaid (ra) was merely a freed slave and not her equal. Even in his own heart, Zaid (ra) felt that his position was lesser than that of Zainab (ra). This feeling slowly and gradually became stronger making their marital life unpleasant.. When this upsetting situation grew out of hand, Zaid bin Harithah (ra) presented himself before the Holy Prophet (sa) of his own accord and complaining about the treatment of Zainab (ra), sought permission to divorce her.
- Naturally, the Holy Prophet (sa) was grieved upon hearing the state of affairs, and he counselled Hazrat Zaid (ra) against divorce.

“Do not divorce your wife, and fear God.”

The reason for this advice of the Holy Prophet (sa) was that firstly, in principle, the Holy Prophet (sa) disliked divorce.

For this reason, it has only been permitted as a last resort.

“Of all lawful things, divorce is most undesirable in the sight of God.”



In this regard, the Holy Qur'an, which is the most authentic of all historical records states: *"When Zaid dissolved his relationship with Zainab, We married her to you, so that there may be no hindrance for the believers with regard to the wives of their adopted sons, after their adopted sons dissolve their relationship with their wives. This is how it was decreed that the Will of God would come to pass."*

In this manner, the ancient tradition which was firmly rooted in the plains of Arabia, was uprooted at the very source and stem, and discarded by Islam through the personal example of the Holy Prophet (sa).

Therefore, after this divine revelation, the Holy Prophet (sa) decided to marry Zainab (ra). The Holy Prophet (sa) sent his proposal to Zainab (ra) through Zaid (ra) himself. Upon the consent of Zainab (ra), her brother Abū Ahmad bin Jahash (ra) served as her guardian and married her off to the Holy Prophet (sa) and the dowry was set at 400 dirhams.

A Nikah ceremony took place for marriage. Ḥaḍrat Zainab (ra) would express in a manner of pride to the other *Ummahatul-Mu'minin* that their marriages were announced through their guardians on the earth, while her marriage was announced in the heavens.

In the accounts relating to the life of Hazrat Zaid, I have mentioned some details regarding the marriage of the Holy Prophet (sa) and Hazrat Zainab. The reason for this is that people raise allegations against this marriage even today and therefore we ought to know about this in detail. There are some further details with regards to this incident that I will explain in the future, but for now the account of Hazrat Zaid will continue.