



## A Review on the Story of the Holy Prophet and Zaynab Bint Jahsh

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### **Abstract**

Regarding the verse 37 of Surah Ahzab , some traditions and stories have been narrated which come in the following in brief:

“One day Prophet wanted Zayd ibn Harithah- his slave- do something for him, he came to his home. When he entered his home, he saw Zaynab bint Jahsh, the wife of Zayd. Her beauty surprised him. The Prophet fell in love with him and wished Zayd divorced her so he could marry her.” In the present study authenticity of this story has been studied. The method of this research is library and descriptive-analytic.

After reviewing text and sources, it becomes clear that these traditions are not authentic, the source-based shortcoming is presence of weak narrators in the chain of narrators. Likewise, in the chain of narrators, we have seen Tabi' in or those who could not have been eye-witnesses of this story.

Concerning the text of this tradition, it should be said that these traditions are not compatible with verses of Quran and the history of Prophet. Presence of ambiguity and discordance of these narrations with the infallibility of Prophet is another reason of rejecting this story.

**Keywords:** Weak Traditions; Zaynab Bint Jahsh; Zayd Ibn Harithah; The Prophet

## 1. Introduction

The concern of scholars of Islam especially at the beginning of recording traditions was to collect and save traditions to leave them behind for next generations in various collections but by the passage of time and reflection on the texts and documents of traditions, the authentic traditions can be recognized from the false ones. One of these traditions which found its way to the book of hadiths and interpretations is the story of the Prophet and Zaynab Bint Jahsh. The holy Prophet first gave Zaynab to Zayd but after a year Zayd divorced Zaynab. Various traditions and issues have been mentioned by some interpreters following the verse 37 of Surah *Ahزاب* “ وَإِذْ تَقُولُ لِلَّذِي أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ زَوْجَكَ وَاتَّقِ اللَّهَ وَتُخْفِي فِي نَفْسِكَ مَا اللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ وَتَخْشَى النَّاسَ وَاللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْشَاهُ فَلَمَّا قَضَى زَيْدٌ مِنْهَا وَطَرًا زَوَّجْنَاكَهَا لِكَيْ لَا يَكُونَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ حَرَجٌ فِي أَزْوَاجِ أَرْوَاحِهِمْ الَّذِينَ زَوَّجْتَهُمْ لِحُسْنِ الْوَسْئِلَةِ وَمَا كَانَ عَلَيْهِمْ فِي الْآيَاتِ أَنْ يَتَزَوَّجُوا مِنْ زَوْجِهِمْ إِنْ كَانَ طَرًا فَإِنْ يَأْتُوا بِطَرٍّ فَاصْبِرُوا ذَلِكَ حَرَجٌ وَالْحُرْمُ الْعَظِيمُ فَاصْبِرُوا سَوَاءً أُنزِلَتْ إِلَيْكُمْ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ وَلِيُعْلِمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَإِنْ تُكْفِرُوا بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَكْرُومٌ خَبِيرٌ ”: *“And when you said to he whom Allah had favored and yourself have favored: 'Keep your wife and fear Allah, ' and you sought to hide in yourself what Allah was to reveal, fearing people; although Allah has a better right for you to fear Him. And when Zayd had accomplished what he would of her (divorce), We gave her to you (Prophet Muhammad) in marriage, so that there is no fault in believers concerning (marriage to) the former spouse of their foster children if they divorced them. The decree of Allah must be done.”*

In the present study, we are narrating them and after that we try to evaluate their authenticity.

## 2. Statement of the Problem

Regarding the verse 37 of Surah *Ahزاب*, we read some traditions which say the holy Prophet fell in love with Zaynab, the wife of his slave, Zayd. In traditions, it is said, the holy Prophet was surprised by her beauty and wished to marry her and hoped Zayd divorced her.

The present study reviews these claims and traditions.

## 3. Familiarity with Zayd, Zaynab and Their Marriage

To understand this story better and to have a more precise picture, it is essential to know Zayd and Zaynab and also to know about their marriage story which is related to our discussion.

### 3.1. Zayd ibn Harithah

His name was Zayd ibn Harithah Sharahil and was from Bani-Kalb.( ibn Hisham, n.d., vol.1,p.264) He was the slave of the Prophet. The holy Prophet adopted him. Ibn ‘Umar said that he always called him Zayd ibn Muhammad until this verse was sent down, «ادْعُوهُمْ لِآبَائِهِمْ» *Ahزاب* 5(Bukhari, al-Tarikh al-Kabir, n.d., p.379). It is said he was the first man after Imam Ali who accepted Islam. He was so dear for the Prophet that he was called Zayd al-Hub (ibn Athir, 1377 , vol.2, p.226) ibn Hisham narrated the story of Zayd and his familiarity with Khadijah (s.a.) like this: Hakim ibn Hazam returned from one of his business trips, Khadijah came to see her, Hakim told his aunt, “ among goods of this trip I brought some slaves, see them and choose each one you like for yourself. Khadijah chose Zayd and after marring Prophet gave her to the Prophet and in this way Zayd joined Prophet. When he joined Prophet he was eight years old and this event was at the same time of Prophet and Khadijah marriage. ( ibn Hisham, n.d., vol.2, p.265) Zayd before Zaynab was married to Umme Ayman, maid of the Prophet and Usamah is

from this marriage. Prophet was given Umme Ayman to Zayd in marriage. He married several women after divorcing Zaynab. ( ibn Hajar, al-Isabah, n.d., vol.1, p.392) Zayd was present in many wars and was commanders of some Sariyyah<sup>1</sup>. ( ibn Hisham, n.d., vol.3, p.491)

### 3.2. Zaynab Bint Jahsh

Zaynab was named Barrah and Prophet changed her name after marrying her. It seems Zaynab Bint Jahsh was born about 33 years before Hijrah and 10 years before Be'that. Her father was Jahsh bin Riyab and her mother Umaymah, the daughter of Abdul-Mutallib and the aunt of the holy Prophet. Zaynab and the family of Jahsh were among the first migrants to Medina. After the death of Zaynab, no money left after her, because during her life time, she had donated all of her wealth to poor people. The holy Prophet remembered this positive character of his wife and told his other wives the fastest one of you to join me after death is the one who is more generous. Zaynab generosity was in a way that in a few hours sent all 12 thousand Dirham of her annual pension to orphans, widows and poor ones. Her personality was so great that 'Aishah remembered her as a lady who was higher than everyone regarding faith, piety, honesty, giving alms and joining family members and she always paid special attention to orphans and widows. In another news, 'Aisha said Zaynab was the most beloved wife of the Prophet after herself. Zaynab in the year 20 AH. passed away. She was the first wife of the Prophet who passed away after Prophet and was buried in Baqi' besides home of 'Aqil and Muhammad ibn Hanafiyah. ( Taken from encyclopedia of Islam, 1375, Mu'assesseh al-Ma'rif al-Islamiyah, vol.1, p.6837)

## 4. Marriage of Zayd to Zaynab Bint Jahsh

The marriage story of Zayd and Zaynab is related to the verses of Quran. Quran says, «وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا لِمُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُبِينًا» ***“It is not for any believer man or woman to have the choice in the affair when a matter is decreed by Allah and His Prophet. Whosoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger strays into clear error.”*** (33:36) Concerning the reason of sending down this verse, it is said, “ Prophet proposed Zaynab bint Jahsh for Zayd ibn Harithah and Zaynab, the cousin of Prophet told Prophet, oh the messenger of God! Am I not free in personal matters? Then the mentioned verse was revealed. After this verse, Zaynab told Prophet, I obey whatever your decision is.” ( Ali ibn Ibrahim Qumi, 1363, vol.2, p.194. Seyyed Hashim Bahrani, 1415 Ah., vol., p.471/ Feyz Kashani, vol.4, 190/ Siyuti, 1404 AH, vol.5, p.200) quite a few number of interpreters regarded the mentioned claim the reason of sending down this verse but some others said that Zaynab thought at first Prophet had proposed her for himself, so she said yes but later she saw Prophet proposed her for Zayd. After this she said I am higher than him in my family but after this verse she accepted to marry him. (Siyuti, 104 AH, vol.5, p.200) therefore the marriage of Zaynab Bint Jahsh and Zayd was after their migration to Medina and by the order of the Prophet.

## 5. Examples of Narrations about the Story of Zaynab and Prophet

About the Prophet and Zaynab various narrations in the explanation of the verse 37 of surah Ahzab have been quoted. In addition, a few narrations have come in the explanation of the verse 4 of surah Ahzab «...وَمَا جَعَلَ أَدْعِيَاءَكُمْ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ...». First various versions of these narrations are mentioned and then their documents and texts are evaluated. As the document of each narration is different with other

<sup>1</sup> Sariyyah or Ba'ath refers to wars in the era of the Prophet (peace be upon him) without the direct presence of the Prophet (peace be upon him) but under the command of one of his companions.

narrations to some extent if there is a document-wise evaluation it comes under the examples and after them their textual-evaluation are included.

### 5.1. First example:

A narration is quoted in Qumi interpretation book which other interpreters after him also narrated it. Qumi quoted from Abi Jarud and Abi Ja'far that the holy Prophet gave Zaynab Bint Jahsh to Zayd though Zaynab did not accept it at first but after coming down the verse 36 of surah Ahzab she accepted and lived with him for a while. Then he continued that «ثُمَّ إِنَّهُمَا تَشَاجَرَا فِي شَيْءٍ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ فَنظَرَ إِلَيْهَا النَّبِيُّ (ص) فَأَعَجِبْتُهُ فَقَالَ زَيْدُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ تَأْتُنِي لِي فِي طَلَاقِهَا فَإِنَّ فِيهَا كِبْرًا وَإِنَّهَا لَتُؤَدِّبُنِي بِلِسَانِهَا، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ص) «اتَّقِ اللَّهَ» وَ «أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ فَأَعَجِبْتُهُ فَقَالَ زَيْدُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ تَأْتُنِي لِي فِي طَلَاقِهَا فَإِنَّ فِيهَا كِبْرًا وَإِنَّهَا لَتُؤَدِّبُنِي بِلِسَانِهَا، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ص) «اتَّقِ اللَّهَ» وَ «أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ» وَ أَحْسِنَ إِلَيْهَا...». Then they both (Zaynab and Zayd) was arguing about an issue. To solve it, they came to Prophet. The Prophet took a look at Zaynab and her beauty wondered him. So Zayd said oh the messenger of God let me divorce her because she is arrogant and she stings me with her tongue. So Prophet told him be pious and keep your wife and be kind with her.” ( Qumi, ‘Ali ibn Ibrahim, 1363 Sh, vol.2, 194, Feyz Kāshāni, 1415 AH., vol.4, p.191, & al-Huwayzī, 1415 AH., vol.4,280)

### 5.2. Second example

It is narrated from Qumi that «قَالَ: فَإِنَّهُ حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي عَنْ ابْنِ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ عَنْ جَمِيلٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (ع) قَالَ: .. فَأَتَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ص) مَنْزِلَهُ يَسْأَلُ عَنْهُ فَإِذَا زَيْنَبُ جَالِسَةٌ وَسَطُ حُجْرَتِهَا تَسْحَقُ طَبِيبًا بِفَهْرٍ فَنظَرَ إِلَيْهَا وَ كَانَتْ حَمِيلَةً حَسَنَةً فَقَالَ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ خَالِقِ النُّورِ وَ تَبَارَكَ «اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ» ثُمَّ رَجَعَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ص) إِلَى مَنْزِلِهِ وَ وَقَعَتْ زَيْنَبُ فِي قَلْبِهِ مَوْعَعًا عَجِيبًا، وَ جَاءَ زَيْدٌ إِلَى مَنْزِلِهِ فَأَخْبَرْتُهُ زَيْنَبُ بِمَا قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ص) فَقَالَ لَهَا زَيْدُ: هَلْ لَكَ أَنْ أَطْلُقَكَ حَتَّى يَتَزَوَّجَكَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ص) فَلَعَلَّكَ قَدْ وَقَعْتَ فِي قَلْبِهِ فَقَالَتْ: أَحْسَى أَنْ تُطَلَّقَنِي وَ لَا يَتَزَوَّجَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ص) فَجَاءَ زَيْدٌ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (ص) فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَخْبَرْتَنِي زَيْنَبُ بِكَذَا وَ « Ali ibn Ibrahim said that my father quoted from ibn Abi ‘Umayr and he from Jamil and he from Imam Sadiq that he said the holy Prophet went to Zayd’s home and he wanted something of him. Suddenly he saw Zaynab who was sitting in her room and was making perfume. Prophet looked at her and she was pretty. Prophet said God is Pure. God is the creator of Light and is bless giver and eternal. God is the best Creator. Then the holy Prophet went to his home while love of Zaynab was filled his heart. Zayd came back to his home. Zaynab told him what Prophet had said. Zayd told Zaynab do you let me divorce you so Prophet could marry you? Your love might fill his heart. She said I am worried you divorce me but he does not marry me. Therefore, Zayd went to Prophet and said, Oh the messenger of God! my father and mother be sacrificed for you. Zaynab told me what had happened. Do you let me divorce her so you can marry her? The holy Prophet said, no, go and be pious and keep your wife.” ( Qumi, Ali ibn Ibrahim, 1363 Sh., vol.2, p.172 / Seyyed Hashim Bahrani, 1415 AH., vol.4, p.410 & Qumi Mashhadi, 1368, vol.10, pp.316,392 , with a little difference Fathullah Kāshāni, 1423, vol.5,377.)

### 5.3. Third example

«حَدَّثَنِي يُوسُفُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْأَعْلَى، قَالَ: أَخْبَرَنَا ابْنُ وَهْبٍ، قَالَ: قَالَ ابْنُ زَيْدٍ: «كَانَ النَّبِيُّ (ص)، قَدْ زَوَّجَ زَيْدَ بْنَ حَارِثَةَ، زَيْنَبَ بِنْتَ جَحْشٍ، ابْنَةَ عَمَّتِهِ، فَخَرَجَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ص)، يَوْمًا يُرِيدُهُ، وَعَلَى الْبَابِ سِتْرٌ مِنْ شَعْرٍ، فَرَفَعَتْ الرِّيحُ السِّتْرَ، فَانْكَشَفَ وَهِيَ فِي حُجْرَتِهَا حَاسِرَةٌ، فَوَقَعَ إِعْجَابُهَا فِي قَلْبِ النَّبِيِّ (ص)، فَلَمَّا وَقَعَ ذَلِكَ كَرِهَتْ إِلَى الْآخِرِ. قَالَ: فَجَاءَ، فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَفَارِقَ صَاحِبَتِي، فَقَالَ: مَا لَكَ؟ أَرَأَيْتَ مِنْهَا شَيْءٌ؟ فَقَالَ: لَا وَاللَّهِ، يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، مَا رَأَيْتِي مِنْهَا شَيْءٌ وَلَا رَأَيْتِ الْإِخْبَرَ، فَقَالَ لَهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ص)، أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ زَوْجَكَ وَاتَّقِ اللَّهَ، فَذَلِكَ قَوْلُ اللَّهِ، عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: وَإِذْ تَقُولُ لِلَّذِي أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ زَوْجَكَ وَاتَّقِ اللَّهَ وَنُحْفِي فِي نَفْسِكَ مَا اللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ، مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَرِيرٍ تَابَرِيُّ said, Yunes ibn Abdul-ali told me in a tradition that, ibn Vahab told us in a news that Zayd said, the holy Prophet made Zayd ibn Harithah married Zaynab Bint Jahsh who was the daughter of his aunt on father side. One day Prophet who was looking for Zayd, came out of his home. There was a curtain on the entrance of Zayd’s home. Wind rolled up the curtain and inside got opened. Zaynab was in her room uncovered, her love filled Prophet’s heart. When it happened, he said this happening improper till the end of hadith. The narrator said, Zayd came and said, oh the messenger of God I want to divorce my wife. The Prophet said, what happened? Does any



### 5.5.fifth example

: زَوْجَ النَّبِيِّ (ص) زَيْنَبُ بِنْتُ جَحْشٍ مِنْ زَيْدٍ، فَمَكَثَتْ عِنْدَهُ حِينًا، ثُمَّ إِنَّهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَتَى زَيْدًا يَوْمًا يَطْلُبُهُ، فَأَبْصَرَ زَيْنَبَ قَائِمَةً، وَكَانَتْ بِيضَاءَ جَمِيلَةٍ جَسِيمَةٍ مِنْ أُمَّتِ نِسَاءِ قُرَيْشٍ، فَهَوِيَ بِهَا وَقَالَ: سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ مَقْلَبَ الْقُلُوبِ، فَسَمِعَتْ زَيْنَبَ بِالتَّسْبِيحِ، فَذَكَرَتْهَا لَزَيْدٍ، فَفَطَنَ زَيْدٌ فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، أَنْذَنَ لِي فِي طَلَاقِهَا، فَإِنَّ فِيهَا كِبْرًا

It is quoted from Maqatil ibn Sulayman who said that Prophet gave Zaynab bint Jahsh in marriage to Zayd, she stayed with him for a while. She had white skin and broad shoulders and she was one of the most beautiful women of Quraysh. So Prophet fell in love with her and said, Oh God! you are Pure. Oh the changer of hearts! Zaynab heard this and told this to Zayd. Zayd thought with himself and asked Prophet to let him divorce her with this excuse that she is arrogant.. . (Qurtabi, 1364 Sh, vol.14, p.191)

Qurtabi narrated this narration in his interpretation book and knew this incompatible with the infallibility of the Prophet. (ibid)

#### 5.5.1.documental evaluation:

This narration is quoted by Maqatil without mentioning its narrating chain. Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalanī also to reject and weaken Maqatil mentioned words of ibn Sa’ad, Bukhari, *an-Nasa’i*, ibn Haban, Dar Qatni and others.( al-‘Asqalanī, Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, 1404 AH., vol.10, p.253)

### 5.6.sixth example

«وَأَخْرَجَ ابْنَ سَعْدٍ وَالحَاكِمَ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ ابْنِ يَحْيَى بْنِ حَيَّانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ جَاءَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (ص) بَيْتَ زَيْدِ بْنِ حَارِثَةَ يَطْلُبُهُ وَكَانَ زَيْدٌ أَنْمَا يُقَالُ لَهُ زَيْدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ فَرُبَّمَا فَقَدَهُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (ص) فَيَجِيءُ لِبَيْتِ زَيْدِ بْنِ حَارِثَةَ يَطْلُبُهُ فَلَمْ يَجِدْهُ وَتَقَوْمُ إِلَيْهِ زَيْنَبُ بِنْتُ جَحْشٍ زَوْجَتَهُ فَأَعْرَضَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (ص) عَنْهَا فَقَالَتْ لَيْسَ هُوَ هَاهُنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ فَادْخُلْ فَأَبَى أَنْ يَدْخُلَ فَأَعْجَبَتْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (ص) فَوَلَّى وَهُوَ يَهْمُهُمْ بِشَيْءٍ لَا يَكَادُ يَفْهَمُ مِنْهُ إِلَّا رُبَّمَا أَعْلَنَ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ سُبْحَانَ مَصْرَفِ الْقُلُوبِ فَجَاءَ زَيْدٌ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ إِلَى مَنْزِلِهِ فَأَخْبَرْتَهُ أَمْرَهُ أَنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (ص) أَتَى مَنْزِلَهُ فَقَالَ زَيْدٌ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ إِلَّا قُلْتُ لَهُ أَنْ يَدْخُلَ قَالَتْ قَدْ عَرَضْتُ ذَلِكَ عَلَيْهِ فَأَبَى قَالَ فَسَمِعْتُ شَيْئًا قَالَتْ سَمِعْتَهُ حِينَ وَلَّى تَكَلَّمَ بِكَلَامٍ وَ لَا أَفْهَمُهُ وَ سَمِعْتَهُ يَقُولُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَ مَصْرَفِ الْقُلُوبِ فَجَاءَ زَيْدٌ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ حَتَّى أَتَى رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (ص) فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ بَلِّغْنِي إِنَّكَ جِئْتَ مَنْزِلِي فَهَلَا دَخَلْتَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّ زَيْنَبَ أَعْجَبَتْكَ فَافَارَقَهَا فَيَقُولُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (ص) أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ زَوْجَكَ...»

Ibn Sa’ad and Hakim ( in their books) quoted from Muhammad ibn Yahya Haban ( may God be satisfied with him) that he said, Prophet went to the home of Zayd ibn Harithah to get him to do something. And Zayd was called Zayd the son of Muhammad. By chance, Prophet could not find him. So he went to Zayd ibn Harithah’s home to get something done but he could not find him. He entered his home. Zaynab bint Jahsh, the wife of Zayd , stood up. The holy Prophet turned his face. Zaynab said, oh the holy Prophet of God! Zayd is not at home. Enter, but Prophet did not enter. Zaynab’s beauty surprised Prophet. The Prophet returned home while he was murmuring something which could not be understood except when he said loudly, “ God is Pure, Pure is the God who desists hearts. Zayd came back to his home, his wife told him about Prophet. Zayd asked, “Did you tell him enter?” Zaynab said, “ I told him but he did not.” She continued, “ I have heard something from him saying while he was coming back home but I did not understand. He was saying, “God is Pure, Pure is the God who desists hearts.” Zayd came to Prophet and said, oh the Prophet of God! I have heard you came to my home why didn’t you come in? oh the holy Prophet! If Zaynab’s beauty surprised you, I can divorce her? The holy Prophet said, keep your wife for you.” (Siyuti, 1404, vol.5, p.201, ibn Sa’ad, n.d., vol.8, p.101)

#### 5.6.1. documental evaluation:

Muhammad ibn Haban is one of the Tabe’aan and passed away in 121. He can not be an eyewitness of this event and if the last narrator is one Tabe’ei, the narration is considered as cut-off and in ‘Ilm Hadith is of lower authenticity.( ibn Hajar ‘Asqalanī, Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, 1404, vol.9, p.363)

## 5.7. Seventh example

و أخرج عبد بن حميد و ابن المنذر عن عكرمة قال : «دخل النبي (ص) يوماً بيت زيد، فرأى زينب وهي بنت عمته، فكأنها وقعت في نفسه، فأنزل الله: «وَإِذْ تَقُولُ لِلَّذِي أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ..»»

‘Abd ibn Hamid and ibn al-Mundhir ( in his book) narrated from ‘Ikrimah who said, one day Prophet entered Zayd’s home and saw Zaynab who was his cousin. It seemed her love filled the heart of Prophet. Therefore, God sent down this verse, “And when you said to he whom Allah had favored and yourself have favored: ‘Keep your wife and fear Allah, ’ ... (33:37)”( *Siyuti*, 1404, vol.5, p.204)

### 5.7.1. Documental evaluation:

Siyuti had omitted the document of this tradition and only sufficed to some individual who are at the beginning of the tradition. In addition, ‘Ikrimah himself accepted Islam in the year 8 of AH. In conquering Mecca and the story of Prophet and Zaynab belonged to the fourth and fifth year of Hijri. Therefore, ‘Ikrimah could not be one of the eye-witnessed to assert his claim. He should narrate this narration through a mediator who had seen the event himself. A lot of narrations of this story are *Mursal*<sup>4</sup> or *Maqtu*<sup>5</sup> and are considered as weak Ahadith.

## 5.8. Eighth example

«حدَّثنا عبد الرزاق، عن معمر، عن قتادة قال: جاء زيد إلى النبي (ص) فقال: إن زينب اشتد علي لسانها، وأنا أريد أن أطلقها. فقال له النبي (ص): اتق الله، وأمسك عليك زوجك، والنبي (ص) يحب أن يطلقها، ويخشى قاله الناس إن أمره بطلاقها، فأنزل الله تعالى: «وَتُخْفِي فِي نَفْسِكَ مَا اللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ وَتَخْشَى النَّاسَ»

‘Abdul-Razzaq quoted from Moa’mmar and he from Qetade who said that Zayd went to Prophet and said Zaynab is speaking harshly to me and I want to divorce her. Prophet told him fear from God and keep your wife for yourself but in fact Prophet liked they got divorced and he was afraid of ordering to divorce. Due to this God sent down, “....” ( San’ani, ‘Abdul-Razzaq, 1411 AH, vol.2, p.96)

### 5.8.1. Documental evaluation:

Qetade is also from Tabe’aan and did not narrate this from Sahabeh. And he himself was not an eye-witness of this story.

To be brief, we did not include other traditions here. It is necessary to say that there are other several narration in Tafsir Tabari in this regard ( Muhammad ibn Jarir Tabari, 1412 AH., vol.22, p.10) and ibn Juzi narrated them in the interpretation book of “ Zad al-Masir fi ‘ilm al-Tafsir” and evaluated some of them. Some others who only sufficed to quote narrations that we can refer to mentioned addresses to know more. ( ibn Jozi, 1422 AH., vol.3, pp.465, 467, 468 and Baghavi, 1420 AH., vol.3, p.641, p.643 & Sa’adi, Abdul-Rahman, 1408 Ah., p.798).

In the end of this part, it is worth saying that some famous interpreters like sheikh Tabarsi and sheikh Tusī made the same mistake that their previous and next interpreters came up with. They tried to justify instead of rejecting them. For example we read in Majma’ al-Bayan that «قال البلخي ويجوز أن يكون أيضا على ما يقولونه أن النبي استحسناها فتمنى أن يفارقها زيد فيتزوجها و كتم ذلك لأن هذا التمني قد طبع عليه البشر و لا حرج على أحد» (Tabarsi, 1372, vol.8, 564) “Balkhi said it is proper جاز what people say if Prophet considered Zaynab beautiful and wished her het divorced from Zayd so that married him but hide this, because this wish is nature of human beings ( and human beings are created based on this nature) and it is no sin if someone wished like this ...” Tabarsi did not evaluate this story but justified that

<sup>4</sup> Mursal news is a hadith that either has no document or does not mention the names of all its narrators.

<sup>5</sup> It is a hadith that some of its narrators are unknown or its connection to the infallible is unknown. In the Sunnite term, any hadith that expresses the speech or deeds of Tabe’an is Maqtu’. In Shi’ite opinion it lacks authority.

Prophet did not betray and he knew that Zaynab in future will marry him, so it was not wrong for Prophet if he had a look at her. Likewise, Sheikh Tuṣi in Tafsir Tebyan said when Prophet saw Zaynab found her beautiful and wished her divorce from Zayd. Then Sheikh Tuṣi quoted from Balkhi that this is natural and based on people's nature. ( Tuṣi, n.d., vol.8, 344) if we consider this behavior natural, it causes muslims have the same wish when they see wives of each other but this is completely against each sound mind.

## 6. *The Relationship of This Story with the Story of Previous Prophets and Evaluating It*

God states in verse 37 of surah Aḥzab ,

: «مَا كَانَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ مِنْ حَرَجٍ فِيمَا فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَهُ سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ فِي الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ قَدَرًا مَقْدُورًا» :  
 “No fault shall be attached to the Prophet for doing what Allah has obligated for him. Such was the way of Allah with those who passed away before the decree of Allah is a decree determined.” (33:38)

Some interpreters wrote about this verse the love of Prophet to Zaynab was like Davood's to his wives and this numerous numbers of wives for prophets is natural and considered it like the lifestyle of previous prophets like Davood. «... سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ فِي الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ. ..» “this was the sunnah of God which was common among ancestors” and then he counted many wives for Davood and Sulayman.

For example Siyuti in Dur-al-Manthūr wrote similar to Davood who looked at a woman and fell in love with her so married her God ordered Prophet to marry Zaynab and as God's sunnah was this for Davood to marry that woman God did the same for Zaynab .(Siyuti, 1404 Ah., vol.5, p.203) likewise from Muhammad ibn Ka'ab Qarzi said, “ it means he can marry as many as women he desired and this was the sunnah of the previous prophets, hazrat Sulayman had a thousand wives and Davood a hundred wives. Ibn Jurayh said that the name of the woman who married Davood was Yasi'ah and this is sunnah of God for Muhammad and Zaynab , «... سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ فِي الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ» and this is how the sunnah of God for Davood and that woman (Yasi'ah) was applied to the Prophet and Zaynab. (Siyuti, 1404 AH., vol.5, p.203) in Tafsir of Sharif Lahiji and Menhaj al-Sadeqin fi elzam al-Mokhalefin similar to this story has been narrated but for Davood a hundred wives and Sulayman three hundred wives have been claimed. ( Kashani, n.d., vol.7, p.297 & Eshkevari, 1373 Sh, vol.3, p.639).

Likewise Tha'labi and baghavi asserted the story of Prophet and Zaynab is similar to the story of Davood and the wives he liked; though they did not mention number of wives of Davood and Sulayman. ( Tha'labi, 1422 Ah.,p.49 & Baghavi, 1420, vol.3, p.645)

### 6.1. Documental evaluation:

These reports have been cited by ibn Jurayh and Muhammad ibn Ka'ab Gharzi who are both from Tab'e'aaan who are considered cut-off and they are not narrated from Prophet.

### 6.2. Textual evaluation:

Concerning its texts, it should be said that having as many as these wives for prophets are not logical and these reports introduced prophets like kings who had *Haramsara* and were busy there; but the life style of prophets and their night prayers are in exact opposition with having a hundred wives or thousand wives. These are distorted texts like Torah which claims 800 wives and 300 maid for Sulayman; infallibles are pure.





Therefore, how would it be possible Prophet fell in love with Zaynab, the wife of Zayd, and wished her divorce; while God prohibits him of looking at wives of others? It seems that this kind of narrations are in complete opposition with Quran and are not acceptable.

«يَعْلَمُ خَائِنَةَ الْأَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِي الصُّدُورُ» It is not proper for Prophet to betray by his eyes. God says about eye betrayal that

“He (Allah) knows the furtive looks of the eyes and what the chests conceal.” (40:19)

## 7.2. Opposition with the history life of Prophet

Zaynab bint Jahsh was the daughter of Prophet's aunt. Since her birth, she accompanied Prophet every where. At the time, when Hijab was not obligatory for muslims, Prophet had seen her uncovered. And more important is it was the Prophet who made her marry Zayd. Therefore how is it possible Prophet fell in love with her suddenly? While he had seen Zaynab since her childhood and he made her marry?! If the cause of this love was her beauty, Prophet could have proposed her for himself earlier and definitely if Prophet proposed a woman, she accepted it right away as she knew it the cause of her salvation.

## 7.3. Distress in the texts of narrations

In quoted narrations about this story, we are witnessing distress and disagreement which are pointed to in the following.

In one of the narrations, it is said that Zayd and Zaynab were arguing in the presence of Prophet, and then her love filled the heart of Prophet.

In another narration we read that Prophet came to Zayd's home and Zaynab came to the door and answer him.

In another narration, we read Zaynab did not come out but wind pushed the curtain hanged on the door away while she was sitting in her room and Prophet saw her.

In another narration, Prophet came to Zayd's home and saw Zaynab while she was sitting in the center part of her room.

In another, Prophet came to Zayd's home and saw her while she was taking Ghusl. Presence of these differences is another reason on the weakness of these narrations and rejecting them.

## 7.4. Opposition with the infallibility of Prophet

Definition of infallibility: infallibility is a quality of soul which prohibits its owner of committing sins. (Mohammad Ali Tahanavi, 1996 AD., p.1183) regarding the infallibility of Prophets we should say that Prophets are immune of mistakes and errors in three levels: 1. infallibility in terms of committing sins and opposing divine orders. 2. Infallibility in terms of mistakes and forgetfulness in receiving and transferring revelation of God, 3. Infallibility from mistakes and forgetfulness in executing divine Laws or performing personal and social duties. This claim can be supported by numerous logical and tradition-based reasons but as the goal of this article is not to prove infallibility we do not mention them here. Likewise, concerning the Prophet per se. specifically various verses of Quran like

«وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ»

“Nor does he speak out of desire.” (53, 3)

Have been revealed that refute any lust or mundane desire for Prophet because Prophet's actions and speech are a practical role model for Muslims and are devoid of any shortcoming. Therefore these claims about Prophet's love to Zaynab are against infallibility of Prophet. Many Shia and Sunni Islamic scholars do not regard this ugly speech about Prophet untrue and regard related narrations weak and fake; of course in Shia sources we find fewer narrations in this regard because of Shia's more belief in infallibility of Prophet.

## **8. Orientalists' Opinion in This Regard and Evaluation**

As these narrations have been mentioned in narrative and interpretational books some orientalist and those who have hatred towards Prophet took advantage of these kind of narrations ( which are disregarded by most Muslims and here we mention why) to disparage Prophet and Islam.

Mohammad Taqi Deyari Bigdeli and Yalchin Ali-uf in an article titled " study of opinions of orientalist about marriage of Prophet and Zaynab" reviewed opinions of orientalist we do not evaluate their ideas here and to know more one can refer to it in *Orientalists Quran-Pazhoji Journal* , no.16. This article was published in spring and winter of 1393 and is free-access in internet.

## **9. Interpreters against This Story**

Some interpreters rejected this story and weak narration as in the following:

Ibn Arabi in the book *Ahkam al-Quran* and Qurtabi in *al-Jame' le-Ahkam al-Quran* did not know these narrations authentic.( ibn Arabi, 1408 AH., vol.3, p.1542 & Qurtabi, 1364 Sh.,vol.14, p.191) Alusi refuted narrations about the love of Prophet to Zaynab and some interpreters like Zahri , Bakr ibn 'A'la' , Qashiri , al-Qazi Abi Bakr bin al-'Arabi ,and others are against these narrations. They introduce narration of imam Sajjad as an authentic (Sahih) narration which comes in the following.( Alosi, 1415 Ah., vol.11, p.204) Jamaluddin Qasemi also in the book *Mahasin al-Tavil* has rejected these narrations by many reasons. (Qasemi, Jamaledin, Mahasen al-Tavil, 1418 AH., vol.8, p.81) Shanghiti said about these narrations and stories, " there is no doubt that this claim is not Sahih and does not deserve Prophet.(Shenqiti, 1427 AH., vol.6, 381) 'Allameh Tabatabaee and Banoo Amin also rejected these narrations and are opposing them.( 'Allameh Tabataba'ee, 1390, vol.16,p.323, Amin, Nosrat Beigom, n.d., vol.10,p.233) Ayatullah Makarem while talking about this verse opened a discussion with the title of lie myths and evaluated the mentioned claims about Prophet.(Makarem Shirazi, 1371, vol.17,p.325) Mohammad 'Ali Eshkevari in *Tafsir Lahiji* after quoting the story of Zaynab bint Jahsh referred to Shahid Sa'eed Thani and 'Allameh Helli who confirmed the story and said their words and justification are not devoid of shortcoming.( Eshkori, 1373 Sh., vol.3, p.636)

As it is clear the interpreters who were men of research and thought evaluated this story and regards Prophet of Islam far from this and did not suffice to quoting without thinking.

## **10. The Reason of Sending Down Sahih Verse**

It seems that the reason of sending down Sahih verse is that God revealed to the Prophet that Zayd will divorce Zaynab. When Zayd complained Prophet of Zaynab's bad temper and said he wanted to

divorce him, Prophet told him out of his politeness and morality, fear from God! and keep your wife while Prophet knew that they will divorce later and this is what the holy Prophet was hiding. He was afraid of people saying he married the wife of his adopted son and God said, do you fear from people while God is more deserved to be afraid of? This narration is quoted from Ali ibn al-Husayn, Zahrī and others in Shia and Sunni sources. (Tabarsi, 1372, vol.8,564)

### **11. The Hikmah of the Marriage of Prophet and Zaynab**

Zaynab belonged to the high level family. In contrast, Zayd was the slave of the Prophet. At the beginning of their marriage, Zaynab and her brother both disagreed. But by revealing that verse both yielded to the order of God. Nearly a year later, Zayd divorced Zaynab. Naturally this was hard for Zaynab because of her family and as she married him by the order of God but then Zayd divorced her. It seems that one of the Hikmah of the marriage of Prophet and Zaynab was to compensate Zaynab's obedience of God. And God due to this obedience made her the wife of the Prophet.

It is worth saying that orders of God may have several Hikmah. It seems the mentioned Hikmah was one of the Hikmah and the most significant Hikmah clearly states by Quran is to nullify custom of ignorant time.

But regarding nullifying the custom of ignorant time we should say that Zayd and Zaynab married in the early of the fourth year of Hijri and by the order of Prophet and according to the verse 36 of Surah Ahzab and surah Ahzab was sent down in the year four and early of year five. Ibn Sa'ad in the book *Tabaqat* knew *ziqa'de* of the year five the time of Prophet's marriage to Zaynab. ( ibn Sa'd, n.d., vol.8, p.114) if it is true, Zaynab and Zayd lived together for a year. This short time of their life together has a Hikmah and the mentioned verse openly pointed out to this Hikmah and that is in ignorant time marrying wife of adopted son was disapproved but after this it has changed and faithful ones could marry wives of their adopted sons. Quran says, «لِكَيْ لَا يَكُونَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ حَرَجٌ فِي أَزْوَاجِ أَدْعِيَائِهِمْ» so that there is no fault in believers concerning (marriage to) the former spouse of their foster children if they divorced them. (33:37)

Therefore, according to this verse, the most significant Hikmah of the marriage of Prophet and Zaynab was to violate one of the sunnah of ignorant time so that faithfuls are allowed to marry wives of their adopted sons.

### **Conclusion**

According to the researches, this is concluded that the mentioned narrations about the story of the Prophet and Zaynab are not Sahih. These narrations have documental and textual shortcoming; there are weak narrators in the chain of narrators or are narrated from *Tabe'in* or those who were not seen this marriage.

Regarding the texts also it should be said these narrations are in opposition with Quran and incompatible with the verse 38 of Surah Ahzab. Because Prophet himself made Zayd and Zaynab marry each other and if Prophet wished to marry Zaynab, he could marry him earlier. Distress among these narrations and differences in narrations are another reason of rejecting this story. These narrations are not compatible with the infallibility of Prophet because a prophet who could not control himself and is eager to marry wife of another man is not suitable to guide people. And the most important Hikmah of sending

down this verse is to nullify prohibition of marrying wife of adopted son which was common in the ignorant time.

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