

Aisha and Safwan

Complete Sahih Bukhari Volume 3, Book 46, Number 717:

Narrated Ibn Aun:

I wrote a letter to Nafi and Nafi wrote in reply to my letter that the Prophet had suddenly attacked Bani Mustaliq without warning while they were heedless and their cattle were being watered at the places of water. Their fighting men were killed and their women and children were taken as captives; the Prophet got Juwairiya on that day. Nafi said that Ibn 'Umar had told him the above narration and that Ibn 'Umar was in that army.

The beautiful *Juwairiya* was daughter of the chief of the Bani Mustaliq, *Hares Ibn Abuzerar*. She was part of the booty that was captured by one of the Muslims in the Ghazwat of Bani Mustaliq.

The captured women were supposed to be returned to their family upon payment of a ransom. The ransom requested by *Juwairiya's* kidnapper was so high that she was not able to pay. Therefore she went to Mohammad and asks for help. Mohammad upon seeing her agreed to pay the ransom (400 Darham) to her owner but in return *Juwairiya* should marry Mohammad.

At the same time there was a dispute between one of Umar's slave and one of the members of Al-Khazraj tribe in Medina. *Abdullah bin Ubai bin Salul* one of Mohammad's influential enemies seized this opportunity and began provoking people against Mohammad. Mohammad realizing the situation returned quickly back to Medina to stop Abdullah's plans. In this Ghazwat Aisha was with Mohammad and she was not happy about the fact that Mohammad in a short period has had married himself two new wives, one [Zainab \(former wife of Zayed\)](#) and now *Juwairiya*.

According to Aisha, on the way back to Medina in one of the stops, she goes out to the call of nature but she does not return to her howdah in time so she remains behind all alone in the desert. Which means her slaves would have mounted the howdah on the camel without looking inside or feeling the weight difference without Aisha being in it.

Aisha waits there until *Safwan bin Al-Muattal As-Sulami Adh-Dhakwani*, the rear-guard of Mohammad's army, arrives and takes her to Medina. They arrived the next morning to Medina.

Due to the strong rivalry between Zainab and Aisha, Zainab accuses Aisha of infidelity with Safwan. At the same time *Abdullah bin Ubai* and *Hamna bint Jahsh* (Zainab's sister) spread the rumour all over the Medina.

Aisha says: "I became ill for a month. The people were propagating the forged statements of the slanderers while I was unaware of anything of all that, but I felt that in my present ailment, I was not receiving the same kindness from Allah's Apostle as I used to receive when I got sick. (But now) Allah's Apostle would only come, greet me and say, 'How is that (lady)?' and leave. That roused my doubts."

According to Aisha, she was ill and was staying with her parents during that time and had no idea about the rumours. She first found out about it after a month. It seems that Mohammad wasn't happy with her at that time so that's why she was staying with her parents. In the meantime Mohammad was trying to find out the truth about this rumour. He ordered Ali to interrogate *Barira* (Aisha's slave) to find out more about whereabouts of Aisha on that night. According to Tabari, Ali even beat Barira up in front of Mohammad but with no result.

The questions that come to mind are: Didn't Aisha's slaves realize that the howdah was empty? Couldn't Safwan ride faster to get Aisha to the army? Isn't the duty of the rear-guard to get to the army in time and warn them of an attack?

Feeling suspicious Mohammad went to Abu Bakr house to speak to Aisha. Aisha assured him of her innocence and on the spot Mohammad got one of his epileptic fits. He got up and explained that Allah has spoken to him and has revealed the surah an-Nur, which contains the laws and punishments for adultery.

At the end three people received punishment for spreading the rumour, *Hassan bin Thabit*, *Mistah bin Uthatha* and *Hamna bint Jahsh*, 80 stripes each.

However it is imperative to understand that the point of this story is NOT innocence or guilt of Aisha but the way these verses were revealed to Mohammad. It seems that whenever Mohammad was in need of help, Allah was there personally at his service providing him with whatever he needed, from finding him virgins to giving him excuse to kill people.

[an-Nur 24:4]

And those who accuse honourable women but bring not four witnesses, scourge them (with) eighty stripes and never (afterward) accept their testimony - They indeed are evil-doers -

[an-Nur 24:11]

Lo! they who spread the slander are a gang among you. Deem it not a bad thing for you; nay, it is good for you. Unto every man of them (will be paid) that which he hath earned of the sin; and as for him among them who had the greater share therein, his will be an awful doom.

[an-Nur 24:12]

Why did not the believers, men and women, when ye heard it, think good of their own folk, and say: It is a manifest untruth ?

[an-Nur 24:13]

Why did they not produce four witnesses ? Since they produce not witnesses, they verily are liars in the sight of Allah.

[an-Nur 24:14]

Had it not been for the grace of Allah and His mercy unto you in the world and the Hereafter an awful doom had overtaken you for that whereof ye murmured.

[an-Nur 24:15]

When ye welcomed it with your tongues, and uttered with your mouths that whereof ye had no knowledge, ye counted it a trifle. In the sight of Allah it is very great.

[an-Nur 24:16]

Wherefor, when ye heard it, said ye not: It is not for us to speak of this. Glory be to Thee (O Allah)! This is awful calumny.

[an-Nur 24:17]

Allah admonisheth you that ye repeat not the like thereof ever, if ye are (in truth) believers.

[an-Nur 24:18]

And He expoundeth unto you the revelations. Allah is Knower, Wise.

[an-Nur 24:19]

Lo! those who love that slander should be spread concerning those who believe, theirs will be a painful punishment in the world and the Hereafter. Allah knoweth. Ye know not.

Reference: Mohammad Ibn Tabari, Ali Dashti, Sahih Bukhari

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