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Moral Evaluations of the Marriage of the Prophet with Aisha

By [Ali Sina](#) [1]

Aisha was 9 lunar years old or 8 years 9 months old according to solar years when Muhammad slept with her. This is a fact [demonstrated](#) [2] by a great number of hadiths. There is no controversy in that. There has never been until now that some of the Muslims have come in contact with western values and are ashamed to admit that their Prophet could commit such an indecency. They deny the facts and have made it a [controversy](#) [3]. The majority of Muslims still have no problem with the young age of the Aisha and they ridicule these Modern day "moral relativists" who are twisting the truth to please the morality of the westerners. (See [this](#) [4] site)

An American lady, with whom I used to correspond about Islam, was interested in this religion because of her Muslim boyfriend. She admitted that the thought of Muhammad having sexual intercourse with a 9-year-old girl appalled her but she was relieved to know that there are some Muslims who deny it and this is the subject of a controversy not agreed by all the Muslims. This is what I wrote in response.

"There are people who deny the holocaust. This happened only 55 years ago and it is very well documented. Yet it has not stopped some people to deny it. So they start a controversy. Would you doubt the holocaust because it is a subject of a controversy? Intelligent people are not affected by controversies. They look at the facts and are not swayed by hearsays. Feeble-minded people become confused and do not know which way to turn. These people switch off and avoid the issue altogether, because for them, making a decision is not an easy task. That is why some people start the controversy.

Only a few years ago Sheikh Baaz in Saudi Arabia issued a fatwa that any one who said the Earth is round is Kafir. Obviously this did not go very far but he started a controversy. So what is your opinion about the shape of the Earth? Would you stay out of it because it is a controversial issue? How about the evolution? There are many Muslims as well as Christians who do not agree with evolution. They believe in the Biblical and Quranic fables of Adam and Eave and the creation. This is a big controversy. Are you going to stay away from it? Is it a none-issue for you? Almost everything under the Sun is a controversial issue. From death penalty to hunting, from spending money for space exploration to aiding the poor countries, everything is a controversy. Even the very subject of religion is a controversial issue. So you cannot walk away from responsibility when you are faced with controversies.

I agree that [morality](#) [5] is relative and we should not judge the ancient people's morality with our modern morality.

Obviously we all cringe when we think of pedophilia and acknowledge that it is a shameful act of immorality. But during the time of Muhammad, and even today in some Islamic countries, marrying a 9-year-old child was not immoral. In fact Aisha was given to Muhammad with the consent of her parents and no one raised an eyebrow. The question is, if sleeping with a nine year old child was not deemed bad and therefore was not considered immoral, was it ok? Not everything that a society accepts as moral is right. Having sex with a minor may not have been immoral for Arabs 1400 years ago, but it is now, as it was then, unethical. Moralities are defined by circumstances, but ethics transcend time and space. They are rooted in logics. Morality can vary from culture to culture, from time to time and from person to person. Who is to determine what is moral and what is not? "

Having sex with a minor may not have been immoral for Muhammad and his contemporaries in that uncivilized culture, but it was ethically wrong. If Muhammad was a messenger of God or an honorable man, as he made his Allah to proclaim him thus, he should have known that what he was doing was dishonorable and unethical.

Although it is true that in the past people married at very young age. And it is also true that occasionally wealthy old men married very young girls. We have to realize that these people acted on their culture. We do not condemn them for they did not know better. What they did was the norm. But we do condemn those cultures.

However, we cannot forgive with the same amnesty those who claimed to be the standard of rectitude amongst mankind. If average people could not distinguish the right from the wrong, the messengers of God, if they were from God, should have known better. If their claim was true, if their knowledge was divine, if they were inspired, they should not have followed the tradition of their people but should have set the example. Muhammad followed the morality of his people. But that morality was ethically wrong. **He claimed to be the best human and the last messenger of God.** According to him God has said to people all he wanted to say in the Quran and his religion is complete. There is no more guidance to come and his examples and teachings are all we need to know and follow for eternity. Yet what he did and said, under the light of modern values prove to be very wrong.

Now we realize that we cannot live by his examples any more, nor can we practice his teachings. Our morality has changed. **We would certainly put a man in jail if he wanted to follow the Sunnah of the prophet in this day and age and "marry" a 9-year-old child. We would not allow someone to take people as slaves or trade in slavery as Muhammad did.**

If we cannot follow the morality of Muhammad any more, if what he said and did do not fit in this modern day, why we need Muhammad? What part of his teachings should we accept and what part should we discard? Who will determine that? This is an important question. If we give ourselves the freedom to pick and choose the teachings that most suit us we should give the same freedom to others.

Suppose you believe that marriage to a minor should be outlawed, or you do not feel that polygyny is appropriate any more for this day and age. Suppose you disagree with slavery, male or female circumcision, beating of the wives and do not believe in Jihad any more. You prefer to concentrate on other parts of Islam that you like, e.g. Salat, Zikat, Haj, etc. This is your choice. But can you deny other Muslims whose choices are distinct from yours? How could you stop a Muslim who wants to follow those teachings of Islam that you consider outdated? By what authority can you dissuade one who wants to spread Islam by Jihad, like Muhammad did? **How can you prohibit him not to assault sexually a 9-year-old child by marrying her?** What would you say to a Muslim who wishes to marry up to four wives and decides to punish them by beating them if they are disobedient, as the Prophet instructed him to do? If you use logic in picking the teachings that are best, you are saying that logic is superior to revelation and therefore you are subscribing to the freethinker's way of thinking not Muhammad's.

Many Islamic countries have realized that true Islam is impractical. Very few of them can practice it faithfully; they all have modified it to certain extent and have incorporated secularism into their laws to make life bearable. Those that do follow Islam are hells on Earth. Interestingly the civility and the progress of these countries are proportionate to the level of their secularization. In the Middle Ages, when religion had plunged Europe into the dark ages, Islamic countries were progressive and prosperous. This was possible because of the tolerance of the rulers of those days, their independence from the Mosque and their disinterest to implement Islam.

Zakaria Ar-Razi, one of the greatest minds of Islamic world, attacked religion in general and Islam in particular with a force unthinkable in this day. He wrote:

"The prophets—these billy goats with long beards, cannot claim any intellectual or spiritual superiority. These billy goats pretend to come with a message from God, all the while exhausting themselves in spouting their lies, and imposing on the masses blind obedience to the "words of the master." The miracles of the prophets are impostures, based on trickery, or the stories regarding them are lies. The falseness of what all the prophets say is evident in the fact that they contradict one another: one affirms what the other denies, and yet each claims to be the sole depository of the truth; thus the New Testament contradicts the Torah, the Koran the New Testament. As for the Koran, it is but an assorted mixture of "absurd and inconsistent fables," which has ridiculously been judged inimitable, when, in fact, its language, style, and its much vaunted "eloquence" are far from being faultless. Custom, tradition, and intellectual laziness lead men to follow their religious leaders blindly. Religions have been the sole cause of the bloody wars that have ravaged mankind. Religions have also been resolutely hostile to philosophical speculation and to scientific research. The so-called holy scriptures are worthless and have done more harm than good, whereas the "writings of the ancients like Plato, Aristotle, Euclid, and Hippocrates have rendered much greater service to humanity."

This kind of criticism of Islam today, would carry the death sentence. Can any intellectual speak so freely against Islam calling the prophets "Billy Goats" as Ar-Razi called them disdainfully in these days and live? Does the fatwa against Salman Rushdie ring a bell? It is clear that in those days of the golden age of Islam, Islamic countries enjoyed a freedom and a level of secularization that has since been disappeared. And along with that, the glory of Islamic world also has ebbed. **Islam can be used as an index of barbarity and backwardness.** The more a country applies Islam, the more uncivilized and uncultured it becomes.

I have no doubt that if Islam was eliminated completely, we'll regain the past glory of those secular days and even surpass it. There is no reason to believe that the black-eyed race of Middle East is inferior to the blue-eyed Europeans. The number of Middle Eastern scientists, academics and scholars in the West is an indication that given the opportunity we are no less intelligent than any other race. The reason that we are backward, uncivilized and barbaric in our native countries is because Islam has taken away our dignity, humanity and intelligence. Islam has brainwashed us, and like a drug has damaged the minds of our people.

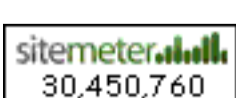
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