110501 - How the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) took care of his daughters when they were alive and until after they died

the question

Can you please advise me how did the PROPHET treat his daughters when there were in the age of 0 to 17 years. Is there anything then the obvious that as a fathers is not allowed to bahave with their daughter. Make dua for me and my family.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

It is very difficult to know how the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) treated his daughters during this period of their lives, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) married Khadeejah (may Allah be pleased with her) when he was 25 years old, and the Revelation came to him when he was 40, then Khadeejah (may Allah be pleased with her) died approximately ten years after his mission began.

The daughters of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) – Zaynab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthoom and Fatimah (may Allah be pleased with them) – were all born to Khadeejah, which means that most of them reached this age (17) in Makkah. Fatimah (may Allah be pleased with her) was the youngest of them, and according to what Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (may Allah have mercy on him) thought most likely in al-Isti’ab (4/178), she was born shortly before his mission began. The Muslims in Makkah were a persecuted minority and at that time they were not able to narrate any details of the life of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), especially since he was married only to Khadeejah (may Allah be pleased with her) at that point, and she died a few years before the Hijrah.

But we can speak about how the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) treated his daughters in general during this stage of their lives and others.

Secondly:

There is no doubt that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is the best example for the Muslims, and his life (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is the best example of how rulers should deal with their people, how husbands should deal with their wives, how fathers should deal with their children and grandchildren, how daa'iyahs should deal with those whom they are calling to Islam, how scholars should deal with seekers of knowledge, how commanders should deal with their troops, and so on in all aspects of religious and worldly affairs. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes for (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much"[al-Ahzab 33:21]

Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

This verse represents the important principle of following the example of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in word and deed and attitude. Hence Allah enjoined the people to follow the example of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) on the day of al-Ahzab, in patience, forbearance, steadfastness, striving hard and waiting for relief from his Lord, may He be glorified and exalted. May blessings and peace be upon him always, until Judgement Day.

Tafseer al-Quran il-'Azeem (6/391).

With regard to the way in which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) dealt with his daughters, he was very compassionate and wise. He had four daughters, all of whom were born to Khadeejah (may Allah be pleased with her). They were: Zaynab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthoom and Fatimah. All of them lived until Islam came, and they became Muslim, and all of them died before him except for Fatimah, who lived for six months after he died.

Compassion and wisdom can be seen in many aspects of the way in which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) treated them. For example:

1 – He called them to Islam in the best manner, out of compassion towards them.

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: When the words “And warn your tribe (O Muhammad) of near kindred” [al-Shu’ara’ 26:214] were revealed to him, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “O people of Quraysh (or words to that effect)! Ransom yourselves, I cannot avail you anything before Allah. O Banu ‘Abd Manaf, I cannot avail you anything before Allah. O ‘Abbas ibn ‘Abd al-Muttalib, I cannot avail you anything before Allah. O Safiyah, (paternal) aunt of the Messenger of Allah, I cannot avail you anything before Allah. O Fatimah, daughter of the Messenger of Allah, ask me for whatever you want of my wealth, I cannot avail you anything before Allah.” Narrated by al-Bukhari (2602) and Muslim (206).

Ibn Ishaq said: As for his daughters, they all lived until Islam came, and they became Muslim, and they migrated with him (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Al-Rawd al-‘Unuf by al-Suhayli (2/157).

2 – He took care of them when they were sick, even at the most difficult times

When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) wanted to go out to Badr, he ordered ‘Uthmaa ibn ‘Affan (may Allah be pleased with him) to stay with his wife Ruqayyah the daughter of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), because she was sick.

It was narrated that Ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said: With regard to his being absent from Badr – i.e., ‘Uthman ibn ‘Affan (may Allah be pleased with him) – he was married to the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), Ruqayyah, and she was sick, so the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to him: “You will have the reward and the share (of booty) of a man who was present at Badr.” Narrated by al-Bukhari (3495).

3 – He would welcome them warmly.

4 – He would confide his secrets to them.

5 –He would say things to make them happy.

This is all summed up in one saheeh hadith:

It was narrated that ‘Aa’ishah the Mother of the Believers (may Allah be pleased with her) said:

We wives of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) were with him, and not one of us was absent. Fatimah came walking, and her manner of walking was exactly like that of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). When he saw her, he welcomed her and said: “Welcome to my daughter.” Then he seated her on his right or his left. He whispered to her and she wept bitterly, and when he saw that she was so upset, he whispered to her again and she smiled. I said to her: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) singled you out from amongst us to whisper to, then you wept? When the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) left, I asked her: What did the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) say to you? She said: I will not disclose the secret of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). When the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) died, I said: I adjure you by the right I have over you, tell me what the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to you. She said: Now, yes (I will tell you). When he whispered to me the first time, he told me: “Jibreel used to review the Quran with me only once every year, but now he has reviewed it with him twice, and I think that my death is near, so fear Allah and be patient, and I will be a fitting forerunner for you.” She said: So I wept, as you saw. When he saw my grief, he whispered to me a second time, and said: “O Fatimah, does it not please you to be the leader of the believing women, or the leader of the women of this ummah?” She said: So I smiled as you saw me.

Narrated by al-Bukhaari (5928) and Muslim (2450).

6.

Part of the great care that he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) showed in raising his daughters was that he hastened to arrange their marriages to those whom he thought were of good character or strong religious commitment. He married Zaynab (may Allah be pleased with her) to Abu'l-'Aas ibn al-Rabee' al-Qurashi (may Allah be pleased with him), who was the son of her maternal aunt Halah bint Khuwaylid, and he married Ruqayyah to 'Uthman ibn 'Affan (may Allah be pleased with him). When Ruqayyah died, he gave Umm Kulthoom to him in marriage.

And he married Fatimah (may Allah be pleased with her) to 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him).

7.

He enjoined them to observe hijab and wear covering clothing.

That was in response to the command of Allah (interpretation of the meaning):

"O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies (i.e. screen themselves completely except the eyes or one eye to see the way). That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed. And Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful"[al-Ahzab 33:59]

8.

He solved problems between them and their husbands, and he intervened to bring about a reconciliation.

It was narrated that Sahl ibn Sa'd said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came to the house of Fatimah and he did not find 'Ali in the house. He said: "Where is the son of your uncle?" She said: There was something between me and him, and he got angry with me and went out; he did not take a nap in my house. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to someone, "Go and look where he is." He came and said: O Messenger of Allah, by Allah, he is in the mosque, sleeping. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came to him and he was lying down. His cloak had fallen from his

back and he had gotten dusty. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) started wiping it from him, saying: “Get up, Abu’l-Turab, get up Abu’l-Turab.”

Narrated by al-Bukhari (4300 and Muslim (2409).

9.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) felt sorry for his daughter who was absent, and he interceded for her husband who had been captured by the Muslims, and stipulated that he should send her to Madeenah.

All of that points to the kindness of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) towards his daughters, and that he was very fond of them; in addition to that he wished them well and wanted to save them from the environment of kufr lest they be tempted. He loved for his daughters what they loved for themselves of good, especially when it had to do with their husbands or children.

All of the above may be summed up in one saheeh hadeeth:

It was narrated that ‘Aa’ishah said: When the people of Makkah sent a ransom for their prisoners, Zaynab sent some wealth as a ransom for Abu’l-Aas, among which she sent a necklace that had belonged to Khadeejah, and she had given it to her to wear when she married Abu’l-Aas. When the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw it, he felt very sorry for her, and he said: “If you wish, you may release her prisoner and return what belongs to her?” They said: Yes. And the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) made him promise to let Zaynab come to him. And the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) sent Zayd ibn Haarithah and an Ansaari man and said: “Wait in Batn Ya’jaj (a place on the outskirts of Makkah) until Zaynab passes by you, then stay with her and bring her to me.” Narrated by Abu Dawood (2629) and classed as hasan by al-Albani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

Shaykh Muhammad Shams al-Haqq al-‘Azeemabadi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“He felt sorry for her” means, for Zaynab, because she was absent and was alone, and he

remembered the time of Khadeejah and her companionship, because the necklace had belonged to her.

‘Awn al-Ma’bood al-‘Azeem (7/254).

10.

He took part in the ‘aqeeqah of his daughters’ children.

It was narrated from Ibn ‘Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) offered ‘aqeeqah for al-Hasan and al-Husayn, a ram for each. Narrated by Abu Dawood (2841). According to a report narrated by al-Nasaa’i: two rams for each. Shaykh al-Albani said: this is more sound.

11.

He checked on his daughters with their husbands, and advised them not to focus on the pleasures of this world.

It was narrated from ‘Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) that Fatimah (may Allah be pleased with her) complained about the pain caused to her hand by the mill, and some prisoners had been brought to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), so she went but did not find him, but she met ‘Aa’ishah and told her. When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came, ‘Aa’ishah told him about Fatimah coming to her. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came to us, and we had gone to bed. We started to get up, but the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Stay where you are.” Then he sat between us, until I could feel the coolness of his foot on my chest. Then he said: “Shall I not teach you something better than what you asked for? When you go to your bed, magnify Allah thirty-four times, glorify Him thirty-three times and praise Him thirty-three times. That is better for you than a servant.”

Narrated by al-Bukhari (3502) and Muslim (2727).

12.

The Prophet’s care for his daughters continued even after they died. That is represented in the following examples:

(a)

His concern about their washing, and his giving one of his garments for shrouding one of them:

It was narrated that Umm ‘Atiyyah al-Ansariyyah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) entered upon us when his daughter died, and said: “Wash her three times, or five, or more than that, if you see fit, with water and lotus leaves, and put camphor in the last time, or a little camphor. And when you have finished, let me know.” When we had finished, we let him know, and he gave us his waist wrapper and said: “Put it next to her body.”

Narrated by al-Bukhari (1195) and Muslim (939).

The daughter in question here was Zaynab, as is stated clearly in a report narrated by Muslim.

(b)

Attending their funerals and burying them.

If we want to discuss in detail everything that our Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did as referred to above, it would take too long. The questioner may refer to books of Seerah (the Prophet’s biography) and commentaries on hadeeth, and find out for himself about these things and their importance in the life of the Muslim and how he should follow this example.

And Allah knows best.