

Safiyah the Jewish Wife of the Prophet

following is the story of Safiyah Bint Huyeyi Ibn Akhtab, the Jewish woman who was captured when Muhammad's troops attacked Khaibar and brought her to the Prophet as his share of the booty. This story, is reported in the Book of Tabaqat and is published also in the trusted Islamic site.

<http://www.prophetmuhammed.org/>

Safiyah was seventeen and very beautiful when Muslims killed her father, husband and many of her relatives.

In the same day the Prophet of Allah wanted to sleep with her. Here is the exact text of the story.

Safiyah was born in Medinah. She belonged to the Jewish tribe of Banu 'I-Nadir. When this tribe was expelled from Medinah in the year 4 A.H, Huyaiy was one of those who settled in the fertile colony of Khaibar together with Kinana ibn al-Rabi' to whom Safiyah was married a little before the Muslims attacked Khaibar. She was then seventeen. She had formerly been the wife of Sallam ibn Mishkam, who divorced her. One mile from Khaibar. Here the Prophet married Safiyah. She was groomed and made-up for the Prophet by Umm Sulaim, the mother of Anas ibn Malik. They spent the night there. Abu Ayyub al-Ansari guarded the tent of the Prophet the whole night. When, in the early dawn, the Prophet saw Abu Ayyub strolling up and down, he asked him what he meant by this sentry-go; he replied: "I was afraid for you with this young lady. You had killed her father, her husband and many of her relatives, and till recently she was an unbeliever. I was really afraid for you on her account". The Prophet prayed for Abu Ayyub al-Ansari (Ibn Hisham, p. 766) Safiyah had requested the Prophet to wait till he had gone a stage away from Khaibar. "Why?" asked the Prophet. "I was afraid for you on account of the Jews who still happened to be near at Khaibar!"

The reason Safiyah rejected the sexual advances of the 57-year-old Muhammad should be obvious to any objective person. I believe most women prefer to mourn than jump into bed with the killer of their father, husband and many relatives on the same day of their death. But the fact that the prophet of Allah could not contain his sexual urges for one day to let this young girl grieve, says a lot of his thinking and moral character. However as for the rest of the story we are not sure whether it is true or was fabricated by Muslim historians to wipe the impression of rape. But this is all we have and to find the truth we have to rely on these biased documents written by Muslims historians. The story goes on to say that Abu Ayyub was concerned for the safety of the prophet because he (Muhammad) had killed Safiyah's father, husband and many of her relatives. This is logical. It is foolish to sleep with a woman after killing her loved ones. But Safiyah's excuse for rejecting Muhammad's advances towards her seems unreasonable. When Muhammad took this young girl into his tent, he had already killed many Jews and was winning the war. If there were any Jews left, they probably were more worried for their own lives than Safiyah's chastity. Also she was already in the tent alone with Muhammad, how the Jews would have known if they were engaged in sex or not? I wonder what other excuse could she make to a man who was the murderer of her father, husband and many of her relatives to let her alone at least that night?

The next day a Walima (wedding-feast) was arranged on behalf of the Prophet

Note that the historian is saying that the wedding took place one day after the prophet got private with Safiyah and made his moves to have sex with her. This presented no problem for the prophet as

he had his Allah reveal a verse saying it is ok to sleep with women captured in war without marrying them even if they are married.

*And all married women (are forbidden unto you) **save those (captives) whom your right hands**) [4:24](#) possess (Q.*

The above verse shows that the Holy prophet did not believe that slaves have any right. You could be a happily married woman living your own life, but if Muhammad and his devout followers attacked your town and captured you, you would lose all your rights, and while your husband was being killed or enslaved you would be given to a Muslim Mujahid who would rape you all with Allah's blessings.

This is confirmed in another place.

) [Q. 23: 1-7](#)(

- 1-The believers must (eventually) win through,-
- 2- Those who humble themselves in their prayers;
- 3-Who avoid vain talk;
- 4- Who are active in deeds of charity;
- 5- Who abstain from sex,
- 6- **Except with those joined to them in the marriage bond, or (the captives) whom their right hands possess,- for (in their case) they are free from blame,**
- 7- But those whose desires exceed those limits are transgressors;-

Let us continue with the story Safiyah.

The other wives of the Prophet showed their jealousy by making slights upon her Jewish origin. But the Prophet always defended her. Once Safiyah was vexed to the extreme by the t aunts of all the Arab wives of the Prophet. She took the complaint to the Prophet, who felt great compassion for her. He consoled her. He encouraged her. He equipped her with logic. He said: "Safiyah, take courage and be bold. They are in no way superior to you. Tell them: I am a daughter of the Prophet Harun, a niece of the Prophet Musa, and a wife of the Prophet Muhammad".

When she was brought along with other prisoners-of-war, the Prophet said to her, "Safiyah, your father always maintained enmity with me until Allah made the final decision." She said, "But Allah does not catch one for the sins of another."

This of course contradicts Muhammad's own behavior who annihilated the entire Bani Qainiqa with the pretext that few of them had killed a Muslim in retaliation. That is despite [Q. 53](#): the verse that says "Namely, that no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another" () Also it was not Allah who made the final decision. Safiyah's father was killed by [38](#) Muhammad's men not by Allah. This would be same as Hitler claiming that God killed all the Jews in the holocaust. If God wanted to kill all those people that Muhammad and his army killed He could have done it on his own. God needs no mercenaries to do his will.

The Prophet then gave her the choice of joining her people after freedom or accepting Islam and coming into a matrimonial relationship with him

We have to remember that Muhammad killed most of her people and banished the rest of them. So giving the choice to join her people is not much of a choice.

She was very intelligent and gentle and said, "O Allah's Messenger, I had hoped for Islam, and I confirmed you before your invitation. Now when I have the honour to be in your presence, I am given a choice between kufr and Islam I swear by Allah, that Allah and His Messenger is dearer to me than my own freedom and my joining with my people." (Tabaqat).

Was this confession, if true, sincere? Was she safe to speak out her mind? She was enslaved by a man who had exterminated her family and could do with her the same. See the reference made to her "freedom". This shows clearly that she was not free. In fact she must have been very intelligent to fabricate those lies and save her own life.

When Safiyah was married, she was very young, and according to one report she was hardly seventeen years old and was extremely beautiful. Once A'isha said a few sentences about her short stature, at which the Prophet said, "You have said a thing that if it were left in the sea, it would mix with it (and make its water dirty)." (Abu Dawud). She not only deeply loved the Prophet but also greatly respected him as Allah's Messenger, for she heard the conversations of her father and uncle after they went to Medinah. When the Prophet migrated to Medinah, they came to see him and find out whether he was the true Messenger of Allah spoken of in the Scriptures. When they got back and talked together that night, Safiyah was in her bed listening to them. One of them said, "What do you think about him?" He replied, "He is the same Prophet foretold by our Scriptures." Then the other said, "What is to be done?" The reply came that they must oppose him with all their might.

Is this story, narrated by Abu Dawud, credible? How can two Jews recognize Muhammad as the prophet foretold by their scriptures and decide to oppose him with all their might? It defies all logic. It takes a "deficient in intelligence" to believe in this nonsense. It is not clear whether Safiyah lied to conform and make her self accepted among her enemies or it is another fabrication of a zealot believer. Why would someone decide to oppose with all his might the one who he has found out to be the promised one of his own scriptures? But this is not all! Where in the Bible it says anything about Muhammad? How come Safiyah's father and uncle could decipher their scriptures and find about Muhammad while for 1400 years all Muslim scholars have been unable to do it?

So Safiyah was convinced of the truth of the Prophet. She spared no pain to look after him, care for him and provide every comfort that she could think of. This is evident since she came into his presence after the fall of Khaibar."

See how the writer contradicts himself in one page? Just a few lines above we read that she was captured and was taken to Muhammad as a prisoner. She didn't come on her own. She was taken to the prophet because she was young and the prettiest of other women captured.

The Prophet had a slight grievance against her for she had refused when the Prophet wanted to have privacy with her at the previous stage (of the journey). At the next halt, the Prophet had privacy with her and spent all night with her. When she was asked by Umm Sulaim, "What did you see in Allah's Messenger?" She said he was very pleased with her and did not sleep at all but was talking to her all night. He had asked her, 'Why did you refuse at the first stage when I desired privacy with you?' She had said, 'I was afraid for you because of the nearness of the Jews. "'This thing further increased my merit in his eyes." (Tabaqat).

Bukhari also has recorded a Hadith telling the invasion of Kheibar and how Muhammad met Safiyah.

Narrated 'Abdul 'Aziz:

Anas said, 'When Allah's Apostle invaded Khaibar, we offered the Fajr prayer there yearly in the

morning) when it was still dark. The Prophet rode and Abu Talha rode too and I was riding behind Abu Talha. The Prophet passed through the lane of Khaibar quickly and my knee was touching the thigh of the Prophet. He uncovered his thigh and I saw the whiteness of the thigh of the Prophet. When he entered the town, he said, 'Allahu Akbar! Khaibar is ruined. Whenever we approach near a (hostile) nation (to fight) then evil will be the morning of those who have been warned.' He repeated this thrice. The people came out for their jobs and some of them said, 'Muhammad (has come).' (Some of our companions added, "With his army.") We conquered Khaibar, took the captives, and the booty was collected. Dihya came and said, 'O Allah's Prophet! Give me a slave girl from the captives.' The Prophet said, 'Go and take any slave girl.' He took Safiya bint Huyai. A man came to the Prophet and said, 'O Allah's Apostles! You gave Safiya bint Huyai to Dihya and she is the chief mistress of the tribes of Quraiza and An-Nadir and she befits none but you.' So the Prophet said, 'Bring him along with her.' So Dihya came with her and when the Prophet saw her, he said to Dihya, 'Take any slave girl other than her from the captives.' Anas added: The Prophet then manumitted her and married her."

Thabit asked Anas, "O Abu Hamza! What did the Prophet pay her (as Mahr)?" He said, "Her self was her Mahr for he manumitted her and then married her." Anas added, "While on the way, Um Sulaim dressed her for marriage (ceremony) and at night she sent her as a bride to the Prophet. () [Sahih Bukhari 1.367](#)

Mahr or dowry is a money that a bride receives from her husband when he marries her. Muhammad did not pay Safiyah her Mahr because he had to pay it to himself for manumitting her. Of course the irony is that he did not buy her but enslaved her by raiding her town. This story is significant because it gives us an insight into the moral and ethical values of the Prophet of God (Peace be upon his immaculate soul).

Our modern sensibility makes us cringe with stories like this, yet amazingly Muhammad taught that he is going to receive two rewards by marrying Safiyah. One for manumitting someone whom no one but himself had enslaved and the other for marrying the prettiest girl who was 40 years younger.

[Sahih Muslim Book 008, Number 3327:](#)

Abu Musa reported that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said about one who emancipated a slave woman, and then married her, that for him there are two rewards.

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