

Explaining the Marriage of Prophet Muhammad to Aisha at nine

How do you explain the marriage of Prophet Mohammed to Aisha at nine?

I wanted to start with an answer that Mujahid from Kings College, Guys Campus gave. It went something like this:

Mujahid : "What you say about some one who married or had sexual intercourse with a sixteen year old girl who had not yet reached maturity/puberty?"

Questioners response: "Well the law says that's ok, but I have to admit that I don't think that's right..."

Mujahid : "Exactly! The issue is not age, is maturity. If a nine year old girl has reached puberty and is mature then what is the problem?"

The reason I liked this response is because it answers a question with a question. This is a good way to provoke thought. Often the question (as in this very example) forces the questioner to answer his/her own question within the response.

Another benefit that is that Islam appears simple and clear and obvious enough for that person to understand themselves.

My traditional response is to mention the same point about maturity. What is important here is not some random age, but the state of physical and mental maturity. It is well known that humans in hot countries mature much faster than in colder climates. During some research on this very issue I discovered that the earliest recorded pregnancy was and eight year old girl in South America!

Aisha was therefore mature enough for this marriage. Reversing the question in this way was a stroke of genius, mashallah!

These are some other issues that could be mentioned:

Firstly: It was Allah who ordered the marriage of Aisha to the Prophet. That of course, takes us right back to the main issue that we talked about in the seminar about how to stop going round in circles. The one answer that answers all the questions!

Secondly: By marrying the Prophet at such a young age Aisha was raised, nurtured and imbibed with knowledge of Islam. It is a fact that she became one of this religions greatest Scholars.

Thirdly: Surely any objection to such a young marriage can only be made if can be shown that some harm was caused because of it. In fact all evidence points to the opposite in the case of this marriage which was so clearly full of love and happiness.

Fourthly: According to ibn Sa'd (The Women of Madina) Aisha was in fact already promised in marriage even before she was married to the Prophet. It shows that arranging marriages at young ages was quite normal.

Fifthly: AbuBakr, her father, was the one who asked the Prophet why he had not consummated the marriage with Aisha. (ibid)