

# The Quran and its Message

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Salamun Alaikum (Peace be upon you)

## DID THE PROPHET CONTRAVENE HIS OWN TEACHINGS? - A PROBLEMATIC HADITH

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**Reader discretion is strongly advised due to the adult content of the article.**

Many incredulous reports are found in [Islamic secondary sources](#) which not only taint the beautiful character of the Prophet depicted by the Quran (68:4), but serve questionable purpose.

The Quran states:

**068.004**

"And indeed (**Arabic: wa-innaka**) you surely are of great moral character (**Arabic: khuluqin azim**)"

One such questionable example is discussed in some detail below as it is often used by those vehemently critical towards Islam and the character of the Prophet. In particular, [Islamic secondary sources](#) are used to portray a sexual gratuitous image of the Prophet and one inclined to earthly pleasures.

Many Muslims on the other hand are woefully unaware of the existence of such questionable narratives. They often pervade the literature and are ardently protected by many as indisputably and wholly authentic in a futile attempt to uphold the complete veracity of the Ahadith corpus.

Quite apart from the fact that these questionable, damaging hadith reports are in direct tension with clear verses of the Quran, many Muslims still attempt to uphold their veracity by providing unpersuasive, almost desperate, explanations for them.

The following hadith is found in 'Sahih Bukhari' in the **Book of Menstruation** (Kitab ul-Haidi)

296 حدثنا إسماعيل بن خليل قال أخبرنا علي بن مسهر قال أخبرنا أبو إسحاق هو الشيباني عن عبد الرحمن بن الأسود عن أبيه عن عائشة قالت ﴿ كانت إحدانا إذا كانت حائضا فأراد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أن يباشرها أمرها أن تتزر في فور حيضتها ثم يباشرها قالت وأيكم يملك إربه كما كان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يملك إربه ﴾ تابعه خالد وجريير عن الشيباني

SOURCE [1]

A popular translation is provided which, though carries the general gist of the Arabic, in parts, 'softens' some of the terms that are used in Arabic. It is strongly advised that non-Arabic speakers consult those familiar with Arabic to understand the text better.

M. Muhsin Khan provides the following translation. (Please note that number 299 in M. Muhsin Khan's translation corresponds with narrative 296 in the Arabic)

**BUKHARI HADITH: Volume 1, Book 6, Number 299:**

Narrated 'Abdur-Rahman bin Al-Aswad:

(on the authority of his father) 'Aisha said: "Whenever Allah's Apostle wanted to fondle anyone of us during her periods (menses), he used to order her to put on an Izar **and start fondling her.**" 'Aisha added, "None of you could control his sexual desires as the Prophet could." [2]

[Izar: a type of waist cloth]

Whilst incredulous that the Prophet would ever 'fondle' his wives while they were in their menses, the supporting 'sanad' (supporting chain) also raises some questions which provides a male at the start of the chain who, according to the Hadith would have acquired this graphic narrative from the Prophet's wife directly.

'Sanad' (supporting chain) [Read from right to left in Arabic]

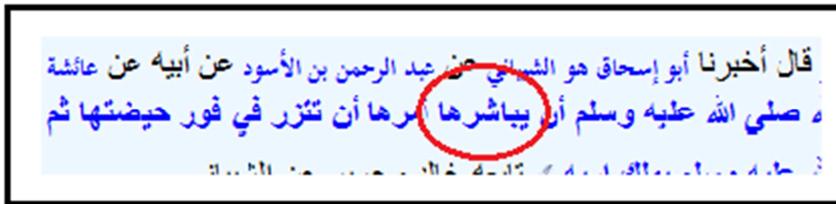
296 حدثنا إسماعيل بن خليل قال أخبرنا علي بن مسهر قال أخبرنا أبو إسحاق هو الشيباني عن عبد الرحمن بن الأسود عن أبيه عن عائشة

SOURCE [3]

[Told us (Final Transmitter)] [Heard from]-> Ismail bin Khaleel -> [from] -> Ali bin Mas'har -> [from] -> Abu Ishaq i-Shaibani -> [from] -> Abdul Rahman ibn al-Aswad -> [from] -> al-Aswad [from] -> from Ayesha

## FONDLE

The Arabic word which is translated as 'fondle' is 'yu-bashir'ha' and it is being asserted by the Hadith that the Prophet, upon desire, would fondle his wives during their monthly courses.



SOURCE [4]

The word '(yu)bashir'ha' **does not** simply mean 'fondle' which arguably 'softens' the true meaning of the Arabic term. In this context, it implies any sexual act which involves skin to skin contact, including sexual intercourse. The word has also been used by the Quran to describe the permissibility of sexual relations in the night of the fast.

### 002.187 (Part)

"Permitted for you in the night of the fasts, is the approach to your wives. They are your garments and you are their garments. God knows what ye used to deceive yourselves; but He turned to you and forgave you; so now have sexual relations / intercourse (Arabic: bashiru'hunna) with them, and seek what God Has ordained for you..."



**bashiru'hunna**

Illustration - Joseph Islam

The root word is 'Ba-Shiin-Ra' and refers to the more physical, physiological attributes of a human being. It refers to the skin, complexion, beauty, elegance of form, physical intimate relationships, contact of the skin etc. It also takes meanings such as rejoicing and good tidings.

The root verb 'bashara' in this context of verse 2:187 means any sexual act including sexual relations which involve skin to skin contact. This is especially true when the word is used concerning a wife.

## QURANIC VERSE CONTRASTED

Given the clear verses of the Quran, it is **inconceivable** that a Prophet of God would be in contravention of it.

### 002:222 (Part)

"They ask you concerning women's courses (menstruation). Say: It is a harm / affliction / annoyance (Arabic: **adhan**): So keep away from women in their courses and do not approach them until they are clean..."

[See usage of 'adhan' in verse 2:196 to denote an affliction / ailment / condition of the head]

## (MU)BASHIRA - A WELL UNDERSTOOD MEANING

*he lay with her, [skin to skin; or in the sense of] inivit eam: (S, K:) i. q. وَطَنَهَا, both فِي الْفَرْجِ and خَارِجًا مِنْهُ: (TA:) [and so بَشَرَهَا, inf. n. بَشْرٌ; for] بَشْرٌ and مَبَاشِرَةٌ are syn. [in the sense of congressus venereus, as is shown by an ex. in the S.]. (S, K.) — بِاشِرُهُ النَّعِيمِ | [Enjoyment attended him; as though it clave to his skin]. (A.)*

Source: Edward Lanes Lexicon [5]

**Congressus venereus** is an archaic term. The word 'venery' is used to describe the pursuit of sexual pleasures and 'veneria' means sexual intercourse.

### Venery

"pursuit of sexual pleasure," late 15c., from M.L. veneria "sexual intercourse," from L. venus (gen. veneris) "sexual love, sexual desire" (see Venus). In earlier use it may have been felt as a play on now obsolete homonym venery "practice or sport of hunting, the chase" (early 14c.), from O.Fr. venerie, from L. venari "to hunt" (see venison). [6]

بشرة *bašara* u to peel (▲ s.th.); to scrape off, shave off, scratch off (▲ s.th.); to grate, shred (▲ s.th.) III to touch (▲ s.th.), be in direct contact (▲ with s.th.); to have sexual intercourse (▲ with s.o.); to attend, apply o.s. (▲ or ب to s.th.), take up, take in hand, pursue, practice, carry out (▲ s.th., a job, a task, etc.)

Source: Hans Wehr's Modern Written Arabic [7]

Many hadith reports are usually cited to contextualise the Prophets sexual prowess.

### THE PROPHET SLEEPING WITH ALL HIS WIVES DAY AND NIGHT DUE TO HIS SEXUAL PROWESS OF THIRTY MEN.

BUKHARI HADITH: Volume 1, Book 5, Number 268:

Narrated Qatada:

Anas bin Malik said, "The Prophet used to visit all his wives in a round, during the day and night and they were eleven in number." I asked Anas, "Had the Prophet the strength for it?" Anas replied, "We used to say that the Prophet was **given the strength of thirty (men)**." And Sa'id said on the authority of Qatada that Anas had told him about nine wives only (not eleven). [8]

This is possibly an attempt to reconcile some of the difficult narratives found in Islamic secondary source literature. However the above narrative further stands in clear contradiction with the Quran verses which make it clear that the Prophet's nights were usually spent worshipping God. So much so, that God Himself advised the Prophet to regulate his worship.

#### 073.020

"Indeed, your Lord knows that you stand in prayer nearly two-thirds of the night, and (sometimes) half of it, and (sometimes) a third of it, and (also) a party of those with you; and God measures the night and the day. He knows that you do not count it, so He has turned to you (in mercy), therefore recite what is easy of the Quran. He knows that there will be sick among you and others who travel in the land seeking of the bounty of God, and others who are fighting in God's cause. So recite of it that which is easy (for you), and establish worship and pay the poor-due, and (so) lend to God a goodly loan. Whatsoever good you send before you for your souls, you will find it with God, better and greater in the recompense. And seek forgiveness of God. Lo! God is Forgiving, Merciful"

However, it appears that the above Hadith narratives serve no other purpose but to malign the beautiful character of the Prophet. It further suggests that the Prophet himself was often an exception to his own teachings. This is a wholly unacceptable assertion given the clear verses of the Quran.

#### 010.109

“And (O Muhammad) follow that which is inspired in you, and forbear until God give judgment. And He is the Best of Judges”

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## FINAL THOUGHTS

The Hadith cited from 'Sahih Bukhari', given its graphic content and insinuation, stands in clear tension with verse 2:222 of the Quran which clearly instructs believers to stay away from their wives during their monthly courses. No exception for the Prophet is noted in this matter.

Not only does this Hadith suggest a questionable 'matn' (text / content of the hadith), it also indicates a questionable 'sanad' (supporting chain) by positing a male as the primary source as the hadith originator. It is highly questionable whether such a graphic narrative with highly sexualised content would be imparted by the Prophet's wife to anyone, let alone another male, particularly when the Prophet's wives were instructed to ensure a separation of sorts (33:53) and to speak straight to the point offering customary / appropriate speech (*qawlan ma'rufan* 33:32).

Given clear verses of the Quran, it is inconceivable that the Prophet of God would have contravened his own teachings, especially given that the source of the hadith narratives were not fully canonised until centuries after his death.

#### Related Articles:

- (1) [The Beautiful Character of Prophet Muhammad](#) <sup>(pbuh)</sup>
- (2) [Islamic secondary sources](#)
- (3) [The Difference Between Hadith and Sunna](#)

## REFERENCES

[1] HADITH IN ARABIC [online], Available at <http://hadith.al-islam.com/Page.aspx?pageid=192&TOCID=206&BookID=24&PID=298> [Accessed 4th September 2011]

Screenshots and highlights are my own insertions. They have no bearing on the original text other than they emphasise relevance to the topic at hand. These are merely illustrations and have solely been utilised for educational and explanatory purposes.

[2] KHAN, M. M - Translations available online and in appropriate bookstores.

Any bold emphasis are my own insertions. They have no bearing on the original text other than they emphasise relevance to the topic at hand. These are merely illustrations and have solely been utilised for educational and explanatory purposes.

[3] HADITH IN ARABIC [online], Available at <http://hadith.al-islam.com/Page.aspx?pageid=192&TOCID=206&BookID=24&PID=298> [Accessed 4th September 2011]

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[4] Ibid.

[5] LANE. E.W, *Edward Lanes Lexicon, Williams and Norgate 1863; Librairie du Liban Beirut-Lebanon 1968, Volume 1, Page 207*

Highlights marked in red on the lexicon excerpt are my own insertions. They have no bearing on the original text other than they emphasise relevance to the topic at hand. These are merely illustrations and have solely been utilised for educational and explanatory purposes.

[6] ONLINE ETYMOLOGY DICTIONARY [online], available at <http://www.etymonline.com/> , search string "venery" [Accessed 4th September 2011]

[7] WEHR. H, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic, Edited by J.Milton Cowan, 3rd Edition, Spoken Languages Services Inc. 1976, Page 59*

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