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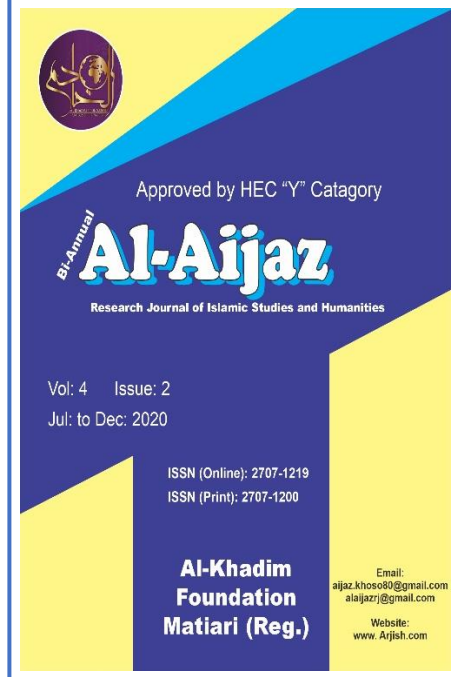
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TOPIC:

A Study Review of Three Shariah Commands Proven from Hazrat Barirah's (R.A) Life

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A Study Review of Three Shariah Commands Proven from Hazrat Barirah's (R.A) Life

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Abstract

Hazrat Barirah (RA) is one of the eminent women companions of the Holy Prophet (SAWW). She has a credit of bringing three important Islamic injunctions into the knowledge of Muslim Ummah through various events of her life. Allah Almighty blessed her with longevity. First injunction is related to the legacy of free slaves, Second injunction is related to the sovereignty of woman in marriage, the third injunction is related to the changing of injunctions when changed the ownership. He also narrated the many hadith. Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik, was also learn from her. Many of her sayings are famous. She died in the era of Umayyad. May Allah (SWT) grant her a place in Jannah. Hazrat Barirah (RA) really loved the family of the Holy Prophet (SAWW). Patience, sympathy, selflessness, philanthropy, truthfulness and fear of Allah were the distinctive features of her personality and she remained miles away from lust for the worldly gains.

Keywords: Barirah, Bareerah, Mugheeth, legacy of free slaves, sovereignty of woman, changing of ownership

Introduction:

Hazrat Barirah (RA) had been a slave to a person and wanted be set free of such an abominable life.

Before the advent of Islam slavery was very common around the world and it was Islam that taught the humanity first of all that Allah created all human beings alike, and that to enslave one's human fellow was not good practice. Islam gives many incentives for setting a slave free: even for the compensation of a wrong deed setting a slave free has been recommended. If one does not want to set his slave free of cost, an option has been given that the master and the slave may decide upon a sum through a contract to be paid by the slave at a certain time in future for his/her freedom. As Quran Says:

"والذين يبتغون الكتاب مما ملكت أيمانكم فكاوتوهم إن علمتم فيهم خيرا"¹

And from among those whom your right hands own those who seek writing- write it for them if ye know in them any good².

Right to Inheritance:

However under such a contractual freedom of the slave the right of Wila'a (right to inheritance) remains with the master even after the slave has been set free.

It is no exaggeration to say that the first nail in the coffin of the institution of slavery was fixed by the teachings of Islam. However, a question raises here that like Islam prohibited

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the pork and wine all at once, why keeping slaves was not prohibited in the similar manner. In my humble opinion, on one hand Islam did not like slavery. While on the other hand, the basic reason for keeping slaves was that war prisoners were turned into slaves. The early stages of Islam were replete with wars. Had Islam declared keeping slaves unlawful; and, if the non-believers would come to know about the fact they would fight more bravely that if they were taken prisoners the Muslims would not be able to enslave them, however, if they arrested the Muslims, they would keep the prisoners as their slaves. Perhaps it was the reason that Islam did not render the institution of slavery unlawful all at once like other impermissible acts.

Islam was not going to start the slavery. Slavery was inherited for Islam. He had to deal with this issue. There were thousands of slaves in Arab after victories on the lands of the Muslims, they reached millions of slaves. If all the slaves are freed on the same day the result that it does not except the multi-million prostitutes, robbers, thieves and beggars come into existence perhaps taking them into control would not be possible.

In this situation, the solution was not except to be tolerated the slavery for a period and started the movement to free the slaves. During this time, legal and social reforms should be made for slaves, which can be given to these people's lives easier and better place in society than ever before. Islam did this job well.

Slavery of Hazrat Barirah (RA):

Coming back to the aforesaid personality, Hazrat Barirah's (RA) master had got her married to one of his slaves Hazrat Mughis (RA). She wanted freedom and asked his master what he wanted from her in exchange. He told her that would set her free for nine Oqia to be paid in five years' installments and the deal was made. Her master thought she would never be able to arrange such huge amount of gold and would not be free accordingly. However, on the other hand, Hazrat Barirah (RA) thought that the amount of the gold was not too much but the tenure of five years was too long to bear. She decided that every problem's solution could be found at doorstep of the Holy Prophet (SAWW) and went to see Hazrat Ayesha (RA). Hazrat Barirah (RA) asked Hazrat Ayesha (RA) to set her free of her master and keep her as a slave with herself.

"حدثنا عبد الله بن يوسف، أخبرنا مالك، عن هشام بن عروة، عن أبيه، عن عائشة . رضی الله عنها . قالت جاءتني بريرة فقالت كاتبته أهلي على تسع أواق في كل عام وقية، فأعنيني. فقلت إن أحب أهلك أن أعدها لهم ويكون ولاؤك لي فعلت. فذهبت بريرة إلى أهلها، فقالت لهم فأبوا عليها، فجاءت من عندهم ورسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم جالس، فقالت إني قد عرضت ذلك عليهم فأبوا، إلا أن يكون الولاء لهم. فسمع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فأخبرت عائشة النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال " خذيها واشترطي لهم الولاء، فإنما الولاء لمن أعتق ". ففعلت عائشة ثم قام رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في الناس، فحمد الله وأثنى عليه، ثم قال " أما بعد ما بال رجال يشترطون شروطا ليست في كتاب الله، ما كان من شرط ليس في كتاب الله فهو باطل وإن كان مائة شرط، قضاء الله أحق، وشرط الله أوثق، وإنما الولاء لمن أعتق".³

Narrated By 'Urwa: 'Aisha said, "Barirah came to me and said, 'I have agreed with my masters to pay them nine Oqiah (of gold) (in installments) one Oqiah per year; please help me.' I said, 'I am ready to pay the whole amount now provided your masters agree that your Wila'a will be for me.' So, Barirah went to her masters and told them about that offer but they refused to accept it. She returned, and at that time, Allah's Apostle was sitting (present). Barirah said, 'I told them of the offer but they did not accept it and insisted on having the Wila'a.' The Prophet heard that." 'Aisha narrated the whole story to the Prophet.

He said to her, "Buy her and stipulate that her Wila'a would be yours as the Wila'a is for the manumitted." 'Aisha did so. Then Allah's Apostle stood up in front of the people, and after glorifying Allah he said, "Amma Baad (i.e. then after)! What about the people who impose conditions which are not in Allah's Book (Laws)? Any condition that is not in Allah's Book (Laws) is invalid even if they were one hundred conditions, for Allah's decisions are the right ones and His conditions are the strong ones (firmer) and the Wila'a will be for the manumitted."⁴

Command about Wila'a (right to inheritance):

Hazrat Ayesha (RA) asked Hazrat Barirah (RA) to convince her master to revoke the condition of five years and take the agreed upon amount of gold at once. When she told him, he agreed upon this. However, he conditioned Hazrat Barirah's (RA) freedom with keeping the Wila'a (right to inheritance) with himself. Hazrat Ayesha (RA) talked to the Holy Prophet in this matter. The Holy Prophet (SAWW) told Hazrat Ayesha to pay the aforesaid amount to her master to set her free, however, the Wila'a would remain with the one who sets a slave free.

It was the first Islamic injunction that came into the knowledge of Muslim Ummah due to the personal case of Hazrat Barirah (RA) that Wila'a (right to inheritance) of a slave remains with the master who sets the slaves free whether such a condition is stipulated in the contract or not.

Accordingly, Hazrat Ayesha (RA) paid the sum and purchased Hazrat Barirah (RA) from her master. However, even after being freed Hazrat Barirah (RA) wanted to live with Hazrat Ayesha (RA), like Hazrat Zaid (RA) opted to live with the Holy Prophet (SAWW), when the Prophet (SAWW) set him free, instead of going with his father. Ever since, Hazrat Barirah (RA) served Hazrat Ayesha (RA) for the rest of life of Hazrat Ayesha (RA).

Hazrat Barirah (RA) & Hazrat Mughis (RA):

Hazrat Barirah (RA) was married to Hazrat Mughis (RA), a Negro slave to her master, but she never remained happy with this relation. Hazrat Barirah (RA) demanded divorce from him as soon as she was set free. While, on the other hand, Hazrat Mughis (RA) really loved her. When he heard about Hazrat Barirah's (RA) demanding divorce, he became really upset. According to some references, Hazrat Mughis (RA) would even go after Hazrat Barirah (RA) in the street of Madinah and literally wept to convince her not to demand divorce from him.

"حدثنا عبد الأعلى بن حماد، حدثنا وهيب، حدثنا أيوب، عن عكرمة، عن ابن عباس، قال ذلك مغيث عبد بني فلان . يعني زوج بريرة . كأنني أنظر إليه يتبعها في سلك المدينة، يبكي عليها."⁵

"Narrated Ibn `Abbas: That was Mughith, the slave of Bani so-and-so, i.e., Barira's husband as if I am now looking at him following her (Barira) along the streets of Medina".⁶

But Hazrat Barirah (RA) did not want to live with him. After observing the whole matter, the Holy Prophet (SAWW) asked Hazrat Barirah (RA) to remain Hazrat Mughis's (RA) wife. Hazrat Barirah (RA) asked the Holy Prophet (SAWW) if it was his order or a merely an advice. When the Holy Prophet (SAWW) told her that it was merely an advice, she said sorry that it was really not possible for her to live with Hazrat Mughis (RA).

"حدثنا محمد، أخبرنا عبد الوهاب، حدثنا خالد، عن عكرمة، عن ابن عباس، أن زوج، بريرة كان عبدا يقال له مغيث كأني أنظر إليه يطوف خلفها يبكي، ودموعه تسيل على لحيته، فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم لعباس " يا عباس ألا تعجب من حب مغيث بريرة، ومن بغض بريرة مغيثا ". فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم " لو راجعته ". قالت يا رسول الله تأمرني قال " إنما أنا أشفع ". قالت لا حاجة لي فيه".⁷

"Narrated Ibn `Abbas: Barira's husband was a slave called Mughith, as if I am seeing him now, going behind Barira and weeping with his tears flowing down his beard. The Prophet (SAWW) said to `Abbas, "O `Abbas! Are you not astonished at the love of Mughith for Barira and the hatred of Barira for Mughith?" The Prophet (SAWW) then said to Barira, "Why don't you return to him?" She said, "O Allah's Messenger (SAWW)! Do you order me to do so?" He said, "No, I only intercede for him." She said, "I am not in need of him".⁸

Sovereignty of Woman:

It was again due to a personal case of Hazrat Barirah (RA) that Muslim Ummah came to know that a married slave woman upon being set free reserves the right of khula'a (divorce demanded by woman).

Perhaps, Hazrat Barirah (RA) inquired from the Holy Prophet (SAWW) if it was his order or advice keeping in view of the verse of the Holy Quran that once Allah and His Prophet have decided something then no Muslim man or woman has the right to go against it.

"وما كان لمؤمن ولا مؤمنة إذا قضى الله ورسوله أمرا أن يكون لهم الخيرة من أمرهم - ومن يعص الله ورسوله فقد ضللا مبينا"⁹

"And it is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His apostle have decreed an affair, that they should have any choice in their affair. And whosoever disobeyeth Allah and His apostle hath strayed with a manifest straying".¹⁰

Hazrat Barirah (RA) was really intelligent and had a great common sense. She knew that she deserved to accept zakat and that how the family of the Holy Prophet (SAWW) lived this worldly life and that the family members of the Prophet (SAWW) never accepted Zakaah for themselves.

Difference between Charity and Gift:

In the same context there is an event that once Hazrat Barirah (RA) cooked beef but she did not serve the meat to the Holy Prophet (SAWW). Seeing that the Holy Prophet (SAWW) asked her why she was not serving the beef to him. She replied that it was given in charity and that she knew that the Prophet (SAWW) and his family did not eat anything accepted for charity.

Thereupon, the Prophet (SAWW) said:

Oh, Barirah it is charity for you, but for us it would be a gift from you.

"عن الأسود، عن عائشة. رضی الله عنها. أنها أرادت أن تشتري بريرة للعق، وأراد موالها أن يشترطوا ولاءها، ذكرت عائشة للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال لها النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم " اشتريها، فإنما الولاء لمن أعتق ". "قالت وأني النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بلحم فقلت هذا ما تصدق به على بريرة فقال " هو لها صدقة، ولنا هدية"¹¹

"Aisha intended to buy Barira (a slave-girl) in order to manumit her and her masters intended to put the condition that her Al-wala would be for them. 'Aisha mentioned that to the Prophet who said to her, "Buy her, as the "Wala" is for the manumitted." Once some meat was presented to the Prophet and 'Aisha said to him, "This (meat) was given in charity to Barira." He said, "It is an object of charity for Barira but a gift for us".¹²

It was the third occasion related to Hazrat Barirah (RA) that due to her the Muslim Ummah came to know that the application of Islamic injunction changes with the change of ownership. If a person, who deserves zakaah, accepts something in charity, he or she may offer the same to the non-deserving person from his/her ownership.

Hazrat Barirah's (RA) & matter of Hazrat Ayesha (RA):

Hazrat Barirah's (RA) lofty character comes to light when the blame was put on Hazrat Ayesha (RA). When the Holy Prophet (SAWW) asked Hazrat Ali (RA) and Hazrat Zaid (RA) bin Haris for advice in this matter, Hazrat Ali (RA) told the Prophet (SAWW) that it would be better to ask Hazrat Barirah (RA) about Hazrat Ayesha (RA). When asked, Hazrat Barirah (RA) replied she never found any fault in the personality of Hazrat Ayesha (RA) and that she was all in all pious. She testified that Hazrat Ayesha (RA) was a perfect lady except for one thing that her sleep was very deep that when would leave dough for her she would sleep and the goat would eat the dough. Later, Allah Almighty Himself testified through the Holy Quran what Hazrat Barirah (RA) had already said.

"حدثنا يحيى بن بكير، فدعا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم علي بن أبي طالب، وأسامة بن زيد. رضى الله عنهما. حين استلبت الوحى، يستأمرهما في فراق أهله، قالت فأما أسامة بن زيد فأشار على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بالذي يعلم من براءة أهله، وبالذي يعلم لهم في نفسه من الود، فقال يا رسول الله، أهلك، وما نعلم إلا خيرا، وأما علي بن أبي طالب فقال يا رسول الله، لم يضيق الله عليك والنساء سواها كثير، وإن تسأل الجارية تصدقك، قالت فدعا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بريرة فقال "أى بريرة، هل رأيت عليها من شىء يريبك". "قالت بريرة لا والذي بعثك بالحق، إن رأيت عليها أمرا أغمصه عليها أكثر من أنما جارية حديثة السن، تنام عن عجين أهلها، فتأني الداجن فتأكله"¹³

"Allah's Messenger (SAWW) called `Ali bin Abi Talib and Usama bin Zaid when the Divine Inspiration delayed, in order to consult them as to the idea of divorcing his wife. Usama bin Zaid told Allah's Messenger (SAWW) of what he knew about the innocence of his wife and of his affection he kept for her. He said, "O Allah's Messenger (SAWW)! She is your wife, and we do not know anything about her except good." But `Ali bin Abi Talib said, "O Allah's Messenger (SAWW)! Allah does not impose restrictions on you; and there are plenty of women other than her. If you however, ask (her) slave girl, she will tell you the truth." `Aisha added: So Allah's Messenger (SAWW) called for Barira and said, "O Barira! Did you ever see anything which might have aroused your suspicion? (as regards Aisha). Barira said, "By Allah Who has sent you with the truth, I have never seen anything regarding Aisha which I would blame her for except that she is a girl of immature age who sometimes sleeps and leaves the dough of her family unprotected so that the domestic goats come and eat it".

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Hazrat Barirah (RA) & Abdul Malik bin Marwan:

She never got influenced by times. When the times changed and, one of the Ummiyad chiefs, Abdul Malik bin Marwan often visited her, she once told him that she could foresee through some of his personality traits that he would become the ruler one day.

Thereafter, she said: "If you become the ruler, never shed the blood of [innocent] as I have heard myself the Prophet (SAWW) saying that whosoever shed the blood of innocent Muslims would be pushed away from the entrance of the paradise." The history has recorded that what she said came true and Abdul Malik bin Marwan became the Caliph.

Hazrat Barirah (RA) & her Piety:

She was God-fearing and would start weeping while narrating hadith. Only the mother of believers, Hazrat Safiah (RA) resembled her in this regard as she would also weep when verses of the Holy Quran were recited before her. Once some of the companions of the Holy Prophet were sitting at her home and the Holy Prophet (SAWW) was reciting the verses of the Holy Quran to them. When she saw them listening to the verses of Quran silently, she asked the Prophet (SAWW) that what kind of believers they were that they listened to the verses of the Holy Quran and shed no tears!

Hazrat Barirah (RA) really loved the family of the Holy Prophet (SAWW). Patience, sympathy, selflessness, philanthropy, truthfulness and fear of Allah were the distinctive features of her personality and she remained miles away from lust for the worldly gains. She always advised the visitors according to the teachings of the Holy Quran and Sunnah. What she told them is too much to be encompassed here; however, a few samples of what she advised them are mentioned in the following lines.

The sayings of Hazrat Barirah (RA)

1. To refrain from telling others about teachings of Islam is like breaching a trust.
2. Always satisfy your hunger with lawful food as it bears countless blessings of Allah.
3. Loafing darkens the heart. Pious is the one who keeps his tongue under control. The one who talks more than he/she needs is likely to fall prey to telling lies.
4. Do well to others selflessly.
5. Brave is the one who does not attack the weak one neither he revenges himself upon the weak.
6. Rich is the one who fulfills the needs of others.
7. Do not ask the others to fulfill your needs as it sometimes earns you nothing but contempt.
8. The worldly gains are mortal. Do not make extra ordinary efforts for them.
9. Telling lies involves one in a big ordeal, always say what truth is.
10. Always do your work yourself, never depend on the others.
11. Be always straightforward and truthful. Never twist the words to confuse others to grind your own axe.¹⁵

Demise of Hazrat Barirah (RA)

No reference is available for the date her death, however, most of the historians hold that she remained alive not only after the demise of the Holy Prophet (SAWW) but a long time even after the demise of Hazrat Ayesha (RA).

Her advice to Abdul Malik bin Marwan proves that she died in the era of Umayyad. Allah Almighty blessed her with longevity. Muslims also love this companion whenever his name Barirah is famous as a common name in Muslims.

Concluding Remarks:

Hazrat Barirah (RA) is one of the eminent women companions of the Holy Prophet (SAWW). She has a credit of bringing three important Islamic injunctions into the knowledge of Muslim Ummah through various events of her life. Before the advent of Islam slavery was

very common around the world. The first Islamic injunction that came into the knowledge of Muslim Ummah due to the personal case of Hazrat Barirah (RA) that Wila'a (right to inheritance) of a slave remains with the master who sets the slaves free whether such a condition is stipulated in the contract or not. Due to a personal case of Hazrat Barirah (RA) that Muslim Ummah came to know that a married slave woman upon being set free reserves the right of khula'a (divorce demanded by woman). The third occasion related to Hazrat Barirah (RA) was that due to her the Muslim Ummah came to know that the application of Islamic injunction changes with the change of ownership. If a person, who deserves zakaah, accepts something in charity, he or she may offer the same to the non-deserving person from his/her ownership. Hazrat Barirah (RA) once told Abdul Malik bin Marwan that she could foresee through some of his personality traits that he would become the ruler one day. The history has recorded that what she said came true and Abdul Malik bin Marwan became the Caliph. She was God-fearing and would start weeping while narrating hadith. Hazrat Barirah (RA) really loved the family of the Holy Prophet (SAWW). Allah Almighty blessed her with longevity.

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