

Aisha

Mohammed's favorite wife

Commonly referred to as Mohammed's favorite wife, Aisha bint Abu Bakr (the daughter of Abu Bakr) was formally engaged to the Prophet at the age of six. The betrothal was initiated through Aisha's father after he and his daughter had returned from a brief period of time in Ethiopia where they had gone to escape the persecution which they had been experiencing from the idolaters in Mecca. Mohammed and Aisha were betrothed for several years before the marriage was consummated at age nine (Mohammed was 52 at that time). Many Muslims are embarrassed about this marriage with such a young girl (many do not know that it happened). Some have even left Islam when they discovered this fact. Some sources say that after the marriage Aisha would still play with her toys and Mohammed would play with her. Aisha was Mohammed's only virgin bride. Aisha was not able to give Mohammed a physical heir and she remained childless all her life. Her name means "she who lives" or "alive." Her name is also written: A'ishah, Ayesha, A'isha).

There are conflicting views about Aisha's status among Muslims. Aisha expressed jealousy toward Mohammed's other wives, especially Khadijah,

عائشة

Mohammed's first wife who died before Mohammed and Aisha were even betrothed. Sunni Muslims hold her in very high esteem as they consider her to be Mohammed's favorite wife and one of the foremost women of her time. The Shi'a (Shiite) Muslims on the other hand, regard her in a more negative light. This is largely due to her role during the first Islamic civil war in which Mohammed's grandson Hussein and his father Ali died. The Shi'a branch of Islam has significant roots in the events surrounding the deaths of Hussein and Ali.

Aisha is one of the foremost Islamic authorities of the early period. She is reputed to be the source of many sacred traditions about Mohammed (Hadith). When Mohammed was approaching death, he spent his last moments in the company of the 18 year old Aisha and died with his head in her lap. She remained unmarried for the rest of her life (Qur'an 33:53). Aisha died in the year 678 AD at the age of 65 during the month of Ramadan.



Prayer REQUESTS

As we have prayed for the living Khadijahs around the world on Day 13 we can also pray for the living Aishas, who take their name from Mohammed's favorite wife. Worldwide, they certainly number in the hundreds of thousands.

▶ *Ask God to open doors of opportunity for the living Aishas to hear the traditions and accounts concerning the life of the Messiah and believe in Him.*

▶ *Pray for the Aishas you may know, or that you may have heard about. Ask the Lord to reveal himself to them that they might find life in the resurrected King.*

Note: It is not helpful to accuse Mohammed for having married such a young girl. Ask Muslim friends what they know about Aisha. Say: "I have heard that Mohammed married Aisha at a very young age, what do you know about this?" Let them elaborate on the subject.