

## A Significant Crisis Period in the Family Life of the Prophet: the Events of İlä' and Takhyir

Hiz. Peygamber'in Aile Hayatında Önemli Bir Kriz Dönemi: İlä ve Tahyir Olayları

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## Abstract

In addition to being a prophet sent to preach Islam, Muhammad was also a human being. As a result, he started a family like other people, got married and faced some problems in his family life. Some of these troubles arose because of the jealousy of his wives. The events of İla and tahyir are one of the important crisis periods that the Prophet experienced regarding his family life. His pure wives caused some negative situations due to jealousy, and they caused the Prophet to forbid something that was halal for himself. Besides, a secret the Prophet gave to one of his wives and wanted her to keep was disclosed. In addition to these, his wives asked the Prophet to spend more for them. As a result of these events, the Prophet swore to stay away from his wives for a month, and as a result of this period, with the revelation of the verse of tahyir, he left his wives to choose between two options. They would either choose Allah, the Prophet and the Hereafter, or they would choose the world and leave the Prophet. These events and the verses that were revealed about them became an important turning point for both the Prophet and his wives.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sirah, İlä', Tahrim, Takhyir, Ummahät al-Mu'minîn.

## Öz

Hız. Muhammed, İslam'ı tebliğ etmek için gönderilen bir peygamber olmasının yanı sıra aynı zamanda bir beşerdir. Bu nedenle diğer insanlar gibi aile kurmuş, evlenmiş ve aile hayatında bir takım sıkıntılarla karşılaşmıştır. Bu sıkıntılardan bazıları, hanımlarının kıskançlığı nedeniyle ortaya çıkmıştır. İla ve tahyir olayları Peygamber'in aile hayatı ile ilgili olarak yaşadığı önemli kriz dönemlerinden biridir. Onun pak zevceleri kıskançlık nedeniyle bir takım olumsuz durumların yaşanmasına sebebiyet vermiş, Peygamber'in kendisine helal olan bir şeyi yasaklamasına neden olmuşlardır. Ayrıca Peygamber'in eşlerinden birine verdiği ve saklamasını istediği bir sır ifşa edilmiştir. Bunlara ek olarak onun zevceleri Peygamber'den kendileri için daha fazla harcama yapmasını istemişlerdir. Bu olaylar neticesinde Peygamber eşlerinden bir ay ayrı durmaya yemin etmiş ve bu sürenin neticesinde, tahyir ayetinin nazil olmasıyla eşlerini iki seçenek arasında muhayyer bırakmıştır. Onlar ya Allah'ı, Peygamber'in i ve ahireti seçecekler veya dünyayı seçecekler ve Peygamber'den ayrılacaklardır. Bu olaylar ve olaylarla ilgili olarak nazil olan ayetler, hem Peygamber, hem de onun eşleri açısından önemli bir dönüm noktası olmuştur.

**Keywords:** Siyer, İlä', Tahrim, Tahyir, Ümmehätü'l-Mü'minîn.

## INTRODUCTION

Muḥammad (pbuh) was a human like other prophets. The fact that the Prophet was a person like his addressees is very important in terms of his example. His role as an example covers many aspects of life, one of which is family life. The Prophet married eleven women. They were Khadija bint Khuwaylid, Sawda bt. Zam'a, 'Ā'isha Bint Abī Bakr, Ḥafṣa bint 'Umar, Zaynab bint Khuzayma, Umm Salama, Zaynab bint Jaḥsh, Juwayriya bint al-Ḥārith, Umm Habiba bint Abū Sufyān, Ṣafiyya bint Ḥuyayy and Maymūna Bint al-Ḥārith. Two of these wives, Khadija and Zaynab bint Khuzayma died while the Prophet was alive. In addition, Muḥammad had two concubines named Rayḥāna and Māriya. One of them, Māriya, rose to the status of umm walad and gained her freedom because she had a child from the Prophet.

The Prophet's wives were not ordinary people, they were either at the forefront of their tribe with their ancestry, intelligence and beauty or they were women who were one step ahead with their conversion and service to Islam. They were the first degree assistants of the Prophet in carrying out her prophetic mission. In addition they were the first implementers of the revealed orders and teachers who taught Muslims what they learned from the Prophet. On the other hand, the cultural environments in which each of them grew up differed. Therefore, there were some disagreements and unpleasant events arising from these differences and jealousy between them. But such situations were immensely human and natural. When some of their behaviors stemming from jealousy were combined with their desire for a luxurious and prosperous lifestyle from the Prophet, a series of events that we can call a turning point occurred in the Prophet's family life. It is indisputable that these incident, known as the events of Īlā' and takhyīr, were a turning point for the Prophet himself, his wives and Muslims, and how important they were. In our study, we will try to determine the causes, results and time of the events by analyzing the narrations and related verses containing clues about the details of these events.

### 1. THE ĪLĀ' EVENT AND ITS CAUSES

The word Īlā', which means "to swear", as a term, refers that the husband forbids himself to have sexual intercourse with his wife by tying it to an oath, vow, or a condition.<sup>1</sup> As a result of some reasons, the Prophet swore not to approach his wives for a month and fulfilled this oath. Regarding this event, first of all, we should cite two long narrations containing many details such as the time and place of the event and the psychological state of the Prophet, his wives and other believers at the time of the event. According to the first of these narrations, 'Abd Allāh b. al-'Abbās said:

I wanted very much to ask 'Umar who two of the Prophet's wife were, about whom Allāh has said "*Would that you two turn unto God in repentance, for the hearts of both of you have swerved...*"<sup>2</sup> I waited a year because I was afraid to ask due to his solemnity. Finally, I went on pilgrimage with 'Umar. On the way back, he turned aside to meet his toilet needs. I immediately began to wait for him with a canteen made of leather and containing water. When he broke his ablution and came to me, I poured water on his hands and he performed ablution. At that time I said; "O Leader of the Believers! Which two of the Prophet's wife were, about whom Allāh has said '*Would that you two turn unto*

<sup>1</sup> Hamdi Döndüren, "Īlā", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2000) 22/61.

<sup>2</sup> al-Taḥrīm 66/4.

*God in repentance, for the hearts of both of you have swerved...*" He replied: "Wonder you, son of 'Abbās! They are 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa." Then I said, "By God, I've been wanting to ask you this for a year, but out of respect, I couldn't." He said, "Don't do that. Ask me about the matter you think I have information on, so that I will let you know if I have any knowledge." Then 'Umar narrated the incident as follows: I was living in the Banū Umayya b. Zayd neighborhood in the Awâlî<sup>3</sup> district of Madinah with a neighbor from the Ansar. Me and my neighbor were going to the Prophet's in turns. One day he would go and bring me the revelation and other news of that day, one day I would go and bring him the same things. We were the tribe of Quraysh, a tribe that ruled over women. When we came to the Ansar, we saw that their women were dominant over them. Our women began to learn this attitude from their women. One day I got angry with my wife and saw that she was raising an answer for me. I reacted to her response. Thereupon, she said: "Why do you find it strange that I have an answer for you? By Allāh, the Prophet's wives are also getting stubborn him. Even sometimes one of them does not come to him all day until the night and remains offended." These words terrified me and I said, "Whoever does such a thing is doomed." Then I put on my clothes and immediately went to Ḥafṣa. "O Ḥafṣa, does one of you ever stay angry with the Prophet all day long?" I asked her. She said "Yes." I told her: "So that person will definitely be devastated and frustrated. Are you sure that you will not suffer the rage of Allāh because the Messenger of Allāh would be angry with you? If Allāh is angry with you, you will surely perish. Don't ask too much of the Prophet and do not respond to him by chattering about anything. Don't be offended by the Prophet. If you need anything, come and ask me. Don't let the situation of your partner, who is more beautiful than you and more beloved to the Prophet -meaning 'Ā'isha- make you do something wrong." Then I left there and went to Umm Salama because I was close to her. When I told the same words to her, she said, "I am amazed at you, son of al-Khaṭṭāb. Do you want to meddle between the Prophet and his wives as you do everything?" This answer brought me to my senses and eased the sadness I felt in my conscience. Then I went out with her. By the way, at that time there was a rumor that the Ghassanids<sup>4</sup> were preparing to fight us. One day, when it was my neighbor's turn to go to the Prophet, at the time of isha, my neighbor came to me and knocked violently on the door. When I opened the door, he in a stew said: "There's been a big event today." "What happened? Or did the Ghassanids attack?" I asked. He said: "No, something bigger and more important! The Messenger of Allāh divorced his wives." I said, "So Ḥafṣa was devastated and frustrated. I was already predicting this would happen." I got dressed immediately, went out and prayed the fajr prayer with the Prophet.<sup>5</sup> After the prayer, the Prophet went to his cell and retreated to solitude there. At once I went to Ḥafṣa and found her crying. "Why are you crying? Didn't I warn you? Did the Messenger of Allāh divorce you?" I asked her. "I don't know. That's where he retreated to that cell," she replied. I left there and went to the *minbar* in Masjid an-Nabī. I saw that people were gathered around the pulpit and some of them were crying. I sat with them for a while, then I couldn't stand it and went to the cell of the Prophet, where he was taken to seclusion. I said to the black servant of the Prophet, "Ask permission for 'Umar." The servant entered, spoke to the Prophet, and then left. "I asked permission, but he didn't say anything," he said. I came back to the *minbar* and sat for a

<sup>3</sup> Settlements 4-8 miles from Masjid an-Nabawī. Fatimatüz Zehra Kamacı, *Hiz. Peygamber'in Günlük Hayatı-II; Hâne-i Saâdet*, (İstanbul: İnkılab Yayınları, 2021), 49.

<sup>4</sup> An Arab state that ruled in northern Arabia and was a vassal of the Byzantine Empire. Ahmet Ağrakça, "Gassâniler", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 1996) 13/397-398.

<sup>5</sup> In another narration from Jabir b. 'Abd Allāh, it was stated that the Prophet didn't go out to lead the prayer despite the Muslims waiting for a long time. Muḥammad b. Sa'd b. Manī el-Hāshimī el-Basrī, *Kitāb at-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, critical ed. Dr. 'Alī Muḥammad 'Umar (Cairo, 2001) 10/171-172.

while with the people there. Then I couldn't help myself and asked permission to meet with the Prophet again. The servant said that he asked permission a second time but the Prophet did not answer. I turned again and sat for a while. Then I couldn't stand it again and asked permission for the third time. The servant entered and when he left, he said, "I told the Prophet that you wanted to meet, but he didn't answer." Just as I was going back, the servant called me and said, "The Messenger of Allāh gave you permission." I went inside and saw that the Prophet was lying on a straw cloth and didn't put a mattress on it. Therefore, traces of wicker braids appeared on his body. He rested his head on a leather pillow filled with palm fiber. I saluted and, while standing, "O Messenger of Allāh, have you divorced your wives?" I asked. He lifted his head towards me and said "No". I said "Allāhu Akbar" and happily continued: "O Messenger of Allāh, we were a society that dominated women. But when we came to Madinah, we found such a society that their women prevailed over them." The Prophet smiled at my words. Then I told him what I said to Ḥafṣa and Umm Salama and Umm Salama's objection to me. The prophet smiled again. Seeing his smile, I sat down too. I lifted my head and looked around the room. I swear I couldn't see anything touching the eye except three pieces of leather. I said, "O Prophet of Allāh, pray to Allāh to give wealth to your ummah. He gave plenitude to the Byzantines and Persians. Although they didn't serve Allāh, he gave them possessions." The reclining Prophet sat up at these words and said: "Do you mean the temporary beauties of this worldly life, O 'Umar? They are a community whose bounties are given to them in advance in the life of this world. The world is theirs, the hereafter is ours. Don't you agree with that?" So I said, "Ask forgiveness for me, O Messenger of Allāh." The Prophet was very angry with his wives because Ḥafṣa had revealed the secret he had given to her to 'Ā'isha, and he had sworn not to go near them for a month. He stayed away from them for twenty-nine days. He did so because he was saddened by God's rebuke. Twenty-nine days later, the Prophet went around his wives, starting with 'Ā'isha, and left them to choose between two options. All of them chose the Messenger of Allāh.<sup>6</sup>

Another narration from 'Umar is as follows:

When the Prophet got away from his wives (he did ilā'), I went to the mosque. I saw that the congregation (out of sadness) took the pebbles in their palms and squeezing them to the ground and they said, "The Prophet divorced his wives." This happened before women were ordered to wear hijab. I said to myself, "I will definitely insight into this issue today." First, I went to 'Ā'isha and said, "O Abū Bakr's daughter. You brought the matter to the point where it hurt the Messenger of Allāh, did you?" She answered me, "What do I have to do with you, son of al-Khaṭṭāb? Look at your own saddlebag (your daughter Ḥafṣa)." Hereupon I left her and went to my daughter. I said to her, "O Ḥafṣa, you brought the matter to the point where it hurt the Messenger of Allāh, did you? By Allāh, you know that the Prophet does not love you. If it weren't for me, he would definitely divorce you." Ḥafṣa cried a lot. I asked him, "Where is the Messenger of Allāh?" "He is in the *mashrabah*" she said. I went there right away. Rabāḥ, the slave of the Messenger of Allāh, appeared before me. Rabāḥ was sitting on the threshold of the mashrabah, his feet dangling on a tree stump. The Prophet was walking up and down there by stepping on this log. I said, "O Rabāḥ, I want to enter the Prophet. Ask permission for me." He looked at the room and then at me, but didn't say anything. Then I raised my voice and said, "O Rabāḥ, ask permission for me. I think the Prophet thinks

<sup>6</sup> Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī, *al-Cāmi' u'ṣ-ṣaḥīḥ*, (s.n., 1315 H.), "Nikāḥ", 83; "Maḏālim", 25; "Talāq", 8; "Aymān", 25; "Libās", 31; Abu 'l-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Muslim, *el-Cāmi' u'ṣ-ṣaḥīḥ*, critical ed. Muḥammad Fuad Abdulbāqī (Egypt, 1955), "Talāq", 20, 34; Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān Ahmad b. Shuayb al-Nasā'ī, *as-Sunan*, (Egypt, 1964), "Talāq", 17; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Tabaqāt*, 10/173-180.

that I came for Hafsa. By Allāh, if the Messenger of Allāh orders me to slap his neck, I will definitely do it." Thereon Rabāh gestured for me to go upstairs. I went to the Messenger of Allāh immediately. He was lying on his side on a mat and covered his izar (clothing that is tied at the waist). There was nothing else on him. I saw the mat leave a mark on his side. I glanced around the room. I saw about a sa' (2,5-3 kg) of barley and an untanned leather. I couldn't hold back my tears at that. He asked me, "Why are you crying, son of al-Khattāb?" I answered him, "O Prophet of Allāh, why should I not weep? Look, the mat has left a mark on your side. Besides, there's nothing in your pantry other than what I saw. On the other hand, Caesar and Kisra are swimming in rivers of fruits and blessings. You are the Prophet and chosen servant of Allāh. You deserve these blessings more than them." Thereupon, he said, "O 'Umar, do you not agree that the hereafter is ours and the world is theirs?" I said "Yes." Ever since I entered the Prophet's presence, his face looked angry. "O Messenger of Allāh, why do you suffer from what your wives have done? If you have divorced them, there is no doubt that Allāh is with you. The angels, Gabriel and Michael, myself, Abū Bakr and all the believers are with you" I said. Praise be to Allāh, I have few speeches that I did not expect that Allāh would confirm what I said. The following verse was revealed about this situation: "... And if you uphold each other against him. God Himself is his Protector, and therefore, Gabriel, and all the righteous among the believers and all the angels will come to his aid...."<sup>7</sup> 'Ā'isha and Hafsa were in solidarity against the other wives of the Prophet. "Did you divorce them?" I asked. He answered me "No." I asked, "O Messenger of Allāh, people are upset. Shall I inform them that you have not divorced your wives?" "You can tell them if you wish" he replied. I continued to talk to the Messenger of Allāh. Finally, his anger passed and he smiled. Then the Prophet came down, and so did I. "O Messenger of Allāh, you stayed in the room for only twenty-nine days" I said. He said to me, "The month sometimes has twenty-nine days." Then I stood at the door of the mosque and shouted, "The Messenger of Allāh did not divorce his wives." Then Allāh sent down the verse of takhyir.<sup>8</sup>

As it is understood from narratives, it took twenty-nine days for the Prophet to remain separated from his wives. This point is also confirmed by another narration from 'Ā'isha. When the Prophet came to 'Ā'isha's room at the end of twenty-nine days, she said, "You had sworn not to enter our rooms for a month." The Prophet said "sometimes a month is like this" and showed ten fingers of his hand twice, on the third time he showed only nine fingers and closed one finger.<sup>9</sup>

When the Prophet took an oath to remain separated from his wives for a month, this news immediately spread among the Muslims. As stated in the rumors, this situation caused great sadness. Muslims did not know what to do because of their sadness and they played with pebbles while waiting in the mosque. Since the Prophet didn't talk to anyone about this issue and immediately turned to his mashrabah, no one could ask anything about it. This situation fed the sadness as well as the curiosity of what would happen next. While this was the state of mind of the Muslims, the wives of the Prophet, who were the mothers of the believers, were also in great grief. Because it was some of their behavior that caused the Prophet to do *ilā'*. It has been reported that crying sounds came from all of their cells during this event.<sup>10</sup> They also did not know whether

<sup>7</sup> al-Taḥrīm 66-4-5.

<sup>8</sup> Muslim, "Talāq", 30.

<sup>9</sup> Abū 'Abdallāh Muḥammad Ibn Māja, *Kitāb al-Sunan*, critical ed. Muḥammad Fuad 'Abdalbākī, (Bayrut, 1975), "Talāq", 24.

<sup>10</sup> Bukhārī, "Libās", 31.

Muhammad (pbuh) had divorced them. Umm Salama stated that she bursted into tears during the incident of ilâ' and said "I don't know" to people who asked "Did the Messenger of Allâh divorce you?" 'Umar went and asked the Prophet about the situation. When he realized that the Prophet couldn't divorce his wives, he said "Allâhu Akbar" and this takbir was heard from their rooms. Thereupon, they relaxed a bit and waited for a month to expire.<sup>11</sup>

The place where the Prophet stayed for a month when he performed ilâ' is reported as "*mashrabah*" in the sources. *Mashrabah* was a room where the Prophet stayed and rested at various times when he did not visit his wives. Since the threshold of this room was a little high, the Prophet had used a step carved from a palm stump while entering and exiting the room.<sup>12</sup> In Muslim's narration, the room in which the Prophet stayed while he was practicing ilâ' was referred to as "*hizānah*."<sup>13</sup> This room was also used as a *baytalmāl* (public purse) and a cellar. According to another narration conveyed by Qurtubî, the Prophet spent the month in which he performed ilâ' in the house of her concubine Māriya.<sup>14</sup> However, this information is not found in the narrations in the reliable hadith sources. In addition, the fact that Māriya lived in the Awālî region of Madinah<sup>15</sup> would have made it difficult for the Prophet to go to and from the mosque. For this reason, the view that states that the Prophet remained in *mashrabah* during this period is more accurate.

Different events are narrated as the cause of the Prophet's ilâ'. These will be examined under separate headings.

### 1.1. More Than Necessary Sustentation Demand

Although Muhammad (pbuh) was the Prophet of Allâh, he was actually a human being. He married like other people, had children, provided residences to his family and provided the maintenance of his household. The Prophet, who lived a simple life, also accustomed his family to this life, and his wives did not desire to have the worldly ornaments that other women had. Together with the Prophet, they tolerated the harshness of their living conditions, contented themselves with little, and were happy in the house where the revelation was revealed. Over time, the conquests of Islam expanded and the financial means of Muslims began to increase. Nevertheless the lifestyle in the Prophet's house was still simple and modest. He didn't allow anything other than the basic and essential needs. When the Prophet's wives saw that the welfare level of the believers had increased and that they could live in better conditions, they demanded an increase in the ration set aside for them. In addition, among the wives of the Prophet were the daughters of amirs and chiefs. They had lived a rich and glamorous life with their fathers or ex-husbands. Seeing that Muslims were now living in comfort, these women wanted to live in luxury and abundance as in their old times.

Regarding this issue, the narrations narrated by the sources are as follows. According to rumors, one day, when Abū Bakr and 'Umar came to the Prophet, they found him in a state of sadness and

<sup>11</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/176.

<sup>12</sup> Kamacı, Hz. Peygamber'in Günlük Hayatı, 50-52.

<sup>13</sup> Muslim, "Talâq", 30.

<sup>14</sup> Ebu Abdullah Muhammed b. Ahmed Kurtubî, *el-Câmiu li-Ahkâmi'l-Kur'ân*, trans. M. Beşir Eryarsoy, (İstanbul: Buruc Yayınları, 2005), 17/470.

<sup>15</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/201-202.

silence among their wives. To cheer the Prophet up, 'Umar said, "O Messenger of Allāh, if you could only see me. My wife asked me for more livelihood, so I got up and manhandled her." The Prophet laughed and said, "The women around me also want more livelihood from me." Thereupon, Abū Bakr got up and began to smack up 'Ā'isha, and 'Umar got up and began to smack up Ḥafṣa. "Do you want from the Prophet what he does not have?" they scolded their daughters. They said, "By Allāh, we will not ask such things from the Messenger of Allāh." Then the Prophet took an oath to remain separated from his wives for a month.<sup>16</sup> In a similar narration, when 'Umar entered the Prophet's presence, he saw him upset and asked why. The Prophet replied, "These women want from me what I don't have." 'Umar talked to the Prophet and tried to comfort him. After leaving the presence of the Prophet, he met Abū Bakr on the way and explained the situation to him. Thereupon, Abū Bakr and 'Umar returned and came to their daughter and advised, "We know that the Messenger of Allāh doesn't withhold anything from you. Do not ask him for something he doesn't have. If you need anything, ask it from us." Then Abū Bakr and 'Umar went to the mothers of the believers and said such things to them. Finally, when they came to Umm Salama and said the same things, she objected, "What is happening to you while the Messenger of Allāh is still alive? If he wanted to warn us, he would have warned us. From whom shall we ask, if we do not ask him to meet our needs? Do you want anyone to come between you and your family? We don't assign you to do this." Thereupon, Abū Bakr and 'Umar left. The other ladies thanked Umm Salama by saying, "May Allāh bless you. We didn't dare to respond to them."<sup>17</sup>

According to another narration, when the Prophet was with his wives, they began to speak loudly and ask for worldly things from him. Just then, when 'Umar asked permission to go inside, they immediately hid behind the curtain. When 'Umar entered, the Prophet was laughing and said, "I am laughing at those women who are with me. How they hide when they hear your voice."<sup>18</sup> In another narration, it is reported that one of the Prophet's wives wanted a gold bracelet, and he had a silver bracelet made and plated it with gold, but she insisted that it be made of gold.<sup>19</sup> According to a similar narration, the Prophet divided a gift that came to 'Ā'isha's room among his wives and sent a share to all of them. However, Zaynab bint Jaḥsh didn't accept and turned it down. Even though the Prophet sent it twice, increasing the amount of her share a little more, she didn't like it and again rejected it. Thereupon, 'Ā'isha said, "She insulted you by rejecting the gift." The Prophet expressed that he was hurt by saying, "You are lower in the presence of Allāh than this situation you have brought me down. I will not visit you for a month."<sup>20</sup> In another narration, it is reported that what Zaynab bint Jaḥsh refused was not the gift, but her share of the sheep slaughtered by the Prophet.<sup>21</sup> In another narration given by Ibn Sa'd, it is stated that the Prophet's wives said, "There is no woman after the Prophet who will receive more mahr than us." Thereupon, Allāh ordered the

<sup>16</sup> Muslim, "Talāq", 29; Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Cāmi'u'l-Beyān 'an Te'vīli Âyi'l-Qur'ân*, critical ed. Abdullah b. Abdilmuhsin et-Türkî, (Kahire: Dâruhicra, 2001), 10/289.

<sup>17</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/171-172.

<sup>18</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/173.

<sup>19</sup> Kurtubî, *el-Câmiu li-Ahkâmi'l-Kur'ân*, 14/76.

<sup>20</sup> Ibn Māja, "Talāq", 24; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/179-180.

<sup>21</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/180.



Messenger of Allāh to leave his wives for a month and then give them two options.<sup>22</sup> All these narrations show that the Mothers of the Believers asked the Prophet to spend more for them.

However the Prophet didn't consider it appropriate to raise his standard of living above that of poor Muslim families. Because Allāh said to His Messenger, "*Do not set your sights on what We have given to some of them as a adornment of the life of this world to test themselves. The provision of your Lord is better and more permanent.*"<sup>23</sup> For this reason, we see that a life adorned with asceticism and richness of heart was more preferred in the eyes of the Prophet. Despite being a head of state at the same time, he adopted a simple lifestyle, praying, "O Allāh, give the Muhammad family enough sustenance to live on."<sup>24</sup> He spent his share of the booty and fay for his essential needs, and immediately distributed the rest to those in need. He even said, "If I have gold the size of Mount Uḥud, it wouldn't make me happy. I don't want three days to pass while I have a dinar with me, except for the one I set aside to pay off my debt."<sup>25</sup> He distanced himself from the adornments and beauties of the worldly life and gave himself completely to his grand mission.

However, this should not be taken to mean that the Prophet didn't spend for his wives and didn't provide them with maintenance. It is unthinkable that the Prophet, who said, "When a Muslim pays for his family's alimony out of consideration for Allāh's pleasure, this expenditure would be like giving alms"<sup>26</sup> he didn't spend anything for his own family. For example, from the income of Khaybar, he allocated 80 vasks<sup>27</sup> of dates and 20 vasks of wheat to each of his wives.<sup>28</sup> In addition, according to what Umm Salama narrated, the milk of a herd of camels belonging to the Prophet was distributed to his wives.<sup>29</sup> Apart from these, foods such as dates, cooked ready meals and milk were also given away to the Prophet from time to time.<sup>30</sup> However, among his dependents were his wives—their number had reached nine—and his children, his wives' children, servants, freedmen. Apart from these, those who remained in the suffa and other needy people were like his family members. For this reason, although they had different sources of income, the family of the Prophet often suffered from financial difficulties.<sup>31</sup> The Prophet and his family didn't eat wheat bread for three consecutive days until his death.<sup>32</sup> Their meals mostly consisted of water and dates, and there were days when they didn't cook for a long time.<sup>33</sup>

The Prophet's wives frequently conveyed such demands to him, put him under pressure and disturbed his peace. They complained that they could not benefit enough from the prosperity of the Muslims and demanded an increase in the expenditures spent for them. Although it was a natural

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<sup>22</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/182.

<sup>23</sup> Ṭā Hā 20/131.

<sup>24</sup> Bukhārī, "Rikak", 17; Muslim, "Zuhd", 18.

<sup>25</sup> Bukhārī, "Isti'zan", 30; Muslim, "Zakāt", 32.

<sup>26</sup> Bukhārī, "Nafakāt", 1; Muslim, "Vasiyyat", 1.

<sup>27</sup> 1 vesk is approximately 240 kilos. Celâl Yeniçeri, "Hz. Peygamber Ailesinin Gelirleri, Geçimi ve Bıraktığı Miras". *Hz. Peygamber ve Aile Hayatı*, (İstanbul: Ensar Yayınları, 2016), 379.

<sup>28</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/69, 93, 98, 104, 116, 123, 135.

<sup>29</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 1/425-426.

<sup>30</sup> See. Yeniçeri, "Hz. Peygamber Ailesinin Gelirleri, Geçimi ve Bıraktığı Miras", 347-406.

<sup>31</sup> Yeniçeri, "Hz. Peygamber Ailesinin Gelirleri, Geçimi ve Bıraktığı Miras", 381-382.

<sup>32</sup> Bukhārī, "Rikak", 17; "At'ima", 23; Muslim, "Zuhd", 21.

<sup>33</sup> Bukhārī, "Hiba", 1; "Rikak", 17; Muslim, "Zuhd", 26, 28; Ibn Māja, "Zuhd", 10.

desire, their request was circumstance that the Prophet didn't have and didn't want to have. Obviously, the wishes of his wives in this regard turned into an attitude and their way of asking upset the Prophet.<sup>34</sup> As a result, they caused the Prophet to decide to live separately from all his wives for about a month.

The Prophet was entrusted with reminding people who had deviated from the purpose of creation, of the eternal message and completing moral education. His mission and position required his family to be an exemplary family as well. The eyes of his interlocutors were on him and his family. However, it shouldn't be forgotten that the Prophet's wives were also human beings. They had feelings, desires and expectations like other women. If the Prophet chose the way to benefit from the worldly blessings in the minimum basis for the education of the ummah during this duty, his wives would either consent to this or they would leave him and be with people who would provide worldly beauties, luxury and prosperity.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, the verse brought the Prophet's wives to the parting of the ways and known as the verse of takhyir was revealed.

## 1.2. Taḥrīm

Taḥrīm was the event that the Prophet forbade something halal for himself. Related to this matter, the following verses were revealed: " *O Prophet! Why do you, out of a desire to please your wives, impose on yourself a prohibition of something that God has made lawful to you? But God is much-forgiving, a dispenser of grace. Allāh has made it lawful for you (in certain circumstances) to break your oaths. God is your helper. He alone is all-knowing, truly wise.*"<sup>36</sup> There are different narrations in the sources of tafsir, hadith and history about what the Prophet made haram for himself.

According to the first rumor, the Prophet made honey syrup forbidden to himself. According to 'Ā'isha, the Prophet loved sweets and honey very much, and after the afternoon prayer, he would visit all his wives in turn for a short time. When he stopped by Ḥafsa one day, he stayed there a little longer than usual. When 'Ā'isha noticed this, she got very jealous and investigated why he stayed so long.<sup>37</sup> She learned that one of Ḥafsa's relatives gave her a bowl of honey, and she made sherbet from it and offered it to the Prophet. Thereupon, 'Ā'isha went to Sawda and said: " If the Prophet comes to you and approaches you, ask him, 'Did you eat a maghāfir?' He will say 'no'. Then you ask, 'What is this smell coming from you?' He will say, 'Ḥafsa treated me some honey syrup.' And you say, 'I guess the bee that makes the honey has landed on the urfut<sup>38</sup> tree.' The prophet is extremely annoyed by the presence of a bad smell on him. I will say the same." 'Ā'isha recommended Safiyya the same things. Later, according to what 'Ā'isha reported from her, Sawda said, " O 'Ā'isha,

<sup>34</sup> Ṭabarī, *Cāmi'u'l-Beyān*, 19/84-87; Abū Maṣṣūr Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd al-Māturīdī, *Ta'vilātu'l-Qur'ān*, critical ed. Ahmet Vanlıoğlu et al, Ed. Bekir Topaloğlu, (İstanbul: Mizan Yayınları, 2005-2010), 11/33; Kurtubî, *el-Cāmiu li-Ahkāmi'l-Kur'ān*, 14/76-77.

<sup>35</sup> *Kur'an Yolu Türkçe Meal ve Tefsir*, Ed. Hayrettin Karaman et al, (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2012), 4/380.

<sup>36</sup> al-Taḥrīm 66/1-2.

<sup>37</sup> 'Ā'isha commissioned her Abyssinian concubine named Hadra to find out why the Prophet stayed long with Ḥafsa. Kamacı, *Hz. Peygamber'in Günlük Hayatı*, 255.

<sup>38</sup> Maghāfir is a gum with a different smell. Urfut, on the other hand, is a tree species whose flowers emit a foul odor, and the effects of this scent were seen in the honey made by the bees that took sap from these flowers. Kurtubî, *el-Cāmiu li-Ahkāmi'l-Kur'ān*, 17/459.

by Allāh, I was about to say what you said to me while the Messenger of Allāh was at the door because I was afraid of you." When the Messenger of Allāh came to Sawda, she asked if he had eaten maghāfir. When she received a negative answer, this time she asked the reason for the smell as planned. When the Prophet said that Ḥafṣa made him drink honey syrup, Sawda said, "I guess the bee must have landed in urfut." When the Prophet went to 'Ā'isha, she said the same words, and when she stopped by Şafiyya, she said the same words. Later, when the Prophet visited Ḥafṣa again and Ḥafṣa offered honey syrup, he refused to drink it. Upon this situation, Sawda was upset by saying, "By God, we deprived the Messenger of Allāh of honey syrup", and 'Ā'isha silenced her.<sup>39</sup> As it is understood from this narration, 'Ā'isha prepared an intrigue due to jealousy and caused the Prophet to prohibit him from honey syrup. Because the Prophet didn't want bad odors coming from himself and he was very sensitive about it.<sup>40</sup>

In another narration in Bukhārī, it is reported that the lady who offered honey sherbet was Zaynab bint Jaḥsh. In this narration, 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa decided to tell the Prophet that the smell of maghāfir came from him. The Prophet said that he drank honey syrup with Zaynab bint Jaḥsh and swore that he would never drink it again. Thereupon, the first verses of Sūrat al-Taḥrīm were revealed.<sup>41</sup> This narration was narrated by Muslim and Nasā'ī without the registration of an oath as follows; "I drank honey syrup with Zaynab, I won't drink it again."<sup>42</sup> Both narrations are mentioned in both Bukhārī, Muslim and various sources. In this case, scholars inform that 'Ā'isha, out of jealousy, orchestrated this situation that troubled the Prophet. While some scholars preferred the narration stating that it was Ḥafṣa who served honey sherbet, others preferred the narration stating that it was Zaynab. Those who preferred the latter showed as justification the dual expression in the verse "Would that you two turn unto God in repentance, for the hearts of both of you have swerved" in Sūrat al-Taḥrīm and the following narration by 'Ā'isha: "The wives of the Prophet were of two groups. The first group consisted of 'Ā'isha, Ḥafṣa, Şafiyya and Sawda. The other group consisted of Umm Salama and other women."<sup>43</sup> Therefore, they didn't accept that 'Ā'isha had plotted against her close friend in such a situation. Ibn Kathīr, on the other hand, commented on the fact that the names reported in both narrations were different, that the same event may had happened twice, and that it was not a remote possibility that the verse was sent down for these two events.<sup>44</sup>

Apart from these narrations, different names had been mentioned about the lady who offered honey sherbet to the Prophet. For example, as reported by Ibn Sa'd, this person was Umm Salama. When Umm Salama was asked about the first verse of Sūrat al-Taḥrīm, she said that she offered honey to the Prophet, but when 'Ā'isha said, "The honey bee has landed in urfut" the Prophet forbade it for himself and said that the verse was revealed.<sup>45</sup> According to another rumor, it was

<sup>39</sup> Bukhārī, "Ṭalāq", 8; Muslim, "Rada'", 88; "Ṭalāq", 3, 20, 21; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/83-84.

<sup>40</sup> Kurtubî, *el-Câmiu li-Ahkâmî'l-Kur'ân*, 17/459.

<sup>41</sup> Bukhārī, "Ṭalāq", 8; "Aymân", 25.

<sup>42</sup> Muslim, "Rada'", 87; "Ṭalāq", 20, 21; Nasā'ī, "Ṭalāq", 17; "Aymân", 20; "İşratu'n-Nisa", 4; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/104.

<sup>43</sup> Bukhārī, "Hiba", 8.

<sup>44</sup> Ebu'l-Fidâ İsmail b. Ömer Ibn Kesîr, *Hadislerle Kur'an-ı Kerîm Tefsiri*, trans. Bekir Karlığa- Bedrettin Çetiner, (İstanbul: Çağrı Yayınları, 1993), 14/7950.

<sup>45</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/163.

Sawda who served honey sherbet.<sup>46</sup> But according to Qurtubî, she could not be Umm Salama or Sawda, those who said this did not know the event.<sup>47</sup> It is more preferable for us that she was Zaynab bint Jaḥsh.

Another issue interested to what the Prophet forbade himself was related to his concubine Māriya. According to rumors, one day Ḥafṣa went to her father 'Umar. Māriya, the Prophet's concubine and mother of his son Ibrāhīm, came to the Prophet on an issue and found her in Ḥafṣa's cell. The Prophet slept with Māriya in Ḥafṣa's room. Ḥafṣa came and saw them in her own room and said, "O Messenger of Allāh, on my day and in my bed, huh? You did me an evil that you did not do to any of your wives." She started to cry, saying that she couldn't digest the Prophet's sleeping with Māriya in her own bed. The Prophet, on the other hand, said, "Don't you want me to make her haram for myself and never get close to her again?" When Ḥafṣa said she wanted it, he made Māriya unlawful for himself and ordered Ḥafṣa not to tell anyone about it. However, Ḥafṣa couldn't keep this secret and told it to 'Ā'isha. Allāh informed her Prophet that she had revealed this secret. Upon this event, the verses of Sūrat al-Taḥrīm were revealed.<sup>48</sup> According to another narration related to this issue, when Ḥafṣa came to her cell and saw the Prophet and Māriya in bed, she returned to her family and spent the night there. Afterwards, the Prophet came and stated that she had to keep this event secret and that he had forbidden Māriya for herself.<sup>49</sup> In some of the narrations recounting this event, it is stated that this event took place on Ḥafṣa's day<sup>50</sup>, and in some on 'Ā'isha's day.<sup>51</sup> According to the narration stating that the incident took place on 'Ā'isha's day, when Ḥafṣa saw the Prophet and Māriya in her own room, he ordered her to keep this event secret. But Ḥafṣa told this secret to 'Ā'isha, and 'Ā'isha came to the Prophet and rebuked by saying, "You sleep with a Coptic concubine on my day, and on other days you do not neglect the rights of other women." Thereupon, the Prophet said that he had made Māriya haram for himself, and the verse was revealed on that.<sup>52</sup> Although these narrations about Māriya were not mentioned in Bukhārī and Muslim, Nasā'ī narrated without giving a name that the Messenger of Allāh had a concubine, and that 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa did not leave him in peace until he forbade her for himself, and that Allāh revealed this verse.<sup>53</sup>

There is another point emphasized in the narrations about Māriya: The Prophet's oath. When the Prophet said that he made Māriya haram for himself, Ḥafṣa said, "How can you make it haram for yourself, she is your concubine", and he swore that he would not touch Māriya.<sup>54</sup> It was also reported that the Prophet said to Māriya, "You are forbidden to me. I swear by Allāh that I will never approach you."<sup>55</sup> The reason for emphasizing the word oath in these narrations is a fiqh debate as to whether just saying "let it be haram for me" counts as taking an oath and whether redemption for

<sup>46</sup> Abu 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Aḥmad al-Wāḥidī, *Asbābu'n-Nuzūli'l-Qur'ān*, (Beirut: Dāru'l-Kütübü'l-İlmiyye, 1991), 459-461; Kurtubî, *el-Cāmiu li-Ahkāmi'l-Kur'ān*, 17/459.

<sup>47</sup> Kurtubî, *el-Cāmiu li-Ahkāmi'l-Kur'ān*, 17/459.

<sup>48</sup> Ṭabarī, *Cāmi'u'l-Beyān*, 23/86-87; Kurtubî, *el-Cāmiu li-Ahkāmi'l-Kur'ān*, 17/459.

<sup>49</sup> Māturidī, *Ta'vīlātu'l-Qur'ān*, 15/249.

<sup>50</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/178-179; Ṭabarī, *Cāmi'u'l-Beyān*, 23/85-89.

<sup>51</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/177; Ṭabarī, *Cāmi'u'l-Beyān*, 23/85; Māturidī, *Ta'vīlātu'l-Qur'ān*, 15/250.

<sup>52</sup> Ṭabarī, *Cāmi'u'l-Beyān*, 23/85; Māturidī, *Ta'vīlātu'l-Qur'ān*, 15/250.

<sup>53</sup> Nasā'ī, "İşretu'n-Nisa", 4.

<sup>54</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/178; Ṭabarī, *Cāmi'u'l-Beyān*, 23/85-89; Wāḥidī, *Asbābu'n-Nuzūli'l-Qur'ān*, 459.

<sup>55</sup> Kurtubî, *el-Cāmiu li-Ahkāmi'l-Kur'ān*, 17/460.

the oath should be paid for it. According to some scholars, the Prophet made expiation by freeing a slave and returned to Māriya.<sup>56</sup> There were also those who stated that he didn't make expiation for the oath.<sup>57</sup> In the second verse of Sūrat al-Taḥrīm mentioned, it is reminded that even if such a decision is made with an oath, there is a legal way to make expiation by giving up the oaths that aren't suitable for perseverance.<sup>58</sup> Although it wasn't certain whether the Prophet paid expiation for the oath, the narrations declaring that he paid have been evaluated in different ways, for example, as expiation for an oath due to religious obligations, as a precautionary charity or as charity given as an expression of gratitude.<sup>59</sup>

According to another view, this verse refers to a woman whom she gave away himself to the Prophet, but whom he didn't accept because of his other wives. According to Ibn 'Abbās, this woman was Umm Sharīk. She donated herself to the Prophet, but he did not accept her. However, this narration was not considered reliable for the revelation of the verses in terms of both sanad (chain of narrators) and meaning.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, the fact that the donated thing is rejected does not mean that it has been rendered haram.

There were also those who argued that what is mentioned in the verse is the Prophet's ilā'; "*Why do you, out of a desire to please your wives, impose on yourself a prohibition of something that God has made lawful to you?*" They cited the following narration from 'Ā'isha as a reason for this: "The Messenger of Allāh made ilā' for his wives and thus made something halal unlawful for himself. Then he gave expiation for this oath."<sup>61</sup> However, as Darwaza stated, it is not preferable that what was rendered unlawful in the verse was ilā'. Because it is stated in the verse that the Prophet made it haram to please his wives and to soften them. It was not a situation for them to like that the Prophet did ilā' and stayed away from them for a month.<sup>62</sup>

In the verse, the fact that the Prophet forbade what Allāh had made halal doesn't mean to make something halal as haram in general. It means that he deprived himself from something halal.<sup>63</sup> According to Māturidī's statement, these verses were revealed as a reproach, not because the Prophet committed a minor fault or sin, but because he imposed some extra responsibilities on himself in family life.<sup>64</sup> The Prophet forbade this thing, which we couldn't definitively determine, exclusively for himself. But since he was the Prophet of Allāh, he wasn't in the position of an ordinary person. When he made something haram for himself, there was a danger that the ummah would accept that thing as haram. In addition, when some people among Muslims established some harams on their own, no one would consider any harmful in this case. In this respect, Allāh warned

<sup>56</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/177-179; Ṭabarī, *Cāmi'u'l-Beyān*, 23/85-89; Kurtubî, *el-Cāmiu li-Ahkâmi'l-Kur'ân*, 17/464.

<sup>57</sup> See. Kurtubî, *el-Cāmiu li-Ahkâmi'l-Kur'ân*, 17/468.

<sup>58</sup> See. al-Mā'ida 5/89.

<sup>59</sup> *Kur'an Yolu*, 5/402-403.

<sup>60</sup> Māturidī, *Ta'vîlātu'l-Qur'ân*, 15/250; Kurtubî, *el-Cāmiu li-Ahkâmi'l-Kur'ân*, 17/460.

<sup>61</sup> Bukhārī, "Nikāh", 91; "Ṭalāq", 21; Ibn Māja, "Ṭalāq" k, 28; Nasā'î, "Ṭalāq", 32.

<sup>62</sup> M. İzzet Derveze, *Kur'an'a Göre Hz. Muhammed'in Hayatı*, trans. Mehmet Yolcu, (İstanbul: Düşün Yayıncılık, 2011), 594.

<sup>63</sup> Derveze, *Kur'an'a Göre Hz. Muhammed'in Hayatı*, 594.

<sup>64</sup> Māturidī, *Ta'vîlātu'l-Qur'ân*, 15/256.

His Prophet about this behavior and asked him to abandon it. In the next verses, He called on his wives to be more sensitive as they dragged him into this behavior.<sup>65</sup>

### 1.3. The Revealed Secret

In some of the narrations about the events of *ilā'* and *taḥrīm*, the occurrence of the events was attributed to the disclosure of a secret given by the Prophet. Related to this issue, the next verses of *Sūrat al-Taḥrīm* were revealed: "Behold, the Prophet once said something secretly to one of his wives. When she thereupon divulged it, and God made this known to him, he acquainted with some of it and passed over some of it. When he told his wife about this, she asked, 'Who told you about this?', he replied 'The All-Knowing, the All-Aware has told me.'<sup>66</sup>

Despite the differences in the narrations about what the secret was, the Prophet's wife who revealed his secret was *Ḥafṣa*, according to the majority. There are even rumors that the Prophet divorced *Ḥafṣa* for this reason and then returned. According to these narrations, when the Prophet divorced her, Gabriel came and said that *Ḥafṣa* was a woman who fasted and prayed a lot, and that she was the Prophet's wife in Paradise. Thereupon, the Prophet took her back to her marriage.<sup>67</sup> In fact, it was possible that the Prophet divorced her due to some mistakes she had made.<sup>68</sup>

As for what the Prophet's secret was, sources give different information about it. According to some, this secret was the Prophet's forbidding *Māriya* for himself. As explained above, the Prophet slept with *Māriya* in *Ḥafṣa*'s room. When *Ḥafṣa* saw this situation and rebuked the Prophet, he said that he had made it haram for himself and warned her not to tell anyone about it. But *Ḥafṣa* could not keep this secret and exposed it to *Ā'isha* by saying, "The good news, the Messenger of Allāh forbade her concubine for himself."<sup>69</sup>

Some narrations stated that this secret was that the Prophet drank honey syrup while he was with *Zaynab bint Jaḥsh*. According to this, when one of the Prophet's wives - *Ā'isha* or *Ḥafṣa*- asked him if he ate *maghāfir*, he said, "No, I drank honey syrup with *Zaynab*. If so, I will not drink it again. Here is my oath. Don't tell anyone."<sup>70</sup>

According to another view regarding the secret in question, the Prophet told his wife that *Abū Bakr* and *Umar* would become caliphs after him.<sup>71</sup> According to the rumor, after the Prophet told *Ḥafṣa* that he would never approach *Māriya* again, he said: "Your father and *Ā'isha*'s father will take over the state government after me. But don't inform *Ā'isha* about them!" Despite this, *Ḥafṣa* went and reported this to *Ā'isha*. Then Allāh explained this situation to the Prophet. The Prophet

<sup>65</sup> Ebu'l-A'lā Mevdudî, *Tefhimu'l-Kur'ân*, trans. Muhammed Han Kayani et al, (İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 1999), 6/392.

<sup>66</sup> al-Taḥrīm 66/3.

<sup>67</sup> Ibn Māja, "Ṭalāq", 1; Nasā'î, "Ṭalāq", 76; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/82-83; Kurtubî, *el-Câmiu li-Ahkâmi'l-Kur'ân*, 17/470.

<sup>68</sup> Mâturidî, *Ta'vîlâtü'l-Qur'ân*, 15/258.

<sup>69</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/178; Wâhidî, *Asbâbu'n-Nuzûli'l-Qur'ân*, 459; Ṭabarî, *Câmi'u'l-Beyân*, 23/85-89.

<sup>70</sup> Bukhârî, "Ṭalāq", 8; Kurtubî, *el-Câmiu li-Ahkâmi'l-Kur'ân*, 17/458.

<sup>71</sup> Kurtubî, *el-Câmiu li-Ahkâmi'l-Kur'ân*, 17/469.

told Hafşa part of it and kept part of it. He said the part about Mâriya, he didn't explain the part about the caliphate. Because the Prophet didn't want this issue to spread among the people.<sup>72</sup>

As stated in the verse The Prophet told Hafşa some of the secret that he told her and that she revealed to 'Ā'isha, and some didn't. Because the purpose of the Prophet wasn't to inform about the secret his wife had disclosed, but only to draw attention to the fact that she had disclosed the secret to her friend. He did this to warn his wife not to do such a thing again. She who knew a part of the event was also aware of the whole. In this case, there was no need to explain the whole event. In some narrations, it is reported that The Prophet said his wife, "Didn't I warn you?" and then remained silent.<sup>73</sup>

When The Prophet told Hafşa what Allāh had informed him, "Who told you about this?" she asked. She thought that it was 'Ā'isha who informed him about this situation. The Prophet said, "Allāh, The All-Knowing, the All-Aware (that is, nothing can be hidden from Him) has informed me."<sup>74</sup> Essentially, this verse It is shown as evidence that the Prophet received revelations other than the Qur'ān. However, when the narrations are examined, it is seen that the fact that the secret in question had been disclosed had already emerged as a result of 'Ā'isha's coming to the Prophet and chiding him. According to these narrations that we have reported before, 'Ā'isha, who learned the secret from Hafşa, scolded the Prophet by saying, "You slept with the Coptic woman on my day, and you spend their days with the other women."<sup>75</sup> This issue should be understood as the Prophet's answer because he didn't want to say how he learned this when Hafşa asked it.<sup>76</sup>

The subject of the revealed secret has been widely discussed in tafsir sources, and many hadiths have been narrated about it in hadith books. However, what the Prophet forbade himself and the revealed secret weren't clarified. The reason for this is that the subject was related to the family of the Prophet. Because the event also has a family privacy dimension. As a matter of fact, according to the commentators of the last period, our duty isn't to investigate the details of this event, such as what the secret was and who disclosed it. Because Allāh had already criticized the Prophet's wife for revealing this secret. Family members, who were subjected to this criticism for not keeping this secret, didn't want to commit the same crime for the second time by revealing this secret and the perpetrators of the incident in the following periods. So how can it be right for us to investigate and reveal what this secret was? In addition, the verse was not revealed to explain what the secret in question was. Therefore, knowing this secret is not important. Otherwise, God would have explained it. The main purpose was to warn the Prophet's wives about their mistakes and remind them that they were the wives of an important personality.<sup>77</sup>

#### 1.4. 'Ā'isha-Hafşa Cooperation

<sup>72</sup> Kurtubî, *el-Câmiu li-Ahkâmi'l-Kur'ân*, 17/469-470.

<sup>73</sup> Mâturîdî, *Ta'vîlâtü'l-Qur'ân*, 15/257.

<sup>74</sup> Kurtubî, *el-Câmiu li-Ahkâmi'l-Kur'ân*, 17/471.

<sup>75</sup> Tabarî, *Câmi'u'l-Beyân*, 23/85; Mâturîdî, *Ta'vîlâtü'l-Qur'ân*, 15/250.

<sup>76</sup> Mehmet Azimli, *Siyeri Farklı Okumak*, (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2013), 453.

<sup>77</sup> Mevdudî, *Tefhimü'l-Kur'ân*, 6/398-399; Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır, *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili*, simplifier: İsmail Karaçam et al. (İstanbul: Azim Dağıtım, 1992), 8/153.

In the relevant verses of Sūrat al-Taḥrīm, which was revealed regarding the *ilā'* event, it is continued as follows: "Would that you two turn unto God in repentance, for the hearts of both of you have swerved. And if you uphold each other against him God Himself is his Protector, and therefore, Gabriel, and all the righteous among the believers and all the angels will come to his aid. If he divorces you, his Lord can give him wives, widows and virgins, who are better than you, who surrender to Allāh, who sincerely obey, repent, serve, live like travelers in the world."<sup>78</sup> We learn who the spouses mentioned in this verse are from the narration of Ibn 'Abbās that we have mentioned above. When he asked 'Umar about this issue, he got the answer "They were 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa."<sup>79</sup> 'Umar also stated that 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa were in solidarity with the other wives of the Prophet.<sup>80</sup>

As stated in the verse, the cooperation of 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa was definitely among the reasons for the *ilā'* incident. Perhaps this cooperation was in the event that the Prophet forbade the honey sherbet Zaynab offered him. Maybe it was about the disclosure of the Prophet's secret. Maybe there was a collaboration regarding a different event that we don't know about. As it can be understood, Allāh warned these two women who took a stance against the Messenger of Allāh without giving a name. He has emphasized that Allāh, Gabriel, the good believers and other angels are his assistants and that those who will be harmed are his wives, If they continue to cooperate against the Messenger of Allāh.

### 1.5. Jealousness

One of the reasons for the Prophet's practice of *ilā'* was that his wives were jealous of each other and they made some mistakes out of this jealousy. Like the Prophet, his wives were human and they also had the traits other people had. The Prophet's wives were jealous of each other, especially when it came to the love and relevancy of their husbands. This jealousy caused them to talk and act against each other. It can be said that 'Ā'isha was the most jealous of the wives of the Prophet. The fact that the Prophet loved her very much, that he clearly expressed his love by saying "'Ā'isha" when asked who he loved the most among people<sup>81</sup>, and that he saw her superior by saying "'Ā'isha's superiority to other women is like the superiority of tirid over other dishes"<sup>82</sup> weren't enough to eliminate 'Ā'isha's jealousy. She had shown her jealousy on many occasions. One night when she couldn't find her husband, she thought that he was going to his other wives. She searched for the Prophet with her hand in the dark room and found him praying on one side of the room. Thereupon, she confessed her jealousy by saying, "What do I think while you are busy with worship?"<sup>83</sup>

Due to each subsequent cowife, 'Ā'isha was upset and her jealousy increased. This situation resulted in her sometimes verbal and sometimes de facto attacks against other wives. Once, one of the Prophet's wives sent a bowl of food while he was with 'Ā'isha. 'Ā'isha hit the hand of the maid who brought the food jealously and caused the bowl to fall and break. The Prophet put the bowl,

<sup>78</sup> al-Taḥrīm 66/4-5.

<sup>79</sup> Bukhārī, "Nikāḥ", 83; "Maḏālim", 25; "Talāq", 8; "Aymān", 25; "Libās", 31; Muslim, "Talāq", 20, 34; Nasā'ī, "Talāq", 17; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/173-180.

<sup>80</sup> Muslim, "Talāq", 30.

<sup>81</sup> Bukhārī, "Faḏāil as-Sahāba", 5.

<sup>82</sup> Nasā'ī, "Iṣratu'n-Nisa", 3.

<sup>83</sup> Nasā'ī, "Iṣratu'n-Nisa", 4.



which was divided into two parts, on top of each other, collected the food on it, and said, " Your mother is jealous right now. You please eat this."<sup>84</sup>

It would be wrong to say that the problems in this matter were caused only by 'Ä'isha. From the expression in the fifth verse of Sûrat al-Taḥrîm<sup>85</sup>, it is understood that it wasn't only 'Ä'isha and Ḥafṣa who caused problems, but also that his other wives made mistakes more or less. For this reason, all the wives of the Prophet were warned immediately after the tasniyah (dual) usage.<sup>86</sup> The narration stating that the Prophet's wives were divided into two groups<sup>87</sup> allows us to understand that there were some conflicts between these groups due to jealousy. When the family life of the Prophet is examined, we see that there were events in which almost all of his wives showed jealousy. For example, Şafiyya's camel fell ill during an expedition and the Prophet asked Zaynab bint Jahşh to give her spare camel to Şafiyya. But Zaynab did not want to give it and said, "Am I going to give it to this Jewish woman?" Thereupon, the Prophet had not approached Zaynab for two or three months.<sup>88</sup> This narration may be an indication of how difficult times the Prophet went through because of the jealousy of his wives. We also understand that the Prophet, apart from the fact that he did İlä to all of his wives, remained separate from one of his wives in some cases, although rarely.

When the behavior of the Prophet towards his wives is examined, it is seen that he behaved kindly and understood their psychology. He avoided actions that would increase the jealousy of his wives and pursued a policy of balance between them. When he encountered various annoying behaviors such as jealousy and intolerance, which are normal for all women, he always responded with patience and sweetness. He never resorted to beatings or hurtful words. Even when he witnessed their actions that caused the İlä' incident, he didn't attempt to say or act offensively towards his wives. In addition, the Prophet treated his wives extremely justly. In the case of honey syrup, when the Prophet stayed with one of his wives a little too long, other wives such as 'Ä'isha and Ḥafṣa noticed it immediately. This means that since the Prophet's wives saw in him a just administration, even the slightest deviation didn't escape their notice.

The negative behaviors of both 'Ä'isha and other women under the influence of jealousy sometimes increased so much as to upset the Prophet and caused the verse to be revealed. The first verses of Sûrat al-Taḥrîm are about their jealousy and the Prophet's reaction to them. Both the honey sherbet incident and the Prophet's forbidding Mâriya for himself mentioned above were events that occurred because of the jealousy of his wives. The Prophet's wives were especially jealous of Mâriya because she had a child with the Prophet. Because none of them, including 'Ä'isha, had a chance to have children from him.<sup>89</sup> The fact that their jealousy was one of the reasons for the İlä' incident and that Sûrat al-Taḥrîm was revealed on this subject was also expressed by 'Umar. He said that he agreed with Allâh on three issues; one of them was that when he saw the jealousy of his wives

<sup>84</sup> Nasâ'î, "İşratu'n-Nisa", 4.

<sup>85</sup> "If he divorces you, his Lord can give him wives, widows and virgins, who are better than you, who surrender to Allâh, who sincerely obey, repent, serve, live like travelers in the world."

<sup>86</sup> Mevdudî, *Teşhîmu'l-Kur'ân*, 6/ 403; Yazır, *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili*, 8/158.

<sup>87</sup> Bukhârî, "Hiba", 8.

<sup>88</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqât*, 10/123.

<sup>89</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqât*, 10/201-202.

towards the Prophet, he said to them, "If he divorces you, his Lord will give him better wives than you" and then the relevant verses were revealed.<sup>90</sup>

### 1.6. Other Causes and Evaluation of Causes

One of the reasons why the Prophet did *ilā'* was the attitude of his wives towards him, their standing, muttering and replying. As a matter of fact, in the long narration we mentioned above, 'Umar was surprised when his wife responded to him, but his wife said, "Why are you scolding? By Allāh, the wives of the Messenger of Allāh also respond to him and murmur. Besides, they get offended and leave the Messenger of Allāh all day long until the night." 'Umar was horrified by these words and went to his daughter Ḥafṣa and asked her, "Are you also responding to the Messenger of Allāh, being obstinate?" When he replied, "Yes, we stand up to him and don't visit him until nightfall", he warned his daughter by saying, "Whoever among you does this, she will suffer greatly and be disappointed. Which of you can be sure that she will not incur the wrath of Allāh because of the anger of his Prophet? You can be destroyed in a moment." Then he went to Umm Salama and wanted to warn her with similar words, but Umm Salama objected to him and said that he should not meddle in the family matters of the Prophet.<sup>91</sup>

All these are the views that are mentioned as the causes of the *ilā'* event. Scholars attributed the occurrence of this event mostly to the events of honey syrup and Māriya. Some of them prioritized the narration about Māriya, while others prioritized the narration about honey sherbet. This is due to the fact that different narrations were evaluated according to different methods. Some scholars reported that the narration about honey sherbet was unanimously included in Bukhārī and Muslim and was transmitted through authentic ways, and that this was a primary reason for preference.<sup>92</sup> Some scholars stated that the narration about Māriya reflects the views of most of the commentators and that this is one of the reasons for their preference. Māturīdī stated that because the Messenger of Allāh wanted to eat honey, it was not likely that their wives would dislike it, so the use of his concubine might have upset their wives, and based on this, they were probable to have landed in a position they deserve the phrase "*the hearts of both of you have swerved*" in the verse.<sup>93</sup> Sayyid Qutb considered the narration about the Māriya incident more suitable for both the verses and the delicacy and sensitivity of the subject, although the sanad of the narration of honey sherbet was stronger.<sup>94</sup> Sābūnī, on the other hand, was of the opinion that the honey sherbet incident cannot be the reason for the revelation of the related verses due to two reasons. First, the *taḥrīm* event took place in order to please some of his wives, and whether or not to drink honey had nothing to do with taking heart. Secondly, it seems unlikely that a surah containing the threat of divorcing the wives of the Prophet

<sup>90</sup> Bukhārī, "Salāt", 32.

<sup>91</sup> Bukhārī, " Nikāḥ ", 83; "Maḏālim", 25; "Talāq", 8; "Aymān", 25; "Libās", 31; Muslim, "Talāq", 20, 34; Nasā'ī, "Talāq", 17; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/173-180.

<sup>92</sup> Mevdudī, *Tefhimu'l-Kur'ân*, 6/392-400; Yazır, *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili*, 8/153.

<sup>93</sup> M Māturīdī āturīdī, *Ta'vilātu'l-Qur'ân*, 15/257.

<sup>94</sup> Seyyid Kutub, *Fîzilâl-il Kur'an- Kur'an'ın Gölgesinde*, trans. M.Emin Saraç et a, (İstanbul: Hikmet Yayınları, 1979), 15/55.

and replacing them with better ones and stating that Allāh, angels and believers are with him, was revealed due to a minor incident such as honey syrup.<sup>95</sup>

As for the narration about the caliphate, it should be stated that it was not respected.<sup>96</sup> There is no sound narration in the reliable hadith works that Abū Bakr and 'Umar were appointed as caliphs after the Prophet. The known disputes about the caliphate also support this. This situation leads us to the opinion that this narration may have been fabricated during the caliphate debates in later periods.

As a result, different events have been narrated for the Prophet to take an oath to be separated from his wives for a month. However, it is more likely that the Prophet took an oath after all or most of the narrated events took place. The fact that the address in the verse covers all the wives, the hadith transmitted by Bukhārī and Muslim unanimously from 'Umar, the fact that the narrators and commentators didn't try to record one of the narrations as the main reason for revelation, and that the Prophet's wives were threatened with a serious issue such as divorcing; all supports the fact that the Prophet may have taken the decision of ilā' after some events that took place one after the other. In fact, other reasons that we don't know may have accompanied them. It doesn't seem appropriate to limit the events of ilā', taḥrīm and takhyir to only one reason.

## 2. THE TAKHYİR EVENT

Takhyir means giving someone the opportunity to choose between two or more options. Takhyir event was the Prophet's leaving his wives free to choose the world and the hereafter. The verse, which was sent down after the Prophet, who was upset by some material demands of his wives and jealousy among them, took an oath not to approach them for a month and did so, and which asked his wives to choose between worldly blessings or Allāh, the Messenger of Allāh and the hereafter, was called the verse of takhyir.<sup>97</sup> The relevant verse is as follows: "*O Prophet! Tell your wives: If you want the life and beauty of this world, let me give you something and then, I shall provide for you and release you in a becoming manner. But if you want Allāh, His Messenger and the abode of the Hereafter, know that Allāh has prepared a great reward for those of you who choose righteousness.*"<sup>98</sup>

The reasons for the takhyir event were the reasons that led the Prophet to practice ilā'. These reasons were that the Prophet's wives wanted a luxurious and prosperous life from him, and that they behaved in some unpleasant ways by being jealous of each other, and upon this, the Prophet took an oath not to approach them for a month and decided to live separately, and at the end of this period the verse of takhyir was revealed. However, apart from the reasons for the ilā' event, other reasons have been reported for the takhyir event. According to Qurtubī's account, Allāh left the

<sup>95</sup> Muhammed Ali Sâbûnî, *Safvetü't-Tefâsir -Tefsirlerin Özü*, trans. Sadrettin Gümüş- Nedim Yılmaz, (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2003), 6/445.

<sup>96</sup> According to Yazır, although it was not mentioned in Kutub-i Sitte, this narration was narrated by other reliable people. In addition, while there were some contradictions in the narrations about both the honey sherbet and the Mâriya event, there were no rumors about the caliphate. This was what was worthy of being a great secret, and because it was a secret, it had not spread as much as the others by being protected from fitnah. Yazır, *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili*, 8/154-156.

<sup>97</sup> Ahmet Özel, "Tahyir", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2010), 39/442.

<sup>98</sup> al-Aḥzâb 33/28-29.

Prophet free to choose between being a sovereign prophet and being presented with the keys to the world's treasures or being a poor prophet. The Prophet consulted Gabriel on this matter, and when he advised him to choose poverty, he chose it. Thereupon, Allāh revealed these verses to the Prophet informing him that his wives should also make a choice. Because among them there could be those who didn't want to endure difficulties with the Prophet.<sup>99</sup> In another narration, it is said that the Prophet's wives began to choose spouses while he was still alive. Thereupon, these verses were revealed to criticize them for their behavior. Although Māturīdī mentioned this narration, he also stated that it was far from the truth and impossible. Because it was impossible for the Prophet's wives to choose spouses while he was alive and married to them.<sup>100</sup> According to Māturīdī, it is also possible that God tested the Prophet and his wives by forcing them to choose between two options, without of the situations mentioned about the Prophet's wives and any other reason.<sup>101</sup>

These verses brought the Messenger of Allāh and his wives at a crossroads and left their wives free to follow the Prophet or leave him. The wives of the Prophet would either consent to his lifestyle and stay in his marriage or they would divorce in order to achieve the worldly life they wanted. Sharing the same life with the Prophet had a price, and those who would voluntarily pay for it would be able to continue with the Prophet. These verses show that the Prophet's house wasn't a place of luxury, prosperity and lust, but a home of decency, knowledge and virtue. And his wives shouldn't be people who deal with worldly ornaments and embellishment. They had more valuable and superior duties than these. This responsibility compelled them to remember everything they heard and learned from the Prophet about all humanity and especially about womanhood, and teach them to other Muslims.<sup>102</sup>

After the aforementioned verses were revealed, the Prophet left all his wives choice between two options, starting with 'Ā'isha. 'Ā'isha told the story from her own mouth: When the takhyīr verse was revealed, the Prophet said to me, "O 'Ā'isha, I will tell you something. But you may not be in a hurry to answer me on this matter without consulting your parents" and read the verse. By God, he knew that my parents were not going to order me to leave him. I said, "Am I going to consult my parents about this? I choose Allāh and Her Messenger and the life in the hereafter." The prophet was delighted. All the wives of the Prophet preferred Allāh and His Messenger and remained married to him.<sup>103</sup> According to a similar narration, the Messenger of Allāh took Abū Bakr with him when he went to 'Ā'isha to inform the verse of takhyīr and said, "Help me against her." However, 'Ā'isha objected to this, saying that there was no need for anyone to help against her and the issue should be asked directly to herself.<sup>104</sup> In another narration, it was reported that after 'Ā'isha said that she preferred Allāh and His Messenger, she said, "Don't tell your wives that I prefer Allāh and you." But, in response to this request, the Prophet said that Allāh sent him as a messenger to people,

<sup>99</sup> Kurtubî, *el-Câmiu li-Ahkâmi'l-Kur'ân*, 14/76; 17/117.

<sup>100</sup> Māturīdī, *Ta'vilātu'l-Qur'ân*, 11/331.

<sup>101</sup> Māturīdī, *Ta'vilātu'l-Qur'ân*, 11/332.

<sup>102</sup> Ziya Kazıcı, *Hiz. Muhammed'in Aile Hayatı ve Eşleri*, (İstanbul: Çamlıca Yayınları, 2019), 54-55.

<sup>103</sup> Bukhārī, "Nikâh", 82; Muslim, "Talâq", 4; Ibn Mâja, "Talâq", 20; Nasâ'î, "Nikâh", 2.

<sup>104</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Tabaqât*, 10/181-182.

not as a confusing, and that if one of his wives asked this, he would inform her.<sup>105</sup> This attitude of 'Ä'isha allows us to understand once again how her jealousy manifested itself in every situation.

The narration from Umm Salama regarding the takhyir incident is as follows: The Prophet swore not to go near the ladies for a month, and when twenty-nine days had passed, he came. He was told, "You swore that you would not stay with us for a month, but it has been twenty-nine days." Thereupon he said, "Some months have twenty-nine days."<sup>106</sup> A similar narration, which we have mentioned before, was transmitted from 'Ä'isha.<sup>107</sup> 'Ä'isha Abdurrahman mentioned this narration in a more romantic way: "It will not be difficult to imagine how happy the mothers of the believers were when they received the good news that the Prophet would return to his home. Except for 'Ä'isha, all of them had gone to the door of their house, and 'Ä'isha was inside her house. Because she knew that the Prophet would come to her first of all. When she saw him coming towards her, she said, 'You swore you would stay away from us for a month, but it's only been twenty-nine days.' Hearing this word, the Prophet was happy. He was pleased to learn that 'Ä'isha was counting the days of separation one by one. He sufficed to say that this month has twenty-nine days."<sup>108</sup>

As a result, Muḥammad (pbuh) went to all his wives one by one and read the verse of takhyir to them and said that they had to make a choice, and all of them declared that they had chosen Allāh and His Messenger. Qurtubi reported that one of them chose to divorce.<sup>109</sup> According to Ibn Sa'd, the woman who chose to leave was an Āmiriyya woman. She chose to live with her tribe, but later regretted this wrong choice. She was a woman whom the Prophet married but didn't consummate a marriage.<sup>110</sup> In other words, she was a woman who hadn't been one of the ummahāt al-mu'minīn.

With this verse, the commentators discussed the subject of which the Prophet's wives were left to choose. There were those who stated that they were left with a choice between this world and the hereafter, but they were not left with a choice for divorce. However, this view does not comply with the apparent meaning of the verse. Because the verse states "*Let me give you something and then, I shall provide for you and release you in a becoming manner.*" So that means let me pay your rights and let you go free and divorce.<sup>111</sup> Besides, commentators stated in this verse that there was evidence that if the Prophet divorced his wives, it was permissible for them to marry someone else while he was alive. Because if it wasn't halal, it wouldn't make sense to say "*Let me give you something and then, I shall provide for you and release you in a becoming manner.*" However, in the event of the Prophet's death, it was not permissible for his wives to marry someone else.<sup>112</sup> In addition, another discussion in the tafsir books is about whether the release of spouses is considered talaq or not, and if so, what type of talaq it is.<sup>113</sup> Based on 'Ä'isha's statement, "The Messenger of Allāh left us with two options. We

<sup>105</sup> Muslim, "Ṭalāq", 29; Ibn Māja, "Ṭalāq", 24; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/68, 172.

<sup>106</sup> Bukhārī, "Savm", 11; Ibn Māja, "Ṭalāq", 24.

<sup>107</sup> Ibn Māja, "Ṭalāq", 24.

<sup>108</sup> Aişe Abdurrahman Bintü'ş-Şâti', *Rasulullah'in Annesi ve Hanımları*, trans. İsmail Kaya, (Konya: Uysal Kitabevi, 1994), 260-261.

<sup>109</sup> Kurtubî, *el-Câmiu li-Ahkâmi'l-Kur'ân*, 14/76.

<sup>110</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/181-182.

<sup>111</sup> Ibn Kesîr, *Hadislerle Kur'an-ı Kerîm Tefsiri*, 12/6516.

<sup>112</sup> Mâturîdî, *Ta'vîlâtü'l-Qur'ân*, 11/333; Ibn Kesîr, *Hadislerle Kur'an-ı Kerîm Tefsiri*, 12/6513.

<sup>113</sup> See. Maturidi, 11/333-334.

chose him, but he didn't consider it talaq<sup>114</sup>, and the majority of scholars are of the opinion that this incident was not considered talaq.

In the following verses of Sūrat al-Aḥzāb, the wives of the Prophet are addressed and it is stated that the punishment is doubled if they commit indecency, and the reward is double if they obey Allāh and His Messenger and do good deeds. It is stated that they were not like any other woman, and it is said, "O family of the Prophet, what Allāh wants is to remove impurities from you and to purify you."<sup>115</sup> Although this verse was taken out of context and used as an argument in some political discussions in later periods, it was actually revealed in relation to the Prophet's wives. Allāh informed the Prophet's wives who prefer to stay with the Prophet that they weren't like other women. There is a direct proportion between responsibility and reward. The Prophet's wives also bore great responsibilities and they were subjected to the great test required by being his wife. Their rewards and punishments would also be in line with their status and responsibilities.<sup>116</sup> They had begun to receive their reward even in this world. Because when they preferred Allāh and His Messenger, Allāh rewarded them in two ways.<sup>117</sup> First, as a result of this preference of the Prophet's wives, which showed that they weren't fond of worldly goods, at this important crossroads, they were elevated to the status of mothers of believers. Secondly, Allāh informed the Prophet that it is forbidden for him to divorce them and make a new marriage.<sup>118</sup>

The verse of takhyīr and the behavior of the Prophet in this process show that some sad events that occur within the family should be resolved not by fighting, hurtful actions and hurtful words, but by mutual agreement, meeting on a common ground and mutual love-respect. While these events were taking place, the Prophet acted with extreme deliberateness. Although his spouses disturbed him for various reasons, he didn't take any action that would make them victims, and he taught them the necessary lesson by staying away from them for only one month.<sup>119</sup>

### 3. THE YEAR OF EVENTS OF THE ĪLĀ' AND TAKHYĪR

In the tafsir and historical sources, there are different opinions about the year in which the events of ilā' and takhyīr took place and, accordingly, how many wives were in the Prophet's marriage at that time. In some sources, it is mentioned that these events occurred after the Banū Qurayza expedition, that is, in the fifth year of the Hijra, and that the Prophet had four wives at that time.<sup>120</sup> They were Sawda, 'Ā'isha, Ḥafṣa and Umm Salama. According to those who hold this view; the fact

<sup>114</sup> Bukhārī, "Ṭalāq", 5; Muslim, "Ṭalāq", 27; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/68.

<sup>115</sup> al-Aḥzāb 33/30-34.

<sup>116</sup> *Kuran Yolu*, 4/381.

<sup>117</sup> Ṭabarī, *Cāmi'u'l-Beyān*, 19/87.

<sup>118</sup> "After that, women will not be halal for you. It is not permissible for you to exchange your wives with other wives, except those under the marriage, even if their beauty pleases you. Allah sees and watches over everything." al-Aḥzāb 33/52.

<sup>119</sup> Sadrettin Gümüş, "Rasūlullah'ın (s.a.v.) Aile Hayatı ile İlgili Ayetlerin Toplu Değerlendirilmesi", *Hız. Peygamber ve Aile Hayatı*, (İstanbul: Ensar Yayınları, 201), 240-241.

<sup>120</sup> *Kur'an Yolu*, 4/381.

that the takhyîr verses followed the verses about Qurayza<sup>121</sup> shows that the demands of the Prophet's wives for alimony came to the fore after the booty obtained from the Qurayza Jews.<sup>122</sup>

According to some, these events took place in the 7th or 8th year of Hijra. The increase in the welfare level of Muslims eventuated after the conquest of Khaybar. Şafiyya, one of the women mentioned in the events, married the Prophet after the conquest of Khaybar. Another lady whose name was mentioned was Mâriya, who was sent by the Egyptian ruler Muqawqis as a gift to the Prophet in the 7th year of the Hijra. In the 8th year of the Hijra, the Prophet had a son named İbrâhîm from her. For this reason, the realization of these events was between the 7th and 8th years of the Hijra.<sup>123</sup>

According to the common opinion, the occurrence of these events and the revelation of the relevant verses took place in the 9th year of Hijra.<sup>124</sup> Meanwhile, there were nine wives in the Prophet's marriage. They were 'Â'isha, Sawda, Hafsa, Umm Salama, Zaynab bint Jaḥsh, Umm Habiba, Şafiyya, Juwayriya and Maymûna. By this year, almost all Arabia was under the rule of Muslims, and the borders of Byzantium and Sassanid had been reached. The revenues of the state increased compared to the past. But the buffer statelets in the north of the Islamic state posed a great danger. As a matter of fact, 'Umar said that they were worried about an attack by the Ghassanids, who was a buffer state at that time.<sup>125</sup> An invasion threat from the Ghassanids was felt in Madinah, and the Tabuk Expedition was launched against this threat.<sup>126</sup> This situation strengthens the view that the events of İlä' and takhyîr took place in the 9th year of Hijra.<sup>127</sup>

'Umar, in his narration about the incident of İlä', said that it was before the hijab was ordered to women.<sup>128</sup> The hijab verses were revealed when the Prophet married Zaynab bint Jaḥsh, that is, in the 5th year of Hijra.<sup>129</sup> However, in another narration transmitted from 'Umar, it was mentioned that when he entered the Prophet's house, his wives who wanted worldly things from him suddenly hid behind the curtain.<sup>130</sup> The fact that the wives of the Prophet retreated behind the curtain shows that the incident took place after the hijab was ordered.

According to those who argue that the events of İlä' and takhyîr took place after the Qurayza expedition, the taḥrîm event had nothing to do with these events. In other words, the Prophet applied İlä to his wives because they wanted more worldly things in him, and in the end he left them to choose between two options. However, many narrations stated that these events were connected

<sup>121</sup> al-Aḥzâb 33/26-27.

<sup>122</sup> M. İzzet Derveze, *et-Tefsîru'l-Hadis-Nüzul Sırasına Göre Kur'an Tefsiri*, trans. Şaban Karataş, et al, (İstanbul, Ekin Yayınları, 1998), 6/21.

<sup>123</sup> Mevdudî, *Tefhimu'l-Kur'ân*, 6/387.

<sup>124</sup> Kazıcı, Hz. Muhammed'in Aile Hayatı ve Eşleri, 53-54; Yeniçeri, "Hz. Peygamber Ailesinin Gelirleri, Geçimi ve Bıraktığı Miras", 381; Gümüç, "Rasûlullah'ın (s.a.v.) Aile Hayatı ile İlgili Ayetlerin Toplu Değerlendirilmesi", 239-241.

<sup>125</sup> Bukhârî, "Nikâḥ", 83; "Maẓâlim", 25; "Talâq", 8; "Aymân", 25; "Libâs", 31; Muslim, "Talâq", 20, 34; Nasâ'î, "Talâq", 17; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqât*, 10/173-180.

<sup>126</sup> Aḡırakça, "Gassâniler", 13/397.

<sup>127</sup> Yeniçeri, "Hz. Peygamber Ailesinin Gelirleri, Geçimi ve Bıraktığı Miras", 381.

<sup>128</sup> Muslim, "Talâq", 30.

<sup>129</sup> Bukhârî, "Tafsîr", 33; Muslim, "Nikâḥ", 89.

<sup>130</sup> Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqât*, 10/173.

with each other.<sup>131</sup> The reason why the Prophet was separated from his wives for a month was not only because his wives wanted more alimony. But also taḥrīm was one of these reasons. Takhyīr incident happened after a month when the Prophet was separated from his wives.

Commentators have stated that the relevant verses in Sūrat al-Taḥrīm and al-Aḥzāb are related to each other.<sup>132</sup> It should be kept in mind that the entire Sūrat al-Aḥzāb was not revealed after the Battles of Khandaq and Qurayza, and that it took until the 9th year of the Hijra to complete the chapter in its entirety. Because, it is understood that the 52nd verse of Sūrat al-Aḥzāb was revealed after Sūrat al-Nisā', which put a limit on marriage with many women. This shows that the revelation of the surah lasted until the 9th year of Hijra.<sup>133</sup> In this case, an objection made that the issue of taḥrīm cannot be related to the events of ilā' and takhyīr would be refuted. As a result, we can say that in the 9th year of the Hijra, first the taḥrīm event and some other reasons occurred, and then the Prophet applied ilā' to his wives. At the end of this one-month period, the takhyīr event took place.

## CONCLUSION

In addition to being a prophet, Muḥammad (pbuh) was also a human being and some problems had been experienced in his family life. His pure wives also had some weaknesses as a natural consequence of being human. The wives of the Messenger of Allāh caused some negative situations to occur due to jealousy and envy. They caused the Prophet to make something halal unlawful for himself, and for this reason, he was scolded by Allāh with the revelation of Sūrat al-Taḥrīm. In addition, one of his wives could not keep a secret that he had given her and revealed it to her cowife with whom she was sincere. When he became aware of this situation, the Prophet reproached him. This time, these two -who were reported to be Ḥafṣa and 'Ā'isha- backed each other and entered into a solidarity in a way that would concern his other wives. Adding to all these reasons, when the wives of the Prophet made some material demands from him, he became upset and offended and swore not to approach his wives for a month. The purpose of his behavior was to both explain the vanity of worldly life in his eyes and to teach his wives a lesson. For this reason, in the 9th year of Hijra, he left his usual family life and stayed away from them for a month by taking an oath. He spent this time in his own cell called *mashraba*.

The fact that the Prophet was separated from his wives by withdrawing to his own cell caused the mothers of the believers to be sad. They were sad because they offended the Messenger of Allāh and they began to cry for fear that he would divorce them. This situation spread among the Companions as well, and they were worried about the possibility that the Prophet had divorced his wives. The Prophet's seclusion lasted for twenty-nine days, and he finally returned to his wives. In the meantime, the verses of takhyīr were revealed and the Prophet left all his wives to choose among the options by reading the verse, "If you want the life and beauty of this world, let me give you something and then, I shall provide for you and release you in a becoming manner. But if you want Allāh, His Messenger

<sup>131</sup> Bukhārī, "Nikāḥ", 83; "Maḥālim", 25; "Talāq", 8; "Aymān", 25; "Libās", 31; Muslim, "Talāq", 20, 34; Nasā'ī, "Talāq", 17; Ibn Sa'd, *at-Ṭabaqāt*, 10/173-180.

<sup>132</sup> Bekir Topaloğlu, "Taḥrīm Sūresi", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2010) 39/442; Özel, "Tahyir", 39/525.

<sup>133</sup> Emin İşik, "Ahzāb Sūresi", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 1989) 2/195-196.



*and the abode of the Hereafter, know that Allāh has prepared a great reward for those of you who choose righteousness" starting with 'Ā'isha. At that time, his nine wives chose Allāh, His Messenger and the Hereafter, and preferred to remain as the Prophet's wives. In such cases, they were warned by revelation, and as a result, they regretted and turned away from their mistakes.*

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