

Amina Begum: The Brilliant Daughter Of Allamah Majlisi

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The Brilliant Daughter Of Allamah Majlisi

The family of Allamah Majlisi has to its credit incomparable services for the cause of Islam four hundred years ago in Iran especially and the world in general. Allamah Majlisi is known as Majlisi, the second. He was the son of Mulla Muhammad Taqi Majlisi or Majlisi, the first; and his name was Mulla Muhammad Baqir. He is the author of the Islamic Encyclopedia titled, Biharul Anwar. Both these gentlemen are objects of pride for the whole Shia community and are greatly venerated in Iran. The father and son, both were like shoreless oceans of knowledge. They had presence of mind and were intelligent to a degree of perfection. It would not be misplaced to say that the two Majlisi's left a heritage of writings that are the foundations of a revivalist movement in the Shia religion. Majlisi, the first had a long list of students who went on to become great scholars of their own standing. The name that heads this list is that of Mullah Salih Mazandarani.

Mullah Salih Mazandarani was such a sincere and serious student that he was always immersed in his pursuits of knowledge. However he was very weak financially and had to undergo many difficulties during the period of his education. He didn't even had enough to purchase a lamp to study at night. His father was also not able to provide assistance to his son.

When Mulla Salih arrived in Isfahan for religious studies he had already completed much of education in spite of his young age. Thus when he arrived in Isfahan he easily got admission in the religious college of Mulla Taqi Majlisi. Within a short time he had earned a place of honor in the view of his teacher and other students due to his sincerity and exceptional talents. Though he had reached the age of marriage he was still a bachelor. Thus his teacher Allamah Majlisi thought that it was a pity that such a good student who was an example for others should remain unmarried. Hence he decided to see that he is married as soon as possible. One day after the class Allamah Majlisi called Mulla Salih and said to him, "If you say, I can get you married so that you are freed from the troublesome life of bachelorhood?" Mulla Salih bowed down his head before his teacher implying his willingness.

Allamah Majlisi came home and told his daughter Amina Begum, who was herself an accomplished scholar of religion and had literary expertise, "I have found a husband for you, who though weak financially has no equal in terms of merits, excellence and knowledge. But now you have to take a decision about it. I am waiting so that you may inform me."

The chaste and intelligent daughter said to her father respectfully, "Dear father! Poverty and financial problems are no defects for men." In this way she expressed her willingness. Thus at an auspicious hour the two were married and Mulla Salih brought his bride to the bridal chamber.

When the son-in-law moved the veil and looked at the beautiful face of the bride he thanked Allah and then went into a corner of the room and immersed himself in study.

By chance he came across a problem that he could not solve. No matter how many books he referred he could not find the answer. At last the bride herself asked, "Tell me what the problem is and which book would have the solution to it?"

At last it was dawn and the son-in-law left the house without having touched the bride and headed towards his classes. Amina Begum came to the study table to see the problem that her husband had failed to resolve. She found the solution to it and also noted down the reference of the book that contained the answer.

Mulla Salih returned home and as was his practice sat down to study. He was surprised to find that his wife Amina Begum had solved the problem and also noted down the references in her own handwriting. That very moment he spread the prayer rug and spent the whole night in worship and continued to thank Allah. Three days passed in the same manner and Mulla Salih did not even speak to his wife.

When Mulla Majlisi came to know about it he called his son-in-law and asked him, "If you do not like my daughter, I can look for another woman for you to marry."

Mulla Salih replied, "It is not that I do not like your righteous and brilliant daughter. Rather I want to thank Allah about it as much as I can for giving me such a wife. But I know that how much ever I thank for it I found it to be less. Therefore I remain engrossed in worship."

When Mulla Majlisi heard this from his gifted son-in-law and intelligent student, he said, "Yes, it is true that if a person confesses that he is deficient in thanking Allah to the degree He is deserving of it, Allah includes him among the thankful ones."

Amina Begum was a pious lady and herself a jurist of Islamic law. She also wrote books on religious laws. In addition to this she also assisted her brother Mulla Baqir Majlisi in collecting traditions and making arrangements for his magnum opus, Biharul Anwar. Even her husband Mulla Salih used to seek her counsel on the text of Allamah Hilli's Qawaid and benefit from her advice.

We should also know that many great personalities of Shia Islam came into existence through this accomplished lady. The great Wahid Behbahani, Allamah Bahrul Uloom, Sayyid Ali Tabatabai (writer of Riyaz) and Allamah Burujardi of the current age and many other great Shia

luminaries belong to her lineage. A noteworthy point about this lady is that both her father and husband were geniuses of their own times. Muhaddith Qummi writes in Qawaidur Rizvia that the Late Majlisi the first, writes in the explanation of the chapter of the Prayer of the Dead from the book Man La Yahzarul Faqih: By the grace of Allah, I know these gentlemen since the last four years. They had sincere faith in Allah, prayers, heaven and hell as if they were before their eyes. They used to perform the midnight prayer. They used to recite the Morning Prayer in congregation. They used to impart good advice to the children, and obtain the knowledge of Quranic verses and traditions from their respected father."

Wahid Behbahani writes in his journal Ijtihad al-Akhbar: "My grandfather, Mulla Salih had written marginal notes on Maalim when he was very young. Whoever reads these notes is "astonished how he could have penned them at such a tender age