

Chains of Narration: Aisha's Age of Nine

The accounts of Aisha's age at consummation are found through at least six separate sources immediate to Aisha: (1) 'Urwah ibn Zubayr,¹ father of Hishām (2) 'Abd Allah bin Safwan (3) Al-Aswad (4) Yahya bin 'Abd Al-Rahmān bin Hātib (5) Muḥammad, father of Hishām (6) 'Amrah bint 'Abd Al-Rahmān bin Sa'd. All the different sources which state Aisha's age agree, creating only one tradition: Aisha's age of nine.

Sahīh Muslim, Book 16: On Marriage, Ch. 10: On a Father Arranging the Marriage of a Small Virgin Girl

تَزَوَّجَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَيْسَتْ سِنِينَ وَبَنَى بِي وَأَنَا بِنْتُ تِسْعِ سِنِينَ (1)

God's messenger (ﷺ) married me at six years, and he had intercourse with me when I was a nine-year-old girl.

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو كُرَيْبٍ، مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْعَلَاءِ حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ، ح وَحَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ قَالَ وَجَدْتُ فِي كِتَابِي عَنْ أَبِي أُسَامَةَ، عَنْ هِشَامٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ

Aisha → Hishām's father (Urwah ibn Zubayr) → Hishām (bin Urwah) → Abu Usāma → Shaybah → Abu Bakr bin Abi → Muham. bin Al-Ala' Abu Usama → Abu Kuraib

تَزَوَّجَنِي النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَنَا بِنْتُ سِتِّ سِنِينَ وَبَنَى بِي وَأَنَا بِنْتُ تِسْعِ سِنِينَ (2)

The prophet (ﷺ) married me when I was a six-year-old girl, and he had intercourse with me when I was a nine-year-old girl.

وَحَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ يَحْيَى، أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو مُعَاوِيَةَ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ غَزْوَةَ، ح وَحَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ نُمَيْرٍ، وَاللَّفْظُ لَهُ - حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ - هُوَ ابْنُ سُلَيْمَانَ - عَنْ هِشَامٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ

Aisha → Hishām's father (i.e. Urwah ibn Zubayr) → Hishām (bin Urwah) → Abda son of Solomon → Ibn Numayr → Abu Mu'awiyah → Yahya bin Yahya

وَرَفَّتْ إِلَيْهِ وَهِيَ بِنْتُ تِسْعِ سِنِينَ وَلَعِبَتْهَا مَعَهَا (3)

Aisha said that... she was taken to his house as a bride when she was nine, and her dolls were with her.

وَحَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ بْنُ حَمِيدٍ، أَخْبَرَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّزَّاقِ، أَخْبَرَنَا مَعْمَرٌ، عَنِ الرَّهْزِيِّ، عَنْ غَزْوَةَ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ

Aisha → Urwah → Az-Zuhri → Muammar → 'Abd al-Razzaq → 'Abd bin Humayd

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ تَزَوَّجَهَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَهِيَ بِنْتُ سِتِّ وَبَنَى بِهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ تِسْعِ (4)

"Aisha reported that God's messenger... had intercourse with her when she was a girl of nine."

وَحَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ يَحْيَى، وَإِسْحَاقُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، وَأَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ وَأَبُو كُرَيْبٍ قَالَ يَحْيَى وَإِسْحَاقُ أَخْبَرَنَا وَقَالَ الْإِخْرَانِ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو مُعَاوِيَةَ، عَنِ الْأَعْمَشِ، عَنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنِ الْأَسْوَدِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ

Aisha → Al-Aswad → Abraham → Al-Amash → Abu Mu'awiyah → Abu Bakr b. Abi Shaybah, Abu Kuraib, Yahya, Is-hāq, & others → Isaac, son of Abraham → Yahya b. Yahya

Sahīh Al-Bukhārī, Book 67: On Marriage, Ch. 38/39: On Giving the Young in Marriage

عَنْ غَزْوَةَ... وَأَدْخَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ وَهِيَ بِنْتُ تِسْعِ

"Aisha said that... she went to live as his wife when she was a girl of nine."

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يُوسُفَ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنْ هِشَامٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ

Aisha → Hishām's father (i.e. Urwah ibn Zubayr) → Hishām (bin Urwah) → Sufyān → Muhammad bin Yusuf

Sahīh Al-Bukhārī, Book 67: On Marriage, Ch. 39/40: On a Father Marrying his Daughter to an Imam

وَبَنَى بِهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ تِسْعِ سِنِينَ

"...and he had intercourse with her when she was a nine-year-old girl"

حَدَّثَنَا مُعَلَّى بْنُ أَسَدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا وَهَيْبٌ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ غَزْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ

Aisha → Hishām's father (i.e. Urwah ibn Zubayr) → Hishām bin Urwah → Wahib → Ma'la bin Asad

Sahīh Al-Bukhārī, Book 67: On Marriage, Ch. 60: On Sexual Intercourse with a Woman who is a Nine-Year-Old Girl

عَنْ غَزْوَةَ... وَبَنَى بِهَا وَهِيَ ابْنَةُ تِسْعِ

"Aisha said that... he had intercourse with her when she was nine years old."

حَدَّثَنَا قَبِيصَةُ بْنُ عُقْبَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ غَزْوَةَ

(Aisha →) Urwah (i.e. Urwah ibn Zubayr, Hishām's father) → Hishām (bin Urwah) → Sufyān → Qubaysa bin Uqbah

Sunan of Abū Dāwūd, Book 12: On Marriage, Chapter on Marriage of the Young

وَدَخَلَ بِي وَأَنَا بِنْتُ تِسْعِ

"...and he penetrated me when I was nine years old." [Note: This hadith is sahih]

حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، وَأَبُو كَامِلٍ قَالَا حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادُ بْنُ زَيْدٍ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ غَزْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ

Aisha → Hishām bin Urwah's father (i.e. Urwah ibn Zubayr) → Hishām bin Urwah → Hammad bin Zaid → Muhammad bin Yusuf → Solomon bin Harb

Sunan of Abū Dāwūd, Book 43: On Manners, Chapter 63: On Swings

فَبَنَى بِي وَأَنَا ابْنَةُ تِسْعِ

"...he had sexual intercourse with me when I was nine." [Note: This hadith is sahih]

حَدَّثَنَا مُوسَى بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادُ، ح وَحَدَّثَنَا بَشْرُ بْنُ خَالِدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ، قَالَا حَدَّثَنَا هِشَامُ بْنُ غَزْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ

Aisha → Hishām bin Urwah's father (i.e. Urwah ibn Zubayr) → Abu Osāma → Bishr bin Khālid → Hammād → Mousa bin Ismāil

The History of Aṭ-Ṭabari

(1) "The Messenger of God married me when I was seven. My marriage was consummated when I was nine." ²

Aisha → 'Abd Allah b. Safwan → 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Muham. → 'Abd Al-Rahman b. Abi Al-Dahhak → Isma'il ibn Abi Khalid → Muhammad b. Yazid → 'Abd Al-Hamid b. Bayan Al-Sukkari

(2) "The Messenger of God consummated his marriage with me in my house when I was nine years old." ³

Aisha → Yahya bin 'Abd Al-Rahmān bin Hātib → Muḥammad bin 'Amr → Yahya bin Sa'īd Al-Umawī → Sa'īd, his son

(3) "...he consummated his marriage with her after coming to Medina when she was nine years old." ³

Aisha → 'Urwah (bin Zubayr) → Hishām bin 'Urwah → Abān Al-'Aṭṭar → 'Abd Al-Wārith → 'Abd Al-Ṣamad (father of 'Abd Al-Wārith) → 'Ali bin Naṣr

(4) "...and consummated the marriage when she was nine years old." ³

Aisha → Muḥammad, father of Hishām → Hishām bin Muḥammad → Ibn Sa'ad → Al-Hārith

(5) "On the day he consummated the marriage with her she was nine years old." ⁴

Aisha → 'Amrah bint 'Abd Al-Rahmān bin Sa'd → Rayṭah → Mūsā bin Muḥammad bin 'Abd Al-Rahmān → Ibn 'Umar Al-Wāqidi

1 Urwah ibn Zubayr was one of the leading fuqaha (Islamic legal scholars) of Medina. His son, Hisham, was grandson of Aisha's half-sister.
2 The History of al-Tabari Vol. VII: The Foundation of the Community: Muhammad At Al-Madina A.D. 622-626/Hijrah-4 A.H.: 07, MacDonald & Montgomery Watt, State University of New York Press, 1987, pages 6-7
3 The History of al-Tabari Vol. IX: The Last Years of the Prophet: The Formation of the State A.D. 630-632/A.H. 8-11, Poonawala, State University of New York Press, 1990, page 131
4 The History of al-Tabari Vol. XXXIX: Biographies of the Prophet's Companions and Their Successors: al-Tabari's Supplement to His History, Landau-Tasserion, State University of New York Press, 1998, page 171