

Khadijah bint Khuwaylid

Bismillah-hir-rahman-nir-rahim

Narrated Abu Hurairah (RA): *Jibril (Gabriel) came to the Prophet (SAW) and said, "O Allah's Messenger! This is Khadijah, coming to you with a dish having meat soup (or some food or drink). When she reaches you, greet her on behalf of her Lord (Allah) and on my behalf, and give her the glad tidings of having a palace made of Qasab (jewels) in Paradise, wherein there will be neither any noise nor any toil (fatigue, trouble, etc.)."* (Al-Bukhari)

The strength of character and noble qualities of Khadijah (RA) earned her the honor of being greeted by ALLAH (SWT) through his Angel Jibril. She was an image of faithfulness, integrity, truth, modest good manners and nobility. She was generous, wise and understanding, nurtured in an atmosphere of wealth and luxury.

The Prophet (SAW) said about Khadijah (RA): ***"that she was the best woman at her time."*** And ***"that she is the best woman of the women of Paradise."*** In another narration, the Prophet (SAW) said: ***"that her blessings and her greatness compared to other women of his nation are comparable to the greatness and blessings of Maryam upon the women of all of the world."***

As we know:

- she was the first wife of the Prophet (SAW) and he did not marry again during her lifetime.
- she was the first person to accept Islam as her religion and her way of life from the Prophet (SAW).
- she was the mother of all his children except one, which was Ibrahim.
- she was blessed with the distinction of having been greeted with "Salam" by Allah (SWT) and the Angel Jibril. She was the first lady ever to be so honored.

The Prophet (SAW) and Khadijah lived together in peace and harmony for more than 24 years. It was in her house that the Prophet (SAW) received the revelations of Allah through the Angel Jibril.

Biography

Khadijah was born in Makkah in the year 555 AD. According to scholars she was born 15 years prior to the incident of the Elephant. She belonged to the clan of Banu Hashim. Her mother's name was Fatimah bint Za'idah and her father's name was Khuwaylid ibn Asad. He was a merchant, a successful businessman whose vast wealth and business talents were inherited by Khadijah, who successfully managed her father's business interests and preserved the family's fortune. He was a very popular leader among the tribe of Quraish and he died while fighting in the famous battle of Fijjar. Her mother Fatimah bint Za'idah was a

member of the Banu Amir ibn Luayy ibn Ghalib tribe and a distant relative of the Prophet (SAW), through Luayy.

She came from a house which represented the Aristocracy of Makkah. She was extremely popular, she was educated, beautiful and she came from a good family.

As Ibn-Ishaq mentions in his Seerah, that Khadijah bin Khuwaylid was the most sought after woman in Makkah.

She married Abu Halah at a young age and bore him two children, Halah and Hind. Abu Halah passed away and then she married Atique ibn Aith who also passed away.

After this all her attention was devoted to the upbringing of her children and building up the business she inherited from her father. Her astuteness and business ability made hers one of the most widespread businesses among the Quraish.

It is said that when Banu Quraish's trade caravans gathered to embark upon their lengthy journey either to Syria during the summer or to Yemen during the winter, Khadijah's caravan equaled the caravans of all other traders of Quraish put together.

Khadijah had a good reputation and earned two titles or a Laqab, which in Arabic is a nickname you earn based on your good quality.

The first name the Quraish gave to our mother Khadija was **Ameerat-Quraish**, which meant **princess of Quraish**. Another name given to her was **Sayeda tun Nisa ul-Quraish**, which meant **the master of the women of the Quraish**.

The other name which was given to her was **Al-Taahira**, which meant **the pure one**.

She was a businesswoman and she used to do business with different men from the Hijaz (this was the region and province in western Saudi Arabia which comprised of Makkah, Madinah, Jeddah and At-Taif). She would send them to Syria and Yemen for trade (which was started by Hashim, the relative of the Prophet (SAW)).

Khadijah did not travel with her trade caravans, she relied on someone else to act as her agent to trade on her behalf in return for an agreed commission and this caused her to constantly be taken advantage of and they would play games with her refund and so on and so forth. During all this people still continued to propose to her and offer their hand in marriage and she kept refusing.

She then heard of a man Muhammad ibn Abdullah (SAW) who by then had earned the LAQAB of **Al-Sadiq (the truthful)** and **Al-Amin (the trustworthy)**, and that he was trading for different people in the area of Makkah and he was known for his honesty and good character. A number of agents whom she knew before and trusted, as well as her own relatives, particularly Abu Talib, suggested to her to employ Muhammad (SAW).

Muhammad (SAW), who was 15 years younger than Khadijah, did not have any official business experience, but he had accompanied his uncle Abu Talib on his trade trips and keenly observed how he traded, bartered, bought and sold, and conducted business. It was not uncommon at that time to hire an agent who did not have prior experience.

So Khadijah decided to give Muhammad (SAW) a chance. He was only 25 years old. Abu Talib asked the Prophet (SAW) to take this job as they were suffering from financial

difficulties even though they were from a noble family. The prophet (SAW) agreed and Khadijah sent him one of her servants, Maysarah, who was young, brilliant and talented, to assist him on this business trip and be his bookkeeper.

This trip proved to be an extremely profitable venture and Maysarah was astounded by some very remarkable things he witnessed on the trip. He was completely won over by the Prophet's (SAW) integrity, strength of character, adherence to principles, his amicable dealings and his business abilities.

On the way back from Syria, the Prophet (SAW) took a rest under a tree. Nestora, a Jewish monk, noted for his knowledge of religion and for his insight saw him and asked Maysarah who he was. Maysarah told him all about Muhammad (SAW) and his reputation for honesty and intelligence. And also said he is a man from the Quraish and the precincts of the Haram. The response of the monk was "that this man would be elevated to Prophethood in the future, as no man had ever rested under that particular tree but Prophets."

On his trip with the Prophet (SAW), Maysarah sometimes saw that a cloud was shading the Prophet (SAW) to protect him from the glare and heat of the sun. He was stunned and overcome by a sense of gratitude that he had been given the opportunity of benefiting from the close companionship of this man soon to be chosen by Allah as His Messenger.

When he returned home to Makkah, Maysarah reported to Khadijah all that had taken place on the trip to Syria and she was surprised to see that the profits she reaped were much more than she anticipated. She was deeply moved and impressed and started thinking of proposing marriage to Muhammad (SAW).

Now she was 40 years old and he was 25 years old. She came from an austere family and the Prophet (SAW) came from a noble family but was an orphan and at the same time he was poor. She must of had a lot of doubts in her head, for instance, what will the people think about this marriage, what would her family say, etc...

Now there are 4 steps to getting married:

1. the first is the glance (to see the person one is interested in)
2. the second is Ashoora (to discuss this person with your family members or people close to you)
3. the third is Al-Istikhaara (to make salat-ul Istikhaara, to ask Allah for his assistance in helping us choose the right mate)
4. the fourth is Al-Khutbaa (when one makes their intentions known to their intended spouse)

She had a difficult decision to make, so she went to her friend Nafisa and told her about the Prophet (SAW). Nafisa gave Khadija the confidence and told her that what was bothering her so much was not a major problem and she would help her to solve it. As Nafisa left Khadija, she was walking through the streets and she came to meet the Prophet (SAW) and without much ado she requested his permission to ask him a very personal question. When he said he had no objection, she asked why he had not married. He said he did not have the financial resources. Then she asked him if he would be willing to marry a beautiful lady from a noble

and wealthy family, who was inclined towards marriage with him. He asked who she was referring to and when he learnt of her identity, he said that he was willing provided that she was willing to marry him. So they both went and talked to their elders.

The two uncles of the Prophet (SAW), Hamzah (RA) and Abu Talib approached her uncle Umar ibn Asad with the formal proposal.

It was Hamza ibn Abdul Muttalib, despite being relatively young, whom the Hashemites delegated to represent them on this marriage occasion, since he was most closely related to them through the clan of Asad.

It was Abu Talib, Muhammad's (SAW) uncle who delivered the marriage sermon.

Khadija (RA) was very blessed in this marriage and had six children. First two sons, Qasim and Abdullah; then followed by daughters Zainab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthum and Fatimah (RA).

They were wonderful, intelligent children and it was a very happy, peaceful and content household.

During their marriage, it is said that the Prophet (SAW) had experienced the first revelations through dreams and that these dreams would come true. It was then that the love of seclusion was put into the heart of the Prophet (SAW) and he would retire for upto a month at a time, once a year to the cave of Hira. Khadijah (RA) would visit the Prophet to see how he was doing and sometimes send her servants to look after him.

When the Prophet (SAW) received his first revelation from the Angel Jibril, Khadijah (RA) was the first person (besides the Prophet (SAW) ---among both males and females--- to convert to Islam. According to some sources, it was Khadijah's parental cousin, Waraqah ibn Nawfal, who informed Muhammad (SAW) of his prophethood soon after his vision of the Angel Jibril. She was also the first person to pray in Jammah with the Prophet (SAW).

The Prophet (SAW) and Khadijah (RA), as I had mentioned had four daughters and two sons. Both of their sons died in childhood and the four daughters grew up to be faithful and courageous daughters of Islam.

His enemies now started calling him Abtar, the one who had no descendants, whose lineage was cut off. But Allah (SWT) had more lasting bounties in store for him. He then revealed to him the beautiful verses of Surat Al-Kauthar, the 108th Surah of the Noble Qur'an.

“Verily, We have granted you Al-Kauthar. Therefore turn in prayer to your Lord and sacrifice. For those who hate you, he will be cut off.” (108:1-3)

When the disbelievers saw that Islam was attracting more and more followers in spite of all their tactics, they had a meeting to decide what steps should be taken to stop the spread of this new religion. They decided to declare an open and total political and economic boycott of the tribe of Banu Hashim. This took place in the seventh year after the Prophet (SAW) declared himself the Messenger of Allah. This is also known in Islamic history as the Shi'ab Abi Talib.

It was so severe that innocent children faced starvation and hunger, and adults survived eating the leaves of trees. Yet the firm followers of the Prophet (SAW) did not turn away from their true religion and they came out of the ordeal stronger and purer than before.

Khadijah (RA) who had been brought up in luxury in her wealthy father's home now faced the economic hardships with patience and courage.

Khadijah (SAW) was the ideal wife and mother. The Prophet (SAW) lived in her house which became a blessed place due to his presence and the fact that Jibril (AS) came often to visit him there with Qur'anic revelations. It became the center of Islam, where the Companions and women Companions visited often to partake of the hospitality of the Prophet (SAW) and his wife.

Khadijah (RA) passed away just three years before the Hijrah, or the Prophet's (SAW) migration to Madinah. It is said that she died at the age of 64 or 65, having given almost 25 years to the Prophet (SAW) and to the cause of Islam.

When the Prophet saw her in the throes of death he consoled her saying Allah (SWT) has so ordained it, and that the thing she was dreading, would prove favorable for her. Her grave was prepared at a place called Hujjoon, near Makkah, which is now known as Jannatul Mualla cemetery, in Makkah.

When she passed away, the Prophet (SAW) was heartbroken at the loss of a dedicated companion who stood by him during the most difficult period of his life. He personally supervised the preparation of her grave, and climbed down into it to check it out. He then lowered her body into the grave himself. Thus ended the life of the lady who was the greatest supporter of Islam in its earliest days, the 'Mother' of all Muslims. She was the mother of Fatima (RA), the First Lady of Paradise, the grandmother of the beloved grandchildren of the Prophet (SAW), Hasan and Hussain (Radi- allah-anhuma), who are to be the foremost of the youths of Paradise.

The same year the Prophet's (SAW) greatest supporter and protector from among his family, his uncle Abu Talib passed away. Thus within a few months, two of his closest companions, supporters and benefactors had passed away. Besides his personal sense of loss and bereavement, the Prophet (SAW) was deeply disturbed by the fact that his work of spreading the word of Allah (SWT) was faced with problems and obstacles. His uncle had protected him at critical moments with his influence and authority. His wealthy wife, Khadijah ((RA) gave generously to the cause and also provided great moral and emotional support. Her house was a haven of peace for him as she took upon herself all of the responsibilities of running the household and bringing up four young daughters. Whenever he was abused by the disbelievers, she provided moral support and unflagging faith.

The Prophet (SAW) is reported to have taken no other wife until after her death because of his love for her. The year of her death is known as the Year of Sorrow, because of the devastation that it caused him and because it was also the same year his uncle and guardian Abu Talib died.

As Ibn Kathir a famous Islamic scholar writes in his book ***Wives of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)***:

“Khadijah had been the first to publicly accept Muhammad (SAW) as the messenger of Allah, and she had never stopped doing all she could to help him. Love and mercy had grown between them, increasing in quality and depth as the years passed by, and not even death could take this love away. The Prophet (SAW) never stopped loving Khadijah, and although he married several more wives in later years and loved them all, it is clear that Khadijah always had a special place in his heart. Indeed whenever Aisha, his third wife, heard the Prophet (SAW) speak of Khadijah, or saw him sending food to Khadijah’s old friends and relatives, she could not help feeling jealous of her, because of the love the Prophet (SAW) had for her.

Once Aisha asked him if Khadijah had been the only woman worthy of his love. The Prophet (SAW) replied: “ ***She believed in me when no one else did; she accepted Islam when people rejected me; and she helped and comforted me when there was no one else to lend me a helping hand. And it is through her that Allah blessed me with children.***”