

Khadija (S.A.), the Mother of All True Believers

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In Islamic terminology, based on God's revelation in the holy Qur'an, Omm al-Momineen or Mother of Believers is the title used for any of the several women who had the honour of being the wife of Prophet Muhammad (SAWA).

According to the exegetes of the heavenly scripture, the Almighty by designating the wives of the Prophet as "Mothers" made them unlawful for any other man after the passing away of the Prophet, in order to preserve the dignity of their conjugal bond with the Seal of Messengers. The exegetes add that the reason behind this Divine Revelation was the secret desire of a companion of the Prophet to marry a certain wife of the Prophet, if he passes away, since that particular lady in whom he was interested, happened to be the sister of the wife of his bosom friend.

Glory to God for thwarting the designs of the ill-wishers by promoting these ladies to the status of Mothers of Believers!

Yet, despite God's commandment for use of this honourific title, the fact is that only one of the nine women the middle-aged Prophet had taken as wives in the last ten years of his life in Medina, out of social necessity (to break the customs of the Days of Ignorance), could become the physical mother of the Prophet's offspring. She was Maria the Egyptian who gave birth to Ibrahim, who, however died in infancy.

Perhaps, for non-Muslims, unfamiliar with details about the Prophet's life, the questions might arise: Did he ever marry in youth, and if so, with whom, and was there any issue from this union?

It is here that the significance of the 11th of Ramadhan comes to the fore. It is the day on which Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) became a widower at the age of 51 years with the departure from the mortal world of the First Lady of Islam, who for 26 long years was his one and only wife, and the only one who guaranteed the continuation of his progeny.

Today is that sad day in history on which the weeping Prophet laid the Mother of all True Believers, Khadija bint Khuwailid, in grave in the gorge outside Mecca where his uncle Abu Taleb had taken the persecuted neo-Muslim community under his protection during those three tortuous years of the socio-economic siege imposed by the Arab pagans.

It is the day, when his only surviving child, daughter Fatema Zahra (SA) became an orphan. It is thus the day of bereavement for all Saadaat (plural of Seyyed) or the descendants of Fatema

(SA) and Imam Ali ibn Abu Taleb (AS), who have multiplied and spread today all over the world.

The Prophet was a picture of grief at the passing away of the mother of his progeny who had spent all her proverbial wealth for the food, clothing and shelter of the persecuted Muslims to the extent that except for a few meagre household items, nothing remained as inheritance for Fatema (SA).

Khadija (SA), a distant cousin of the Prophet from the Bani Asad branch of his ancestor Qussai's second son, had married him when he was 25 year old, while she had remained a spotlessly pure virgin all her forty years, earning the reputation of Tahera or the Pure in the society of Arabia.

Unlike the other marriages of the Prophet later in life, this was the only union that was sealed in the celestial heavens, for this wedlock had a purpose behind, that is, to give humanity an Infallible line of divinely-guided leaders, the last of whom is the awaited Saviour of mankind, Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his reappearance to cleanse the world of all vestiges of corruption and oppression by establishing the global government of peace, prosperity and justice).

The Prophet in this hour of grief was soothed by his loving uncle and guardian since childhood, Abu Taleb, who a quarter century earlier had solemnized the nuptials of this made-for-each-other-pair, and who like Khadija and the other members of the Hashemite-Asad clan was a monotheist untainted by the worship of idols.

No wonder, the Almighty chose the son of Abu Taleb to marry the daughter of Khadija, so that these two pure persons would be the progenitors of the Prophet's progeny, the Ahl al-Bait, whose unsullied purity God Himself vouches in ayah 33 of Surah Ruum.

Thus, Islam and all true Muslims will forever remain indebted to the sacrifices of the Mother of all True Believers (Omm al-Momineen), whose memory the Prophet used to cherish all his life despite taking as wives nine women out of social necessity in the last ten years of his life.

Once, when one of his spouses tried to speak of herself as a better one, the Prophet reprimanded her, saying: "By God, the Almighty did not grant me a better wife than her. She believed in me when the people used to mock at me and she acknowledged me when the people denied me. She shared her wealth and property with me and she bore me children which I was not destined to have through other women." (Sahih Bukhari).

But how did the Muslims treat the children of the Prophet and Khadija? They showed ingratitude, and by ignoring even the divine commandment of love for the Ahl al-Bayt, they deprived them of not just their political rule of the Islamic state, but seized from Hazrat Fatema

.(SA), her patrimony of Fadak