

Ummul Mu'minīn Sayyidah Khadījah

رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا



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Transliteration key

أ-'	ض - ḍ
آ - ā	ط - ṭ
ب - b	ظ - ḏ
ت - t	ع - ʿ
ث - th	غ - gh
ج - j	ف - f
ح - ḥ	ق - q
خ - kh	ك - k
د - d	ل - l
ذ - dh	م - m
ر - r	ن - n
ز - z	و - w, ū
س - s	ه - h
ش - sh	ي - y, ī
ص - ṣ	

Ummul Mu'minīn Sayyidah Khadijah

Undoubtedly, the most challenging position to have ever been held by a human was the position of nubuwwah. Along with bearing the excessive weight of revelation, the Ambiyā' were faced with many challenges from those who opposed them. Thus Nabī ﷺ said, "The people who undergo the severest trials are the Ambiyā', followed by the best after them, and then those who are next best."¹ From the galaxy of the Ambiyā', the paragon of Allah's creation, Sayyidunā Muḥammad ﷺ underwent the most difficulties in the path of Allah. We are told in a hadith:

ما اوذى احد ما اوذيت فى الله

No one was put through difficulty to the extent to which I was put through difficulty in (the path of) Allah.²

It is common knowledge that a person to whom daunting tasks are assigned needs support and backing from fellow humans, especially from those who make up his inner circle. How often do we not hear that so and so (the father, wife, etc.) was the secret behind a certain hero's success? Therefore, it makes perfect sense that a nabī, especially the one who was about to undergo the greatest difficulty, was in need of a figure of support in his life. Allah ﷻ, in His infinite wisdom, selected for this task none other than the Mother of the Faithful Sayyidah Khadijah bint Khuwaylid رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا.

Her Life Prior to Islam — The Pure One

There is consensus among the historians that she belonged to a very noble and elite family. Suffice to say; from all the spouses of Nabī ﷺ, she was closest to him in lineage. Her father, Khuwaylid ibn Asad was from the royals of Quraysh.

1 *Al-Tirmidhī*

2 *Hilyat al-Awliyā'*

He was part of the delegation sent to congratulate the Arab king of Yemen upon his victory over the Ahbash.¹ She herself was well known amongst her people as a noble and pure woman. Zubayr ibn Bakkar reports:

كانت تدعى في الجاهلية الطاهرة

During the days of Jāhiliyyah (pre-Islam), she was referred to as the pure one.

Al-Tamīmī states:

كانت تسمى سيدة نساء قريش

She was named, “The leader of the women of Quraysh.”²

As far as her marital life is concerned, she was first married to Abū Hālah al-Tamīmī. She had a son from him whose name was Hind ibn Abī Hālah. He later accepted Islam, participated in the battle of Badr and rendered a great service to the ummah by describing the physical features of Rasūlullāh ﷺ in the most apt manner. After Abū Hālah passed away, she married ‘Atīq ibn ‘Ābid, who also passed away.³ Thus, she was widowed twice. Many of the prominent men of the Quraysh then sought her hand in marriage on account of her nobility, beauty, and wealth.⁴ However, she rejected all of their offers, preferring to remain single and concentrate on her business. Since she was a woman, she would not go out on business trips herself. Rather, she would employ men from the Quraysh to do so on behalf of her, in lieu of a share of the profits.⁵

Al-Ṭāhirah Employs al-Amīn

The narrations of Ibn Sa’d, Ibn al-Sakān and Abū Nu’aym relate, on the authority of Nafisah bint Munyah (a friend of Khadījah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا):

1 Akhbār Makkah by al-Azraqī (quoted from *al-Sayyidah Khadījah Sabbaqāt al-Khalq*)

2 *Al-Rawḍ al-Unf* (quoted from *al-Sayyidah Khadījah*)

3 *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*

4 *Subul al-Hudā wa al-Rashād* (quoted from *al-Sayyidah Khadījah*)

5 *Al-Sīrah li Ibn Hishām* (quoted from *al-Sayyidah Khadījah*)

Rasūlullāh ﷺ reached the age of twenty-five, and he was not known by any other title in Makkah except *al-Amīn* (the trustworthy one), as a result of him reaching the epitome in good traits. Abū Ṭālib said to him, “O my nephew, I am a man who has no wealth, and times are tough... Here is the caravan of your people, about to depart. Khadījah bint Khuwaylid sends men from your people in her caravan to trade on behalf of her and accrue profits for themselves. If you were to go to her and offer your services, she would seal the deal immediately and grant you preference over others on account of that which reached her regarding your pure nature...”

Rasūlullāh ﷺ was overtaken by his shyness and self-dignity, and replied, “(If that is the case), then maybe she will send someone to me (with the offer).” The conversation eventually reached Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, who immediately sent someone to call him. She then said to him, “I felt it necessary to call you on account of that which I heard regarding your truthfulness in speech, your trustworthiness, and your excellent character. I will pay you double the amount that I pay the other men.”

Rasūlullāh ﷺ then accepted the offer and thereafter departed, accompanied by the slave of Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, Maysarah, who she instructed:

لا تعص له امرا ولا تخالف له رايًا

Do not disobey him in any matter and do not oppose his view.¹

The Marriage Proposal

The Arabic proverb states:

ليس الخبر كالعيان

Narrative can never be equated to first-hand experience.

After hearing about all the virtues and merits of Muḥammad ﷺ from the rest of the people of Makkah, Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا was given the opportunity by Allah

1 *Subul al-Hudā wa al-Rashād* (quoted from *al-Sayyidah Khadījah*)

Ta'ālā to witness it first-hand. Hence, it comes as no surprise that she was left greatly impressed, to the extent that she now went against her initial intention of staying single and turning down the noblemen of Quraysh; and instead opted to marry this embodiment of nobility صلى الله عليه وسلم. Furthermore, she did not wait for him to propose. Doing away with meaningless customs, and with the motive of securing the best of spouses; she initiated the discussion on marriage, albeit through her acquaintance Nafīṣah. Ibn Sa'd reports from Nafīṣah:

I said, "O Muḥammad, what holds you back from marriage?"

He replied, "I do not possess that by means of which I may marry."

I asked, "If that is taken care of for you, and you are called towards wealth, beauty, nobility, and compatibility, will you not accept?"

Thereupon he asked, "And who is that?"

I replied, "Khadījah."

He asked, "How is that possible for me," to which I responded, "That is in my care."

He responded, "In that case, I will do it."¹

The Marriage

Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم then spoke to his uncle, Abū Ṭālib regarding marriage and narrated to him what had transpired. They agreed that he should marry her. Consequently, they approached her uncle, 'Amr ibn Asad (as her father passed away) and put forward the proposal. The uncle gladly accepted it and married her off to him with the dowry being five hundred silver coins.² At the time of their marriage, Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم was twenty five years old³ and Khadījah رضي الله عنها had reached the age of forty.⁴

1 *Subul al-Hudā wa al-Rashād* (quoted from *al-Sayyidah Khadījah*)

2 *Ibn Hishām*

3 *Ibn Hishām*

4 *Uṣd al-Ghābah*

Her Love and Reverence for Rasūlullāh ﷺ

Al-Fākihī reports in *Kitāb Makkah* from Anas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ:

Nabī ﷺ was with Abū Ṭālib when he sought permission to leave and go to Khadījah. Abū Ṭālib granted him permission and sent a slave girl (Nab'ah) behind him.

He instructed her, “See what Khadījah says to him.”

Nab'ah recounts, “I saw something amazing, Khadījah barely heard him approaching and she already came to the door, held his hand and hugged him...”¹

Children from the Perfect Marriage

Six children were born out of this wedlock. The first amongst them was al-Qāsim (hence the agnomen of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Abū al-Qāsim), followed by his four daughters in the following order; Zaynab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthūm, and Fātimah. Another son, who was named 'Abd Allāh, was born after Zaynab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا.

Zayd ibn Ḥārithah

Zayd was among the slaves of Sayyidah Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. When she observed the love that Rasūlullāh ﷺ had for him, she handed him over as a gift to him. Thus, she was the cause of Zayd becoming the adopted son of Rasūlullāh ﷺ as well as his early acceptance of Islam.²

Nubuwwah Begins — Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا is the Pillar of Support

» Comforting Him after a Worrying Dream

The first form of *waḥī* (revelation) received by Rasūlullāh ﷺ was true dreams.³ On one occasion, he saw that a panel from the roof of his house was

1 *Fath al-Bārī* (quoted from *Al-Sayyidah Khadījah*)

2 *Al-Iṣābah*

3 *Al-Bukhārī*

removed and a ladder made of silver was placed in the exact spot. Thereafter, two men descended towards him. He attempted to call out for help, but he was unable to speak. Eventually, they removed his heart, praised the purity thereof, purified it even further and then replaced it.¹ Rasūlullāh ﷺ related this to Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, who dispelled all possible worries by saying, “Be glad! Indeed Allah only does good to you. This is goodness, so be happy.”²

» The Cave of Ḥirā’

Rasūlullāh ﷺ would go into seclusion for a number of days in the Cave of Ḥirā’, (which is approximately three miles from the Ḥaram). There, he would worship Allah for a number of days. Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا did not stand in his way or complain about this. Rather, she sought his pleasure by packing for him provisions that would last him until his return.³ Sometimes, she would deliver this herself to him. If his absence happened to be unusually lengthy, she would send some of her servants to look for him.⁴

» The Meeting with Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

After the passing of some time, Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام appeared before Rasūlullāh ﷺ whilst he was in the cave of Ḥirā’ and instructed him to recite. Rasūlullāh ﷺ responded by saying that he could not recite. Thereafter, Jibrīl hugged him tightly and then instructed him once again to recite. Rasūlullāh ﷺ responded in the same manner as the first time. Jibrīl hugged him tightly for a second time, and repeated his instruction. The response of Rasūlullāh ﷺ was the same as the first two times. Thus, Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام hugged him a third time and instructed, “Read in the name of your Rabb...”⁵

1 It should be noted that this act (removing the heart of Rasūlullāh ﷺ for further purification) took place more than once.

2 *Al-Khaṣa’ṣ al-Kubrā* (quoted from *al-Sayyidah Khadījah*)

3 *Al-Bukhārī*

4 Refer to *Subul al-Hudā and al-Sīrah li Ibn Hishām* (quoted from *al-Sayyidah Khadījah* رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا)

5 *Al-Bukhārī*

Rasūlullāh ﷺ was greatly shaken by this meeting and immediately rushed home to Sayyidah Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. As he entered the house, he pleaded to her, “Cover me, Cover me!” Without any questions, she immediately complied with his plea. Once Rasūlullāh ﷺ regained his composure, she asked him as to what had transpired, whereupon he narrated to her the details of his meeting. Rasūlullāh ﷺ also informed her that he feared for his life. Her response was:

كلا والله لا يخزيك الله ابدا انك لتصل الرحم وتحمل الكل وتكسب المعدوم وتقرى الضيف وتعين على نوائب الحق

و فى رواية و تصدق الحديث و تؤدى الامانة

Never! By the oath of Allah, Allah will never put you to shame! You join ties, help the weak, give to the poor, serve the guest, and you help when natural calamities befall.

Another narration adds:

You speak the truth and you fulfil your trusts.¹

Regarding her reaction, Ibn Ḥajr comments:

صدمته صلى الله عليه وسلم فى اول وهلة و من ثباتها فى الامر ما يدل على قوة يقينها ووفور عقلها و صحة عزمها

She believed him ﷺ immediately. Her firmness upon the matter indicates the strength of her conviction, profoundness of her intelligence, and the high level of her determination.²

» Waraqah ibn Nawfal

Thereafter, Sayyidah Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا took Rasūlullāh ﷺ to visit her cousin, Waraqah ibn Nawfal رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, who was well versed with the divine scripture. After

1 Al-Bukhārī

2 Fath al-Bārī (quoted from al-Sayyidah Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا)

listening to the experience of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he comforted him by informing him that Jibrīl was the angel who would bring revelation to Nabī Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ as well.¹

The First to Accept Islam

Ibn al-Athīr says:

خديجة اول خلق الله اسلم باجماع المسلمين لم يتقدمها رجل ولا امرأة

Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا was the first of Allah’s creation to accept Islam, according to the consensus of the Muslims. Neither did a man nor a woman precede her.²

Ibn Hishām says:

وامنت به خديجة بنت خويلد و صدقت بما جاءه من الله ووازرته على امره و كانت اول من امن بالله و رسوله و صدق بما جاء به فخفف الله بذلك عن نبيه صلى الله عليه و سلم لا يسمع شيئا مما يكرهه من رد عليه و تكذيب له فيحزنه ذلك الا فرح الله عنه بها اذا رجع اليها تثبتته و تخفف عنه و تصدقه و تهون عليه امر الناس رحمها الله تعالى

Khadījah bint Khuwaylid had conviction in him, believed that which came to him from his Rabb and supported him. She was the first to believe in Allah and His Rasūl. Allah lightened the difficulties of Rasūlullāh ﷺ by means of her belief in him. He would not hear anything distasteful (such as; people rejecting him, belying him etc.) which would sadden him except that Allah would remove that sadness from him by means of Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, when he would return to her. She would strengthen him, lighten (his matters), believe in him, and help him to overcome the inconvenience that people caused to him. May Allah have mercy upon her.³

1 *Al-Bukhārī*

2 *Usd al-Ghābah*

3 *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah*. A similar statement is attributed to Ibn ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in *al-Istī‘āb*.

She is Grieved Upon Her Daughters Divorce (along with Rasūlullāh ﷺ)

The polytheists of Makkah wished to inflict as much pain upon Rasūlullāh ﷺ as they could. Hence, they approached his two sons-in-law, ‘Utbah and ‘Utaybah; and influenced them to divorce their wives, Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthūm رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. Both brothers divorced their wives. Thus Sayyidah Khadījah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا had to endure the pain of two of her daughters being divorced, only on account of their father being the Nabī of Allah ﷺ.

She Relieves the Muslims During the Inhumane Boycott

When the persecution of the polytheists yielded them no results, and they saw Islam spreading despite all of their efforts, they adopted the idea of boycotting the Muslims. The boycott lasted for three years and it was certainly one of the most difficult periods endured by the Muslims. Sayyidah Khadījah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا was instrumental in easing the harsh effects of this boycott. Ibn Hishām says:

و بذلت رضى الله عنها مالها لتؤمن ما تستطيع من الطعام للمسلمين فى خلال سنوات المقاطعة

She spent her wealth in order to secure whatever food she could, for the Muslims during the years of the boycott.¹

Her cousin, Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām (who accepted Islam after the conquest of Makkah) was the one who would discreetly bring the food to the Muslims.²

The Year of Sorrow

In the tenth year after Nubuwwah, Rasūlullāh ﷺ lost his uncle Abū Ṭālib. The sadness experienced by him due to this was twofold; the departure of a close relative who defended him on numerous occasions against the other leaders of

1 *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah*

2 *ibid*

the Quraysh, and the departure of his loving and caring uncle upon incorrect beliefs. Barely three months had passed before Rasūlullāh ﷺ was afflicted with an even greater calamity, i.e. the demise of Sayyidah Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, who passed away on the tenth of Ramaḍān in the same year. Thus, the year is referred to as ‘The Year of Sorrow’.¹ Her age at the time of her death was sixty five.²

Rasūlullāh’s ﷺ Grief Upon Her Demise

Rasūlullāh ﷺ was grieved to such an extent that those around him began fearing that this grief might result in his death.³ It is reported that Khawlah bint Ḥakīm visited Rasūlullāh ﷺ after the demise of Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, and the following conversation ensued:

يا رسول الله كأنى أراك دخلتك خلة لفقد خديجة قال أجل كانت ام العيال و ربة البيت...

Khawlah, “O Rasūlullāh, I see that you are uneasy since (you) lost Khadījah.”

Rasūlullāh ﷺ, “Yes. She was the mother of the family and the custodian of the house.”⁴

Some of Her Merits

» Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not Re-Marry as Long as She was Alive

‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا relates:

لم يتزوج النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم على خديجة حتى ماتت

Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not take a second wife with Khadījah as long as she was alive.⁵

1 Refer to *Subul al-Hudā wa al-Rashād*.

2 *Al-Iṣābah*

3 *Ibid*

4 *Ibid*

5 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*

» The Custodian of the House is Greeted by Allah ﷻ and Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, and Promised a House in Jannah

Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reports:

أتى جبريل النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال هذه خديجة قد أتت معها اناء فيه ادام او طعام او شراب فاذا هي اتتك فاقرأ عليها السلام من ربها عز وجل و منر و بشرها ببيت في الجنة من قصب لا صخب ولا نصب

Jibrīl appeared before Nabī ﷺ and said to him, “This is Khadījah. She has arrived with a container in which there is gravy, food or drink. When she reaches you, convey to her greetings (of peace) from her exalted and glorified Rabb, and from me; and also give her glad-tidings of a house in Jannah made from jewels,¹ in which there will neither be noise, nor toil.”²

Al-Suhaylī comments regarding the mention of a house instead of the word “palace”:

لذكر البيت معنى لطيف؛ لأنها كانت ربة بيت قبل المبعث فصارت ربة بيت في الإسلام منفردة به، لم يكن على وجه الارض في أول يوم بعث فيه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بيت في الإسلام إلا بيتها، وهي فضيلة ما شاركها غيرها

There is a fine reason why ‘a house’ was promised, i.e. she was the custodian of the house before nubuwwah as well as after nubuwwah. She alone had this privilege. There was no household immediately after the nubuwwah of Nabī ﷺ that accepted Islam, except hers. This is a merit which she shares with none.³

» The Intelligence and Knowledge of Khadījah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا

The narration of Anas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ regarding the above incident preserved for us her marvellous response. She replied:

1 *Sharḥ al-Nawawī*

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*

3 *Al-Rawḍ al-Unf* (quoted from *al-Sayyidah Khadījah*)

ان الله هو السلام و على جبريل السلام و عليك السلام و رحمة الله

Indeed Allah Himself is al-Salam, peace be upon Jibrīl and peace be upon you as well as the mercy of Allah.¹

» Rasūlullāh ﷺ Remembers Her Excessively and Honours Her Friends

‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا reports:

ما غرت على احد من نساء النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم ما غرت على خديجة و ما رأيتهما و لكن كان النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم يكثر ذكرها و ربما ذبح الشاة ثم يقطعها اعضاءا ثم يبعثها فى صدائق خديجة فربما قلت له كأنه لم يكن فى الدنيا امرأة الا خديجة فيقول انها كانت و كانت و كان لى منها ولد

I was not envious of any of the wives of Nabī ﷺ, except Khadījah. I did not get to see her but Rasūlullāh ﷺ would remember her excessively. At times he would slaughter a sheep, cut it up into portions, and send them to the friends of Khadījah. Once I said to him, “As if there was no woman in the world besides Khadījah!” He replied, “She was (an) extra-ordinary (person) and I had children from her.”²

» Rasūlullāh ﷺ Shudders when He is Reminded About Her

‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا reports:

استاذنت هالة بنت خويلد اخت خديجة على رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم و عرف استاذان خديجة فارتاع لذلك

Hālah bint Khuwaylid, the sister of Khadījah, sought permission (to enter). Rasūlullāh ﷺ recognised (this as) the way Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا would seek permission and thus shuddered.³

1 Al-Nasā’ī

2 Al-Bukhārī

3 Al-Bukhārī

» Rasūlullāh ﷺ Recounts Some of Her Outstanding Favours

‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا reports that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said to her:

قد امنت بي اذ كفر بي الناس و صدقتني اذ كذبنى الناس وواستنى بماله اذ حرمنى الناس و رزقني الله عز و جل اولادها اذ حرمنى اولاد النساء

She accepted me (my message) when people rejected me, believed me when people belied me, supported me with her wealth when people deprived me and Allah granted me her children when he kept me away from the children of other women.¹

» Rasūlullāh’s ﷺ Love for Her was Divine

‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا narrates from Rasūlullāh ﷺ, who said:

انى قد رزقت حبها

I was granted love for her.²

» She was the Best Woman of Her Time

‘Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said:

خير نساؤها مريم بنت عمران و خير نساؤها خديجة بنت خويلد

The best woman of her time was Maryam bint ‘Imran and the best woman of her time was Khadījah bint Khuwaylid.³

Is it not amazing that her virtues were preserved and related to the ummah primarily by the none other than the beloved of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Umm al-

1 *Musnad Aḥmad*

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*

Mu'minīn Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا—who was referred to by Allah as 'the chaste and pure one'? Hence, the unblemished beloved was chosen to narrate the virtues of the 'pure one', for whom Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was granted love. Indeed this is a beautiful manifestation of the wisdom of Allah!

May Allah be pleased with her and grant all her children (i.e. the entire ummah) the divine ability to develop genuine love for her and follow in her noble footsteps.