

Chapter 3: On the Way to a Blessed Life

When Safiya returned home and informed her brothers (the Prophet's uncles) of the authenticity of the news, happiness mixed with amazement, and astonishment overtook them.

Khadija who refused to marry the princes and lords of the Arabs, because she deemed them unworthy to marry, chose to be the wife of a poor man who owned nothing of the ephemeral things of this world, of even a foot of land!!

This was the wonder of wonders!!

The Prophet's uncles proceeded towards Khadija's house, and asked for her hand from her father (or her uncle as some historians report), who at first rejected them; but, later agreed to the proposal.

Inevitably, an appropriate sum of money had to be presented to Khadija as her dowry; how could it be obtained? And, who would donate it?

This was a difficult question at hand, until Khadija once again surprised everyone by giving four thousand dinars as a gift to the Prophet, and urged him to pay it to her father as her dowry. Although according to another historical finding, it was Abu Talib who paid the dowry from his own money.

Even though Khadija was a woman of high standards who sacrificed material gains to achieve honor, her father, Khuwaylid, possessed contradicting values. This difference between Khadija and her father is not rare between parents and their children; in fact, this ideological difference can also be found between various classes of people, brothers, spouses, and parents.

Khadija's payment of the dowry was a unique, amazing and unforeseen act; for the Arabs were not acquainted with women giving dowries to their husbands. Thus, it was not unexpected of Abu Jahel to incite an envious commotion and say:

"O people, we have thus seen men paying dowries to women; we are not used to women giving dowry to men" In answer to this, Abu Talib angrily replied:

"What is the matter with you? O you wicked man! Men like Muhammad are to be given gifts and grants, but your likes give gifts that people always reject."

or he said:

"If it was a man like my nephew then the greatest dowries are to be granted to him, but men like you cannot get married save by paying large sums of money."

The blessed wedding took place in the best possible way. The Messenger (as) moved in with Lady Khadija who felt that she was going through the happiest period of her life, because she had attained her best wishes and sweetest dreams.

Khadija gave birth to several children of whom only four daughters survived: Zainab, Umm Kulthum, Ruqiya, and Fatima az-Zahra who was the youngest and most exalted of them all.

There is a difference between historians regarding the first two daughters, for some claim that they were the Prophet's step-daughters; but the fact is that they were his direct daughters. This fact will be explained in the coming pages, if Allah wills. 1

1. The story of Khadija's marriage was summarized and carried on from Bihar al-Anwar: v.6.

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