

Freedom, Tragedy, Spiritual Strength

Khadijah Dies

The dark years of confinement end. Khadijah lives to see the salvation of the Moslems, her beloved husband and her noble and loyal daughters. The Prophet experiences his first great victory over the Quraish. But the destiny which had been sent to change our history allows for no peace or pleasure to reflect from his face, for two great tragedies fall upon him simultaneously.

Abu Talib and Khadijah both die within a few days of each other and within a few days of their freedom. Abu Talib had raised the orphan Muhammad and had made up for the kindness of his missing father and mother and his grandfather, Abdul Muttalib. He looked after the young man, Muhammad, and cared for him. He found work for him in the service of Khadijah. Finally, it was he who acted as the father at the marriage of Khadijah and Muhammad. He had supported the prophecy of Muhammad. With all of his influence, character, personality and social credit, he had protected him. He even bore the three years in confinement, the difficulties and hunger and remained with him. It was because of him that Muhammad was saved from death and the horrible torture which his companions suffered. Now, he has lost Abu Talib, his only protector against the anger, danger and hatred of the city.

And Khadijah was the woman who gave up the privacy of their life to his destiny. Muhammad (twenty-five years old), orphan and shepherd, having suffered the difficulties and poverty, now beside the wealthy Khadijah (forty or forty-five years old), comes to know her through love, with the faith of a fellow sufferer and thinker. He seeks refuge in her from the difficulties of poverty and life. He receives the kindness of a friend beside her, and the love of a mother which he had not had. He benefits from her advice and the great protection which she gave him.

Later, when he is appointed as God's Prophet, she is with him, step by step. She is beside him, beside his heart, beside his spirit. During the whole time of the thunderstorm of difficulties, fears, dangers, loneliness, years of hatred and enmity, battles, fights and treacheries; she is with him from the first moment of the revelation until the moments of her death. She is with him during all of the moments of his life. She gives all of her life, love, faith, sacrifice and wealth at the moment when he needs it the most.

Now Muhammad has lost his protector, his compassionate, fellow sufferer, the first person who believed him, the greatest giver of sympathy and finally, the mother of his Fatima and Fatima has lost her mother.

Difficulties and tortures increase. Abu Talib has gone. The Prophet is left defenseless in respect to the hatred. The hatred and enmity become violent when they witness the patience, perseverance and faith of Muhammad and his Companions. Their roots become firmer and more merciless. The Prophet is very much alone. Abu Talib is no longer in the city and Khadijah is no longer at home.

Fatima now more than ever senses the heavy burden of the unfortunate hatreds and grudges, because she is called 'the mother of her father'. At the time that her sisters go to their husband's homes, she is still tied to her mother's skirts.

'Mother, I never want to replace this home with another one. Mother, I will never leave you.'

Khadijah smiling, answers, 'They all say that and we say, 'My daughter, the time will come'.'

Fatima, imploringly continues, 'No. I will never leave my father. No one will separate me from him.'

Her mother remains silent.

Fatima senses she has such a mandate. Her message is not a child's desires. Her faith in her mandate gains strength when she hears her father begin his invitation in the following way.

'Oh, Quraish, take yourselves back. In relationship to your God, I cannot implore anything for you: Oh children of Abd Manaf, in relationship to your god, I cannot implore anything for you. Abbas, ibn Abdul Muttalib, in relationship to your god, I...oh, Safiyeh, daughter of Abdul Muttalib...Oh, Fatima, take whatever you want of my wealth but in relationship to thy God, I cannot implore anything for you.'

Fatima, full of understanding, spiritual desire and perseverance, answers, 'Yes. Yes, dearest of fathers, the most respected of Prophets.'

How surprising that the Prophet calls upon her in the presence of the leaders of the Quraish, as well as with the leaders of the Hashimi tribe and the Abd Manafs. Her? A young girl? She alone, and only she from among her family?

The child-like feelings and loving kindness of the young girl, who hundreds of times re-iterated that she would never marry and that she would never leave her father, is growing into a serious covenant and takes on the color of a responsibility and a commandment.

The first years of her life coincide with the first years of the mission and the difficulties and tortures of the beginning of the mandate. Fatima, from among all of the children of Muhammad, is the worthiest to have been able to bear the suffering of the difficulties, to bear the heavy weight of the responsibilities of the mandate which is upon her father's shoulders. She is aware of her fate and so are her mother and

father.

On one of the last days of her life, Khadijah, worried, turns to her and says, 'After me what things will you see, my daughter. My life will end today or tomorrow. Zaynab and Roqiyyeh, your two sisters, are at peace beside their kind husbands. My mind is not worried about Umm Khu1thum because her age and experience are enough to keep her. But, you, Fatima, are drowned in difficulties. You have to suffer multiple sorrows and tribulations which increase daily.'

Fatima, who shared in bearing the burdens which had been placed upon her father's shoulders, answers, 'Rest assured, mother. Don't worry about me. The idol worshipping Quraish will have a rebellion among themselves. They will torture and punish Moslems and they will show no mercy. They will pre_judge. The souls and hearts of Moslems should rejoice in accepting this despotic torture.'

Fatima is the most worthy for having suffered this torture. She is special because the blessing of being the daughter of the Prophet is offered to her and because of the kindness and respect which has been devoted to her.

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