

Khalifa Umar bin al-Khattab - Life in Madina and Early Battles

Hafsa

Hafsa was the daughter of Umar. Her mother was Zainab, a sister of Usman bin Mazur an eminent Companion. Abdullah was a real brother of Hafsa.

In Mecca, Hafsa was married to Khunays bin Hudhaifa of the Banu Sahm clan of the Quraish. Khunays was one of the early converts to Islam. He participated in two migrations, migration to Abyssinia and the migration to Madina, and was blessed by the Holy Prophet.

In Madina, Khunays participated in the battle of Badr. He also fought in the battle of Uhud. He was wounded in the battle of Uhud. These wounds proved fatal, and he died shortly after the battle of Uhud. Hafsa thus became a widow at a very young age.

Umar felt much distressed at the grief of his daughter. After the period of Iddat was over, Umar thought of remarrying her. Like her father, Hafsa was hot of temper. Umar felt that it would be advisable if she was married to an elderly man of a sober temperament.

Umar's choice fell on Abu Bakr. Umar went to Abu Bakr, and offered him the hand of Hafsa. Umar had hoped that Abu Bakr would enthusiastically welcome the proposal. Umar was, however, disappointed, for Abu Bakr remained quiet and evaded the issue. Umar felt distressed that his friend Abu Bakr had not grasped the hand of friendship that he had extended to him.

Umar next went to see Usman. Usman had been married to Ruqayya, a daughter of the Holy Prophet. Ruqayya had died. Umar offered him the hand of Hafsa. Usman asked for some time to consider the matter. When Umar saw Usman a few days later, Usman said that his grief over the death of Ruqayya was so overwhelming that he did not contemplate another marriage.

Umar felt very angry at the rejection of his proposal by Abu Bakr and Usman. Brimming with rage, Umar went to see the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet greeted him with a smile and asked tenderly what was worrying him? Umar poured out the grief of his heart, and complained against Abu Bakr and Usman who had turned down the hand of friendship that he had extended to them.

The Holy Prophet addressed Umar with great affection and said, "Umar, I know of your worries and I also know of your services to Islam. Rest assured, Hafsa will marry a man better than Usman, and Usman will marry a lady better than Hafsa."

This meant that the Holy Prophet himself wanted to wed Hafsa. Umar was overwhelmed with joy at this great honour beyond his aspirations. Umar reverently kissed the hand of the Holy Prophet in token of his gratitude. He hurried home, and told Hafsa of the happy news.

Then he went to Abu Bakr. From the face of Umar radiating happiness, Abu Bakr judged of the developments. Addressing Umar he offered apologies and said, "The Holy Prophet had spoken to me about Hafsa, and as such I could not accept your proposal. But for that it would have been a great honour and pleasure for me to agree to your proposal."

Umar then went to Usman. Usman offered apologies and said, "The Holy Prophet had talked to me over the matter. He had offered me the hand of his younger daughter Umm Kulsum, and he had expressed the desire to marry Hafsa himself. Under these circumstances I could not accept your proposal."

In A.D. 625 Hafsa was married to the Holy Prophet that elevated the status of Umar and brought him at par with Abu Bakr, as both of them enjoyed the unique privilege of being the fathers-in-law of the Holy Prophet.

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Source : Alim.org-Umar bin al-Khattab History