

The Eldest Daughter

Zainab ؓ, the eldest daughter of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and Khadija ؓ was born about five years after their marriage and ten years before Prophet Muhammad ﷺ received the first revelation.





The Persecution of the Quraysh

Once Prophet Muhammad ﷺ started giving the message of Islam openly things changed very rapidly. The Prophet, his family, and the few new Muslims suffered greatly at the hands of the Quraish. Zainab and her younger sisters, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulsum and Fatima were not spared of these hardships.



Zainab's Love for Abu al 'Aas

Some time later, even though her wounds were not completely healed, she quietly left Makkah again. After a long and difficult journey she finally reached Madinah. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was very happy to see his daughter. He was greatly grieved and shocked when he heard what she had to go through to reach him.





al 'Aas died during the lifetime of his grandfather at a very young age.

Even though Zainab was legally divorced, she refused to marry anyone. She always hoped and prayed that one day Allah would guide Abu al 'Aas to accept Islam and return to her. As time passed she always wondered why she had not heard from him. She knew he loved her and could not understand how he could tolerate the separation. She recalled his fame amongst the people for reciting poetry about her sweet nature and her father's honorable manners while he was away from home during his trading trips. She remembered how he refused the Makkans offer of marriage to their most beautiful girl and how he refused to divorce Zainab.

A couple of years before the conquest of Makkah, Abu al 'Aas was returning with his trading caravan from Syria, loaded with rich merchandise. It was a very successful trip. He had taken a lot of goods from the Makkans and had agreed to give them half of the profit he would make. Being a clever merchant he was bringing back new merchandise from Syria to trade in Makkah.



As the caravan neared Madinah it was intercepted by a group of Muslims led by Zaid ibn Haritha. The Muslims succeeded in taking several people as prisoners along with all their valuable merchandise.

Abu al 'Aas managed to escape and used the cover of the night to hide in the thickets. He remained there throughout the chilly night. He started debating in his mind whether to head to Makkah alone without any provisions or means of travel or go to his beloved wife who he was sure would not refuse to give him protection.

Just before dawn he went to Zainab's house and knocked on her door. She was surprised to see him. They gazed at each other, eyes brimming with tears, both were realizing how much they loved and missed each other. She exclaimed in excitement, "Welcome cousin! Have you accepted Islam?"



Abu al 'Aas lowered his head in embarrassment and replied, "I did not come as a Muslim but as a fugitive to seek your protection." Zainab was disappointed with his response. In spite of her disappointment, she allowed him in and gave him food and assured him saying that if Allah willed she would be able to solve his problems.

