



KHADĪJAH

MOTHER OF HISTORY'S
GREATEST NATION

SAMPLE CHAPTER



FATIMA BARKATULLA



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CHAPTER ELEVEN

When Life Changed



‘**R**at-a-tat-tat!’
The banging on the door,
echoed throughout the rooms of
Khadījah’s ﷺ house, breaking the
silence. All had been calm, the children asleep. The
only light was the dim glow of an oil lamp.

‘Rat-a-tat-tat! Rat-a-tat-tat!’

Khadijah ﷺ wondered who it could possibly be at this hour? She got up to look.

“Abul Qāsim?” she asked tentatively.

Muhammad ﷺ had been up on Mount Nūr, at the Cave of Hira for days and had not come home to collect more provisions. Worried, she had sent someone to look for him. Perhaps the knock on the door was her servant bringing back some news. As she slowly unfastened the latch and pulled open the door, she recognised the pale, awe-stricken face of her husband, trembling before her.

Khadijah ﷺ reached out to offer her hand to Muhammad ﷺ, who slowly staggered in through the door. What could have caused him to be in such a state?

“Wrap me up! Wrap me up!”

Muhammad ﷺ whispered urgently. Quickly and silently, Khadijah ﷺ brought blankets to calm his shivering frame. Her wisdom told her that this was not the time to be asking questions. And so,

after she had patiently brought him blankets, she sat quietly next to him ﷺ, allowing him some moments to gather himself.

When Muhammad's ﷺ heartbeat had calmed and his shivering subsided, he caught his breath and was ready to speak. He began to tell Khadijah ؓ what had caused his terror.

He had been up on the mountain in the Cave of Hira, when someone appeared in front of him out of thin air. The being looked, for all intents and purposes like a man, yet he was no mere mortal. He was a heavenly being in human form.

“Read!” the celestial creature commanded. Muhammad ﷺ was sure that this was an angel, the same angel, in fact, who he had met once, while playing in Halimah's yard as a little boy.

Having never been schooled, Muhammad was perplexed by the angel's demand. He replied cautiously, “I do not know how to read.”

At that, the angel had grabbed Muhammad ﷺ and held him so forcefully that he took his breath away.

“He then released me...” Muhammad ﷺ explained, “and again asked me to read. I replied, ‘I cannot read.’ He grabbed me and embraced me hard for a second time until I was exhausted, then released me and asked me again to read. I said, ‘I cannot read.’ He then took me and embraced me intensely for the third time. Then, he released me and recited:

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ
 خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ
 اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ
 الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ
 عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ

‘Read! In the Name of your Lord Who
 created everything.

He has created man from a clot.

Read! And your Lord is the

Most Generous.

He, Who taught man the use of the pen.

Taught man that which he knew not.'

(THE QURAN, 96:1-5).

What were these wondrous words, the likes of which Muhammad ﷺ had never heard before? Muhammad ﷺ realised that he was being asked to recite and repeat after the angel, not to read from anything. So he repeated the glorious words that the angel recited to him, just as he heard them. Fear suddenly crept over him, and he stumbled down the craggy slope of the mountain in alarm. He wondered what this all meant. He wanted to know who the stranger on the mountain really was, and why he had imprinted these powerful words into his heart such that he could never forget them....

Khadījah ﷺ listened intently to all that Muhammad ﷺ related. He couldn't put his finger on what this all meant. When he had finished, still enveloped in blankets, he looked up into Khadījah's ﷺ eyes.

"I am fearful for myself," he confessed to her.

Muhammad ﷺ had many questions in his mind. Was Allāh punishing him? Was this some sort of madness that had overtaken him?

Khadījah ﷺ shook her head at any such suggestion.

"Never, by Allāh!" she said confidently, "Allāh will never disgrace you; for you keep good relations with your kith and kin, you speak the truth, you help the poor, you give money to the needy, you are generous to your guests, you help people who are suffering from hardship...." She turned to Muhammad's ﷺ glowing face, gazed into his clear dark eyes, and said firmly, "He would never forsake you."

Khadijah ؓ had no doubt that a man as God-conscious as her husband would never be abandoned by Allāh. She was certain that Allāh would protect him.

There was only one person she could think of, who was sure to be able to shed light on the strange ordeal. So as soon as they were ready, they headed to his house.



“O my nephew! What have you seen?” asked Waraqah, looking blankly ahead. In the years since Khadijah’s ؓ marriage, Waraqah had grown so old that he’d lost his eyesight. Nonetheless, his mind was as sharp as ever. When Muhammad ﷺ recounted the events of that day, Waraqah’s eyes widened with wonder.

“This is the same archangel whom Allāh sent to Mūsa!” he cried out.

This could only mean one thing in Waraqah’s mind: Muhammad ﷺ, like Mūsa ؑ, was the chosen Messenger of Allāh.

Then Waraqah’s gleeful expression turned into a worried frown.

“How I wish that I were young and could live until the time your people try to drive you out,” he lamented.

“Will... they... drive me out?” Muhammad ﷺ, the Prophet of Allāh, asked solemnly.

It was inconceivable to him, the grandson of the great ‘Abdul Muttalib—loved and respected by all in Makkah—that a day might come when his people would actually disown him.

“Yes,” Waraqah replied gravely. “Never has a man come with anything similar to what you have, but that he was treated with enmity. If I could live to

see that day, I would surely support you with all my might!”

And as the predictions fell from Waraqah’s lips, the realisation dawned upon Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and Khadijah ؓ that life would never be the same again.





May Allah be pleased with Khadijah,
mother of history's greatest nation.

About the Author

Fatima Barkatulla is a writer and passionate teacher of history and Islamic law. As a teenager, she studied Arabic and Islamic studies in Egypt at prominent institutes including a college of Al-Azhar University. She is continuing her studies in Islamic Scholarship (Alimiyyah) with senior scholars in the United Kingdom.

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