

**Mother of the believers Sawda bint Zama
(may Allah be pleased with her)**

Sawda's (may Allah be pleased with her) family

Father: Zama ibn Qays ibn Abdul Shams

Mother: Shamoos bint 'Amr

Tribe: Banu Najjar

Sawda (may Allah be pleased with her) was born in 571 approximately the same year as the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).ⁱ

Sawda (may Allah be pleased with her) was a widow of Sakraan bin 'Amr bin 'Abd Shams (may Allah be pleased with him) who was one of the Muslims who had migrated to Abyssinia but died on his return to Makkah. Sawda (may Allah be pleased with her) had embraced Islam with her husband and she had migrated with him. She had a son with him called Abdul Rahman bin Sakran.ⁱⁱ She had suffered similar difficulties and hardships that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) suffered and faced. After the death of her husband the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) married her.

It has not been reported that Sawda (may Allah be pleased with her) was beautiful, or that she possessed wealth or standing, that would make any of the worldly aspects influence the Messenger of Allah's (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) marriage to her. Since the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) had married her after the death of her husband, the only thing we can deduce from this is that he married her to support her and rise her to the position of the 'Mother of the believers' and to support the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and his children. When he migrated, he made the house of Sawda (may Allah be pleased with her) close to the Mosque. This was the first house the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) built for any of his wives.

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) married Sawda (may Allah be pleased with her) when she was 50 and the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) was 50 years old too.ⁱⁱⁱ

The dream

'Abd-Allah bin Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) states that Sawda (may Allah be pleased with her) saw in a dream the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) walking towards her and placed his blessed feet on her neck. When Sawda (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated the dream to her husband (before his death) he said "If your dream is true then without doubt I will die soon and the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) will marry you." After this the second night Sawda (may Allah be pleased with her) saw in a dream a star broke and fell on her chest. In the morning she related this to her husband and he said "If your dream is true then I will die very soon and you will marry the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace)." Hence, this is what happened the same day he fell ill and died few days later.^{iv}

Five ahadith narrated by her are recorded in the famous books of hadith, including one being recorded in Bukhari. 'Abd-Allah and Yahya bin 'Abdur-Rahman are two of her most distinguished students.^v

There are different opinions concerning the year in which she passed away. Imam Dhahabi and Imam Bukhari have classified the opinion of her passing away in Madinah in 23 AH as correct. Imam Waaqi states that she passed away in 53 AH, whilst Imam Asqalani has stated that her demise had occurred in Shawwal 55 AH.^{vi}

We find from the above mentioned that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) was upset as his beloved wife Khadijah (may Allah be pleased with her) who supported him when no-one else did had passed away. There was no-one to look after his children and his household affairs. Sawda (may Allah be pleased with her) was also widowed and was also one of the early Muslims who supported the Prophet's (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) mission.

Lessons learnt

Sawda (may Allah be pleased with her) performed Hajj with the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and the method of Hajj for women can be learnt through her. One of the rules that the scholars have derived is that women can leave Muzdalifah earlier due to rush as the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) let Sawda (may Allah be pleased with her) do that and not feel any trouble because of heavy rush.^{vii}

She enjoyed a humour as well. She used to make even the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) laugh with her humour. Once, she said to the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), "I was performing non-compulsory prayers behind you last night. But despite the fact that you knew it that I am behind you, but you bowed for such a long time that I felt that the blood will flow out of my nose, so I squeezed my nose tightly."

Hearing this, the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) too laughed.^{viii}

ⁱ Azwaj-e-Mutaharat. P. 39

ⁱⁱ Zarqani

ⁱⁱⁱ Assahul Siyar

^{iv} Zarqani, Vol. 3, Pg. 227

^v Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), The Prophet of Islam. (Seerat-e-Mustafa)

^{vi} Zarqani, Vol. 3, Pg. 229

^{vii} Al-Usaba

^{viii} Ibid