

THE **F1RST**S

A Lecture Series

YAQREEN™
INSTITUTE FOR ISLAMIC RESEARCH

Sumayyah Bint Khabbat

The First Martyr in Islam

Sumayyah - The Extra-Ordinary Death after a Very Ordinary Life

We learn about her through her death, because of her martyrdom. Her life was not extraordinary in any way. She's the first martyr in Islam, not the first female martyr, but rather the first martyr - period.

She was the first to be willing to stand alone for the truth, even when it meant putting her life on the line. She is the "Assya" of our ummah and Abu Jahl was "the pharaoh" of this ummah.

Originally from Abyssinia (modern day Ethiopia), she was born about 20 years before the Prophet Mohammad. She was in her sixties at the time she was killed. She was a slave girl to Abu Huthaifa ibn Mugheera (brother of the chief of makhzoom, the most powerful tribe in Mecca and tribe of Abu Jahl). When Abu huthaifa died, she and her family were at the mercy of the tribe. Abu Huthaifa married her to Yasser, from Yathrib and they both remained as servants to him. She gave birth to Ammar, who was the same age as the Prophet Mohammad.

Contrast : Power vs Weakness

Abu Jahl led those who persecuted those who accepted Islam. Sumayyah was an old, frail, black woman who had no social status. Abu Jahl had great power & stature and was willing to do anything to protect his status. However, even with all the power that Abu Jahl possessed in society, someone so weak and seemingly inconsequential as Sumayyah stood up to him like no one else did.

The Prophet Mohammad, Abu Bakr, Bilal, Khabab, Suhaib, Sumayya, and Ammar were the first seven to make their Islam known in Mecca. The Prophet and Abu Bakr had protection from their tribes but the others were all tortured & intimidated publicly. None of them were

deterred from Islam however. Out of those seven, Sumayyah died by torture and didn't see the glory days of Islam, which she died for. She was very strong in her persistence on Islam. Abu Jahl tried to break her spirit in public as a lesson to others, but was unsuccessful in making her renounce her faith and curse the Prophet publicly. He humiliated her in public and tortured her husband and son in front of her, experimenting with different types of torture.

The Promise

Prophet Mohammad told her and the others that Allah promised that they have a place in janna, as he did with the Ansars (new Muslims) in Medina to comfort them. He didn't give them any other promises, showing that should be enough. Her entire life was difficult. She didn't experience any ease before or after becoming Muslim. However, she will proceed everyone to paradise isA.

The torture was physical and emotional, as she watched her husband and son being tortured as well. The more severe the torture became, the more intense her faith seemed to be. She refused to say anything that would displease Allah.

As her husband, Yasser, was about to die, Abu Jahl mocked that she's just waiting for Yasser to die so that she could marry the Prophet Mohammad. She spit on him and said that he is smaller in her sight than a beetle on the ground. In retaliation for that comment, Abu Jahl then put a spear through her midsection and she died.

A Final Moment of Ease

At that moment, she had finally gotten pleasure that she never got in the world, as martyrs see their place in janna at the first strike.

Yasser died next after seeing Summah killed. Ammar saved himself by cursing Prophet Mohammad as he was ordered by Abu Jahl.. He felt so bad about it and was too ashamed to look at the Prophet after that but the Prophet told him that he wasn't angry with him, and that if it happens again, to curse him again to save himself.

Ammar continued to see the murderer of his parents go unpunished for 7-8 years until Hijra and couldn't do anything about it. Abu Jahl was finally killed during the Battle of Badr and Ammar was martyred 50 years after the death of his parents.

Lessons Learned

- Those that die for the sake of Allah do not die at all, rather they are still alive, and honored, but in a state we don't comprehend.
- The honor of Allah does not go by the distinctions of this world. We should not underestimate or overestimate a person's stature since only Allah knows that for sure.

Disclaimer: Notes for The Firsts are brought to you by dedicated students for your personal reference. Please refer to the original lecture for source material.