

*Who were the **four** great women of Islam to whom Jannah was promised?*

Answer:

Anas reports that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him), said: 'The best women of mankind are four: **Khadijah** daughter of Khuwailid, **Fatima** the daughter of the Messenger of Allah, **Maryam** daughter of 'Imran and **Aasiya** wife of Pharaoh.' [Bukhari and Muslim]



The Story:

Khadijah (RA) has the distinction of being the mother of all the believers, or practicing Muslims. She was extremely wise, intelligent, gentle, and influential. She was exceptionally wealthy and a prosperous business woman. She married the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) at the age of forty while he was twenty five. She provided the moral, financial, and emotional support for him when he was blessed with Prophethood. When Muhammad (pbuh) first saw the angel Jibreel in the cave of Hira, he was terrified and feared for his life. He ran down the mountain trembling and crying: "Cover me up! Cover me up!"

It was Khadija (RA) who consoled him; she was his pillar of support; she believed in him when everyone else doubted him and became the first Muslim.

Fatimah (RA), the daughter of the Prophet (pbuh) was given the glad tidings that she would be the leader among the women at Paradise. She was the youngest daughter of the Prophet (pbuh). Hers was a life of extreme poverty and struggle. She constantly saw her father being mistreated, insulted and humiliated by the disbelievers.

On one occasion, the Prophet (pbuh) went into the sanctuary of Makkah with some of his Companions and started to pray, the disbelievers had just then sacrificed a camel. The filth and bowels of the camel were lying there, when a horrible idea came to Abu Jahl. He asked who among his friends would like to lift all that filth and pile it on the back of Muhammad (pbuh) 'Uqbah bin Abi Mu'it, the lowest of the low among his friends, got up and said he would perform the task; and he lifted up the bloody filthy mess and piled it on the Prophet (pbuh)'s back while he was in the act of prostrating before Allah (swt). All of them then broke into peals of uncontrollable devilish laughter. When news of this act reached Fatimah, she rushed to the sanctuary. Removing with her hands the impurity, furious at the brutal treatment given to her beloved father, she scolded the disbelievers.

Such scenes of vicious opposition and harassment against her father and the early Muslims were witnessed by the young Fatimah almost every day. She did not meekly stand aside but joined in the struggle in defence of her father and his noble mission.

Maryam (RA), the Pure and Chaste is the only woman to have given birth to Isa (AS) without having been touched by any man.

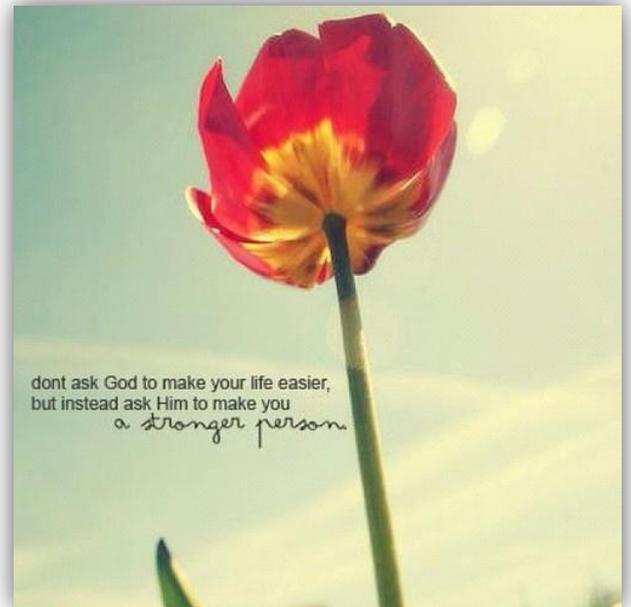
Maryam (RA) spent her young days in total seclusion worshipping Allah (swt) and endeavoring greatly in performing obedience to the Almighty. She grew up as a righteous, pure, and pious Muslim woman. Although unmarried she miraculously gave birth to Isa (AS); she was accused of adultery and chastised for bringing disrepute to the family name. When she came back to his people with Isa (AS), they said, "O Mary! Surely you have done a strange thing; your parents were not unchaste people!" She pointed towards the baby. They responded, "How can we speak to a child in the cradle?" At that moment, Isa (AS), by the power of Allah (swt), started to speak. He said: "Surely I am the servant of God, He has given me the Book and made me a prophet." (19:27-30)

When she gave her life to Allah (swt), He gave her a child that protected her integrity even whilst he was in the cradle.

Aasiyah (RA) - God had chosen her to provide refuge to Musa (AS) when he was an infant. When her maids brought the cradle of Musa (AS) from the river, she insisted to Pharaoh that she wanted to adopt that infant as a child. This was at a time when infanticide was the law of the land. All the newborn boys of the tribe of Israel were being murdered because of the prediction that one of them would finally overthrow the Pharaoh and destroy him.

Aasiya bint Muzahim was one of the first to accept Islam as declared by Musa (AS) and declared her faith in the message of God after witnessing the miracle of the Prophet Moses in the Court of Pharaoh; and after witnessing the death of another believing, woman under torture. Pharaoh tried to turn her away from Allah (swt), but Aasiya refused to reject her faith. On Pharaoh's order, she was tortured to death. The Qur'an says: "And Allah gives an example for those who believe: the wife of pharaoh. (Remember) when she said, 'My Lord! Build for me a house with Thee in the Paradise, and deliver me from Pharaoh and his deeds; and deliver me from the unjust people.'" (66:11)

In Aasiya (RA), we see the example of supreme sacrifice: By marrying Pharaoh, Aasiya became the Queen of Egypt, she gained everything that she wanted in this worldly life from the materialistic point of view: the best of clothes, food, palaces, jewels, servants and maids, etc. But she sacrificed all that to be closer to Allah.



Khadija (RA) neither succumbed to the trappings of wealth, nor to power and fame.

Fatima (RA) was patient in the face of unending hardships.

Maryam (RA) was characterized by piety, chastity and faith.

Aasiya (RA) the wife of Pharoah chose faith over royalty.

These four women acquired perfection in faith and character by virtue of their devotion, patience, toil and morality. Their lives radiated with piety, trust, patience and gratitude. Their lives serve as beacons of guidance for all believers, especially in times of hardship, difficulty and struggle.

References used:

“Great women of islam” by **Mahmood Ahmad Ghadanfar**