

Aasiyah: the Wife of Fir'aun

Allah Ta`ala says: **“And Allah has set forth an example for those who believe, the wife of Fir'aun (Pharaoh), when she said: "My Lord! Build for me a home with You in Paradise, and save me from Fir'aun (Pharaoh) and his (evil) work, and save me from the people who are wrong-doers.”** (Surah at-Tahrim: verse #11)

Aasiyah bint Muzahim (radhiAllahu anha) was the wife of Fir'aun (One of the villains of all history. He is known for his wickedness, his godlessness and his arrogance). Despite this, she is known as one of the four great women of Jannah.

Allah Ta`ala gives an example of her for the believers that even the wife of a great oppressor and disbeliever can become a Muslim. In spite of the fact her husband, the Pharaoh, hated the truth of Islam and would persecute the believers day and night, Allah still blessed her with Imaan.

This is her story....

Aasiyah used to be shocked at the way Fir'aun tortured people, even women. Deep down in her heart, she believed in the message of Prophet Musa (alayhis salam).

Aasiyah's daughter was once in the palace having her hair combed by her maid, when out of clumsiness, the maid dropped the hairbrush. As the brush fell to the floor, the maid said: “May Allah's curse be on those who claim to be god”.

Immediately the daughter of Fir'aun turned to her and said, "Do you believe in a god besides my father?!"

The maid said, "My Allah, your Allah and your father's Allah, and the Allah of the heavens and the earth, is the one Allah, who has no partners!"

Then the daughter of Fir`aun said, "You dare say such a word!" And she entered her father's room and reported this incident to him.

Remember that Fir`aun claimed he was a god. And here was his own maid cursing him! The daughter liked to gossip, and she went straight to Fir`aun and told him exactly what the maid had said.

Now, Fir`aun could not have his own servants cursing him, so like the tyrant he was, he arranged for her to be tortured.

Then Fir`aun tried to bribe her to make her change her mind. When that didn't work, he locked her in the dungeon. This too failed to work, so he ordered his soldiers to tie her down and drive nails into her hands and feet. With this torture and persecution the maid lost her life but she did not give up her faith. She was granted a high rank in paradise for her suffering and steadfastness on Islam.

This kindled the light of Islam in the heart of Aasiyah and she also accepted Islam on seeing the steadfastness of the maid-servant.

When she accepted Islam, Aasiyah proclaimed her faith to all, and this enraged Fir`aun. Even his own wife has accepted the religion of Musa and belief in Allah?! This he could not tolerate.

He had his own wife arrested by the soldiers and had her tied down in the scorching heat of the sun. He would leave her there burning all day in the sun and from time to time come and ask her, "Who is your God now? Me, or the Lord of Musa?" But she persisted on Islam and would not give up her faith.

During the time where they would leave her in the burning sun, the angels would hover over her and spread their wings like an umbrella to cover her from the scorching heat of the sun. Then, when Fir`aun and his soldiers would come back, the angels would go away.

When all of this torture failed, he asked his wife one last time, "Who is your Lord?"

So all she did was reply with this supplication to her Lord:

"O My Lord! Build for me a home with You in Paradise, and save me from Fir`aun (Pharaoh) and his (evil) work, and save me from the people who are wrong-doers."

And at this time, Allah Ta`ala orders Angel Jibreel to reveal to Aasiyah her palace in Jannah. And seeing this, she was overcome with joy and peace and she passed silently out of this world.

Fir`aun, not knowing that she had already passed away from this world, ordered that a huge boulder be dropped on her to crush her to death. They did this but her soul had already departed and was enjoying the blessings of Paradise.

Aasiyah, one of the four great women of Jannah, is a brilliant example for us. Despite tremendous wealth and a position of power, once she had seen the truth, this noble lady readily accepted Islam. May Allah have mercy on her and be pleased with her and allow us to learn from her sacrifices. Ameen

Questions on Lesson:

- 1.) What was the full name of Fir`aun's wife?

- 2.) How did she come to accept Islam?

- 3.) In which surah of the Qur'an is she mentioned?

- 4.) Aasiyah is one of the great women of paradise, who are the other three great women who have been mentioned by Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) in a hadith?

- 5.) How is it that she did not get scorched by the sun when she was being tortured?

- 6.) Why did Allah Ta`ala bring the example of Aasiyah's story in the Qur'an? Give 3 reasons for this.