



*(Sayyidah Asmaa bintu 'Umais [radhiyallahu 'anha] – Part Two)*

Sayyidah Faatimah (radhiyallahu 'anha), the blessed daughter of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam), and Sayyidah Asmaa bintu 'Umais (radhiyallahu 'anha) were sisters-in-law, as both of them were married to two brothers; Sayyiduna 'Ali bin Abi Taalib and Sayyiduna Ja'far bin Abi Taalib (radhiyallahu 'anhuma) respectively.

Shortly before she passed away, Sayyidah Faatimah (radhiyallahu 'anhu) mentioned to Sayyidah Asmaa bintu 'Umais (radhiyallahu 'anha), who was in the marriage of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (radhiyallahu 'anhu) at that time, "O Asmaa! I do not like what is done with a woman's body (when she passes away and her body is being taken for burial, as merely) a cloth is placed on her body which allows her body shape to be seen."

Sayyidah Asmaa (radhiyallahu 'anha) replied, "O daughter of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam)! Shall I not show you something which I saw in the land of Abyssinia?" Saying so, she called for some fresh, moist palm leaves to be brought. When they were brought, she shaped them (into a funeral bier). Thereafter, she draped a cloth over the bier (and due to the frame, the cloth would not lie directly on the woman's body, thus not allowing the shape to be seen).

When Sayyidah Faatimah (radhiyallahu 'anhu) was shown the bier, she was so delighted that she exclaimed, "How excellent and beautiful this is! May Allah Ta'ala conceal you (i.e. your faults, O Asmaa!) as you have concealed my body." In fact, such was her happiness that this was the only time that she was seen smiling (since the demise of her beloved father, Rasulullah [sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam], approximately six months prior to that).

After her demise, her body was accordingly carried on this bier, making her the first woman in

Islam to be carried on this bier. The second was Sayyidah Zainab bintu Jahsh (radhiyallahu ‘anha). In this way, Sayyidah Asmaa (radhiyallahu ‘anha) provided a unique service to all the woman of this Ummah, assisting them to maintain their modesty after death as well.

*(Mustadrak Haakim #4763, Usdul Ghaabah vol. 5, pgs. 368 & 369, Siyaru Aa’laamin Nubalaa vol. 2, pg. 132)*

### **Lessons:**

1. Even as she was approaching her final moments, one of the greatest concerns of Sayyidah Faatimah (radhiyallahu ‘anha) was that of her modesty. Her concern was that **EVEN AFTER** death, her body should remain concealed from strange men, to the extent that not even the **SHAPE** of her body can be seen. When this was her concern to conceal her body even after death, how much more would she have been concerned and taken care to conceal herself from strange men in her lifetime can be well imagined. This alone is sufficient in illustrating to us how crucial modesty is in the life of a Muslimah. Likewise, on seeing the bier, she experienced such happiness, knowing that her modesty would be protected, that it was the only time she was seen smiling since the demise of her beloved father (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam).

2. Sayyidah Asmaa (radhiyallahu ‘anha), enjoyed such a close and loving relationship with her sister-in-law, Sayyidah Faatimah (radhiyallahu ‘anha), that it was Sayyidah Asmaa (radhiyallahu ‘anha) to whom Sayyidah Faatimah (radhiyallahu ‘anha) turned at the end of her life, confiding in her and explaining her fear to her.