

Lady Fatima az-Zahra (as): Daughter of the Holy Prophet/Woman of the World
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Her name was Fatima (as), daughter of the Holy Prophet (PBUH &HF). She was born on Friday the 20th of Jamadi al-Akhar in Mekkah around 606, five years after the Prophet openly declared his mission. Fatima was one of three daughters of the Prophet from his first wife, Khadija bint Khuwailid (as). Fatima married her cousin, Ali ibn Abi Talib (as), and had two sons, Imam Hassan and Imam Husayn, the 'two Youths of Paradise'.

Fatima is usually called 'Fatima az-Zahra', which means 'The Shining One' or 'The Resplendent One', but she has many other titles. It is reported that the sixth Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (as) said: "Fatimah has nine names with Allah. They are: Fatimah, as-Siddiqah (the Righteous), al-Mubarakah (the Blessed), at-Tahirah (the Pure), az-Zakiyyah (the Unblemished), ar-Radiyah (the one content with Allah's pleasure), al-Mardiyyah (the one pleasing to Allah), al-Muhaddathah (the one spoken to by angels) and az-Zahirah (the Luminous).

It has been reported that the Prophet loved Fatima very much. When Fatima would enter into the presence of the Holy Prophet, he would immediately stand up to welcome her, kiss her hand and take her by the hand and request for her to sit in his place. The Prophet used to say, "Fatima is part of me, she is my heart and my spirit which is in my side, thus he who harms her harms me."

There are many verses from the Holy Quran that refer to Fatima, such as the famous Verse of Purification (Sura 33.Verse 33). After the revelation of this verse the Holy Prophet every morning stood outside and said loudly, "Assalamo Alaikum Ya Ahlebaitin Nubuwwah" (Peace and blessings on the people of the Household). Also, the verses in Sura Dahr was revealed in praise of Fatima and Ali and their extremely charitable act in the way of Allah, for they had fasted for three days continuously without eating any food, giving away their Iftar (breaking of fast meal) to a beggar, an orphan and a prisoner who arrived at their door and asked for food.

Fatima inherited the genius and wisdom, the determination and will - power, the piety and sanctity, the generosity and benevolence, the devotion and worship of Allah, the self - sacrifice and hospitality, the forbearance and patience, and the knowledge and nobility of disposition of her illustrious father, both in words and deeds. Fatima's character can best be described by her son, Imam Hassan (as) when he said, "I saw my mother standing in her arch of prayer. She was continuously kneeling and performing prostration till the dawn broke. I would hear her pray for the faithful men and women, but she did not at all pray for herself. I said, 'Oh mother why did you not pray for yourself like you prayed for others?' so she replied, 'Oh my son, first thy neighbors and there after your own house.'

Like her father, Fatima had a mission to perform. She was virtue personified. If Prophet Mohammad was the best exemplar for the human race, as the Quran calls him, she was to

be the ideal of womanhood. It was Fatima with her role as a caring daughter, a faithful wife, a loving mother, and a concerned teacher for the growing community of Muslim women that was to serve as the most perfect example for believing women.

Not long after the death of her father the Prophet, Fatima passed away in Medinah at the age of eighteen in 632. Although her burial site was protected, she is believed to be buried in the al-Baqi cemetery in al-Medinah al-Munawwara.