

Stories of the Female Companions

(+ list of resources)



Stories of Less-Known Sahabiyat

1) Nusaybah bint Ka'ab – Umm Ammarah (رضي الله عنها)

You might have heard the name UMM AMMAARAH (رضي الله عنها – may Allah be pleased with her), but you may not know her from her real name – Nusaybah bint Kab! She was a part of the battle of Uhud – where she participated to give

water to the thirsty and to take care of the injured. She did not carry any sword, bow or arrow since she didn't come to fight...

But then, the unexpected happened! The archers disobeyed the Prophet (saws) by abandoning the position he commanded them to stay in and fled to collect the war booty instead, thinking that the Muslims have won. The tide then turned against the Muslims and many sahaabas got martyred.

Prophet ﷺ lost his teeth as most of the companions either got martyred or fled the war. When Umm 'Ammarah saw his face bleeding, she dropped her vessel of water and snatched a sword from one of the escaping fighters and a bow and an arrow from another to defend the Prophet ﷺ.

Prophet (saws) said: "Whenever I turned left or right on the day of the battle of Uhud, I always saw her (Umm 'Ammarah) fighting in my defense."

Her son was wounded during the battle so she ran to him and bandaged his wounds, and then commanded him: "Go and fight the people, my son!" The Prophet ﷺ then commended her, "Who can endure what you can endure, Umm Ammarah!" Seeing the Prophet's pleasure on her bravery, she requested: "Ask Allah to make us your companions in the Garden!" So he made dua for her and her family. She replied: "I do not care what afflicts me in this world now!"

That day, she received 13 wounds and a deep neck wound that stayed with her till her death. She also participated in the Battle of Yamama (war against Musaylmah – a self proclaimed prophet) where she received 11 wounds and lost her hand during the battle.

One of her son was tortured by Musaylmah who cut his limbs piece by piece until he died. So Umm Ammarah kept looking for Musaylmah through rows of fighters during the battle and killed him with her spear after Wahshi pierced his javelin inside of him.

Lessons learned from her story:

I learnt that bravery is not only jumping into the face of danger yourself for the betterment of many, but also letting your children step ahead into danger for a good cause. As mothers, we may sacrifice ourselves but can never see our children getting hurt. The real strength is in her resolve – encouraging her son to go fight for the sake of Allah even though he was wounded, even though most of the companions were running away... What did you learn from this short story?

2) Asma bint Umais (رضي الله عنها)

Asma bint Umais (رضي الله عنها – may Allah be pleased with her) was one of the earliest converts to Islam. She was married to Jafar bin Abi Talib (RA) and when he was martyred in Battle of Mu'tah, she married Abu Bakr (RA). After his death, she married Abdur Rahman bin Awf (RA) and after his death, she married Ali bin Abi Talib (RA).

When Muhammad ﷺ went for Hajj, Asma was so keen about performing Hajj that she didn't bother being in her final trimester of pregnancy. She was a woman with strong opinions.

It was narrated from Abu Bakr that he went out for Hajj with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and Asma' bint 'Umais was with him. She gave birth to Muhammad bin Abu Bakr. Abu Bakr came to the Prophet ﷺ and told him about that, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ told him to tell her to take a bath, then begin the Talbiyah for Hajj, and to do everything that the people did, apart from Tawaf.

It was narrated that Asma' bint 'Umais said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught me some words to say at times of distress: Allah! Allahu Rabbi la ushriku bihi shay'an (Allah, Allah is my Lord, I don't associate anything with Him)." .

(a dua that has become a staple in our home now, especially when my kids cry or I'm lullaby-ing them to sleep. My 3 year old used to recite it to her crying baby sister and even used to put her doll to sleep reciting this too).

Lessons learned from her story:

I learnt that if you set your mind to something, nothing can stop you! Hajj isn't a piece of cake even in this age when we can travel on automobiles and it's HARD even when you're not pregnant! So, for a woman to go through labour and deliver during Hajj and then get up to complete it saying "here I am my Lord, here I am" is an achievement on its own!

As mothers, we often feel like we can't even pray around kids and it's amazing how there were women doing hajj during labour!

I was also baffled at how the men in her life believed in her ability and instead of saying that she should rather stay and rest, they are telling her how she can complete what she passionately came for! What did you learn from this short story?

3) Umm Hakim bint Harith (رضي الله عنها)

Umm Hakim bint Harith (رضي الله عنها – may Allah be pleased with her), wife of Ikramah – son of Abu Jahl (Abu Jahl was her paternal uncle), accepted Islam on the day of Conquest of Makkah. She eventually brought her resistant husband to Islam too (after many attempts, since he ran away when the Muslims gained victory and she went to find him in the middle of nowhere).

But soon after, her husband Ikramah (along with her brother & father) got martyred in the battle of Yarmouk. After her iddah, she was proposed by a commander of the Umayyad Muslims – Khalid ibn Sa'id (RA). She wished to postpone the marriage until the war was over, but he said: "I feel that I would be killed." Umm Hakim then agreed and he gave her 400 dinar (gold coins) mehr on their marriage.

But he was right about his speculation. As everyone was having a walima feast, Roman soldiers attacked them. Everyone left the food right there to fight back and eventually her 2nd husband got martyred as well. Upon seeing this, she tightened her clothes, pulled out the pole of the tent and slayed 7 armed soldiers with it. 1 woman vs 7 men. After all, she was the niece of Khalid bin Waleed (RA) – who was known as "saifullah" (sword of Allah). She also played a role of an archer in the battle of Uhud (against Muslims). Later on, she was married to another skilled warrior – Umar bin Khattab (RA).

Lessons learned from her story:

I learnt that serving others demand physical fitness as much as emotional strength from your own end first. Not all women went to wars. Only the skilled ones did. Skill doesn't come out of one-off fitness training. She was raised in a skilled family and the consistency helped her refine her skills.

Do you know how heavy and big the pole of a tent is? Not to mention how it's dug in the ground as it holds up most of the tent's weight. And there she was, pulling it out (in her wedding dress) and fighting back with it. I can't even imagine how she did it even in such an emotionally difficult time! What did you learn from this short story?

4) Umm Sulaym bint Malhan – Rumaisa (رضي الله عنها)

Umm Sulaym bint Malhan – Rumaisa (رضي الله عنها – may Allah be pleased with her) was the mother of a famous companion Anas bin Malik (RA). She converted to Islam before her whole family and her husband divorced her as a result. She was able to direct her son towards Islam though.

When Anas bin Malik turned 10 years of age, Umm Sulaym took him to the Prophet ﷺ and offered him to his service. The Prophet ﷺ admitted him to his household where Anas stayed for 10 years and hence the reason why we have so many narrations of ahadith from Anas.

Anas reported that Umm Sulaim said (to the Holy Prophet) Allah's Messenger, here is your servant Anas, invoke blessings of Allah upon him. Thereupon he ﷺ said:

O Allah, make an increase in his wealth, and progeny, and confer blessings upon him in everything Thou hast bestowed upon him. It's said that Anas bin Malik then lived on for 100 years as a rich man and had 100 children and grandchildren.

She married another companion then.

Anas said: "Abu Talhah married Umm Sulaim and the dowry between them was Islam. She became Muslim before him, and he proposed to her but she said: 'I have become Muslim; if you become Muslim I'll marry you'" So he became Muslim and that was the dowry between them.

Narrated Jabir bin `Abdullah: The Prophet ﷺ said, "I saw myself (in a dream) entering Paradise, and behold! I saw Ar-Rumaisa', Abu Talha's wife..."

Lessons learned from her story:

I learnt that if you want your child to learn a skill, then as long as you're passionate about it, it's never too late – Allah will help you reach your goal.

It's said that she was so passionate about Islam that she went to a battle with full term pregnancy.

I also learnt that there's nothing wrong in converting to Islam when marrying someone. And as opposed to the popular belief of women converting for men, here we see an example of a rich skillful man converting to Islam for a seemingly poor divorced woman. Of course he converted for the sake of Allah, but it was her offer that he considered which led him to Islam. What did you learn from this short story?

5) Khansa (Tamadur bint Amr) (رضي الله عنها)

Khansa (رضي الله عنها – may Allah be pleased with her) was an eloquent sahaabiyah. Her beautiful poetry refined with her sorrow over the death of her brothers Sakhr and Mu'aawiyah. So much so that famous Arab poets used to call her "the best of all poets among humans and jinns" (meaning the best of the best). She used to write elegies for the dead and recite them for the tribe. She gained fame for her heart-melting compositions.

She used to cry so much that her eyes carried deep dark circles. Her deep emotions would bring everyone else around her to cry with her as well. After becoming a Muslim, she was known as khansa when Prophet saws said: "ya Khansa!" Once a royal tribe of Hatim Tai came to Prophet ﷺ boasting about their famous poet so Muhammad ﷺ negated them that Khansa is the best poetess instead.

Khansa together with her 4 sons took part in the famous battle of Qadisiyyāh – which was fought between the Muslims and the Persians. On the eve of that battle, she gathered her sons and said; "O, My sons! You embraced Islam and emigrated of your own free will... You must remember that the everlasting life of the Hereafter is far better than the transitory life of this world... When you get up tomorrow morning, be prepared to contribute your best in the battle. Go ahead into the enemy lines, seeking help from Allah. When you see the flames of war rising high, get right into the center and face the enemy chiefs. In shaa Allah you will get your abode in Paradise with honour and success."

Next day, when the battle was in full swing – one by one, her sons attacked the enemy, reciting the words of their mother and fought until all of them were martyred. When Khansa got the news, she said: "Alhamdulillah. Glory to Allah Who has honoured me with their martyrdom. I hope that Allah will unite me with them under the shade of His Mercy."

Lessons learned from her story:

A contrast of Khansa who cried for years on the death of her 2 brothers and made everyone cry with her to a Khansa who said alhamdulillah on the martyrdom of her 4 sons and made everyone wonder! I learnt how Islam can bring peace in your life – even amidst the chaos – if you fully embrace it. What did you learn from this short story?

Stories of Famous Sahabiyat

1) Fatima bint Muhammad (رضي الله عنها)

Fatima bint Muhammad (رضي الله عنها – may Allah be pleased with her), as opposed to her sisters (Zainab, Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthum), was not married in a wealthy household and hence worked very hard with her husband (Ali رضي الله عنه) to keep the house running – with kids in the mix (they had 5 children together – 3 sons and 2 daughters – Husayn, Zaynab, Hasan, Umm Kulthum and Muhsin)

It was narrated that Ibn ‘Abbas said: “When Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, married Fatimah, may Allah be pleased with her, the Messenger of Allah said to him: ‘Give her something.’ He said: ‘I do not have anything.’ He said: ‘Where is your Hutami armor?’”

Narrated `Ali: Fatima complained of what she suffered from the hand mill and from grinding, when she got the news that some slave girls of the booty had been brought to Allah’s Messenger ﷺ. She went to him to ask for a maid-servant, but she could not find him, and told `Aisha of her need. When the Prophet ﷺ came, Aisha informed him of that. The Prophet ﷺ came to our house when we had gone to our beds. (On seeing the Prophet) we were going to get up, but he said, ‘Keep at your places,’ I felt the coolness of the Prophet’s feet on my chest. Then he said, “Shall I tell you a thing which is better than what you asked me for? When you go to your beds, say: ‘Allahu Akbar (i.e. Allah is Greater)’ for 34 times, and ‘Al hamdu Li llah (i.e. all the praises are for Allah)’ for 33 times, and Subhan Allah (i.e. Glorified be Allah) for 33 times. This is better for you than what you have requested.”

Ali (ra) said: “I used to draw water, one bucket for a date...”

This shows that both husband and wife used to work really hard till their bodies ached. Fatima and Ali were what people would nowadays tag as – a stay at home mum and a breadwinner of the family respectively. They were not able to afford a servant. But when the economic situation of Muslims became better, Fatimah gained some maids with whom she performed the house duties.

Lessons learned from her story:

I learnt that all of us have different duties during the day. And all of us have different time schedules. Being a stay at home mum who dedicated a large amount of her time in doing the house chores etc. did not hinder Fatima from paving her way to jannah. Prophet ﷺ gave her the glad tidings of jannah before he passed away – giving her the title of “chief of all the ladies of Paradise”. So when you feel helpless due to lack of help and support that you are not able to dedicate your time for the things that you see others achieving in life (as they look up to Khadija (RA) as an entrepreneur and a business woman – who got glad tidings of a palace in Paradise too), then look at Fatima (RA) as an inspiration because jannah is achievable in all forms. Whatever you do for the sake of Allah is rewardworthy, be it sadaqah through your services (house chores) or money. What did you learn from this short story?

2) Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها)

Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها – may Allah be pleased with her) was the wife of Prophet ﷺ, who was known for her beauty, wisdom and knowledge. Prophet ﷺ used to go to her for advice in political matters and in one incident, her wise advice helped Muslims not get into a fight with each other.

Although she was a mother of small children, she used to spend time in self care as well (along with being so good at gaining knowledge) – so much so that Prophet ﷺ used to give her example whenever he’d advice anyone – Take care of yourself like umm salamah takes care of herself.

She narrated 378 ahadith and she used to often inquire Prophet ﷺ about the matters of cleanliness etc.

Umm Salama reported: I said: “Messenger of Allah, I am a woman who has closely plaited hair on my head; should I undo it for taking a bath, because of sexual intercourse?” He ﷺ said: “No, it is enough for you to throw three handfuls of water on your head and then pour water over yourself, and you shall be purified”.

It seems like she took care for her hair a lot. One narration shows how she was getting her hair combed by her maid (and she used to comb them with perfume or henna) and as the khutba of Muhammad ﷺ began, she asked the maid to leave her hair so she can focus on the sermon.

Narrations also show that she used to take care of her facial beauty as well – by putting warts on her face for freckles. And juice of aloes in her eyes to give the face a glow. Yet she was someone who was concerned about the modesty of her dress as well.

It was narrated from Umm Salamah that: She mentioned women's hems to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Let it down a hand span." Umm Salamah said: "But that will uncover (her feet)." He said: "Let it down a forearm's length, but no more than that."

Lessons learned from her story:

I learnt that as a student of deen and a mother, you don't have to ignore your beauty or self. One doesn't nullify the other. You can do it all in the boundary of Islam. What did you learn from this short story?

3) Juwairiyah bint Harith (رضي الله عنها)

Juwairiyah bint Harith (رضي الله عنها – may Allah be pleased with her) was a Jew royal (perhaps you may even call her a princess). A'ishah (RA) describes her saying, "She was a pleasant woman. No one saw her except he became captivated by her..." but it was the beauty of her Islam that shone brighter because A'ishah said, "I knew of no other woman who brought greater blessing to her people than Juwairiyah..." since her whole tribe became Muslim after her. She was a devout Muslimah, someone who remembered Allah a lot...

Juwairiyah, reported: The Prophet ﷺ came out from my apartment in the morning as I was busy in performing the dawn prayer. He came back in the forenoon and found me sitting there. Prophet ﷺ said, "Are you still in the same position as I left you." I replied in the affirmative. Thereupon the Prophet said, "these words will be heavier than all you've recited since morning: Subhan-Allahi wa bihamdihi, `adada khalqihi, wa rida nafsih, wa zinatah `arshihi, wa midada kalimatih ."

Lessons learned from her story:

I learnt that sometimes little suffices. Sometimes barakah can bring you more – even in less. Prophet ﷺ said, "For him who says: 'Subhan-Allahi wa bi hamdihi (Allah is free from imperfection, AND I begin with praising Him, and to Him),' a palm-tree will be planted in Jannah." Jannah isn't easy to acquire, but there are big treasures hidden for us in little things. Little words. Little deeds. The only thing we really require is sincerity and consistency. However we can pull it off. May be someone can pull off tahajjud while you can't. May be someone can spend millions in charity while you can't. But you can do little, yet get a lot. You can focus on quality if you can't do quantity. Never underestimate any little you do. Start small but START! What did you learn from this short story?

4) Hind bint Utbah (رضي الله عنها)

Hind bint Utbah (رضي الله عنها – may Allah be pleased with her) was a fierce woman. Whatever she did – either good or bad – she did it with all the energy she had. She was a woman of powerful mindset. She was the wife of Abu Sufyan, a powerful man of Makkah and the mother of Muawiyah I, the founder of the Umayyad dynasty.

Her anger for Muslims was so intense that she accompanied the army to the Battle of Uhud to see Wahshi killing Muhammad's uncle Hamza. When the battle came to an end, Hind and the women went to mutilate the corpses of the dead Muslims. They cut off noses and ears and made them into necklaces and anklets. After Wahshi speared Hamza, Hind gouged out Hamza's liver and bit into it; but she was unable to swallow the bite and spat it out. Then she climbed a rock and shrieked at the top of her voice: "We have paid you back for Badr..."

Eventually she softened towards Islam. But her remorse kept her doubting whether she could even face Muhammad ﷺ. So one day she veiled her face so that the Prophet ﷺ would not recognize her and took her shahaadah.

She said: "O Allah's Messenger ﷺ! By Allah, there was no family on the surface of the earth, I like to see in

degradation more than I did your family, but today there is no family on the surface of the earth whom I like to see honored more than yours.”

Later on, In the Battle of Yarmouk, the Muslims defeated the Eastern Roman Empire with the help of such courageous women who fought when men ran away.

As arrows started raining down on Abu Sufyan, he tried to turn his horse away. Hind struck his horse in the face with a tent-peg and said: “Where do you think you’re going, O Sakhr? Go back to battle and put effort into it until you compensate for having incited people in the past against Muhammad ﷺ.”

Lessons learned from her story:

I learnt that mistakes (no matter how big), once realized, don’t define us. Instead of wallowing in regrets, clarify your vision and mindset and use that energy to compensate the guilt into progression! What did you learn from this short story?

5) Bareerah (رضي الله عنها)

Bareerah (رضي الله عنها – may Allah be pleased with her) was an Arab slave-girl who belonged to Utbah ibn Abu Lahab. She was forced to marry another slave whose name was Mugheeth, somebody she did not approve of. But as a slave in that era, she didn’t have much choice so she got married. She then had a child with him.

Aisha said, “Bareerah came to me and said, ‘I have agreed with my masters to pay them nine Uqiyas (of gold) (in installments) one Uqiya per year; please help me.’ I said, ‘I am ready to pay the whole amount now... Eventually, Aisha (RA) bought her and set her free. When Bareerah, as a free woman, was given a choice to keep her marriage with her slave-husband or leave him, she chose to leave...”

“Narrated Ibn `Abbas: Barira’s husband was a slave called Mughith, as if I am seeing him now, going behind Barira and weeping with his tears flowing down his beard. The Prophet ﷺ said to `Abbas, “O `Abbas ! are you not astonished at the love of Mughith for Barira and the hatred of Barira for Mughith?” The Prophet ﷺ then said to Barira, “Why don’t you return to him?” She said, “O Allah’s Messenger ﷺ ! Do you order me to do so?” He said, “No, I only intercede for him.” She said, “I am not in need of him.”...

...She said, “(even) If he gave me so much and so much (money), I would not stay with him.”...

She loved Allah and His Messenger, so much so that when incident of Ifk happened, Muhammad ﷺ went to her for her opinion on Aisha (RA). But she was an individual with an immense amount of self awareness.

After leaving her husband, She went on to become a scholar and taught Islam till her last breath.

Lessons learned from her story:

I learnt that Islam honours personal freedom, provided they do not exceed the limits of Shari’ah. After her denial, Prophet ﷺ did not attempt to force her because he ﷺ respected a woman’s feelings as he did the man’s (by interceding on his behalf). What did you learn from this short story?

List of Resources

1) STORIES IN AHADITH: You will find many stories of the companions in ahadith. My favorite site for ahadith is sunnah.com – so user friendly and it has all the categorization of hassan, Sahih and da’if ahadith etc.

2) STORIES IN TAFSIR: You will find many stories in Tafsir ibn Kathir too (one of the most famous explanations of the Quran). Check qatafsir.com for that.

3) STORIES IN BOOKS: From books, check “**Men and Women around the Messenger**” by Dar us Salam. Or “**Men and Women around the Messenger**” by Khaalid Muhammad Khaalid. Or “**Women around the**

Prophet” by Muhammad Ali Qutb. Here is a [FREE pdf](#) of that book from kalamullah website. There are more [FREE E-BOOKS](#) on the topic at allahsworld website too.

4) AUDIO STORIES (podcast): You will find many sahabiyyat stories in Farhat Hashmi [Seerat e Sahabiyyat](#) podcast. Muslim Heroes podcast in alhudapk.com also mentions a few sahabiyyat (both of these podcasts are in Urdu language). For English, check [“Women Inspired by The Beloved”](#) audio series by Hesham Al-Awadi. Mufti menk has a series of lectures on companions of the Prophet called [“Getting to Know the Companions”](#) (you’ll find stories of sahabiyyat in the last few episodes). Also check [“The Firsts”](#) series by Omar Suleiman (it mentions a few sahabiyyat as well). He also did [“The Superstars Series”](#) in Quran Weekly (which mentions a few sahabiyyat as well). There are few sahabiyyat stories in [“Sahaba Profile”](#) by Sulaimaan Ravat as well.

5) STORIES FOR KIDS: I absolutely LOVE [Miraj Stories/Audio](#) (they have a story on Maryam (peace be with her) – although she wasn’t a sahabiyyah, but it could be a great intro for your kids to noble women in Islam). I wrote a detailed post [HERE](#).