

# Behavior Changes with the Changing of Concepts:

## Al-Khansa (ra) as an Example

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(Translated)

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The great Deen of Islam is full of rulings, lessons, organization, legislation, and transformation that elevate people from a state of misery and decline to one of dignity, pride, and nobility, raising them above trivial matters. In today's discussion, we will address just one of the many examples from the reality of Muslims in the early days of Islam.

The call of Islam, which was revealed to the heart of our master, our Prophet, and our beloved Muhammad (saw), was not limited to men without women. Women were central to this blessed call, sacrificing themselves for the sake of raising Allah's word high. The martyr Sumayyah bint Khayyat (ra) is not far from us, she was the first martyr to ascend in the path of Islam, despite the short time she had been honored with it. From this, we recognize the greatness of this Deen and its comprehensiveness for all people. When anyone enters Islam, they bear responsibility for it just like the best of the Companions, Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq, Umar Al-Faruq, Uthman Dhun-Nurayn, and Ali Al-Karrar (ra).

From this perspective, we look at the life of a noble Companion who had a great impact in Islamic history: Al-Khansa (ra) (Tamaḍir bint Amr ibn al-Ḥarith), described by the Messenger of Allah (saw) as the finest poet among the Arabs. Umar ibn al-Khattab (ra) used to ask her to recite poetry whenever he saw her. So beautiful and smooth was her verse, flowing into the heart like a cool stream of water. It is said that in the language, "al-Khansa" means "the gazelle."

Al-Khansa (ra) embraced Islam in the eighth year of Hijrah, after the Conquest of Makkah, coming with a delegation from her tribe Banu Sulaym. Her Islam was good by the grace of Allah (swt). The Prophet (saw) would listen to her poetry and say to her, «هيه يا خنساء» **"Continue, O Khansa."**

She was known for her intense weeping over her two brothers, Sakhr and Muawiyah, who were killed in the pre-Islamic era. She composed many elegies for them, and this theme dominated her poetry even after she became Muslim. From her verses mourning her brother Sakhr:

"Has dust entered your eye, or is it weeping,  
Or do your eyes overflow when the house feels empty?  
It is as if my eyes, when his memory comes,  
Are a stream flowing endlessly down my cheeks.  
Khansa weeps for Sakhr, overcome with longing,  
Though he is veiled beneath layers of fresh earth.  
She weeps and will not cease for as long as she lives,  
Her sighs forever echoing in grief.  
Khansa weeps for Sakhr and rightly so,  
For time has struck her, and time is harsh."

Some people from her tribe complained about her excessive mourning to Umar ibn al-Khattab, the Khalifah (Caliph) of the Messenger of Allah (saw), saying her elegies showed lack of patience with Allah's Decree.

It was mentioned that she once came to Madina for a need, accompanied by people from her tribe. They told Umar, "This is Al-Khansa. If only you would admonish her, for her crying has lasted long in the time of ignorance and in Islam." Umar went to her and said, "O Khansa." She raised her head and replied, "What do you wish? What do you want?" He said, "What makes your eyes so sore with weeping?" She said, "Crying for the leaders of Mudar." He said, "They perished in the time of ignorance; they are now fuel for Hellfire." She said, "May my father and mother be sacrificed for you, that only deepens my pain." He said, "Recite to me what you have composed." She replied, "I will not recite to you what I composed before, but I will recite what I have just said now." So she recited verses of poetry. Umar then said, "Leave her, for she will always remain sorrowful." He neither forbade nor scolded her, showing kindness and gentleness toward her.

This was Al-Khansa's (ra) state regarding her brothers in the pre-Islamic era (Jahilliya) and for part of her early Islam. However, Islam penetrated deep into her soul. She came to understand her Iman, Deen and her purpose in this life, so she hastened to participate in the first Muslim conquests outside Arabia. She went with her sons to the conquest of Iraq under the command of one of Islam's lions, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas (ra). On the night before battle, she addressed her four sons, "O my sons, you embraced Islam willingly, and you migrated by choice. By Allah, besides Whom there is no god, you are the sons of one man just as you are the sons of one woman. I have never betrayed your father, nor disgraced your uncle, nor stained your lineage, nor defiled your honor. You know what great reward Allah (swt) has prepared for Muslims who fight the disbelievers. And know that the eternal abode is better than this fleeting world. Allah (swt) says, **يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ**

**تَفْلِحُونَ** "O believers! Patiently endure, persevere, stand on guard, and be mindful of Allah, so you may be successful" [TMQ Surah Aal-i Imran: 200]. Tomorrow, if Allah (swt) wills and you are safe, go forth to fight your enemy with insight, seeking Allah's (swt) help against His foes. When you see the battle blaze fiercely and its flames rise high, then plunge into its heat and fight their leader at the height of combat. You will attain victory, booty, and honor in the eternal abode of Paradise."

Her sons listened to her will, went forth into battle, and were all martyred at al-Qadisiyyah. None of them returned. When Al-Khansa (ra) received the news, she did not panic nor grieve for them as she had for her brother, Sakhr. Instead, she bore it with patience and said her famous words, **الحمد لله الذي شرفني بقتلهم، وأرجو من ربي أن يجمعني بهم في مستقر رحمته،** **"Praise be to Allah who honored me with their martyrdom. I hope from my Lord to gather me with them in the abode of His mercy."**

Umar ibn al-Khattab used to grant her the stipends of her four sons, each of whom had an allotment of 200 dirhams, until she passed away (ra).

Thus, Islam changed her concepts, her thinking, and her behavior toward death which no one can escape. It was never reported that she composed even a single verse of poetry mourning her sons, though she had lost all four in one day.

Therefore, we say: a Muslim whose convictions, behavior, and life stances are not transformed by the thoughts and concepts of Islam has not truly understood his Deen, nor treated Islam as a complete way of life and the path to Allah's (swt) Pleasure, and thereafter to Paradise by Allah's (swt) Mercy. And that is indeed the supreme success.

O Allah (swt), by Your Mercy that encompasses all things, and by Your generosity and favor, have mercy on us and gather us with our master and Prophet Muhammad (saw) and his Companions (ra) in the place of Your pardon and mercy, O Most Merciful of the merciful.