

Khalifa Umar bin al-Khattab - Inter-Personal Relations and Interactions

Atika Bint Zaid

Atika was the daughter of Zaid bin Amr bin Naufal. Zaid was the uncle of the Umar. Atika was thus a cousin of Umar.

At Madina, Atika was married to Abdullah the son of Abu Bakr. Atika was very beautiful and Abdullah was much enamoured of her. He was so much lost in her love that he failed to participate in the various expeditions undertaken by the Muslims. He even neglected to offer his prayers in the mosque.

The love of Abdullah and Atika became proverbial. Abdullah felt that Atika was the most valuable thing in the world. When Abu Bakr came to know that Abdullah had not taken part in the various expeditions and had even neglected his prayers, he put him to explanation. He had no explanation to offer. The matter of fact position was that he was so much overwhelmed by the love of Atika that he could not attend to other duties.

Abu Bakr gave vent to anger and told his son in plain words that his failings and shortcomings were too grave to be passed over. Abdullah placed himself at the mercy of his father, and Abu Bakr decreed that Abdullah should divorce Atika within three days.

Abdullah was torn between two minds. At times he thought that he should be faithful to his love. On second thought he felt that the command of his father should be obeyed whatever the cost. After three days Abdullah divorced Atika. This decision made Abdullah deranged. He would neither eat nor drink. He sobbed and sighed and sang heart rending verses giving expression to his great grief over the loss of his beloved.

The divorce of Atika became the matter of talk in Medina. When the Holy Prophet came to know of the matter, he felt sympathy for Abdullah. The Holy Prophet revoked the divorce, and the two lovers were reunited.

Abdullah was very particular thereafter to ensure that the love for Atika did not stand in the way of his duty to God. In all the campaigns that were undertaken by the Holy Prophet thereafter, Abdullah took part therein, and fought valiantly. In the battle of Taif, Abdullah was wounded, and later he died of such wounds at Madina.

Atika bitterly mourned the death of Abdullah, and in a touching elegy she said:

"Abdullah I have sworn that my eyes

Shall not cease grieving over thee;

And my body shall ever remain,

Covered with dust."

Atika resolved that after Abdullah she would not marry any one. She kept her resolve for four or five years. Umar felt for her. He felt distressed that one so young and beautiful should remain a widow. Umar advised her that she should marry. When Umar became the Caliph, he himself offered to marry. After some hesitation, Atika accepted the proposal.

After the consummation of the marriage, when Umar held the marriage feast, Ali congratulated Umar, and sought his permission to talk to the bride. Umar permitted and Ali reminded Atika of her resolve not to marry any one after Abdullah. Thereupon Atika burst into weeping. Umar consolingly said:

"Atika do not be grieved. All women do like that. May God bless you. By re-marriage you have conformed to the injunctions of Islam."

Of Umar, Atika had a son "Ayaz".

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Source : Alim.org-Umar bin al-Khattab History