

## Story of Sohaila and Farrookh

In one day of the days of Bani Ummayah, rahimahumullah, after the Khulafaa' ar-Raashideen, when Islaam used to be the dominant power in the whole Earth, when the Muslim country was the biggest country amongst all the others, and specifically in the city of the Prophet Sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam, in Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah, there was a gathering, a Muslim gathering, of some sahaba and some tabi`een, attending a wedding of two young but yet righteous Muslims. These two were Sohaila and Farrookh. Sohaila was the wife and Farrookh was the husband. In spite of the fact that they were both young, they were so righteous in such a way that they became very well known among the leaders of the muttaqeen later on. During these days, brothers and sisters, jihaad was one of the good deeds that every Muslim was targeting...every Muslim was dreaming of doing jihaad. And the Muslim army was everywhere in the earth, going towards north, towards south, towards east, towards west...everywhere they were going and doing the battles to spread the message of Allaah subhana wa ta`ala and that dream was also with that young, new husband, which was Farrookh. And he was watching the companions, the sahaba, and the tabi`een, as they were coming back and forth from the battlefield and listening to their news and how they are sacrificing their lives for the sake of Allaah subhana wa ta`ala. and how Allaah subhana wa ta`ala is granting them victories and Allaah subhana wa ta`ala is blessing them with everything.

So, it has not been 3 months after his marriage when that young man came back home at night, he saw his wife, and told her about his intention to go for jihaad, to go for fighting against the non-believers, and to spread the message of Allaah subhana wa ta`ala. Even though it was almost 3 months after marriage but that hope of having the mercy of Allaah subhana wa ta`ala by one of the greatest good deeds, which is jihaad, was more attractive to him than by being happy with his wife at home. And as it was a very difficult decision by Farrookh to decide go for jihaad even after three months for marriage, it was even almost unbelievable or impossible for the wife to hear about this. How can she accept this and they have been married for three only months? Who is going to take care of her? What is she going to with the home? With the money? Who is going to feed her? She is still young and her husband took her from her family and he is no more with her, and her family is also no more with her. However that decision was made up by that young man, Farrookh, and he was not willing to even argue about it. "And what about our life together, what about the house?", Sohaila said to him. Too many questions from her, but only one answer from him which was: "Allaah subhana wa ta`ala will take care of you". And as the Mujahid made up his mind to go for jihaad, he had no time to waste. And he started immediately to get himself prepared for the long trip to go for jihaad. He spent his nights getting himself prepared and trying to convince his beloved wife that this is a choice that he is not going to hesitate in having it, and he is doing it for the sake of Allaah subhana wa ta`ala and we have to sacrifice.

Farrookh left with Sohaila some money that she might spend for couple of months later on and as they were hoping that the whole journey would not take more than couple of months, and he also left with her whatever he saved during his life, the whole wealth that he was trying to save before the marriage and he left thirty thousand dinars with her as a trust and he asked her not to touch that, and not to even use it until he comes back to her. And in front of the door, when Sohaila was glancing her last at her husband, to her beloved husband Farrookh, she was crying, she was deeply crying and saying "O Farrookh, do not leave me alone, O Farrookh, do not leave me alone, nobody is gonna take care of me". But Farrookh did not add to his words anything but to say "istawjil`kAllaah al-ladhi laa

tudi`u wa daa`iuh" (?).

And Farrookh left (to) the masjid of Prophet Sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam to pray salatul fajr and immediately after that he joined the Muslim army and they went altogether to the battle field. And they went towards the East. Sohaila, his wife, was left alone crying and crying. What could she do as she was still young? How could she survive without a husband? Her friends used to come her house to try to make it easy for her to try to make her forget about her disaster but they were always failing. And it was not more than three months later on when Sohaila discovered that she was expecting a baby. She was pregnant after her marriage with that young man, Farrookh. You can think of the situation she would be in after her husband left her alone and she felt that she is going to have a baby and that baby is going to live as an orphan. Sohaila did not find any way to get out of her problem except by (praying) to Allaah subhana wa ta`ala and begging Him for His mercy to help her and give her way out. Days after days passed, and Sohaila delivered a baby boy. She was so very happy for that baby but yet, she didn't know how this orphan would grow up without a father.

The time period of Farrookh's absence was gone and Sohaila became restless. She used to ask the Muslims coming back from the battlefields about her husband but nobody was able to give her a specific answer. The money that Farrookh left with his wife was almost gone however she did not plan to spend anything, not even a single dinar, from the trust that he left with her. The only money that she was spending from was the money that he left for her to survive. That money was almost over and Farrookh did not come back yet. And Sohaila was very patient and she never took any money from that trust. She waited until she heard about some mujahideen coming from battlefields and so she went to them, hoping that they might know about her husband. And then when she came to them and asked them about her husband, Farrookh, one of them told her that, "I saw him with my two eyes dying in one of the battles". This news was not easy for her, for Sohaila to hear. But the Imaan, the faith that was in her heart, stopped her and protected her from doing any wrongful actions, except saying, "inna lillaah wa inna illaayhi ra ji`aoun".

Sohaila went back to her home, with that news being as a fire in her heart but she found nothing but (to ask) Allaah subhana wa ta`ala to give her a way out. And after that news, Sohaila decided to start using the trust that Farrookh left with her and to spend the entire trust in teaching her son the Islamic knowledge and getting him prepared to be one of the righteous leaders. Sohaila started to take her son in his early age to attend thillatul-dhikr where the scholars give their lectures and where the Muslims gather to do their dhikr. She also used to bring some teachers to the house to teach her son the Qur'aan and the Sunnah and she used to pay them from the trust that her husband left with her. The scholars that used to teach that little boy, loved him very much and they all noticed his genius and his intelligence. But it wasn't only because he was clever, it wasn't only due to his abilities, it was much more: It was his mother's hard efforts, it was his mother's prayer to Allaah subhana wa ta`ala to bless him and protect him. It was the pure and blessed sperm drop coming from the two righteous parents and it was on top of all of that the blessings and the mercy of Allaah subhana wa ta`ala on that little baby.

And as the years were passing, Sohaila was still thinking of her husband, Farrookh. She was still hoping to see him one day. She used to describe him to her son with all good characteristics and manners. She used to make his identity as a model for him, for her son to follow. She used to make his picture as bright as she could before her son. And you can always compare that to our situation now. Inna lillaahi wa inna ilayhi raaji`aon...

At night, after thirty years, and at the borders of China, very far away from Madina Al-Munawwarah, a group of mujahideen were sleeping after Allaah subhana wa ta`ala had granted them victory. They were all thankful and they were happy for that and they slept for the whole entire night, except for an old man in his fifties of his age. That old man was thinking of his wife when he left her three months after marriage. While everyone was sleeping, that old man was saying, "What happened to Sohaila? How is she doing? What happened to the trust?" Yes, that was Farrookh, Sohaila's husband. He did not pass away as Sohaila was wrongly informed. Now, after the thirty years since Farrookh left his wife, these thirty years were enough to make him think of returning back to his wife, to the city of Prophet Muhammad sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam. But it would be very risky now for him to go back. What if he doesn't find his wife? What if he returns to find his wife but that wife of his is married to another person? What if he doesn't find his trust? What and what and what? Lots of questions occupied his mind. But finally he made his decision to go back to Madina Al-Munawwarah and to see his wife, at least once before Allaah subhana wa ta`ala would take either of their souls. He got permission from the mujahideen leader and he left the battle going towards Madinah Al-Munawwarah. You know how long it would take them in these days to go from like the borders of China to Madinah Al-Munawwarah and the only means of transportation they used to have were camels and horses. So it was a very long journey. However, the extent and the intensity of the yearning he had for his beloved wife was an immense encouragement for him to travel as fast as possible. And as he was getting closer and closer to Madina Al-Munawwarah, his worries were increasing more and more. What type of situation he would find his wife in?

Finally after (months) of that long trip, he reached to the borders of AlMadina Al-Munawwarah, where he had left his wife more than thirty years ago. Although these minutes were like a matter of life or death for him, he did not forget the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam, and you know that one of the sunnah, is that when you return to your home after a journey, back to your city, that you start with the masjid first. You go to the masjid, pray two raka`s and then you go back to your home. That was one of the sunnahs of the Prophet Sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam and the hadith was reported in al-Bukhari. So he did not forget that sunnah even though he was so excited to know about his wife and what had happened to her. So he went immediately to the mosque of Prophet Sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam - masjid Nabi sallallaahu alaihi wa sallam, where he prayed two raka`s and then he waited for Salaatul-`Asr to start. And then after he prayed Salaatul-`Asr, Farrookh wasn't able to wait any more. He was very eager to know about his wife and what happened to her. However, by the time the Salaat was over, he saw hundreds and thousands of people making circles out of circles and all surrounding one person, one great scholar that he did not know about. That scholar didn't look that old. Farrookh was very surprised at such a sight, because he had not witnessed such a spectacle before, when he was last in Madinah. He was trying his best to know or to guess who was that person, who was giving that lecture in front of thousands of people in the masjid of Prophet Sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam. He failed to recognise that person but he was amazed by his knowledge and by his efficacy, by his manner and the way he deals with his students.

Do you know brothers and sisters, that among the students of that scholar was Imam Malik ibn Anas, one of the leaders of the four schools of thought. Not only Imam Malik, beside Imam Malik was Imam Sufyan At-Thawri and Imam Layth ibn Sa`ad and many more great scholars. After the lecture was over, Farrookh asked his neighbour, the one who was sitting just behind him, "Who is this? Who is this lecturer? Who is this scholar? Who is this Shaykh?" His neighbour started to laugh at him, "Come on! Don't you know that Shaykh? You don't know this great scholar?" He said, "No, I am a foreigner and I have just come to Madinah Al-Munawwarah." So the neighbor started to describe and to tell him about this Shaykh and that this Shaykh is the highest reference in Madina Al-Munawwarah and

he is from one (of) the top seven scholars in Madina Al-Munawwarah, as you know they are called, "al `ulema al-Madina saba`". Farrookh asked, "What is his name?" The neighbour said, "His name is Rabi`ah ibn 'Abdur-Rahmaan". Farrookh didn't know him. And he wasn't even able to get a good look at him as he was very far from him and as the place was overcrowded with people.

So as soon as he had done with this, he went away. He went out of the mosque to his old house. Before getting to the door, Farrookh saw a very well dressed and a nice looking Shaykh trying to get into his house, into Farrookh's house. Farrookh was unable to control himself. How can he see a man coming or entering his house without his permission? And to the best of Farrookh's knowledge, his wife, Sohaila was still there in the home. So how can this man enter his home and he looks like a Shaykh? So Farrookh did not control himself and he jumped on that person, trying to beat him and even trying to kill him, saying, "Who are you? What are you doing at my house? And who allowed you to enter my house?" But the Shaykh was strong enough to defend himself and he was asking Farrookh the same questions. And as they were fighting against each other, people started to gather. And among the people, Imam Malik ibn Anas came and when he saw the situation, he didn't know who Farrookh was, so he asked Farrookh to leave the area, saying "You have no place here, because this house belongs to that person - it doesn't belong to you."

When Farrookh saw that all the people were saying that this home is belonging to that shaykh and not to you, meaning Farrookh, he shouted in his loudest voice, "I am Farrookh! I am the owner of that house!" It wasn't even a minute when a lady. an old lady came out of the house and said to all the people, "Yes, this is Farrookh, this is my husband". And then she looked at Farrookh and said, "This is your son, O Farrookh, leave him alone". So the people did not control themselves and they all started crying and they left them alone respectfully. So Farrookh and his wife entered the house and their son left them alone and went away.

Do you know the first statement that Sohaila said to her husband? After the long separation, she said, "O Farrookh, I am very sorry, I am not nice any more, I am not beautiful anymore, I am not the way you used to see me thirty years ago, I am very sorry. That's what happened because of the years. My hair turned white and my skin is no longer nice the way you used to see me". But Farrookh said, "O my wife, I don't care about these things. Your beauty is in your heart. Your beauty is in your honesty. Your beauty is in your character and your manners. I don't mind about this." Then he said to her that: "I swear you are the most beautiful lady for me." These two couples began discussion after discussion for hours and hours. And they did not stop until he asked her about the trust he left with her. She said, "O Farrookh, didn't you go to the masjid? To the masjid of Prophet Muhammad Sallallaahu `alahi wa sallam?" Farrookh said, "Yes I did". She said, "So what did u see there?" So he said, "I saw an amazing scholar whose his name is Rabi`ah ibn 'Abdur-Rahmaan I believe. I would never forget that scholar in my life." So Sohaila asked him, "Would you like to be like Rabi`ah ibn 'Abdur-Rahmaan in spite of losing all your wealth?" Farrookh said, "Yes I would, I do like to be like that person even if that would lead to losing all the wealth that I used to have." So Sohaila said, "Would you like to spend your entire wealth to have your son like Rabi`ah ibn 'Abdur-Rahmaan?" And then he said, "Yes, that would be even better." So Sohaila said to him, "Rabi`ah ibn 'Abdur-Rahmaan, that scholar, is your son, is the one whom you were fighting with, whom you were fighting against in front of the door." So when Farrookh knew about this, he went alone, crazy, looking for his son, looking where he went and saying, " Rabi`ah ibn 'Abdur-Rahmaan is my son, I cannot believe it! I cannot believe it!"

Brothers and sisters, think about this story. That story was reported in more than one history book. It is a real story that happened during the days of Bani Umayyah. When you think about this person,

Farrookh, who left his wife during their best days, during the first three months of their marriage, going for jihaad and he knows for a fact that jihaad means that he might be killed. That person, when you evaluate his Imaan, that he was willing to get rid of every worthy thing, every nice thing that he might think about and go, sacrificing his neck for the sake of Allaah subhana wa ta`ala, where does that put us? Where does that put us? When you think about that lady, Sohaila radhiallaahu `anha, when you think about Sohaila, that lady, she was young when her husband left her alone. And he left with thirty thousand dinar, and thirty thousand dinar is a great amount of money. It means something that you might consider equivalent now to millions and millions of dollars, because in those days, thirty thousand dinars, nobody dreamt of having so much. And that lady, she was in her twenties, yet she did not make use of that money for her pleasure, for her to be nice looking in front of her friends. For her to at least be happy in her life or take what was necessary from that money to be happy in life. No, she just spent that money for the sake of her son and she was working her best to get other money to spend for her basic provisions, her food and drink. Now Rasool sallallaahu `alaihi wa sallam said in the hadith, the best among the wives are those whom when the husband looks at, he feels very happy. And when he orders them, they would obey with no hesitation. And when the husband leaves them then they would protect his wealth and they would save their bodies from any other people and they would not disobey him by any means. Think about that hadith and compare Sohaila to it, and see where you want to put Sohaila in relation to it. And then think about yourself and where would you put yourself in relation to it. Sohaila spent more than thirty thousand dinar just to get her son educated and that was the whole wealth of her husband and when her husband came back and he saw his son, he said, "Yes, I am very willing to pay the whole of what I left with you just to get my son to be like that Rabi`ah ibn 'Abdur-Rahmaan", before he knew it was him.

So where does that put us, brothers and sisters? How much are we really willing to pay in order to get our children Islamically educated? How much are we really willing to even educate ourselves about Islaam? These people, brothers and sisters used to travel, used to leave their jobs, used to spend their whole wealth just to come closer and closer to Allaah subhana wa ta`ala.

And another thing that you might think of, brothers and sisters, is that this lady, Sohaila was caring about her son that much and compare the circumstances she used to live in with our present circumstances today. In those times, most of the Muslims were practising Islaam, if not all. In their time, the government used to practice the religion and used to rule by Islaam. And today we have no such a country and we have no such environment. We live in a very bad area. We live in Daar ul Kufr. We live in an area where we are surrounded by Shayaateen so how would we compare the duties towards our children compared to the duties that these people in those days used to have towards their children? And Sohaila spent that much money and she was devoted to her son day and night. She was spending whole days and nights praying to Allaah subhana wa ta`ala, trying to educate her son, trying to think about ways that will lead her son to be one of the righteous leaders in the future. Now how great, do you think, an effort would be needed in the present day? How much compared to that effort and we have these bad circumstances. And I would always like to give examples from our life nowadays. Because I feel that when we read about history, when we read about the Sahaba and Taabi`een and these Salaf as-Saalih, we think that these people were like dreams, that they are fictional, that we cannot have the same stories and find similar examples in our time. But let me tell you about two stories that happened not too long ago.

One of them was in Chechnya. Maybe some of you heard about it. It was a Saudi brother, who was fighting, making jihaad in Chechnya. He left his son in Saudi Arabia and that son was 2 years old. Alhamdulillah Allaah subhana wa ta`ala has blessed him with a very righteous wife, such that she

was, towards her son, like Sohaila was towards Rabi`ah ibn 'Abdur-Rahmaan. After five years of absence, that Saudi brother went to Chechnya, and did not return for five years. His wife sent him a letter just to let him know that they are all feeling well and not to worry about us, just continue in your jihaad. And one of the statements, that was in the letters was about his and her son, Muhammad. Muhammad was seven years old at that time. And SubhanAllaah, that lady used to give Muhammad one riyal everyday so that when he goes to the school, he would buy a sandwiches or something. That little boy, because he heard from his mother about his father, he heard how good, how great his father is, and he was educated that way. He came one day to his mother and he asked her to look at a box that he used to have. And he said to her, "Look at this, my Mum". What was that? It was more than a hundred riyal. She said, "O my son, where did you get that from?" He said: "I got that from the Riyal you used to give me every day." The mother was very surprised, "Weren't you using that to pay for your sandwich, for your candies and stuff?" He said: "No, I was saving this in order to buy a ticket and go with my father to do jihaad." That was the little boy and that was a couple years ago.

Another story happened in Syria, Brothers and Sisters. You know in Syria, in one week 40 000 people were killed in Hama, that was in 1982 almost, or the early '80's. Lots of people were arrested, as happened to a family that I know personally. The name of the family is Az -Za`tar, and they are from a village very close to Damascus. Now that son, he was like a very righteous Muslim alhamdulillah. He was one of the brothers who used to memorize the Qur'aan and used to go to the masjid very often and used not to miss any lecture and any good deed that you know others can do. And one day, the Intelligence came to the city or to the village and they arrested lots of these brothers and he was amongst them. But that brother, from Az-Za`tar, he was in the masjid at that time he was arrested. He was in the masjid reading the Qur'aan. Allaah subhana wa ta`ala has blessed him with a wife, a very righteous wife, just like the other wife, just like Sohaila. When he was arrested, it was only six months after he had got his first baby boy. He called him, `Abdullah. Now when that brother got arrested, nobody knew about him. So people started to say that maybe he died orAllaahu`alam what happened to him. But then, after twelve years, they released him, and they put him in a place in Syria, in Damascus called, Sahatal Marjah. They dropped him in that place, and his eyes were so bloody that he couldn't even see his surroundings. They left him like a dog or even worse. So what happened, SubhanAllaah, one taxi driver was passing by and he saw that man and he felt a lot of mercy and sympathy for him and he said, "Let me give you a ride, where do you live?" He said, "I want to go to such a village, it's called At-Til". So he took him to At-Til and he refused to get any money. Even if he were to ask for any money, he didn't have anything. And now that brother, wallaah you will be amazed brothers, he remembered the same sunnah that Farrookh remembered when he came back from the battlefield. He did not go immediately to his home, he started by going to the masjid of that city or of that village. He went to the masjid where he was arrested and he prayed two raka`. And after he prayed two raka`s, he was just looking around him when he saw a couple of children reading the Qur'aan as they were having halaqah. He was just watching them and seeing how nice they were. And after the halaqa was over, he saw one of them that (he) really liked in particular. He saw that he looks very bright and very intelligent and so on. So he (said), "O boy come here, what is your name?" He said, "My name is Abdullah Az-Za`tar." He didn't believe him. He said, "Who is your father?" He said: "I don't know my father. My mum told me that my father went away in struggle and that he is coming back. But he never appeared after that."

Brothers and sisters, this really took place, a few years ago and he found him in the same mosque he was arrested at and he found him doing the same thing he was doing when he was arrested - reading the Qur'aan, trying to memorize the Qur'aan. What was the reason for that? It was the mother. It was the mother who brought the children up and educated them in the right way.