



Builders of a Nation

LEARN ABOUT QUEENS, SCHOLARS
& WARRIORS IN ISLAM

For centuries, the narrative of Islamic history has been incomplete. We know the names of the great male heroes and scholars, but what about the women who were their teachers, their patrons, their warriors, and their pioneers?

Inside, you will meet the legendary women who were the Builders of a Nation. They weren't just alive in the past; they were powerhouses of faith, knowledge, and action whose contributions echo through time. From the battlefield to the courtroom, from the hospital to the university, they set the standard for what it means to be a Muslim woman: courageous, learned, and unwavering in faith.

They teach us our deen, strengthen our imaan (faith), and inspire us to excel in every field, from math and medicine to academia and activism.

These women weren't just part of history. They shaped it. And their legacy is a powerful reminder that to be a Muslim woman is to be a builder, a defender, and a legend in the making.

Let their lives inspire yours.

1

Did you know the
**world's oldest
university** was
founded by a
Muslim Woman?

Meet Fatima al-Fihri

Meet Fatima al-Fihri

(800–880 CE)

**Born in Tunisia, she
migrated to Morocco,
where she used her
inheritance to build
Al-Qarawiyyin**



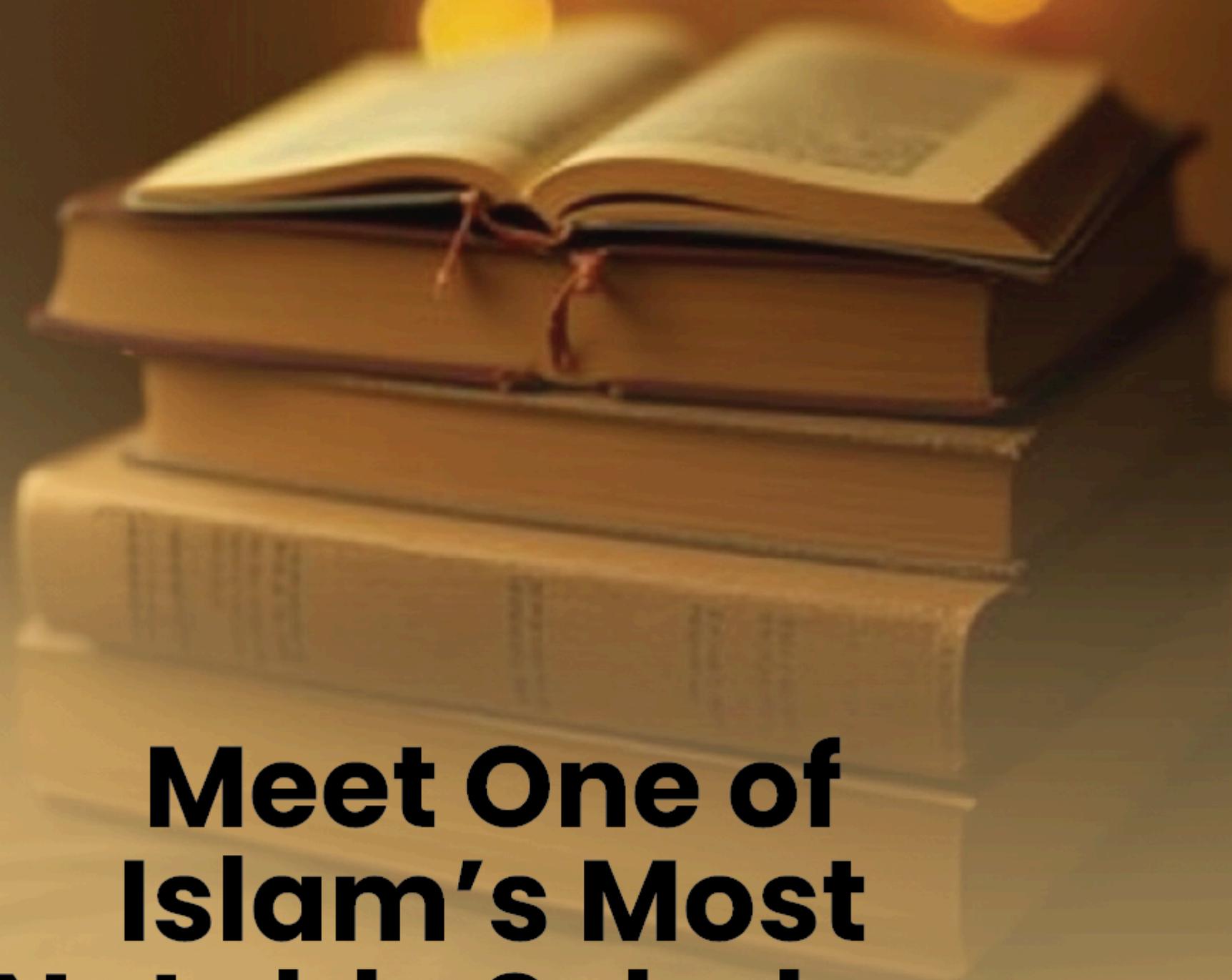
A mosque-turned-school, it became the **first degree-granting university!**

It taught astronomy, medicine, philosophy, and Quranic studies – attracting scholars like Ibn Khaldun.

Why She Matters Today

- ✔ She proved education is a **Sadaqah Jariyah** -- her institution still operates today!
- ✔ **Shatters the myth** that "women didn't lead in Islamic history."

2



Meet One of Islam's Most Notable Scholars

Meet Aisha bint Abu Bakr رضى الله عنها

Meet Aisha bint Abu Bakr رضى الله عنها

- Primary narrator of **2,200+** hadith
- Authority in medicine, poetry, and Islamic jurisprudence
- Main teacher to Abu Hurayra, Abdullah ibn Abbas and other major scholars
- Led the Battle of Jamal
- Legal opinions are cited in Maliki and Shafi'i schools

Her Legacy

- ① Her interpretations are **still taught** worldwide
- ② **Proved** women's right to advanced Islamic education
- ③ **Preserved** crucial details of the Prophet's **life**

صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهَا
وَسَلَّمَ

3



**While Europe burned
'witches' for healing the
sick, she set up a hospital
in her tent and changed
medicine forever.**

Meet Rufayda al-Aslamia

Meet Rufayda al-Aslamia

The World's First Surgeon

- During the Battle of Khandaq, Rufayda led female nurses, stitched wounds, and pioneered triage – prioritizing the gravely injured.
- Her tent was the Prophet's ﷺ designated medical camp.

The Prophet's Trust

- ① He ﷺ personally ordered casualties to be sent to her, praising her skills.
- ② Her work inspired later Islamic hospitals like Al-Adudi in Baghdad.

Legacy Erased by History

Though Florence Nightingale is credited as the first nurse, Rufayda's systems **existed 1,200 years earlier**. Yet Western textbooks omit her.

4



**She ran toward
the battlefield –
sword in hand,
blood on her face**

*The Prophet ﷺ watched
her fight and said: 'Today,
she is better than men.'*

Nusaybah bint Ka'ab

Nusaybah bint Ka'ab

The Lioness Who Fought for Islam

- When the Muslim army collapsed, Nusaybah grabbed a sword, blocked arrows with her body, and shielded the Prophet ﷺ.
- She took 12 wounds and kept fighting.



Warrior. Nurse. Revolutionary.

She didn't just fight – she nursed wounds, raised sons who became martyrs, and was one of the first to pledge allegiance at Aqabah.

The Prophet's Praise

He ﷺ said: "***Whenever I looked left or right, I saw her defending me.***" Her courage redefined what it means to be a Muslim woman.

5



**She was a
40-year-old widow
and a successful
businesswoman.**

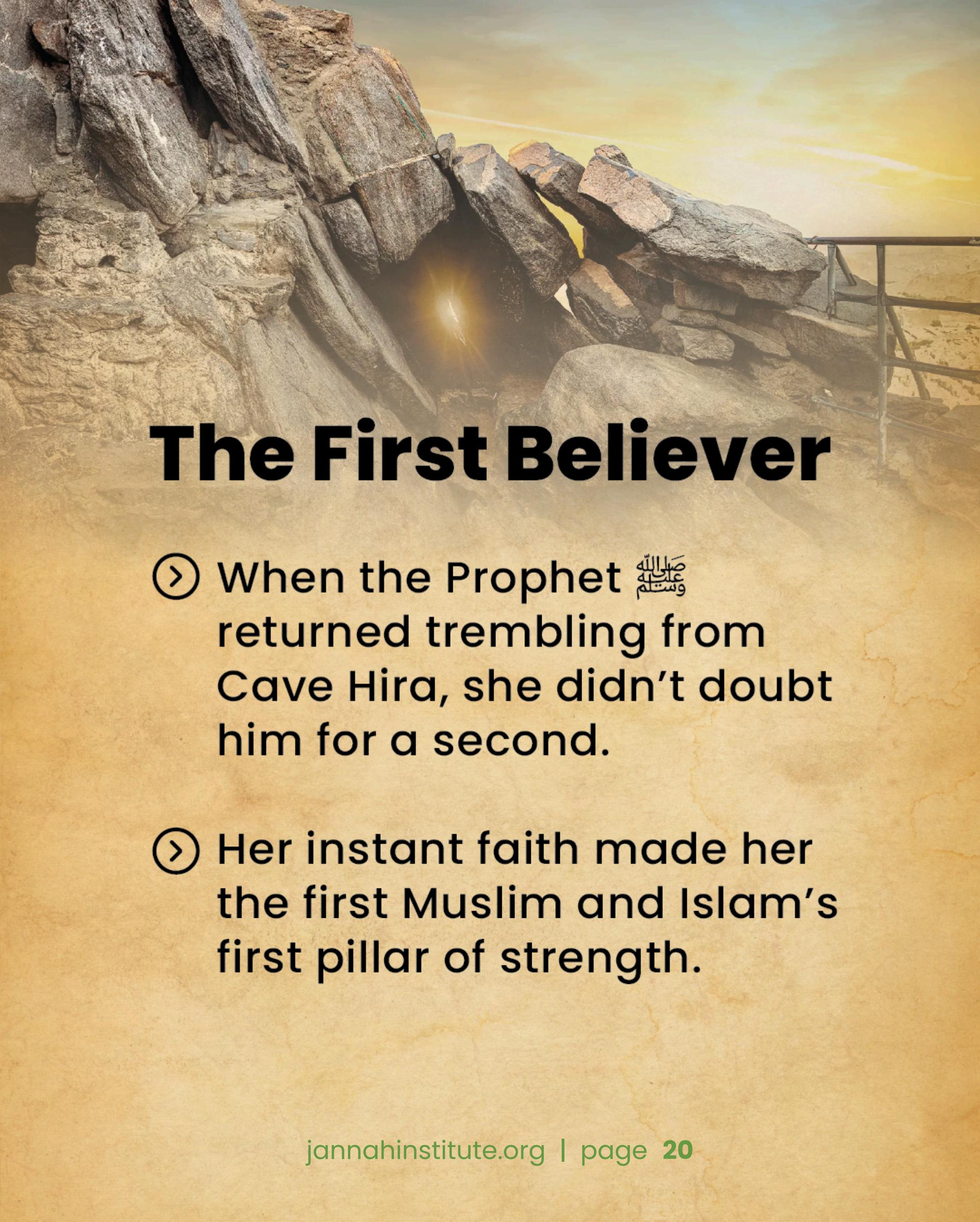
Allah called her 'the best of women.'

Khadijah bint
Khuwaylid

Khadijah bint Khuwaylid

The Woman Who Changed History

- Khadijah didn't just break glass ceilings – she owned the marketplace.
- As Mecca's top merchant, she hired Prophet ﷺ for his integrity, then married him against all norms.



The First Believer

- ① When the Prophet ﷺ returned trembling from Cave Hira, she didn't doubt him for a second.
- ② Her instant faith made her the first Muslim and Islam's first pillar of strength.

Love That Built a Legacy

- ① For 25 years, she was his refuge through persecution, poverty, and prophecy.
- ② He ﷺ later said, "*She believed in me when others denied me.*"

6

When the scholars of 10th-century Baghdad were stumped by a math problem, they didn't ask a man – **they asked her.**

A jurist, a mufti, and a genius who invented new equations.

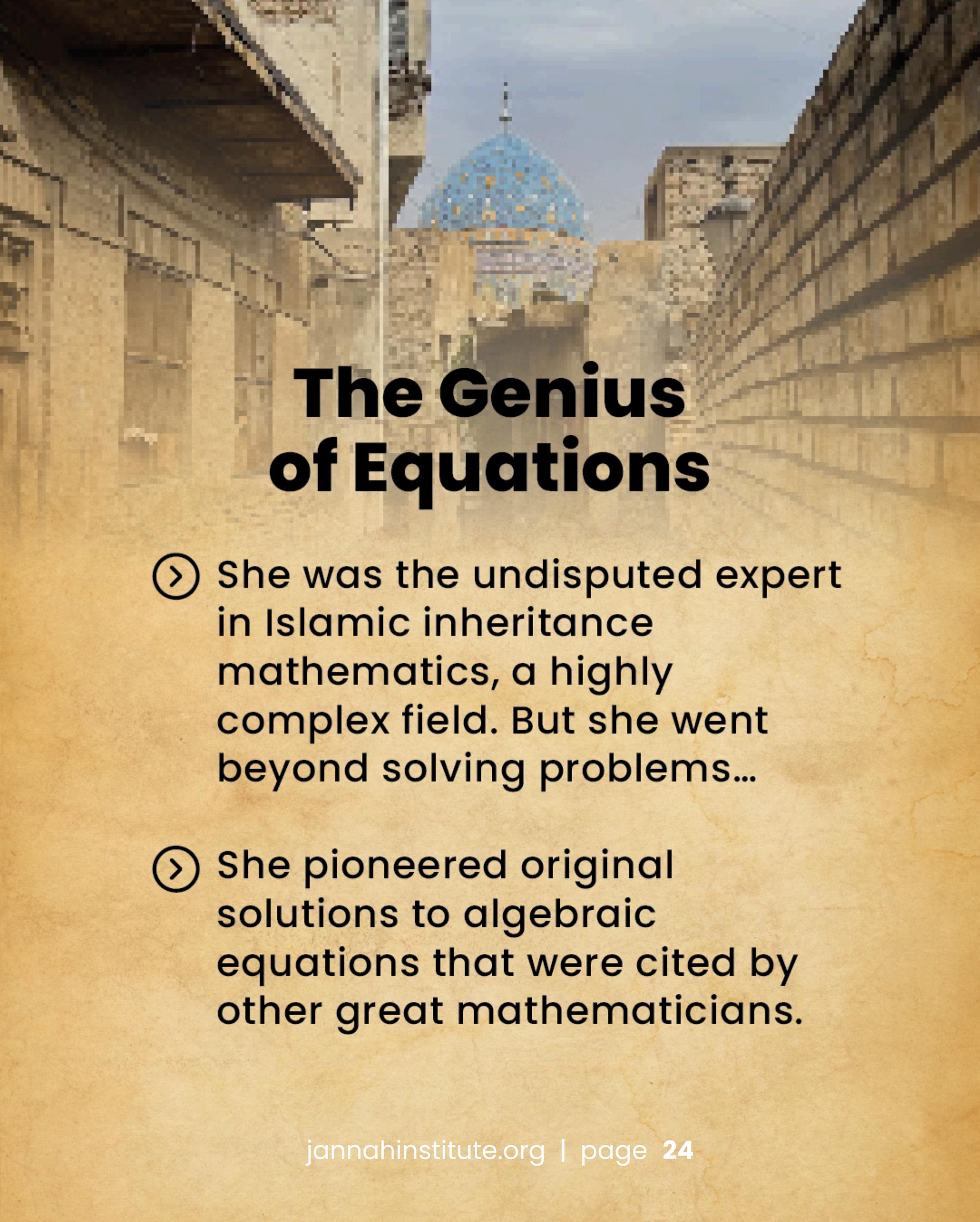
Sutayta al-Mahamili



Sutayta al-Mahamili

The Scholar-Mathematician of Baghdad

Sutayta was a celebrated jurist (Faqihah) and mufti who issued fatwas in the Hanbali school. Historians like Ibn Kathir praised her as one of the most knowledgeable people of her time, renowned for her generosity and good character.

A photograph of a courtyard with a blue domed building in the background. The courtyard is paved with light-colored tiles and has a low wall on the right side. The building in the background has a large, ornate blue dome with intricate patterns. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

The Genius of Equations

- ① She was the undisputed expert in Islamic inheritance mathematics, a highly complex field. But she went beyond solving problems...
- ② She pioneered original solutions to algebraic equations that were cited by other great mathematicians.

Her Legacy: Erased by Time, Reclaimed by History

Her scholarship defined her, not her gender. She was a community leader who applied her knowledge to daily life. Like many brilliant women, her contributions were slowly obscured, a classic case of the "Matilda Effect" in history*.

7



**The man who founded
one of the largest
schools of Islamic law
in history sat at the
feet of this woman...**

*She was the final authority on the
practice of the Prophet's ﷺ own family.*

Aisha bint Sa'd
bint Ibn Amir

Aisha bint Sa'd bint Ibn Amir

The Teacher of Imam Malik

- ① The daughter of Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas, a legendary Companion of the Prophet ﷺ.
- ① She grew up in Medina, immersed in the direct knowledge of how the Prophet ﷺ and his family lived, prayed, and worshipped.
- ① **She was a living library of the Sunnah.**



The Mentor of a Giant

- ③ Imam Malik ibn Anas (the founder of the Maliki Madhhab) was her most famous student. He would travel to her home to seek her knowledge.
- ③ **He held her in the highest esteem.**

A Bridge to the Prophet ﷺ

She didn't just narrate hadith;
she was a crucial link in the
chain of transmission (Isnad)
for the practical, lived Islam of
the earliest community.

8



**When the Byzantines
captured her brother, she
armed herself, stormed
the enemy ranks, and
became their nightmare**

Khawla bint al-Azwar

Khawla bint al-Azwar

The Warrior in the Shadow of the Sword

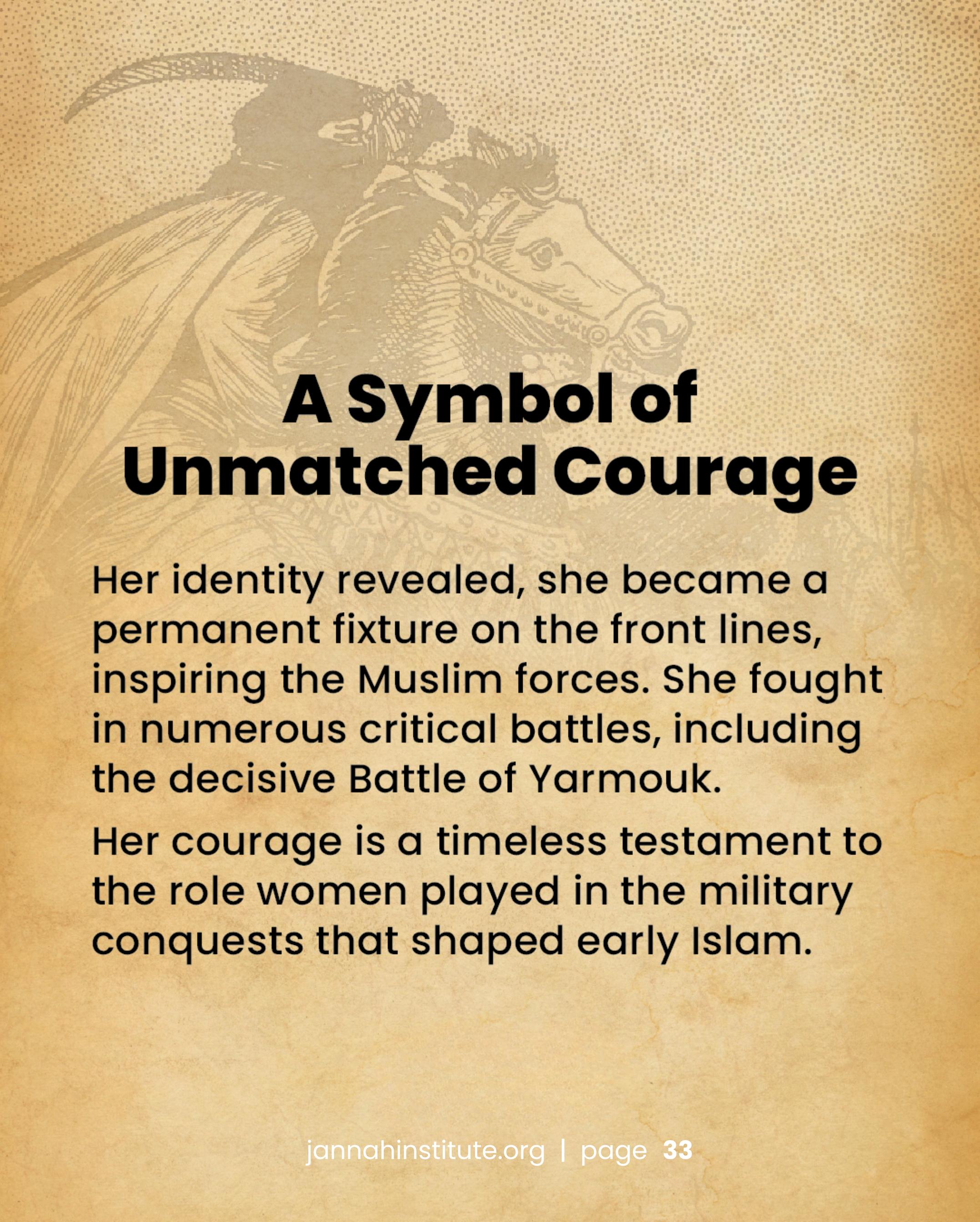
- Khawla was the sister of Dirar bin al-Azwar, a famed warrior and companion of the Prophet ﷺ.
- She trained alongside him, mastering the art of war.



The One-Woman Army

When her brother was taken prisoner, disguised in a black cloak and armor, she plunged into the Byzantine forces like a tempest.

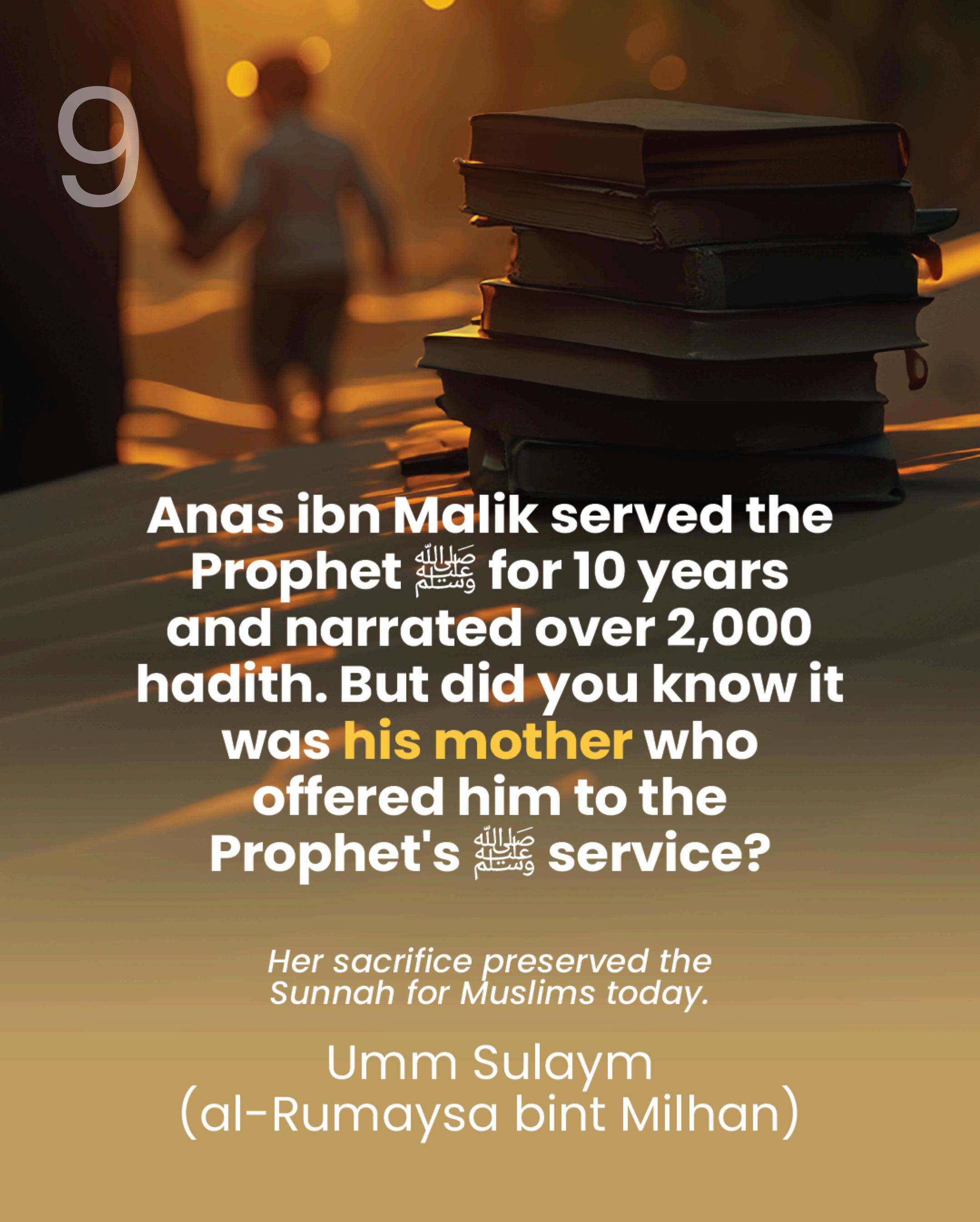
So ferocious was her assault that the Muslim commander, Khalid bin Walid, initially mistook the masked knight for the legendary Dirar himself.



A Symbol of Unmatched Courage

Her identity revealed, she became a permanent fixture on the front lines, inspiring the Muslim forces. She fought in numerous critical battles, including the decisive Battle of Yarmouk.

Her courage is a timeless testament to the role women played in the military conquests that shaped early Islam.



Anas ibn Malik served the Prophet ﷺ for 10 years and narrated over 2,000 hadith. But did you know it was **his mother who offered him to the Prophet's ﷺ service?**

Her sacrifice preserved the Sunnah for Muslims today.

Umm Sulaym
(al-Rumaysa bint Milhan)

Umm Sulaym **(al-Rumaysa bint Milhan)**

The First Educator & Steadfast Believer

- Accepted Islam early, raising her son Anas ibn Malik as a believer.
- When her first husband refused Islam and later died, she stood firm in her faith, raising Anas to serve the Prophet ﷺ.



Warrior of Faith

- At Uhud, she carried water and tended wounds while armed with a dagger. She declared it was to defend herself and the Prophet ﷺ if the enemy approached.

Legacy of Influence

- The Prophet ﷺ said: *"I saw myself (in a dream) entering Paradise and behold! I saw al-Rumaysa, Abu Talha's wife."* (Bukhari)
- Umm Sulaym's spirit of serving the Prophet ﷺ – from offering her son Anas to defending him at Uhud – was so profound that it etched her name among the **people of Jannah.**

10



**She was a master
of the Quran who
prayed 500
rak'ahs a day.**

*When the great scholars of her
generation were stuck, they came to her.*

Hafsah bint Sirin

Hafsah bint Sirin

A Home of Knowledge

- The daughter of a freed slave, Hafsah bint Sirin and her family were beacons of knowledge in 7th-century Basra.
- Her brother was the renowned scholar Muhammad ibn Sirin. She became a leading authority in Quranic Tafsir, jurisprudence (Fiqh), and hadith.



The Walking Library

- She was known for her **incredible memory and deep understanding**. It is said she had the entire Quran memorized by the age of 12 and spent 30 years studying its Tafsir.
- Men of knowledge attended her study circles, seeking her expertise without hesitation.

Knowledge Worshipped

- Her scholarship was inseparable from her worship. She was a devout ascetic (zahidah) who spent her nights in prayer.
- She embodied the principle that **true knowledge leads to piety**, making her a model for students of Islam.

10



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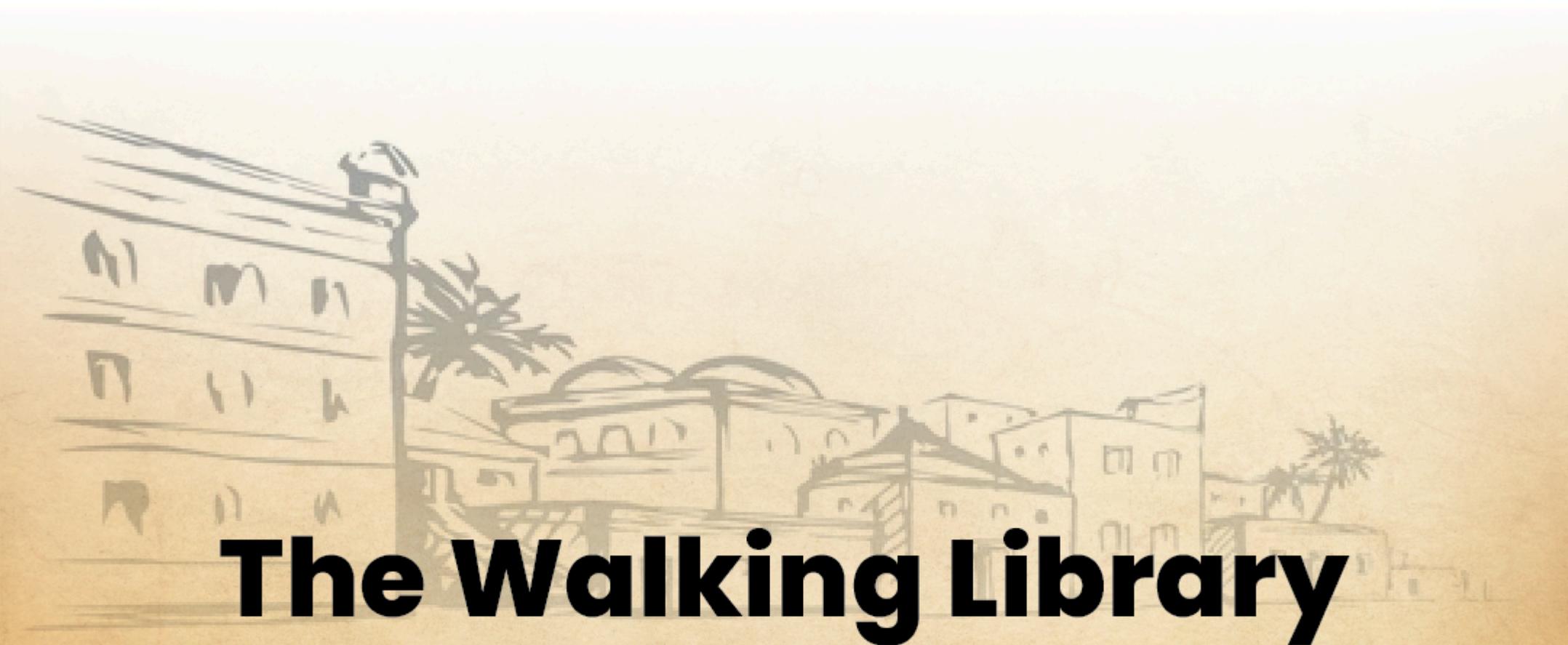
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11

A silhouette of a woman in a hijab, shown in profile from the chest up, with her hands raised in a gesture of prayer or supplication. The background is a warm, golden-brown gradient.

Her son went blind as a child. Doctors gave up, **but she didn't.**

Her du'a not only restored his sight, it gave the Muslim world the man who would compile the most authentic book after the Qur'an.

The Mother of Imam al-Bukhari

The Mother of Imam al-Bukhari

The Du'a That Changed History

- When the young Muhammad ibn Ismail (Imam al-Bukhari) lost his sight, his mother devoted herself to prayer.
- It is narrated that the Prophet Ibrahim (AS) appeared to her in a dream and told her that Allah ﷻ had restored her son's sight due to her constant supplications.



The First Teacher

- After his sight was miraculously restored, she nurtured his genius, ensuring he memorized the Qur'an and foundational knowledge at a young age before sending him to the great scholars of Bukhara.
- **She invested in his intellect with unwavering belief.**

The Architect of a Legacy

- While Imam al-Bukhari traveled the world collecting hadith, her early training and spiritual foundation were the bedrock of his work.
- She built the character of the man who would spend 16 years sifting through 600,000

12

They tortured her family in the scorching heat of Mecca. They speared her, making her the first to die for Islam.

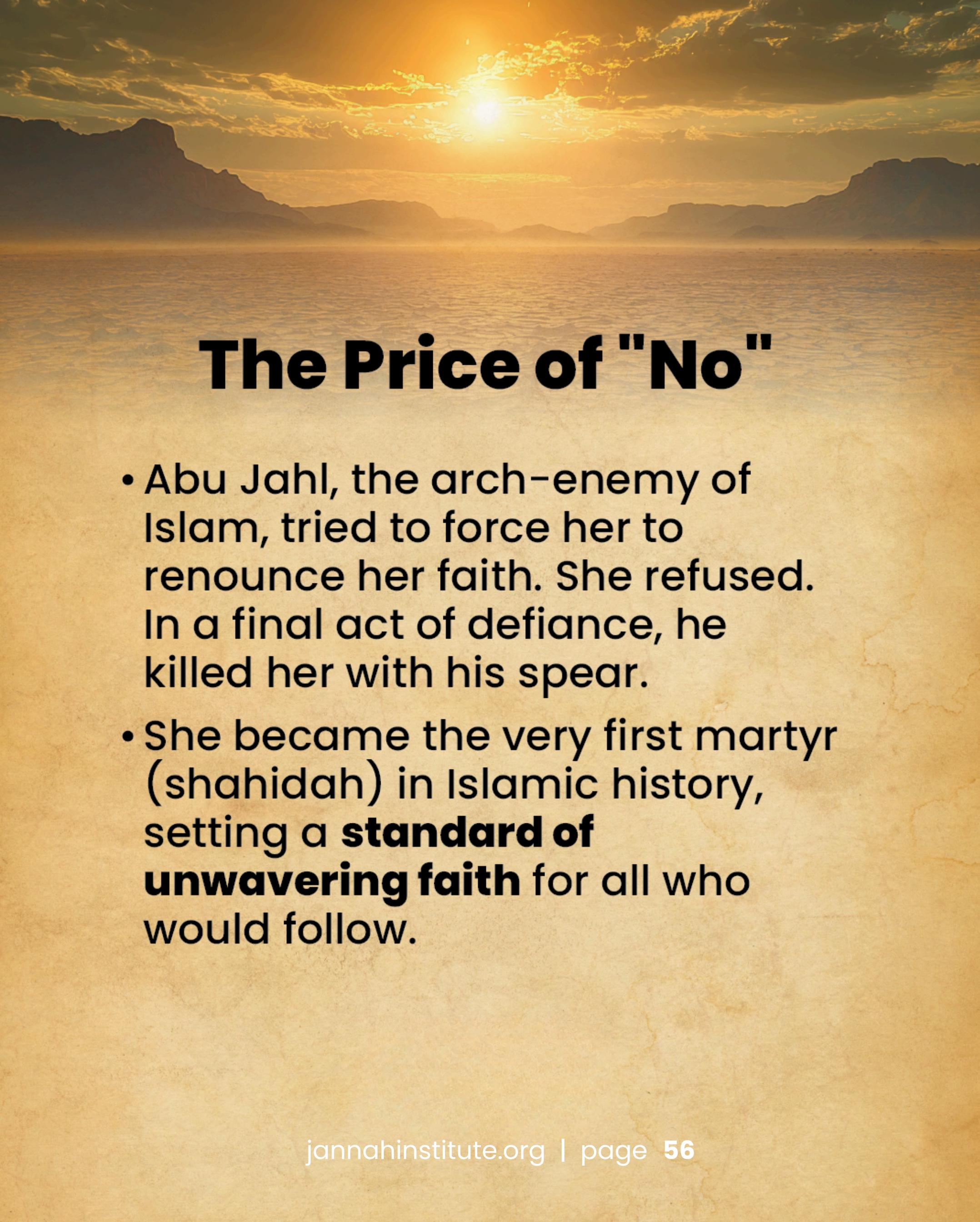
But with her last breath, she built the foundation of a nation that would outlast every empire.

Sumayyah bint Khayyat

Sumayyah bint Khayyat

The Foundation of Resistance

- Sumayyah bint Khayyat, her husband Yasir, and their son Ammar were among the earliest and most vulnerable converts – a family with no powerful tribe to protect them.
- The Quraysh made them an example, subjecting them to brutal public torture in the burning sand.



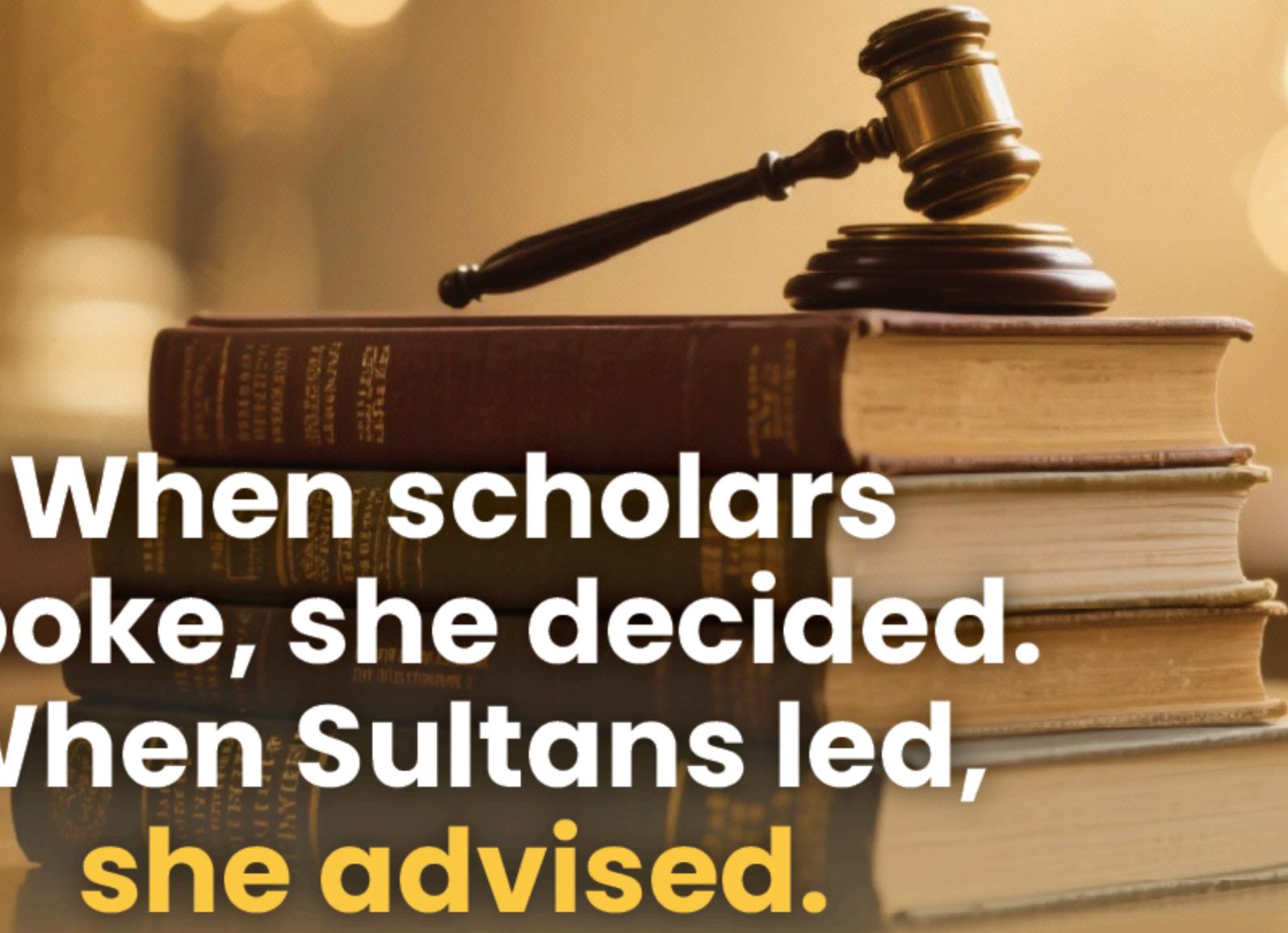
The Price of "No"

- Abu Jahl, the arch-enemy of Islam, tried to force her to renounce her faith. She refused. In a final act of defiance, he killed her with his spear.
- She became the very first martyr (shahidah) in Islamic history, setting a **standard of unwavering faith** for all who would follow.

A Legacy Sealed in Blood

- Her martyrdom was not a defeat. **It was a seed.** Her son, Ammar ibn Yasir, became a beloved Companion.
- Her family's sacrifice became a powerful **source of strength** for the early Muslim community, proving that truth could not be crushed by force.

13



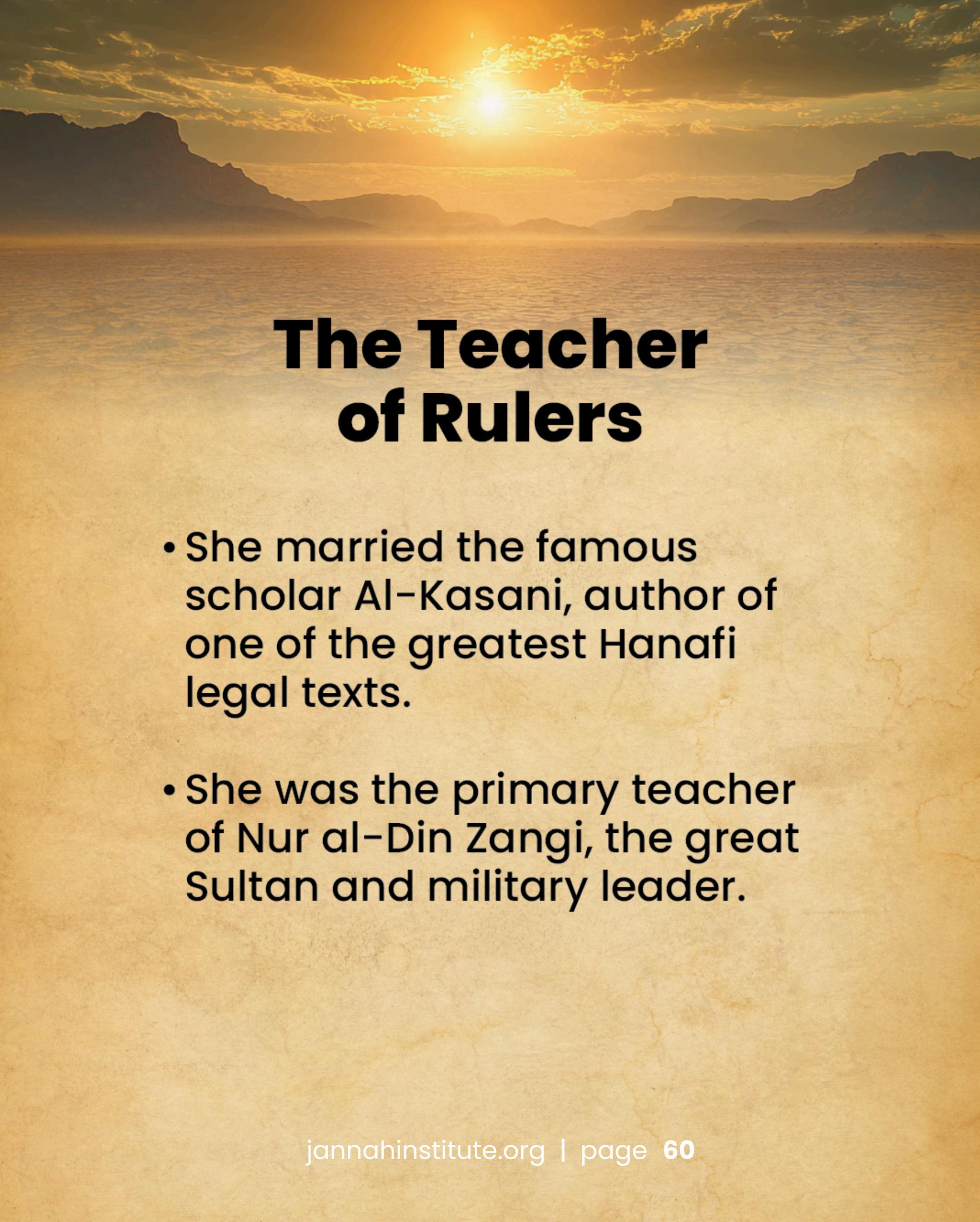
**When scholars
spoke, she decided.
When Sultans led,
she advised.**

*The most powerful woman
you've never heard of in
Islamic history.*

Fatima al-Samarqandi

Fatima al-Samarqandi

- Born in 12th-century Samarqand, Fatima was trained by her father, a leading Hanafi scholar.
- She mastered Fiqh, Hadith, and Tafsir while still young.



The Teacher of Rulers

- She married the famous scholar Al-Kasani, author of one of the greatest Hanafi legal texts.
- She was the primary teacher of Nur al-Din Zangi, the great Sultan and military leader.

The Unquestioned Authority

- Her legal understanding was so renowned that her husband, a grand jurist himself, would not issue a fatwa **without her approval.**

14

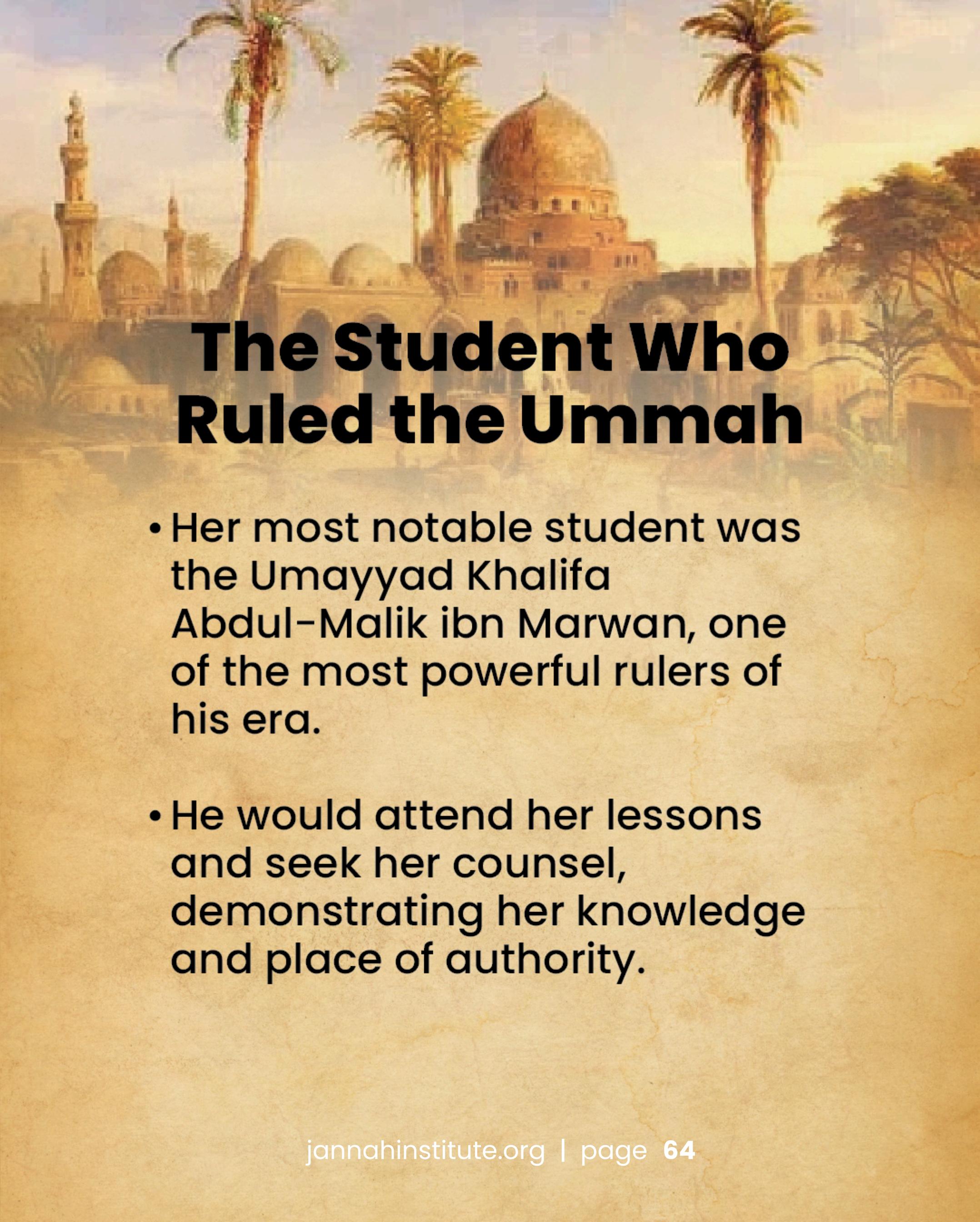
**She taught in the
Umayyad Masjid and
Al-Aqsa compound.**

*Her most famous student was the
Umayyad Khalifa himself.*

Hujayma bint Husayn

Hujayma bint Husayn

- Known as Umm al-Darda al-Sughra, she was a 7th-century scholar of hadith and fiqh.
- She was so respected that she held study circles for men and women in the masajid of Damascus and Jerusalem, a rare and powerful privilege.



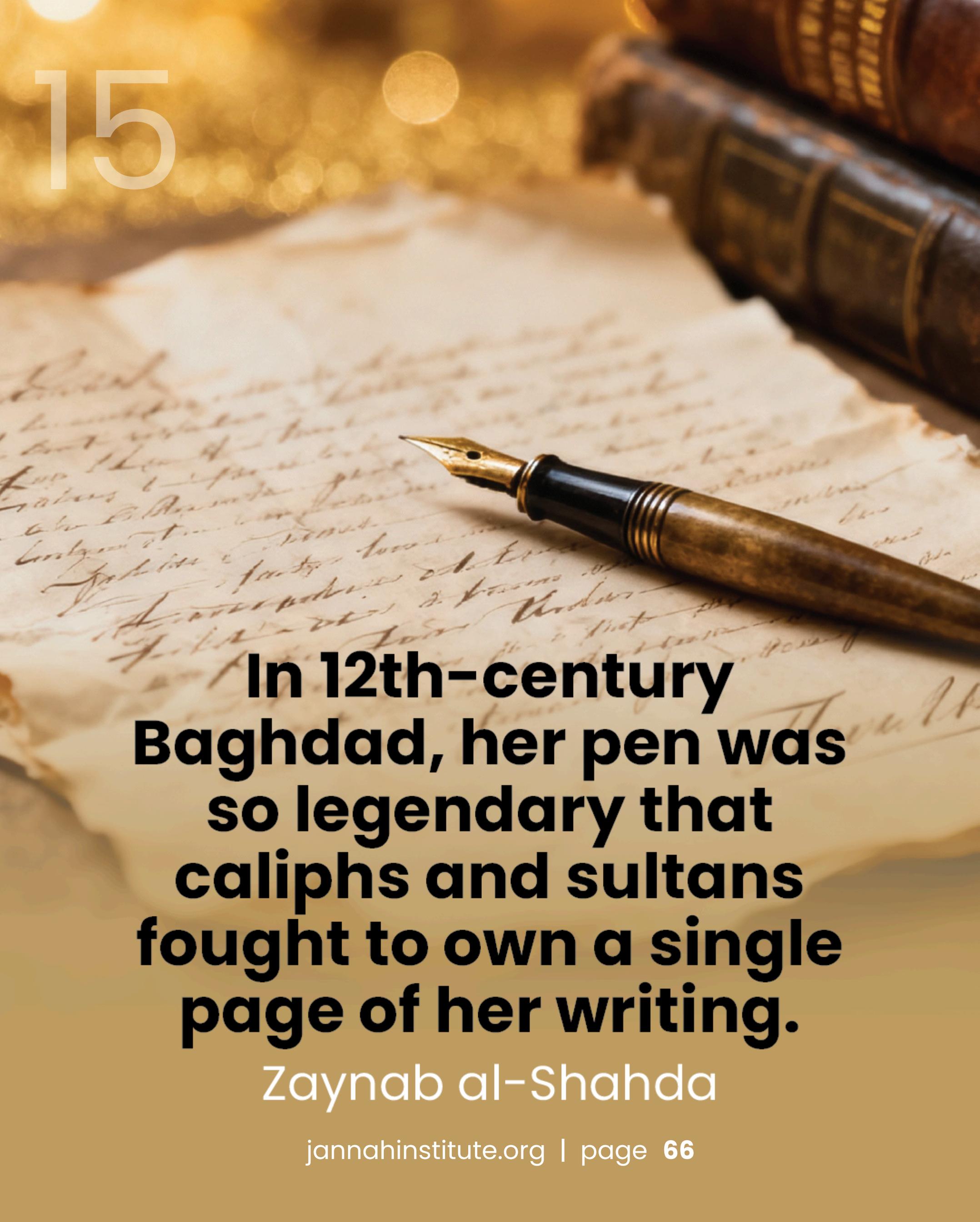
The Student Who Ruled the Ummah

- Her most notable student was the Umayyad Khalifa Abdul-Malik ibn Marwan, one of the most powerful rulers of his era.
- He would attend her lessons and seek her counsel, demonstrating her knowledge and place of authority.

An Authority on Worship & Law

- She was a specialist in the science of hadith and a jurist.
- Leading male scholars of the time, like the famous Hasan al-Basri, transmitted knowledge from her.

15

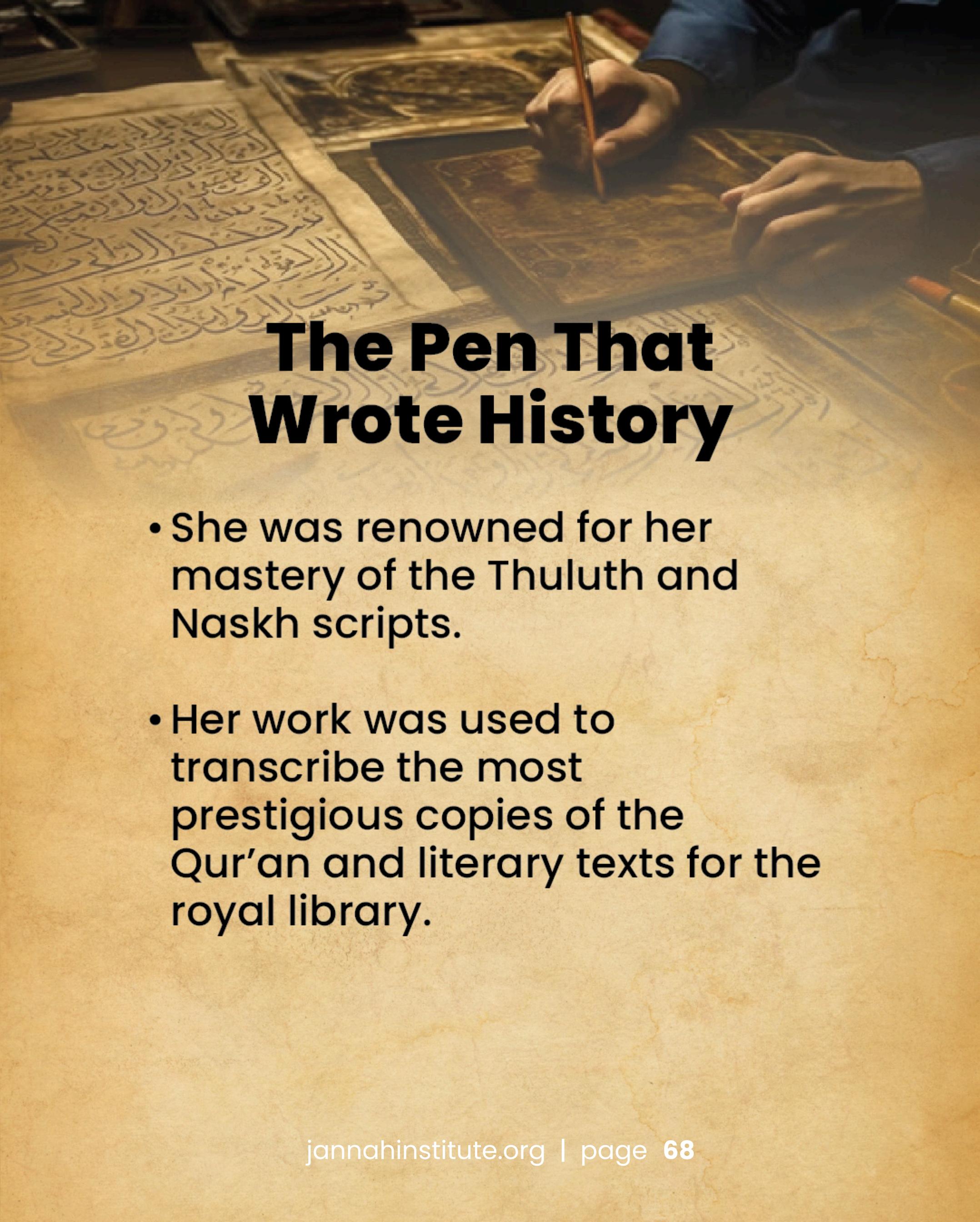
A close-up photograph of a fountain pen with a black barrel and a gold nib, resting on a piece of aged, yellowed paper with handwritten Arabic script. The background is softly blurred, showing more of the paper and a dark, textured object, possibly a book or another pen. The lighting is warm and golden, creating a bokeh effect in the background.

**In 12th-century
Baghdad, her pen was
so legendary that
caliphs and sultans
fought to own a single
page of her writing.**

Zaynab al-Shahda

Zaynab al-Shahda

- Zaynab was a **master of calligraphy**, so skilled that she was appointed as the official teacher of the Khalifa's wife and the women of the Abbasid court.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands writing Arabic calligraphy on a scroll. The person is wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and is using a quill pen. The scroll is laid out on a surface, and the calligraphy is in a dark ink. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the scroll and the person's hands.

The Pen That Wrote History

- She was renowned for her mastery of the Thuluth and Naskh scripts.
- Her work was used to transcribe the most prestigious copies of the Qur'an and literary texts for the royal library.

A Legacy in Ink

- Her fame extended far beyond the palace.
- Students, including the most prominent male calligraphers of the era, traveled to Baghdad to seek her 'ijazah (certification).

16

A close-up photograph of a weathered, golden crown with five points, resting on a stack of several reddish-brown bricks. The background is a warm, golden-yellow bokeh.

**A queen used her
entire fortune not on
palaces, but on a
1,000-mile water
highway for pilgrims.**

Zubaydah bint Ja`far

Zubaydah bint Ja`far

- Wife of Khalifa Harun al-Rashid, she funded the massive "Darb Zubaydah," the pilgrimage route from Baghdad to Mecca.
- She commissioned tanks, reservoirs, and wells, some of which are still in use today.



A Legacy Carved in Stone

- Her project included building rest houses, mosques, and milestones along the entire route.
- Not just charity, this was state-level infrastructure that secured the safety and survival of millions of pilgrims for centuries.

The Patron of Public Works

Beyond the pilgrimage route, she funded the construction of an aqueduct to supply water to Mecca and Medina and was a renowned patron of the arts, science, and architecture in the Golden Age of Baghdad.

17

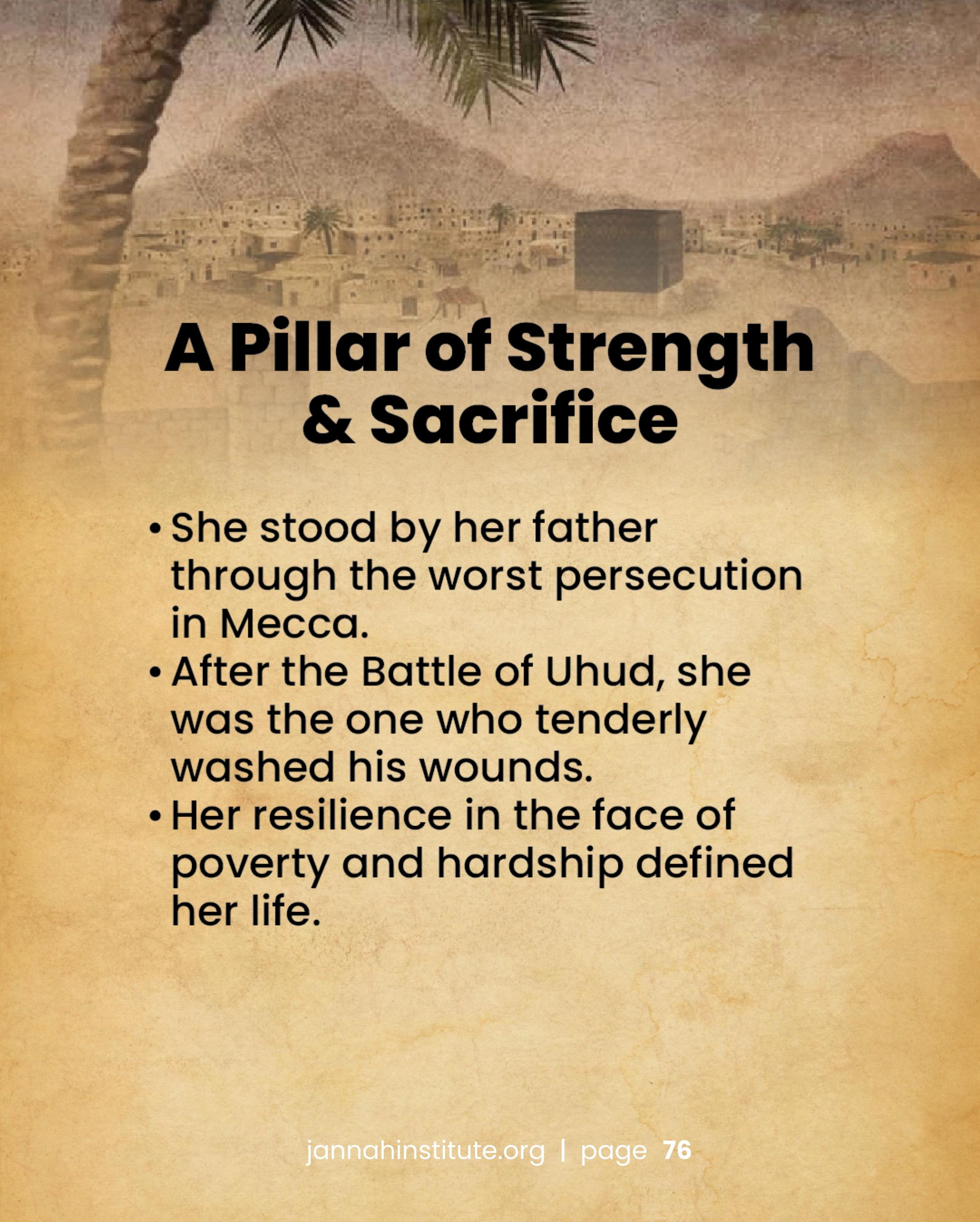


**She was the only child
to outlive the Prophet
ﷺ. From his lineage,
she became the
mother of his legacy.**

Fatimah bint Muhammad

Fatimah bint Muhammad

- The Prophet ﷺ showed her immense love. He would stand for her when she entered, give her his seat, and call her "Umm Abiha" (Mother of her Father).
- Her character and modesty were a **living mirror of his own.**



A Pillar of Strength & Sacrifice

- She stood by her father through the worst persecution in Mecca.
- After the Battle of Uhud, she was the one who tenderly washed his wounds.
- Her resilience in the face of poverty and hardship defined her life.

The Mother of the Line

- Through her sons, Hasan and Husayn, the noble lineage of the Prophet ﷺ continued.
- She is the mother of the Ahl al-Bayt, and the Prophet ﷺ declared her **"The Leader of the Women of Paradise."**

18

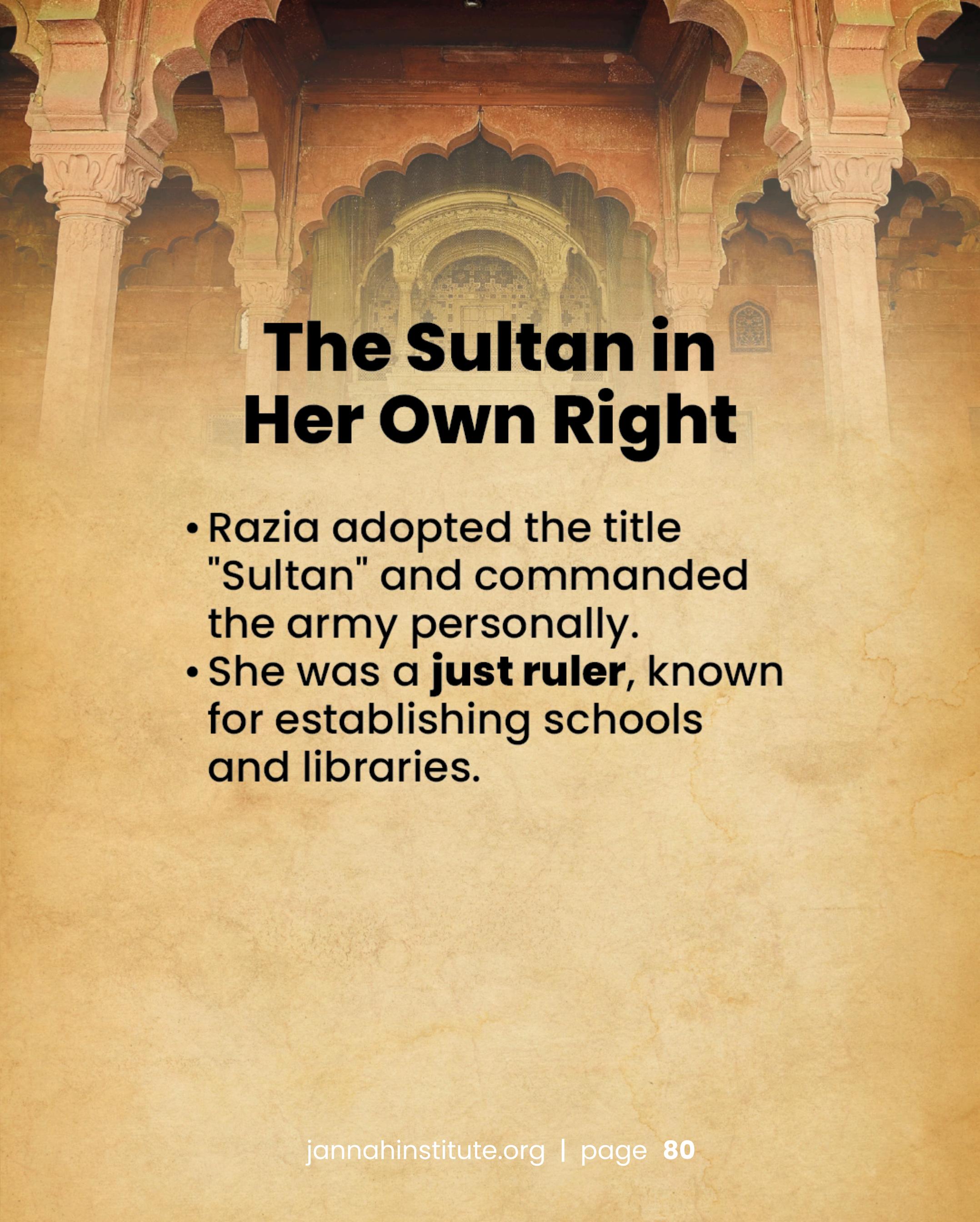


The nobles told her a woman couldn't rule. So she appointed her own cabinet, led her army into battle, and became the only woman to ever sit on the **throne of Delhi.**

Razia Sultana

Razia Sultana

- Despite having brothers, her father, Sultan Iltutmish, saw her superior administrative and leadership skills.
- He shocked the court by naming her his successor, declaring her "**more capable than twenty sons.**"



The Sultan in Her Own Right

- Razia adopted the title "Sultan" and commanded the army personally.
- She was a **just ruler**, known for establishing schools and libraries.

A Tragic End, A Lasting Legend

- Her challenge to patriarchal norms created powerful enemies.
- After a rebellion fueled by nobles who opposed a female ruler, she was defeated and killed.
- But her brief reign proved a woman could wield sovereign power.

19



In 10th-century Aleppo, a woman didn't just use complex scientific instruments. She designed and built them.

Mariam al-Ijliya
(Al-Asturlabiyya)

Mariam al-Ijliya (Al-Asturlabiyya)

- Following in her father's footsteps, Mariam became a renowned asturlabi (astrolabe maker).
- She was part of a vibrant scientific community in Aleppo, known for her innovative and intricate designs.



The Smartphone of the Medieval World

- The astrolabe was a complex analog computer used for navigation, timekeeping, and astronomy.
- Mariam's skill in crafting these devices placed her at the absolute forefront of applied technology in her time.

A Hidden Figure of Science

- Like many female scientists, her story was nearly lost.
- Modern historians are now rediscovering her contributions, highlighting that women were active creators in the scientific revolutions of the Islamic world.

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