



Sabra Bibi Shah

1944 - 2025

Our Mother, the Mother of Hundreds: In Memory of Sabra Bibi Shah

Written by Ubaid & Jamil Ur Rahman & Farzana Hussain Shah

Born in Rajouri, India, in 1944, Sabra Bibi Shah was one of 11 siblings born to Syed Feroz Ali Shah, her father and Syeda Fatema Bibi, her mother. Her side of family still reside in Indian occupied side of kashmir.

After marrying our respected father, teacher, and Murabee, Maulana Tufail Husain Shah—former president of the United Kingdom Islamic Mission (UKIM)—she migrated to Pakistan. Her life was a testament to love, sacrifice, and devotion.

She moved from Pakistan to Glasgow in 1980 when her husband took up the position of Imam at the Al Furqan Masjid (also known as Carrington St Mosque) in the West end of Glasgow. She brought up eight children during her lifetime bringing over seven children from Pakistan, six sons and a daughter with her youngest son born in Glasgow.

At the tender age of 18, our mother endured the loss two children. One was stillborn, and the other, Azeez Ur Rahman, passed away within a week due to health complications. Allah (SWT) would bless her with more children: Hafiz Ubaid Ur Rahman, Farzana Hussain Shah, Junaid Ur Rahman, Zia Ur Rahman, Sajjad Ur Rahman, Mohammad Faisal, Khalil Ur Rahman, and Jamil Ur Rahman. She became the devoted grandmother of 35 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren, many of whom have memorised the Qur'an Masha'Allah.

The start of womens religious education, known as 'darss' started in Masjid Furqan (also known as Carrington St mosque) during the early 80's, which coincided with the time that renowned scholar Dr Farhat Hashmi came to Glasgow from Pakistan to start her study for her Doctor in Philosophy in Islamic theology. She was like a family member coming to our house every day after university and mum would make food for her. They were very close. Dr Farhat Hashmi joined our mother's efforts and started preaching the darss to ladies. Then the late Aunty Salma Shaikh started attending darss and when Dr Farhat Hashmi left the UK after completing her PhD study, our mother Sabra Shah, aunty Salma Shaikh and few other devoted ladies took on this task and continued the dars at Carrington St Masjid.

Only three days before her passing on 3rd July 2025, she was teaching a revert Muslim the Qur'an and Salah—an enduring snapshot of a woman who dedicated over six decades of her life to the recitation and teaching of the Qur'an.

The Legacy of Our Beloved Ammi Jee

Devoted Wife

Our father told us that they were married for 65 years without a single argument or difference of opinion. Subhan'Allah. He said, "She has a part in all my projects." Our mother played an integral role in the work that Allah (SWT) allowed our father to do. She supported him without complaint, especially when his work in the cause of Allah (SWT) took him away from home. As our father put it, "She is the one who brought you all up and instilled in you the good characteristics you possess. She supported me in everything I did."

Mother

Since her passing, countless people have shared that she was like a mother to them as well. Numerous family friends, who had lost their own mothers, found peace, comfort, and solace in the knowledge that they could always turn to her for advice and support. It's a phrase we've heard repeated many times: "She was like a mother to me." Her love for everyone transcended borders, reaching across continents—whether it was in India, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Sweden, or France. A cousin described her as "the mother of people in different continents."

As a grandmother to 35 grandchildren, Masha'Allah, some called her baree amee—"Big Mother." This term perfectly encapsulated the depth of love and affection she inspired. She was always up-to-date on each grandchild's activities. Truly, she was a mother to hundreds.

Qur'an Teacher

Our beloved mother was not just a mother and grandmother, but a devoted teacher of the Qur'an. For over six decades, she dedicated her life to teaching the Qur'an with proper tajweed. As the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

"The best of you are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it."

(Sahih al-Bukhari)

She was blessed with a beautiful voice, using it to impart the Qur'an to people of all ages, from young children to elderly adults. We met families whose three generations were taught by her, truly awe-inspiring, especially considering she never formally attended school. Allah (SWT) indeed chooses His servants for great work, regardless of their worldly education.

As one scholar remarked, “There are many things replaceable in life, but not people of knowledge. Who will my mother learn Qur’an from now that your mother has passed?” May Allah (SWT) grant her sadaqah jariyah for all the Qur’an she taught, and may it continue to benefit her in the Hereafter. Ameen.

Charity and Service

Ammi Jee’s spirit of generosity extended to charity, as she constantly sought opportunities to contribute to those in need. Whether large or small, she was always eager to assist and take part in charitable projects. This sense of responsibility was not just a duty but a natural part of who she was. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

"The example of the believer is like a green tree, which produces its fruits year-round."

(Sahih al-Bukhari)

Indeed, our mother was like that tree—always giving, always nurturing, always seeking to benefit others.

It is vital to document and share the lives of those who have touched us with their kindness, wisdom, and love. Their stories and lessons are invaluable gifts we leave for future generations.

To those who still have their parents with them, remember to cherish every moment and serve them with love, for these moments are priceless. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Paradise lies under the feet of your mother."

(Sunan an-Nasa’i)

May we all learn to show our parents the same care and respect that our mother demonstrated in her life.

May Allah (SWT) envelop our beloved Ammi Jee in His infinite mercy, forgive her shortcomings, and make her grave a garden from the gardens of Paradise. May she be reunited with her two children, who returned to Allah (SWT) before her, and may the rest of our family be united with her in Jannatul Firdaws, Ameen.