

Abu Ubaidah Aamir ibn Abdullah ibn Al-Jarrah (ra), the Trustworthy of this Ummah

(Translated)

Al-Waie Magazine Issue No. 467

<https://www.al-waie.org/archives/article/19860>

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Abu Ubaidah Aamir ibn Abdullah ibn Al-Jarrah Al-Fihri Al-Qurashi (40 Before Hijra/584 CE to 18 After Hijrah/639 CE) was a Companion (ra) of the Prophet (saw), a Muslim commander, and one of the ten Companions (ra) who were given glad tidings of Paradise. He was among the first to embrace Islam. The Messenger of Allah (saw) gave him the title "The Trustworthy of this Ummah," saying, «إِنَّ لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَمِينًا وَإِنَّ أَمِينَنَا أَيْتُهَا الْأُمَّةُ أَبُو عُبَيْدَةَ بْنُ الْجَرَّاحِ» **"Every nation has a trustworthy one, and the Trustworthy One of this Ummah is Abu Ubaidah."** [Bukhari]

The Status of Abu Ubaidah (ra) in Islam:

Abu Ubaidah (ra) is considered one of the prominent figures in Islamic history and is held in high respect and esteem by Muslims. He was one of the commanders of the Muslim army in Ash-Sham (Levant), and played a major role in its conquest. He was wise in his leadership and held a great position among the Muslims in the region. He was ascetic (*zahid*) and devout, loved doing good, and gave to people whatever he could. He died in Ash-Sham due to plague, and his death was a tragedy for the Muslims. He remains a symbol of wisdom, abstention (*zuhd*), and piety in the history of Islam.

The Islam of Abu Ubaidah (ra):

Abu Ubaidah (ra) embraced Islam in the early stages of the Islamic Dawah. He migrated first to Abyssinia and then to Madinah. He participated with the Messenger of Allah (saw) in the Battle of Badr, and all the other battles. He was among those who remained steadfast on the battlefield, when the Muslims were surprised by the attack of the mushrikoon on the Day of Uhud.

Abu Ubaidah Aamir ibn Al-Jarrah (ra) was among the early reverts to Islam. He embraced Islam at the hands of the Companion Abu Bakr As-Siddiq (ra), who would carefully choose those he saw as wise and mature to invite to the Deen of Islam. Among these individuals was Abu Ubaidah (ra), in whom Abu Bakr (ra) saw purity of heart and sound judgment. Motivated by this, Abu Bakr (ra) invited him to Islam.

Abu Ubaidah (ra) quickly responded to his Dawah, and soon after, he went along with Abu Bakr As-Siddiq (ra) and a group of others including Abdur Rahman ibn Awf, Uthman ibn Maz'oon, and others to the Messenger of Allah (saw), who then spoke to them about Islam and its teachings. They all embraced Islam together at the same time.

At that point, the Prophet (saw) had not yet entered the House of Al-Arqam ibn Abi Al-Arqam. Abu Ubaidah (ra) was twenty-five years old at the time, an age of full intellect and maturity.

Abu Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah (ra) faced the same rejection and harm that other Muslims endured during the early days of the Dawah to Islam. He made Hijrah with the Companions (ra) to Abyssinia during the second migration. When he learned that the Messenger of Allah (saw) had secured the Bayah from the Ansar, he returned to Makkah. After that, he made Hijrah with the Prophet (saw) and the Companions (ra) to Madinah. He stayed with Kulthum ibn Al-Hadm, and the Prophet (saw) established a bond of brotherhood between him and Muhammad ibn Maslamah (ra).

The Story of Abu Ubaidah's Jihad and Bravery:

Abu Ubaidah (ra) was known for his bravery and love of Jihad. The Prophet (saw) used to refer to him as "the Strong, the Trustworthy." Abu Ubaidah participated in all the battles and expeditions alongside the Messenger of Allah (saw), never missing a single one. He was appointed as a commander of military detachments during the Prophet's time due to his military intelligence and successful leadership.

Abu Ubaidah (ra) continued his fighting and bravery during the era of the Khulafaa' Rashidoon (Rightly-Guided Caliphs). He took part in the Wars of Apostasy and the battle against Musaylimah the Liar. He was one of the commanders of the Muslim armies sent to conquer As-Sham. He participated in the Battle of Ajnadayn, the Battle of Al-Samawah, and Marj Al-Saffar.

During the Khilafah (Caliphate) of Umar ibn Al-Khattab (ra), Umar appointed Abu Ubaidah (ra) as the commander in place of Khalid ibn Al-Walid (ra) for the conquest of Damascus. Victory was granted to the Muslims, and Abu Ubaidah made a peace treaty with the people of the city, agreeing to leave them half of their properties and churches.

The Incident of Removing the Two Rings That Entered the Face of the Messenger of Allah (saw) on the Day of Uhud:

It was narrated that during the Battle of Uhud, the Messenger of Allah (saw) fell, and two rings from his helmet, a metal headpiece worn under the turban, became embedded in his noble cheeks. Abu Ubaidah (ra) was present, as he was one of the Companions who remained steadfast until the end of the battle. He proceeded to remove the two rings from the face of the Messenger of Allah (saw) using his teeth. In doing so, his own teeth fell out, and he became a person with broken front teeth. However, this only increased his beauty and grace, and none was more handsome than Abu Ubaidah (ra) with his broken teeth.

The Piety and Humility of Abu Ubaidah (ra):

The Companion Abu Ubaidah (ra) was humble, and leadership or commanding armies never made him arrogant or proud. It is narrated that he once said, "O people! I am a man from Quraysh, and if any of you, ruddy or black, surpasses me in piety, I would wish to be in his skin."

One of the incidents that reflects his humility is when Abu Bakr (ra) sent reinforcements to support him during the siege of As-Sham and appointed Khalid ibn Al-Walid (ra) as their commander. Abu Ubaidah (ra) welcomed him warmly and, out of humility, gave Khalid his rightful position and authority.

Abu Ubaidah's Leadership over the Companions (ra), His Wisdom, and Obedience to the Messenger of Allah (saw): It was narrated that during the time of the Messenger of Allah (saw), the Muslims launched the campaign of Dhat al-Salasil on the outskirts of Ash-Sham. The commander of the expedition was the Companion Amr ibn Al-As (ra), who sent to the Prophet (saw) requesting reinforcements.

The Messenger of Allah (saw) chose some of the most prominent companions for this mission among them Abu Bakr As-Siddiq and Umar ibn Al-Khattab (ra) along with many other Muhajirun. He appointed Abu Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah (ra) as the commander over all of them.

This indicates that the Prophet (saw) saw in Abu Ubaidah (ra) the wisdom and capability to assume such a post. Abu Ubaidah (ra) responded with nothing but complete obedience and loyalty to his Prophet (saw).

During the Khilafah (Caliphate) of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq (ra), Abu Ubaidah (ra) was one of the four commanders appointed by Abu Bakr (ra) to lead the conquest of As-Sham. Later, Abu Bakr (ra) ordered Khalid ibn Al-Walid (ra) to move from Iraq to As-Sham to take command of the Muslim armies there.

When Umar ibn Al-Khattab (ra) became Khalifah (Caliph), he dismissed Khalid ibn Al-Walid (ra) and appointed Abu Ubaidah (ra) in his place. Upon this, Khalid (ra) said, "The trustworthy one of this Ummah has been appointed over you."

Abu Ubaidah (ra) successfully led the Conquest of Damascus and other cities and villages throughout As-Sham. In the year 18 AH, corresponding to 639 CE, he died due to the plague of Amwas in the Jordan Valley, where he was also buried.

His mother:

Umaymah bint Ghanm ibn Jabir, and according to Jamharat Ansab al-Arab by Ibn Hazm al-Andalusi: Umaymah bint Uthman ibn Jabir ibn Abd al-Uzza ibn Amirah ibn Umayrah ibn Wadi'ah ibn al-Harith ibn Fihr.

Ibn Hajar reported that Abu Ubaidah's mother lived to witness the advent of Islam and embraced it.

Historical sources do not mention anything about Abu Ubaidah's activities during the pre-Islamic era (Jahiliyyah). Thus, the recording of his life begins from the day he embraced Islam. Ibn Hisham and others reported that "he accepted Islam before the Messenger of Allah (saw) entered the House of Al-Arqam ibn Abi Al-Arqam."

Al-Bukhari and Muslim narrated from Anas ibn Malik that the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, «إِنَّ لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَمِينًا وَإِنَّ أَمِينَنَا أَيْتُهَا الْأُمَّةُ أَبُو عُبَيْدَةَ بْنُ الْجَرَّاحِ» **"Every nation has a trustworthy one, and the trustworthy one of this Ummah is Abu Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah"**

Ibn Hajar Al-'Asqalani commented, "The 'trustworthy one (al-Amīn) is someone reliable and commendable. Although this quality was shared by others as well, the context suggests that Abu Ubaidah (ra) possessed an extra degree of it. The Prophet (saw) specifically attributed a unique virtue to each of the prominent Companions (ra) giving each one a distinctive trait that he excelled in over others such as modesty for Uthman, judicial wisdom for Ali, and so on."

The occasion behind this title, as narrated by Al-Bukhari, is as follows: The two leaders of Najran, Al-'Aqib and As-Sayyid, came to the Messenger of Allah (saw) intending to engage in mubahala (a mutual invocation of Allah's curse upon the liars). One of them said to the other, "Don't do it. By Allah, if he truly is a prophet and we engage in mubahala with him, we and our descendants will never succeed."

So they said to the Prophet (saw), "We will give you what you ask of us. Just send with us a trustworthy man do not send with us anyone but someone trustworthy." The Prophet (saw) replied, «لَأَبْعَثَنَّ مَعَكُمْ رَجُلًا أَمِينًا حَقًّا أَمِينًا» **"I will indeed send with you a truly trustworthy man."** The Companions eagerly hoped it would be one of them. Then the Prophet (saw) said, «فُمْ يَا أَبَا عُبَيْدَةَ» **"Stand up, O Abu Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah."** And when he stood up, the Prophet (saw) said, «هَذَا» **"This is the Trustworthy one of this Ummah."**

Muslim also narrated from Anas that when the people of Yemen came to the Prophet (saw) and said, "Send with us a man to teach us the Sunnah and Islam," he took the hand of Abu Ubaidah and said, «هَذَا أَمِينٌ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةُ» **"This is the trustworthy one of this Ummah."**

His Abstention (zuhd): غَيَّرَتْنَا الدُّنْيَا كُلُّهَا غَيْرَكَ يَا أَبَا عُبَيْدَةَ **"The world changed all of us except you, O Abu Ubaidah."** (Umar ibn Al-Khattab)

A group of narrators reported: When Umar (ra) arrived in As-Sham, the commanders and dignitaries came out to receive him. He said, "Where is my brother Abu Ubaidah?" They replied: "He's on his way." Then Abu Ubaidah (ra) arrived, riding a camel tied with a rope. He greeted Umar (ra), and then said to the people, "Leave us." So they walked together until they reached Abu Ubaidah's house. Umar (ra) entered and found nothing in the house except his sword, shield, and saddle. Umar (ra) said to him, "You could have acquired some furnishings or something (for comfort)." Abu Ubaidah (ra) replied, "O Amir ul-Mumineen, this is enough to get us to our final destination."

In a similar account from another narration: When Umar arrived in As-Sham, he said to Abu Ubaidah (ra), "Take me to your home." Abu Ubaidah (ra) replied, "What will you do at my place? You only want to make your eyes weep over me." They entered, and Umar (ra) saw nothing there. He said, "Where is your furniture? I see nothing but a coarse woolen mat, a dish, and a water skin made of leather. And you are a commander! Do you have any food?" Abu Ubaidah (ra) then stood up, went to a jawnah (a container resembling a basket or jar used for storing bread), and took out a few crumbs. Umar (ra) began to weep. Abu Ubaidah (ra) said, "Did I not tell you that you would make your eyes weep over me, O Amir ul-Mumineen? What I have is enough to get me to my final resting place." Umar (ra) responded, غَيَّرَتْنَا الدُّنْيَا كُلُّهَا غَيْرَكَ يَا أَبَا عُبَيْدَةَ **"The world has changed all of us except you, O Abu Ubaidah."**

Al-Dhahabi commented, "Abu Dawud recorded this in his Sunan and said, 'By Allah, this is true abstention (zuhd) not the abstention of someone who is poor and destitute.'"

Ibn Sa'd narrated from Malik that Umar (ra) sent Abu Ubaidah (ra) either four thousand or four hundred dinars and said to the messenger, "See what he does with it." So Abu Ubaidah (ra) distributed all of it. Then Umar (ra) sent the same amount to Mu'adh ibn Jabal (ra), and he also

distributed it except for a small portion, which his wife asked him to keep, saying, "We need it." When the messenger reported this back to Umar (ra), he said, "Praise be to Allah who has placed among the Muslims those who do such things."

His Narration of Hadith

Abu Ubaidah (ra) embraced Islam early in the Prophetic mission and possessed vast knowledge of the Qur'an and Sunnah. However, books of hadith have preserved only a few narrations from him. Sahih al-Bukhari contains no hadiths directly attributed to Abu Ubaidah (ra). Sahih Muslim records one hadith, and Jami' al-Tirmidhi also narrates one hadith.

In Musnad Imam Ahmad, there are twelve hadiths, but after removing repetitions, only seven unique hadiths remain. Musnad Abu Ya'la contains nine hadiths, six of which are the same as in Imam Ahmad's collection, and three of them are parts of one extended narration.

Thus, the total number of narrations from Abu Ubaidah (ra) amounts to eight hadiths, some of which are mursal (narrated without the Companion) and others connected (musnad). Some of the connected chains are authentic, while others are weak.

Ulema have explained the reason for the small number of hadiths reported from Abu Ubaidah (ra) and other senior Companions (ra). Ibn Sa'd cited Muhammad ibn Umar al-Aslami who said: "The narrations from the senior Companions of the Messenger of Allah (saw) are few because they passed away before there was a pressing need for their narrations. The hadiths are more numerous from the likes of Umar ibn al-Khattab (ra) and Ali ibn Abi Talib (ra) because they ruled, and were asked questions and gave judgments.

All the Companions (ra) of the Messenger of Allah (saw) were leaders and examples to be followed, and what they did was preserved. They were consulted and they issued fatwas, and they heard hadiths and conveyed them.

However, the senior Companions (ra) such as Abu Bakr, Uthman, Talhah, Az-Zubayr, Abu Ubaidah ibn al-Jarrah, and others like them, narrated less than the younger companions, like Jabir ibn Abdullah, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, and Abu Hurayrah.

These younger Companions (ra) lived longer lives, were more frequently consulted, and people had a greater need for the narrations, which is why most narrations and Islamic knowledge came from them and their peers among the Companions (ra) of the Prophet (saw)."

The Death of Abu Ubaidah (ra):

Abu Ubaidah ibn al-Jarrah (ra) was afflicted with the plague during the Khilafah (Caliphate) of Umar ibn al-Khattab (ra). When Umar (ra) learned of this, he feared for Abu Ubaidah's safety and sent him a letter, requesting that he come to him under the pretext of an important mission.

However, Abu Ubaidah (ra) understood that Umar's true intention was not a task, but rather a desire to save him from the disease, out of fear for his life knowing how much the Messenger of Allah (saw) loved him. It is for this reason that Abu Ubaidah (ra) declined the request, sending an apology in return.

The reason for his refusal was his adherence to the Prophet's (saw) instruction that if a plague spreads in a land, its people must not leave it. And so, Abu Ubaidah (ra) remained and eventually died from the plague of Amwas, in the region of Beisan in present-day Jordan.

The funeral prayer was led by the Companion Mu'adh ibn Jabal (ra). This took place in the year 18 AH (639 CE). At the time of his death, Abu Ubaidah (ra) was 58 years old.

His Children:

Ibn Sa'd said, "Abu Ubaidah (ra) had two children: Yazid and Umair. Their mother was Hind bint Jabir ibn Wahb ibn Dibab ibn Hujayr ibn Abd ibn Mu'ayyis ibn Amir ibn Lu'ayy. However, the children of Abu Ubaidah ibn al-Jarrah (ra) passed away early (i.e., they died young), and his lineage was cut off."

Mus'ab al-Zubayri also stated in Nasab Quraysh, "The descendants of Abu Ubaidah ibn al-Jarrah (ra) and his brothers became non-existent."