

# DEVOTED COMPANIONS

## INTRODUCTION

The Holy Companions (May Allah be pleased with Him), that is, the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are those great personalities of the world, who are superior to and greater than anyone except the Prophets and Messengers of Allah (peace be upon him). By their achievements they earned the pleasure of Allah and His Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

When we read the life histories of the Holy Companions, we feel a longing to follow their example. We feel an urge to be firm in our beliefs and to establish the faith of Islam. We believe that had not Allah created those wonderful people; our religion would not have come to us in its pristine form. Allah had caused those noble Companions of our Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) to safeguard our religion. Next to the lives of the Apostles of Allah (peace be upon him). It is the lives of these sages which serve as the best models for us.

The manner in which the Holy Companions went forward with the Islamic movement, the sacrifices which they made in support of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), and the zeal and enthusiasm with which they worked for spreading the message of Islam, carry a good lesson for all human beings of the world, specially the Muslims. For a long time now there has been a feeling that the life-stories of those torch-bearers of Islam should be presented to our children and young persons, boys and girls, for correcting the ills of our present society. This book is intended to fulfill this need and it is hoped that it will be of benefit to our young generation and shall impart especially to them desirable training on the Islamic way of life. May Allah accept this work and reward us in the hereafter

**Mail Khairabadi**

## **HADRAT UBAIDA BIN AL-JARRAH** **CUSTODIAN OF THENATION (Aminul Ummah)** **(Allah be pleased with him)**

Hadrat 'Ubaida bin Al-Jarrah (Allah be pleased with him) is one of those ten holy companions who received the tidings during lifetime that they are destined to go to Paradise. Another distinction of Hadrat 'Ubaida was the title of 'Amin-ul-Ummah', i.e. "Custodian of the Nation," conferred upon him by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). An account of his life would inspire us to follow the trial set by him and serve the cause of Islam with same zeal and favor to earn the pleasure of Allah and an eternal reward.

Before embracing Islam, Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida was one of Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddiq's friends. When Siddiq-i-Akbar (Allah be pleased with him) embraced Islam, he invited all of his friends to Islam. None of his intelligent and sensible friends lagged behind in acquiring the blessings of Islam. Such famous companions as Zubair and Talha (Allah be pleased with them) embraced Islam on the invitation and preaching of Siddiq-i-Akbar (Allah be pleased with him). Also, persons of sound judgment like Abdul Rahman bin 'Auf, zealous warriors like Sa'd bin Waqqas, persons of integrity like 'Othman bin 'Affan and Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with them) embraced Islam through his efforts.

Hadrat 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) ranks high in the merit list of first converts to Islam who endured the unbearable, torments of the infidels of Mecca. He went through all their barbarities and persecution and never did he stagger. He had to leave his home, family, wealth and property. Twice he migrated to Abyssinia and made his third migration to Medina. There too the Muslims were not allowed to live in peace. The infidels of Mecca challenged the Muslims in the battle of Badr. Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida took part in the battle with great zeal. This can be judged from the fact that Hadrat 'Ubaida was in the ranks of the Muslim army, while his father opposed him in the enemy forces. The father tried his best to make his son, Abu 'Ubaida, a target of his arrows, while the son avoided confrontation with his father. But when 'Ubaida saw that his father did not refrain from aiming at his own son, the love for Allah overcame the filial affection, and he killed him with one stroke of his sword. This shows that, in matters of religion, all relations such as mother, father, sisters, brother, and ties such as race and nation are severed, and a devotee of Allah is cut off from every body and devotes himself to the service of Allah only. The Holy Quran says about such devotees of Islam: --

**"You will not find folk who believe in Allah and the last Day loving those who oppose Allah and his Messengers, even though they be their fathers or their sons or their brethren or their kin. As for such, He has written faith upon their hearts and has strengthened them with a devotion to Him." 58:22**

The battle of Badr was followed by the battle of Uhud. In this battle his Holy Prophet received an injury on the face, and two pieces of iron from the armor were plunged into the flesh of his face, Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) pulled out the splinters with his teeth, and in this process broke two of his teeth. But that devotee of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) did not take any notice of that until he had extracted the iron pieces.

Besides the battles of Badr and Uhud, Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) stood by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) in all the other battles too. He always fought gallantly against the enemy. In addition to taking part in all these battles, Abu 'Ubaida completed with success every assignment given to him by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) once dispatched Umar bin al'As (Allah be pleased with him) with a body of troops on an expedition. On reaching there Umar bin al'As (Allah be pleased with him) asked for some reinforcements to be sent to him. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) sent two hundred warriors under the command of Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him).

The importance of this auxiliary force can be judged by the fact, that among others it included men like Abu Bakr Siddiq and 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with them).

With the arrival of the reinforcement a problem cropped up. In the presence of the most eminent companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) who should command the forces? Hadrat 'Amar bin al'As (Allah be pleased with him) was no match to Hadrat Siddiq Akbar, Hadrat Umar Farooq and Hadrat Abu Ubaida. Amar bin al'As insisted that he should continue as the commander for strategic reasons. Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) agreed with him. This event shows the loftiness of Abu 'Ubaida's character. He had gained so much in the company of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) in terms of piety, virtue and character that after the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddiq and Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with them) entrusted him with missions of great responsibility. The invasion of Syria was an important issue during the period of the first two caliphs. Serious encounters had taken place with the Christians at Damascus, Makhla, Ladhqia, Yarmouk and several other places. Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) commanded the Muslim armies very efficiently. A few events of the battle at Yarmouk are cited here, as example.

Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) marched into the territory of the Roman emperor Hercules, after defeating his armies and conquering several forts. The Roman Emperor was aghast, He warned all the Christian states about the looming danger. He raised a huge army and the Christians made a vow to drive the Muslims out of their land. Receiving the news Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) halted at Hamas and called a meeting of his subordinate officers. After delivering a fervent address, he held a council of war.

A veteran suggested: "We should go out to meet the enemy leaving the women folk and the children in the city. We should write at the same time to Hadrat Khalid bin Walid and Hadrat 'Umar bin al'As (Allah be pleased with them) to reach here as soon as possible from Damascus and Palestine." By the time the Muslim had occupied Hamas and its Christian inhabitants had agreed to pay Jizia (protection money) and remain faithful to the Muslim. But the Muslims and the Christians had no experience of one another. So, another Muslim veteran said:

"We should not leave our families at the mercy of Christians."

General Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) observed

"Should then we get the city evacuated by the Christians as our first step.."

Sharjil bin Hasana (Allah be pleased with him) rose and said:

“O our leader! It would be breach of faith and a violation of agreement in the eyes of Islamic law, and you cannot do that.”

The custodian of the Muslim nation, Abu ‘Ubaida (Ameen ul Millat), could not imagine to go against the principles of Islam at any cost. He conceded the point and returned the protection money received as Jizia to the Christians of the city with the remarks,

“Jizia was collected from you as a token money for your protection. Since we are not in a position to guarantee protection to you we have no right to keep the money with us.”

The Christians of Hamas had never seen such a character and fair play. They were moved to tears and prayed “May Allah bring you back soon!

On learning the evacuation of Hamas by the Muslim occupants, Hercules was greatly encouraged. The Romans gathered a huge force in Yarmouk to rout the Muslims and remove the danger of Islam for ever. But there were men among the Romans who knew the metal of Muslims and their courage and fearlessness. They advised their leadership to avoid confrontation with the Muslim forces. Consequently a Roman named George was sent as a messenger to negotiate with the Muslims, he was very much impressed with their honesty and character. He also met Hadrat Abu ‘Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) and discussed religion with him. He could not resist the appeal and embraced Islam. Now he had no desire to return; but his stay was likely to arouse suspicions in the Roman forces. Hadrat Abu ‘Ubaida said: “Go back now ; tomorrow when some persons from our side shall go in your army, you may come back with them.”

Next day some persons from the Muslim army went to the Roman camp, but the terms of truce could not be agreed upon and the battle started, The enemy was several hundred thousand strong while the Muslims were thirty-two thousand only. However, the commander of the Muslim army planned his strategy with such skill that, by the grace of Allah, the enemy was completely routed. Seventy thousand of their troops lay dead. It proved a decisive blow and the Roman lost all the forts one by one.

Hadrat Abu ‘Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him) was not only a good military strategist but a diplomat too, who commanded a great respect among the infidels of Mecca. The treaty of Hudaibia between the Mecca and the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), bore the witnesses of Abu ‘Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him).

In the ninth year after Hijra, some people from Najran presented themselves to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and requested him to send with them a learned and pious person to educate them in Islam. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) deputed Abu ‘Ubaida for the purpose and said:

“He is the custodian of Muslim nation I am sending him with you.”

After the death of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), when the election of Caliph was under discussion Hadrat Siddiq-e-Akabr (Allah be pleased with him) proposed Abu ‘Ubaida’s name for this office and said to the Muslims:

"Here is Abu 'Ubaida bin Al-Jarrah (Allah be pleased with him). He has been bestowed with the title of Amin-ul-Ummah. If you agree he is best suited for the job. Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida stepped forward and took an oath of allegiance to Hadrat Siddiq-e-Akbar (Allah be pleased with him). After him all the Muhajirin and Ansars took oath of allegiance.

Hadrat Abu 'Ubaid (Allah be pleased with him) was very much particular about the Islamic principles of equality. He faithfully obeyed Allah and the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He knew no distinction between an officer and his subordinate. Once during a battle he camped at Makhhal. The enemy sent a messenger to him to negotiate peace. When the messenger arrived in the Muslim camp he was amazed to see that every Muslim, high or low, was imbued with the same spirit. He looked in every direction to locate the tent of the commander, but he could not. He was perplexed and enquired: "Who is your commander, please?" The men took him to Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida (Allah be pleased with him), who was sitting on the ground. The messenger was stunned, by this humility and said: "Are you the chief, really?" Then he discussed with him some important matters and went away.

Many welfare projects started by Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) in Syria, were completed by Hadrat Abu 'Ubaida. When famine struck Arabia in 18 A. H. he sent four thousand camels loaded with grain from Syria. He was so keen in the propagation of Islam that he never forgot his duty. Thousands of Romans and Syrians embraced Islam impressed by his high character and excellent conduct.

Although Abu Ubaida was the Governor General of Syria, he was so simple that he wore very ordinary dress and kept only one she-camel for personal conveyance. The camel too had no decorations and was strung with an ordinary cord. Once Hadrat 'Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) paid a visit to Syria. He came to see his governor and found nothing with him except a sword, a shield, and a camel's saddle. Hadrat 'Umar said:

"What a pity, Abu 'Ubaida you should at least have provided yourself with some bare necessities of life.

Abu 'Ubaida replied: "Sir, all that I possess is more than enough for me.

Hadrat 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) sent to him four hundred dinars and four thousand dirhams. Abu 'Ubaida accepted the money and distributed it among the troops. When Hadrat 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) came to know of this, he said:

"All praise be to Allah! What a sort of persons have been produced by Islam."

Thus the 'Custodian of the Muslim nation' passed whole of his life in obedience to Allah and His Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Even in the last moments of his life he followed the teachings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He was infected by plague at Jabia and breathed his last in the epidemic. He refused to leave the epidemic ridden locality to save his life as the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) disapproved of it to run away from any place for fear of life.