



أبو عبيدة بن الجراح رضي الله عنه - أمين الأمة

Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رضي الله عنه

## The Nation's Trustworthy Man

Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ

# The Nation's Trustworthy Man

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**DARUSSALAM**  
A MULTILINGUAL INTL. PUBLISHING HOUSE  
Riyadh, Houston, New York, Lahore



**In the Name of Allâh,  
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful**

“Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allâh; of them some have fulfill their obligations and some of them are still waiting, but they have never changed (their determination) in the least.” (33:23)

## Publishers Note

All praises are due to Allâh, the Lord of all that exists. May Allâh's peace and blessings be upon His final Prophet and Messenger, Muhammad ﷺ, his family and his Companions.

*Darussalam* is pleased to present this valuable series, '*The Golden Series of the Prophet's Companions*', to the Muslim youth. The purpose of these books is to enlighten our youth about the lives of the greatest heroes of Islam, the Prophet's Companions. Also, we wish to increase the enthusiasm of the Muslim youth for following and adhering to their religion. In this way these books achieve two very important tasks: educating our children and encouraging them to be good Muslims.

The story you are about to read, '*Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah – The Nation's Trustworthy Man*', discusses the life of one of the greatest Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ. He was one of the ten people whom the Prophet ﷺ publicly promised their acceptance into Paradise.

The Prophet ﷺ also referred to him as the ‘The trustworthy man of this *Ummah*.’

We hope that these books are beneficial to our Muslim youth, as they are the future of Islam. We at *Darussalam* realize the importance of good Islamic literature for Muslim children, especially in the West where non-Islamic influences are so strong. For this reason, we feel that the availability of this series will be a valuable aid in instilling a genuine love for Islam in our children. We would like to thank the author, Mr. Abdul Basit Ahmad, the editor, Mr. Aqeel Walker, and Mr. Muhammad Ayub Sapra for their diligent work in preparing this series. As Allâh says:

“Is there any reward for good other than good?” (55:60)

And our final invocation is that all praises are due to Allâh, the Lord of all that exists.

**Abdul Malik Mujahid**  
General Manager

## Foreword

Few men sacrifice all they have, even their souls for the sake of their faith. As they struggle for the support of their religion, they look at anyone who tries to prevent them from their way as an enemy, even if that person is a father or a brother.

Islamic history contains many examples of men who believed in Islam and devoted all their resources and even their souls for the support of the Word of Allâh. However, history gives us only one example of a man who killed his father in self-defense when he tried to attack him for following the religion of Islam. That man was our hero Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah رضي الله عنه.

He was a man of a noble character and deep faith. As soon as he heard about Islam, he was aware how much it was close to his heart and morals. Hence, he immediately embraced Islam and adopted it as a style of life. He was the eighth person to accept the Message of Islam. All his sacrifices for the sake of Islam were only for the support of the faith he believed in and not for promised dignity or

power. Therefore, he rejected to hold the post of a Caliph when Abu Bakr ﷺ nominated him for the position. Even when he was offered by 'Umar bin Al-Khattab ﷺ to lead an easy life while he was the governor of Syria. He refused any distinction over other Muslims. He was really a trustworthy man and all Muslim generations should follow his example.

So, let us read together about the man who abandoned all pleasures of life and sacrificed all he had for the service of Islam.

**Abdul Basit Ahmad**



## Introduction

### Arabs before the rise of Islam

The Arab society in the Arabian Peninsula and surrounding areas mainly consisted of tribes and clans. Some of them lived in towns while most of them followed their flocks everywhere in the desert in search of food and water. These tribes were usually involved in wars amongst each other. Every tribe was invading and invaded by other tribes.

The gloom that loomed over the Arabian Peninsula and the world in general before the rise of Islam killed nearly every virtue in the minds and hearts of human beings at that time. Human rights, for example, were not given any value. Slavery, burying girls alive and injustices were dominating the societies of the city and desert alike. Youth and old were spending their time in grazing animals or practicing trade during the daytime and seeking trivial pleasures during the night. The guidance brought by previous religions was absent from the life of the people. There was no central government; rather, every tribe had its own chief and customs in spite of the fact that some common laws were prevailing in the



society.

The people of Arabia were largely idol worshippers. A number of Jews and Christians were scattered here and there, but practice of their religions had greatly diminished. Every Arab tribe had its own deities and its own forms of worship. The Ka'bah in Makkah was itself surrounded with hundreds of idols which were considered by Makkans as gods.

All these vices and atrocities urgently needed a Messenger from Allâh to reform the society and spread guidance throughout the Arabian Peninsula in particular and the world in general.

### **Advent of Islam**

The child Muhammad ﷺ grew up in such an environment. When he became a young man, he kept himself away from the evils and vices of the day. Like other youth, he used to graze his uncle's flocks. He was well behaved and was loved and respected by all those who came in contact with him. He was well known to be sincere and trustworthy to the extent that people called him *Al-Ameen* (trustworthy). He did not like the ways that his peers were following to satisfy their desires.

He even could not bear the idea to stand before any idol pleading for help. He sometimes engaged in trade on behalf of wealthy men. It is well known that he visited Damascus twice before he was commissioned with the Message of Islam. On the way there, many signs of his Prophethood were seen by his companions and even monks living in isolation. When he was twenty-five years old, he married a wealthy woman who preferred him over the chiefs of the Quraish.

At the age of forty, Allâh blessed him with the grant of Prophethood. He started preaching the new religion to his close relatives as ordered by Allâh. After three years of calling to Islam, he was ordered by Allâh to preach Islam in public. He met hard opposition and cruel oppression, especially by his tribesmen.

The Prophet ﷺ spent thirteen years in Makkah calling the people of Makkah and its surrounding areas to accept Islam. However, he did not realize much success. He visited some nearby towns like Tâ'if to preach Islam and to seek protection against oppression. His attempts did not meet success.

The Prophet ﷺ changed his way of preaching

Islam. He began asking visitors of Makkah to provide him protection to be able to proclaim the Word of Allâh. A group of visitors from a town called Yathrib believed in the message of Islam and pledged to provide the needed protection.

The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions migrated to Yathrib (Al-Madinah). From there, they could establish their Islamic State and propagate the message to the entire world.

### **The Values and morals the Prophet ﷺ called to the values and Morals**

The first thing the Prophet ﷺ called people to adopt was to worship One Allâh. He told people that the stones they were worshipping were just stones made by them and not deserve to be worshipped. These stones were not the real creators of this vast universe. They could not bring their worshippers any good or cause them any harm. The Prophet ﷺ urged people to stop burying their daughters alive. These little girls were given the right by Allâh to live and no one should deprive them of this sacred right. He also urged them to be just to their slaves and not to be hard on them. He invited the various tribes of Arabia to stop invading each other and to unite their efforts

under the banner of Islam to become a real nation. He also preached against all vices and evils that were spreading amongst the people.

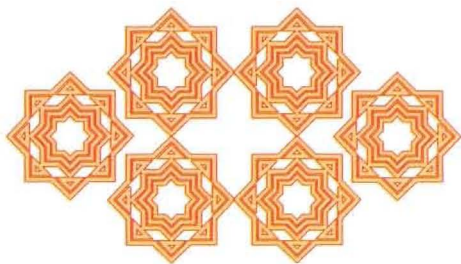
### **Followers of Islam**

In the beginning of the call, most of those who accepted Islam were weak people and slaves. They found justice and truth in the principles preached by the Prophet ﷺ. Although some of the early believers held good positions in their society, they also received their share of oppression and torture. These followers were worshipping Allâh secretly. They faced the challenge with courage and steadfastness. All means to make them abandon their faith were of no avail. The torture they received at the hands of the pagans did not succeed in making them even say one word against their faith. Some of them were even killed under torture.

### **Attempts of the Quraish to stop the Call**

The chiefs of the Quraish were furious to see Islam spread among people. In the beginning, they tried their best to make the followers of Islam recant. When they could not force the believers to give up their faith, they began accusing the

Prophet ﷺ of things that they themselves knew were false. They alleged that Muhammad was a magician or a liar, although they themselves used to call him the trustworthy. However, all their attempts were of no avail. They followed another direction. They began negotiating with the Prophet ﷺ and his uncle to reach a compromise. They told the Prophet ﷺ that they would make him a king or give him all the money he might ask for. However, the Prophet ﷺ rejected all of their worldly proposals and continued preaching the message of Islam to all humanity.



## Side by Side with the Prophet ﷺ

### Background

In spite of the corrupt atmosphere that loomed over Makkah before the advent of Islam, Abu 'Ubaidah led a life of honesty and humility. He resented the practices of pagans of Makkans and decided to keep pure and straightforward. He spent most of his time thinking of the gloom that prevailed over his society and of a way out of such darkness.

Even when he was invited by his peers to join them in fun and trivial pleasures, he preferred to keep clean and resorted to thinking about the universe and creation.

As soon as he learnt that the Prophet ﷺ was calling people to adopt a new way of life guided by Allâh, he positively responded to the message and embraced Islam.

With deep thinking, he compared the values and morals the Prophet ﷺ was preaching to the false and misguided life which the pagans were leading. He truly knew that the idols his tribesmen were worshipping were false deities. They could not offer him any good nor cause him any harm. He believed

that worshipping these idols reduced the value of reason down to the level of animals.

### **Islam introduced to Abu 'Ubaidah**

Abu 'Ubaidah was a close friend of Abu Bakr ؓ, who was the first man to believe in Islam. As soon as Abu Bakr ؓ explained to him the values and faith the Prophet ﷺ was preaching, he asked his friend to arrange a meeting with the Prophet ﷺ to hear from him directly.

Upon seeing the Prophet ﷺ and hearing the Qur'ân, Abu 'Ubaidah realized that this man was not the type of person the pagans claimed him to be. He had heard them saying that Muhammad was an enchanted man, a lunatic or a poet. They tried their best to convince others that the words the Muhammad was uttering were inspired by underworld spirits. However, they could never reach a clear explanation of the case because they were under the veil of gloom that controlled their minds and souls.

In spite of all the troubles and pressures he foresaw to befall him, Abu 'Ubaidah embraced Islam and kept side by side with the

Prophet ﷺ during this difficult period in the history of Islam. He liked the Prophet ﷺ and the new religion more than he liked himself, his family and the whole world.

### **Endurance**

As Islam was growing inside Makkah with difficulty, the new Muslims were day after day facing more oppression and harassment to make them recant. Abu 'Ubaidah had his share of agonies that made him more steadfast and more persevering. He saw how much the Prophet ﷺ was suffering in the process of calling the Makkans to Islam.

When all ways had failed to defame Islam and the Prophet ﷺ, the pagans started a new method of physical torture against weak Muslims. All the Muslims, including Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ accepted the challenge and kept patient in spite of all agonies they faced.

### **Migration to Abyssinia**

However, the Muslims felt that they could not continue their message in such a gloomy environment and under such oppression. Hence, they asked the Prophet ﷺ to find a way



to put an end to the atrocities inflicted on them by the pagans. The Prophet ﷺ asked them to leave to Abyssinia where they could find shelter. Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ found it improper to leave the Prophet ﷺ to face the oppressors alone. He decided to stay in Makkah.

### The Siege

When the Quraish used up all ways to put out the light of Islam, they decided to impose a boycott against the Muslims and Bani Hashim, the clan to which the Prophet ﷺ belonged. They besieged them within a valley called *Sha'bah Abi Tâlib* (Abu Tâlib's valley). They also wrote a pledge among themselves to cut all commercial and familial relations with the Muslims and to deprive them any source of food.

The Prophet ﷺ, Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ and other Muslims spent three tough years under the siege. They even ate everything they could find including bones and leaves of trees. However, they remained steadfast to their faith and never retreated.

The siege failed at last, but oppression

continued. The Muslims were too weak to challenge the Quraish. Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ instructed his Companions to migrate to Abyssinia for the second time. Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ and many other Muslims left Makkah to the new land to seek refuge against the oppression of the pagans.

The pagans, on the other hand, felt very angry to see the Muslims have escaped themselves. Therefore, they decided to get them back from Abyssinia. They sent an envoy to the emperor of Abyssinia to convince him to surrender the persons who had sought refuge in his land.

The envoy plotted to entice the emperor against the Muslims. He told the emperor that these people left the religion of their forefathers and resented all religions including Christianity. The emperor was a wise and just man. He brought the Muslims before him. He asked them to refute the allegations made against them. The representative of the Muslims, Ja'far bin Abi Tâlib ؓ, explained to the emperor their situation before and after the rise of Islam. He

also told the emperor that they believed that Jesus Christ was son the of Mary and a Prophet. The emperor was convinced that this group of Muslims were following the true religion. He told them that they were free to live in his land and that nobody would cause them any harm. The refugees found there much care and love and stayed several years until the Prophet ﷺ and his followers migrated to Al-Madinah.



## Migration to Al-Madinah

The Prophet ﷺ and his followers faced many hardships in Makkah. He did his best to find a shelter for the Muslims to live in peace and worship Allâh the way they liked. He went to the market every day and presented his message to visitors from outside of Makkah. However, the Quraish chiefs were always following his steps to fail his plans.

One day, the Prophet ﷺ met some visitors from a town about four hundred kilometers away from Makkah called Yathrib. He explained Islam to them and convinced them to accept it.

The Jews in the suburbs of Yathrib had always threatened the two tribes of Al-Aws and Al-Khazraj, who inhabited Yathrib, that a Prophet from the Arab land was going to appear soon. They told them that they would follow his religion and put the Arabs to sword.

So, the Prophet ﷺ asked the group from Yathrib to provide him protection in their town so he could propagate the message of Islam. The group promised him to come back next year and conclude a pledge of loyalty

with him.

The said pledge would provide protection for the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions if they migrated to Al-Madinah. Hence, the Prophet ﷺ commanded his Companions to migrate to that town.

### **Muslims' Reunion**

Upon receiving news that the Prophet ﷺ and the other Muslims escaped the Quraish and migrated to Al-Madinah, Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ and his migrant companions left Abyssinia to join their fellow Muslims in the new Islamic State.

The migrants from Abyssinia were met with warm welcome. The people of Al-Madinah provided them with all means of livelihood and took them as brothers in Islam.

This reunion gave Abu 'Ubaidah a chance to share in building the new Islamic State and to exert his best efforts to make it strong and lasting.

He shared with the other Muslims in building the first mosque of Islam and worked hard to foster the faithful relations among brother Muslims.

## The Real Test

The Muslims settled in Al-Madinah under the protection of the *Ansar* (supporters). But the Quraish forced and threatened the polytheists of Al-Madinah to provide help to them against Muslims. Upon this Allâh allowed the Muslims to fight the Quraish in self-defense.

### The First battle against the Idolaters

The Muslims began patrolling outside Al-Madinah for security purposes. They received the news of a Quraish caravan nearby. They went towards it to check it. Abu Sufyan, the leader of the caravan, got the news of Muslims coming towards them, in fear of their attack, he changed his direction and managed to escape the Muslims. At the same time, he sent a warning message to the Quraish that their trade caravan was in danger.

The Quraish chiefs were furious to hear such news. They collected an army of about one thousand men armed to their teeth and marched toward Al-Madinah to rescue the caravan. On their way to Al-Madinah they received news that the caravan escaped the

Muslims and that there was no need for them to continue their march.

However, some chiefs of the Quraish were very arrogant. They were intent on undermining the Muslims and Islam. They insisted on continuing their march to stop the threat of the Muslims.

The Muslims received news of the huge army marching to Al-Madinah to put an end to their existence and faith. They were still weak and lacked the resources to fight back. However, the Prophet ﷺ consulted with his followers on the best way to face the threat. At last, they concluded that they should challenge the Quraish in an open battle in spite of the fact that they did not have equal power. They believed that Allâh would not forsake them. Three hundred and thirteen soldiers headed to a place near to Al-Madinah called Badr to meet the army of the Quraish.

Although the army of the Quraish was three times their number with more horses and better arms, the Muslims were determined to fight their first battle against tyranny. Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ was fully prepared to

fight those who caused many harms to him and his comrades. He felt very strong because he believed that Allâh was supporting them.

### **Faith or Father**

The battle started fiercely. Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ was doing his best to prove that the Muslims were stronger. To his surprise, he saw his father fighting with the army of the Quraish. His father also took notice of him and was determined to kill his son. He had already taken an oath that if he met his son, he would not let him live a minute longer. His son had abandoned his gods (idols) and followed the religion of Islam.

Both father and son met face to face. Abu 'Ubaidah's position was so critical. He was hesitant to kill his father. He did his best to avoid his father. It was really a hard test. However, the father insisted on killing his son.

Both father and son exchanged blows. Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ had no choice but to defend his faith and life. So, he killed his father.

Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ felt very sad for that. He thought that he did a great sin. However, a



Verse of the Qur'ân came down praising his act:

"You will not find any people who believe in Allâh and the Last Day loving those who resist Allâh and His Messenger, even though they were their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their kindred. For such he has written faith in their hearts and strengthened them with a spirit from Himself." (58:22)

Now Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ was satisfied that he did the right thing. He knew that to defend his faith was better than to keep good relations with his disbelieving father.

### **More challenges, more Perseverance!**

Two years later, Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ had to face another challenge. The Quraish chiefs received a big defeat in the battle of Badr. Therefore, they decided to revenge themselves on the Muslims. They gathered a huge army of three thousand soldiers including their allies and marched to Al-Madinah with an objective to fight their last battle against the Muslims.

The Muslims discussed the threat. Some of

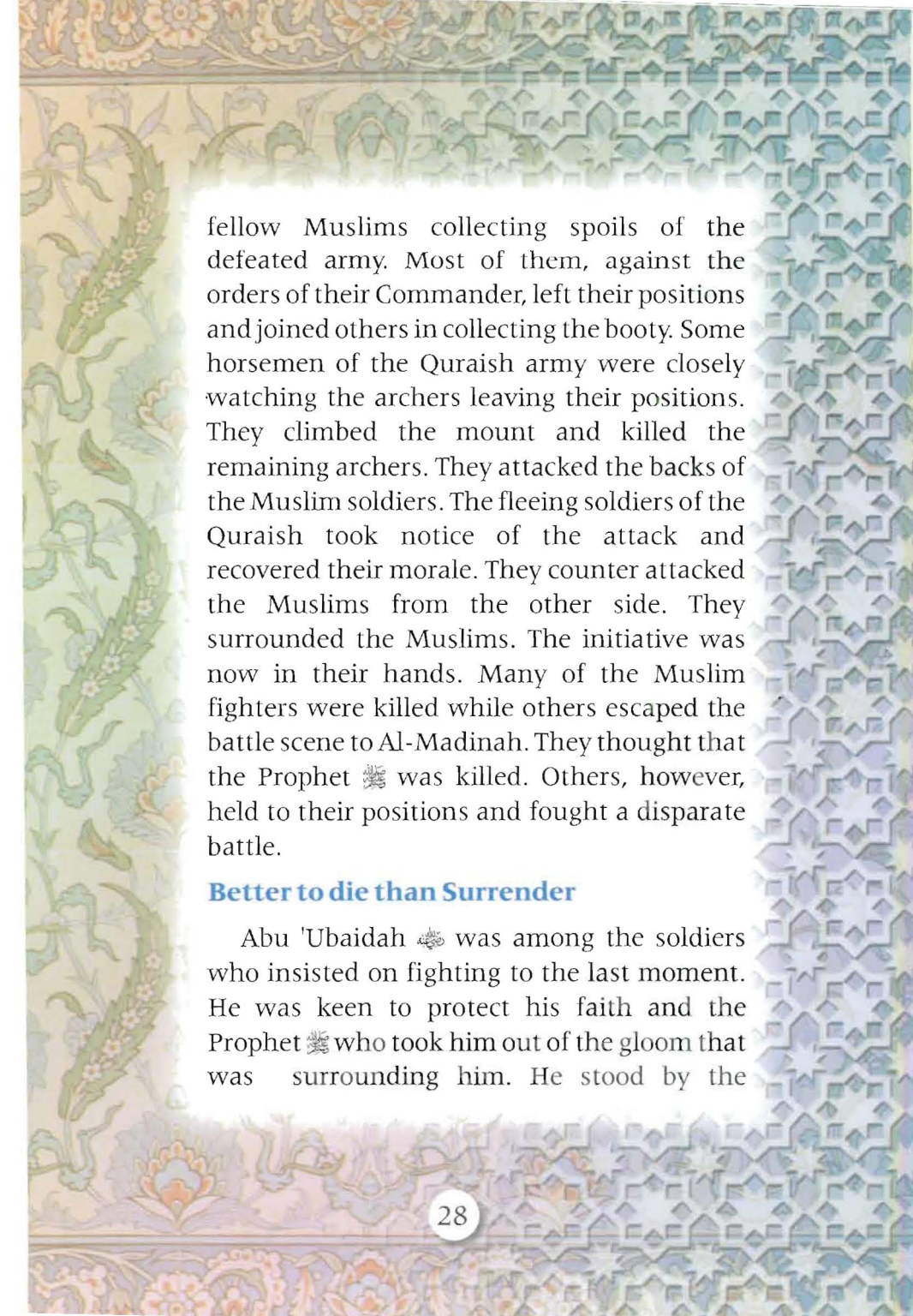
them thought it would be better to keep inside Al-Madinah and defend it against invaders. Others, however, saw that they should not give the pagans any idea that they feared to fight them in an open battle. Finally, it was decided to fight the invaders in an open battle.

The Muslims gathered an army of one thousand men and headed to Uhud Mount to challenge their enemies. However, some hypocrites, who had already chosen to keep inside Al-Madinah, withdrew with about a third of the army and left back to Al-Madinah. The Muslims were in a very critical position but they strongly believed in Allâh's support.

The Prophet ﷺ commanded fifty archers to take their positions over a small mount near the battle scene to protect the backs of the Muslim army. He ordered them to hold to their positions whatever the result of the battle might be.

### **The Defeat**

As the battle started, the pagans began fleeing the battle scene and Muslims were behind them. It was about to be a striking defeat to the pagans. The archers saw their



fellow Muslims collecting spoils of the defeated army. Most of them, against the orders of their Commander, left their positions and joined others in collecting the booty. Some horsemen of the Quraish army were closely watching the archers leaving their positions. They climbed the mount and killed the remaining archers. They attacked the backs of the Muslim soldiers. The fleeing soldiers of the Quraish took notice of the attack and recovered their morale. They counter attacked the Muslims from the other side. They surrounded the Muslims. The initiative was now in their hands. Many of the Muslim fighters were killed while others escaped the battle scene to Al-Madinah. They thought that the Prophet ﷺ was killed. Others, however, held to their positions and fought a disparate battle.

### **Better to die than Surrender**

Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ was among the soldiers who insisted on fighting to the last moment. He was keen to protect his faith and the Prophet ﷺ who took him out of the gloom that was surrounding him. He stood by the

Prophet ﷺ and other Companions fighting with all his might. He was astonished to see an arrow hit the Prophet's face. The Prophet ﷺ fell down and was about to be killed. Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ ran toward the Prophet ﷺ. He saw two chains of the Prophet's armor going into the cheeks of the Prophet ﷺ. In such a terrible situation, Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ had no time to look for options. He bit the chains with his front teeth and removed them out of the Prophet's face. In doing so he lost his own two front teeth. However, he continued defending the Prophet ﷺ until the end of the battle.

### The Trench

Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ was also one of the Muslims who shared in digging the trench to protect Al-Madinah against the pagans. The pagans gathered from all parts of the Arabian Peninsula to give Islam and the Muslims the final and fatal blow. Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ spent many days and nights guarding the weak points of the trench lest any of the confederates' soldiers tried to cross over the trench and attack Al-Madinah. He was a witness to how much the Prophet ﷺ trusted

that Allâh would not leave them alone in the confrontation and how much the Prophet ﷺ was confident that Islam would spread all over the world. He heard the Prophet ﷺ saying when he was breaking the rocks that hindered the progress of work:

“Allâh is the greatest, I have been given the keys of Syria, Persia and Yemen.”

### **The military Commander**

Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ was commissioned by the Prophet ﷺ to lead many military efforts Against the Arabs who were plotting to harm the Muslims and stop the spread of Islam. In all such efforts, he proved to be the loyal and faithful soldier.

Some of the Arab tribes around Al-Madinah were now and then trying to harm the Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ commissioned Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ to put an end to their assaults against the properties of the Muslims. Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ with his companions stopped their offences.

He was also commissioned by the Prophet ﷺ to intercept a caravan of the Quraish near the seashore. They waited for the caravan for a

long time. Their supply of food vanished. Hence, they were forced to eat tree leaves and grass. At last, Allâh brought them a huge dead whale by the shore. They kept eating from the whale until they became fat. They brought some meat when they came back to Al-Madinah and gave the Prophet ﷺ some of it.

The Romans on the northern borders of Arabia tried to conclude a pact of allegiance with the Quda'a tribes to cause disruption to the Muslim state. The Prophet ﷺ commissioned 'Amr bin Al-'Aas ؓ to fight them. 'Amr saw that he, with the small group of fighters, could not fight the enemy. He sent an envoy to the Prophet ﷺ asking for support. The Prophet ﷺ commissioned Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ to lead two hundred soldiers to support the fighters led by 'Amr bin Al-'Aas ؓ. When both groups met together, 'Amr bin Al-'Aas ؓ told Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ that he was the first to lead the army and that Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ was sent as support to him. Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ, although he preceded 'Amr in accepting Islam, did not object to Amr's words. He did not object to being like any soldier in the army as long as the objective was to spread the Word of Allâh.

Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه joined the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Muslims in every military or civil effort in support of Islam and the Muslims. He took part in the battle to conquer Khaibar and expel the Jews who were always conspiring to destroy the message of Islam.

Even when other leaders contested his leadership, he humbly gave them all the power they wanted because he considered himself fighting for a greater and more sublime objective than mere power and authority.

### **Back to the Homeland**

The Muslims and the Quraish held a truce for a period of ten years. The agreement provided peace for both sides and brought many tribes and clans to Islam.

The Quraish broke its promise of stopping war against the Muslims for ten years. They attacked some Muslims and killed them. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was now ready to conquer Makkah. He prepared a huge army and divided it into wings. His Companions marched toward Makkah. Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه led one of those unarmed factions and entered

Makkah in a peaceful manner. First, he thought that the Prophet ﷺ would revenge himself against those who stood against him. However, he highly admired the acts of the Prophet ﷺ. He saw how much the Prophet ﷺ was merciful to the Makkans who treated him badly, forced him to leave the city which he loved very much and fought many battles against him with the intent to destroy his Message and undermine his new born state. He entered Makkah leading thousands of soldiers unarmed to show the Arabs that Islam was not a religion that aimed at killing, but at preaching with mercy.

Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ shared in all the battles that the Prophet ﷺ initiated against the pagans all over the Arabian Peninsula, to deter them and to stop their aggression against Islam and the Muslims.

He sadly listened to the Prophet ﷺ bidding them farewell and teaching them the final principles of Islam during his farewell address.



## The Trustworthy

Abu 'Ubaidah was a man of good character and morals. The Prophet ﷺ loved him very much. No one of the followers of the Prophet ﷺ could claim to be as trustworthy in the eyes of the Prophet ﷺ as Abu 'Ubaidah was.

### The trusted Envoy

A delegation from Najran came to Al-Madinah to negotiate an agreement with the Prophet ﷺ. They agreed with the Prophet ﷺ to provide them protection for *Jizyah* (a sum of money). After concluding the treaty, They asked the Prophet ﷺ to send one of his Companions to their land to collect the *Jizyah*. They told the Prophet ﷺ that such a man should be trustworthy to the utmost. The Prophet ﷺ told them that he would send 'a truly trustworthy man with them.' All those present were keen to know who was that man whom the Prophet ﷺ meant. It was a great honour for every one of them to be that man.

The next day, many of the Prophet's followers were present in the mosque to perform *Zuhr* (noon prayer). Everyone was eager to know the man whom the Prophet ﷺ

considered as the trustworthy. Many of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ were hoping to have that honour. They listened carefully to the Prophet ﷺ when he called Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ to assume that huge responsibility. The Prophet ﷺ held Abu 'Ubaidah's hand and said:

“Every *Ummah* has a trustworthy man; Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ is the trustworthy man of this *Ummah*.”

### Sublime Objectives

Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ was the best example of trust and honesty to the last moment of his life. He was taught by the Prophet ﷺ that nothing in this life is equal to purity of soul and body and that nothing in this life is equal to the promised reward on the Day of Judgment for those who keep honest and trustworthy.



## Self Denial

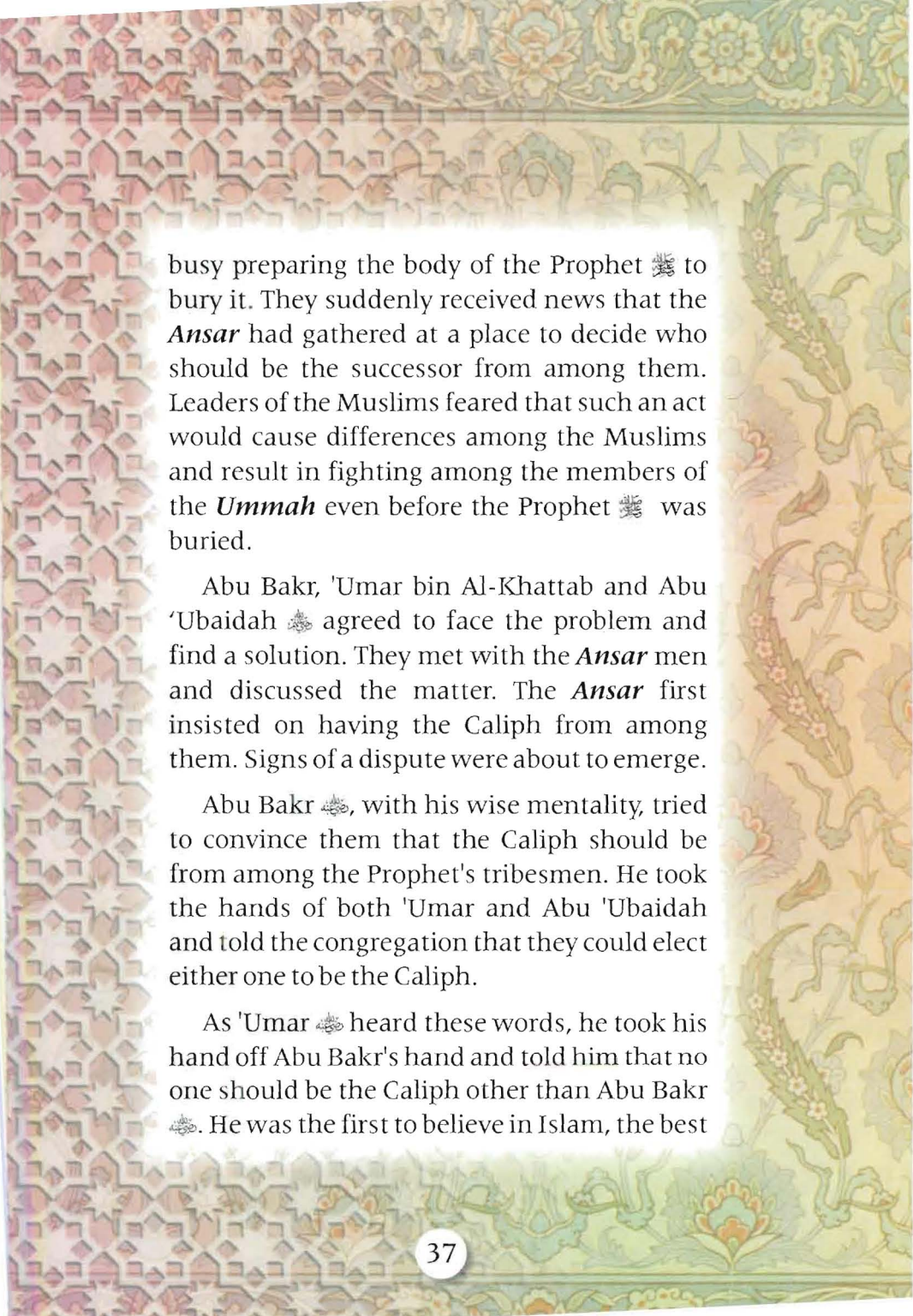
Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه continued his struggle for the sake of Islam. Whenever the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him to carry out any mission, he fulfilled such mission properly.

To his grave sorrow, he lost the person who taught him to be a real man of honour and dedication. Some days after the completion of the farewell pilgrimage, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his followers returned to Al-Madinah to continue their efforts in building their Islamic State. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, however, fell ill and finally passed away like any other human being.

Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه felt as if the world around him had changed. At first, he could not believe that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had passed away and that the nation was left alone to decide on its future. He was well aware that by the death of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, revelation would cease to come down. However, he was sure that the last Verses of Qur'ân revealed to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم made it clear that the religion had now become complete and perfect.

## Wisdom and Action

Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه and other Muslims were



busy preparing the body of the Prophet ﷺ to bury it. They suddenly received news that the *Ansar* had gathered at a place to decide who should be the successor from among them. Leaders of the Muslims feared that such an act would cause differences among the Muslims and result in fighting among the members of the *Ummah* even before the Prophet ﷺ was buried.

Abu Bakr, 'Umar bin Al-Khattab and Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ agreed to face the problem and find a solution. They met with the *Ansar* men and discussed the matter. The *Ansar* first insisted on having the Caliph from among them. Signs of a dispute were about to emerge.

Abu Bakr ؓ, with his wise mentality, tried to convince them that the Caliph should be from among the Prophet's tribesmen. He took the hands of both 'Umar and Abu 'Ubaidah and told the congregation that they could elect either one to be the Caliph.

As 'Umar ؓ heard these words, he took his hand off Abu Bakr's hand and told him that no one should be the Caliph other than Abu Bakr ؓ. He was the first to believe in Islam, the best

believer and the one who sacrificed all he could to firmly establish Islam.

Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه, on the other hand, wept and told Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه that it was shameful for him to be put in a position superior to the first believer and closest follower of the Prophet ﷺ. He absolutely rejected to be elected as Caliph and preferred to remain a humble member of the Islamic *Ummah*.

Both 'Umar and Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنهما took the hand of Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه and pledged to obey him in everything he said or did. By this action, all other Muslims, both migrants and supporters, were convinced that the best man was elected for the position of the Caliph. They all advanced to pledge obedience to the new Caliph.

Such an act by Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه clearly shows us how much he exercised self denial, how much was looking for eternal things and how much he was loyal to the faith he believed in and sacrificed all his treasures to keep high and sublime.



## The Great Commander

During the life of the Prophet ﷺ, he was running all affairs of the state under the guidance of Allâh. All matters related to religion were decided through revelation while worldly things were decided through consultation between the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions.

After the Prophet ﷺ had passed away, revelation ceased and it was now the role of the Muslims to draw on what they had achieved during the life of the Prophet ﷺ. It was, however, a difficult job to be borne by one single person. Therefore, when Abu Bakr ؓ took over, he began organizing the affairs of the continually broadening state on the basis of sharing powers with his Companions. He appointed Khalid bin Al-Waleed ؓ as Commander General of the state army, 'Umar ؓ as the state judge and Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ؓ as the treasurer.

It was the time when every effort was needed to help protect the emerging state and when all were for one and one for all. All powers that hid enmity toward Islam had now

raised their heads and declared enmity clear and loud.

The Romans were furious to see Islam spreading so quickly and so strongly. Even Arabs in some parts of the Arabian Peninsula found it a good chance to rebel after the death of the Prophet ﷺ.

### **The Conqueror**

Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ was destined to face all these challenges like any other Muslim loyal to his faith. Hence, he was commissioned by Abu Bakr ؓ to march to Syria to stop the threats of the Romans forever. Three other armies were also commissioned to the other parts of Syria under the command of 'Amr bin Al'Aas, Yazid bin Abi Sufyan and Shurahbeel bin Masna ؓ. All were given instructions that if and when they meet, their General Commander would be Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ.

The four armies marched to Syria and met together at a place called Al-Yarmouk. Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ was amazed upon seeing the huge number of soldiers deployed by the Romans. He discussed the problem with his staff and all agreed to inform Abu Bakr ؓ of the situation

and to ask him to dispatch them more soldiers.

### **More and more Self Denial**

Khalid bin Al-Waleed ﷺ was already commissioned by Abu Bakr ﷺ to fight the Persians in the east. To face the huge Roman army, Abu Bakr ﷺ instructed Khalid ﷺ to leave the eastern front and join Abu 'Ubaidah's army. He told him to take over as Commander General of the combined army.

As Khalid ﷺ reached Al-Yarmouk, he informed Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ of the Caliph's instructions. Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ immediately obeyed the orders and shared in fighting as an ordinary soldier. His main objective was not to be anything else than a loyal soldier of Islam under the leadership of any other Muslim.

The Muslim army could, through strong belief in the support of Allâh, challenge the Roman army, defeat them and dismiss Hercules out of Syria.

While the battle was hot, a messenger from Al-Madinah came to inform Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ that Abu Bakr ﷺ had passed away, that 'Umar bin Al-Khattab ﷺ was selected as Caliph and



that he had a message from 'Umar ﷺ to him.

The message contained an order from 'Umar to appoint Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ as Commander General in place of Khalid ﷺ. Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ read the message and asked the messenger to keep it secret as long as the battle was under the command of Khalid ﷺ.

As the battle ended with a great victory for the Muslims, Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ informed Khalid ﷺ of the message. Khalid ﷺ read the message, advanced and kissed Abu 'Ubaidah's forehead. He was so influenced by the way Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ acted. He exclaimed!

"Why did you not tell me before?"

Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ replied:

"I did not like to confuse you. You know it is not worldly things that we look for. We are all brothers."

Khalid ﷺ accepted the instructions of the Caliph with loyalty and continued his struggle against disbelief under the command of Abu 'Ubaidah.

Such an attitude by both men showed how much they were devoted to only one objective;

that was, to raise the Word of Allâh high and to spread Islam all over the world.

### **The humble Governor**

Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه continued his mission until he, with the Muslim army, spread his control over all of Syria. Hence, 'Umar رضي الله عنه commissioned him to be the Governor of Syria and Commander General of the largest Muslim army. Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه, however, acted like any other humble soldier of his army. Powers and posts did not make him feel proud over others.

He heard that the people of Damascus admired his morals much and were praising him in their conversations. He feared that he might feel any kind of self-admiration.

Hence, he asked them to gather at one place and addressed them saying:

“O People, I am a Muslim from the Quraish. Anyone among you, whether white or black, who outweighs me in piety, then he shall be my master.”

### **The poor Governor**

'Umar bin Al-Khattab رضي الله عنه, the Caliph,

decided to visit Syria. Upon his arrival to Damascus, he asked people to take him to Abu 'Ubaidah's house. He found it a humble house empty of all features of pleasure. He blamed Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ for being so hard on himself. 'Umar ﷺ asked Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ to bring him some food. Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ brought him a basket of some dry and rough bread. 'Umar's tears roll down on his cheeks. He addressed Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ:

“We all have changed except you.”

'Umar ﷺ instructed his treasurer to send Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ some money. Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ, however, refused to accept the money and told 'Umar ﷺ:

“I am not working for you. I am working for Allâh's sake. For that I will not accept any worldly compensation.”

"Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ lived a poor Governor. He felt the agonies of the poor and the needy and gave them most of his salary. He could not lead a life of pleasure or enjoy any moment of his life while he knew that all he was doing would be calculated either for him or against him on the Day of Judgment.

## Preaching Morality

Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه always advised his Companions to be clean inside as well as outside. Whenever he had a chance to preach to people, he was urging them to be pious and self-restrained. Even he was so brave as to advise 'Umar رضي الله عنه himself when he took over rule to shoulder his responsibilities in a good manner and to consult the notable Muslim personalities.

The last commandment he made before he passed away in Jordan was:

"O People, I would like to advise you. If you listen to my advise, you will surely live in peace: Perform prayers, fast Ramadhân, give alms, perform pilgrimage, advise your rulers and do not be misled by worldly things, for if you live one thousand years you will finally end the same as I end now. Allâh has Prescribed death on human beings. The best among them is the most loyal to his Lord and the most knowledgeable of the Day of Judgment."

## The noble Man

Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه was one of the best

Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. He ﷺ himself commended him as the nation's trustworthy of the Muslim *Ummah*, and even he foretold that Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ would be one of those who would be accepted in Paradise. He was the fighter who spent all his life supporting the message of Islam even under the worst conditions.

'Umar bin Al-Khattab ؓ admired Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ so much so that he wished to have thousands like him. 'Amr bin Al-'Aas ؓ said:

"There are three men from the Quraish, most notable, best in morals and most bashful. They never lie or deny others. They are Abu Bakr , 'Uthman bin 'Affan and Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ؓ"

away in Jordan. He joined the Prophet ﷺ and his dear Companions in the eternal life.

May Allâh bestow his mercy on and bless Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ for the services he rendered to Islam and the Muslims.



## The End of the Journey

As Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ and his soldiers were marching through Syria and surrounding lands, they were inflicted with plague. 'Umar bin Al- Khattab ؓ felt sad for Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ and requested him to come back to Al-Madinah immediately. However, Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ refused to return to Al-Madinah and told the messenger that he would never escape from the act of Allâh.

He wrote a letter to 'Umar ؓ saying:

"O Commander of the believers, I know that you need me. However, I am with some Muslim soldiers whom I do not like to leave alone. So, I would like to ask you to leave me with my soldiers.

"Umar ؓ received the letter and cried much for losing such a great man.

Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ became very sick and bedridden. He said to those around him:

"Pass my greetings to the Commander of the believers and tell him that I have fulfilled all my obligations."

Some days later, Abu 'Ubaidah ؓ passed