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Abū Qutaydah Ansārī, the Brave Youth

Abū Qutaydah Ansārī's complete name is Harith ibn Rib'ah Ansārī. In Islamic history, he is popularly known by the pseudonym of Abū Qutaydah. According to the scholars of history, Abū Qutaydah is one of the most renowned and prominent companions [*sahābah*] of the Prophet (S). He always risked his life courageously for the sake of Allah and the advancement of Islam.

Abū Qutaydah Ansārī was a very brave horseman; he participated in the war of Uhud, and was always seen fighting next to the Noble Prophet (S) in the other wars that came to pass during the time of Allah's Prophet (S), to such an extent that he was famously known as the commander of the Prophet's (S) artillery. He was such a famous warrior that whenever a duty was entrusted to him, he used to perform it to perfection and return to Medina victorious.

One of the wars in which Abū Qutaydah participated was the Battle of Dhī Qard, at a place adjacent to the residential village of Banū Qatfān near Medina. This confrontation occurred in the month of Jumādī al-Awwal in 6 AH. Abū Qutaydah Ansārī came to Allah's Prophet (S) and volunteered to enlist for this battle. Abū Qutaydah Ansārī was twenty four years of age at that time, being born eighteen years before the migration.

Abū Qutaydah, a brave warrior, though young, killed Ibn 'Uyaynah, the leader of the opponents. Abū Qutaydah Ansārī then covered the infidel's dead body with his own clothes. When the Muslim soldiers who were returning saw this scene, they mistakenly thought that Abū Qutaydah had been killed, but the Noble Prophet (S) told them what Abū Qutaydah had done.

In this war, and after the martyrdom of two people, the Muslims managed to defeat the infidel tribe of Qatfān and returned to Medina with victory.

In addition to the other worthy services which Abū Qutaydah rendered to Islam, he was present during the conquest of Khaybar. Like every other true Muslim, he possessed special love and affection for the Noble Prophet (S) of Islam. It is for this reason that he used to make the most of every possible opportunity to show his appreciation of the Holy Prophet (S), and behave respectfully towards him.

The Noble Prophet (S), too, loved Abū Qutadah very much. It is for this reason that the Noble Prophet (S) made this supplication for him, “May Allah protect you in the same way that you protected his Prophet (S) from danger”¹

[Abū Qutadah Next to ‘Alī ibn Abū Tālib \(‘a\)](#)

After the sad demise of the Noble Prophet (S), Abū Qutadah followed ‘Alī ibn Abū Tālib (‘a), as the rightful successor of Allah’s Prophet (S). He did not deviate from the right path because he knew and could perceive the original axis or pivot of the government and Islamic leadership. He could easily distinguish which people had the right and capability of leading the Islamic community after the sad demise of Allah’s Prophet (S). It was for this reason that after the Noble Prophet’s (S) death, he was always by ‘Alī’s side.

During the apparent leadership of ‘Alī (‘a), neither the negative and misleading propagation against Imam ‘Alī (‘a) by Mu‘āwiyah, nor the wars of Siffīn, Nahrawān and Jamal managed to shake his faith. On the contrary, he courageously stood by ‘Alī ibn Abū Tālib (‘a) like a strong and firm mountain in all the wars that the enemies of Islam imposed on the Imām (‘a) during his reign.

Abū Qutadah Ansārī was not only a warrior but a loyal and trustworthy Muslim, who possessed managerial and organizational skills as well. It was for this very reason that during the caliphate of Imām ‘Alī (‘a), he was appointed as the governor of Medina by the Imām.

He not only protected ‘Alī ibn Abū Tālib (‘a) on the battlefield, but also defended ‘Alī (‘a) through wise discourses and always sided with him at public discussions. He used to dispute with ‘Alī’s (‘a) opponents logically and forcefully till they were convinced of the truth of his words. Some of these conversations took place between him and ‘U’ishah, the Khawārij, Khālid ibn Walīd and Abū Bakr. All these discourses are a proclamation of the high and revered personality of this great struggler [*muji‘hid*].

Abū Qutadah Ansārī died in 54 AH after long years of struggle and devotion to Islam and the Muslims.

Some historians have stated that Abū Qutadah Ansārī died during the caliphate of Imām ‘Alī (‘a), and that it was actually Imām ‘Alī (‘a) who performed his last rites and laid him to rest.²

¹. Zarkulī, Al-A‘lām, vol. 2, p. 54; Al-‘Ibar, vol. 1, p. 41; Tārīkh-e Baghdād, vol. 1, p. 59; Usd al-Ghābah, vol. 5, p. 274; Al-Is‘bah, vol. 4, p. 458; Al-Istī‘āb, vol. 4, p. 461; Ibn Hishām, Al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyah, vol. 3, p. 293; Hayāt al-Sahābah, vol. 1, p. 57; Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, Al-Musnad,, vol. 5, p. 298.

². Al-Is‘bah, vol. 4, p. 162; Al-As‘bah, vol. 4, p. 158; Usd al-Ghābah, vol. 5, p. 275; Qāmūs al-Rijāl, vol. 10, p. 165; Al-Darajāt al-Raf‘ah, p. 351; Al-Fusūl al-Muhimmah, p. 146; Tārīkh-e Tabarī, vol. 3, p. 243.

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