



The Prophet's Companions





In the Name of Allah,
the Most Gracious,
the Most Merciful



The Prophet's Companions

A companion of the Prophet is a person who physically met Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), believed in him and died as a believer. The Prophet's companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) are the best of mankind after the prophets and are the best generation of the Muslim

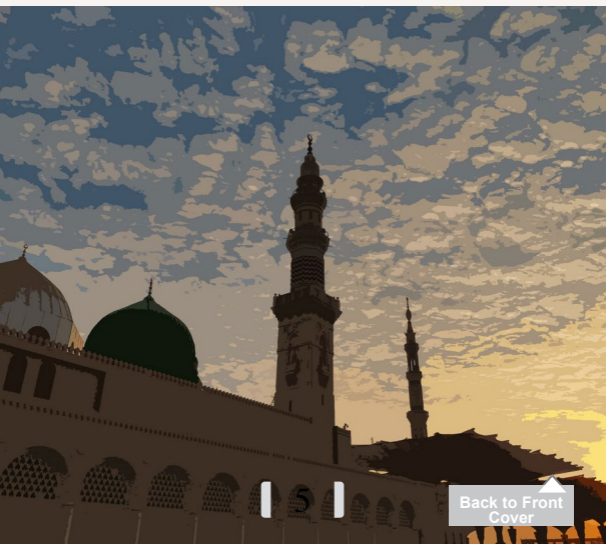
community. As the Prophet says: ‘The best of mankind is my generation’. “The best of my community are my generation’.

All of them were people of high integrity, because Allah chose them to be the companions of His Prophet. He commended them, was pleased with them, accepted their repentance of their sins, described them in the most honourable terms and promised them the best reward. Allah says:

“Muhammad is Allah’s Messenger; and those who are with him are firm and unyielding towards the disbelievers, full of mercy towards one another. You can see them bowing down, prostrating in prayer, seeking favour with Allah and His good pleasure. They bear on their faces the marks of their prostrations. This is how they are pictured in the Torah. And in the Gospels, they are like a seed that brings forth its shoot,

strengthens it, grows thick and stands firm on its stem, delighting the sowers. Through them Allah will enrage the unbelievers. To those of them who believe and do righteous deeds Allah has promised forgiveness and a rich reward.” (48: 29).

Nevertheless, they are of different ranks, both as communities and as individuals.





Community differences include:

One: The Muhajirin are higher in rank than the Ansar

This is because the Muhajirin combined immigration from their homeland with supporting the Prophet. Moreover, they were mentioned by Allah in the Qur'an before the Ansar. Allah says:

“[Such gains are for] the poor migrants who have been driven out of their homes and possessions, seeking Allah’s

favour and His acceptance, and who help Allah and His Messenger. These are the ones who are true. And to those who were already firmly established in the Home and in faith, those who love the ones that seek refuge with them and harbour no desire in their hearts for whatever the others may have been given. They give them preference over themselves, even though they are in want. Those who are saved from their own greed are truly successful.” (59: 8–9)

“As for the first to lead the way, of the Muhajirin and the Ansar, as well as those who follow them in [the way of] righteousness, Allah is well-pleased with them, and well-pleased are they with Him. He has prepared for them gardens through which running waters flow, where they shall abide forever. That is the supreme triumph.” (9: 100).

“Allah has assuredly turned in His mercy to the Prophet, the Muhajirin and the Ansar, who followed him in the hour of hardship, when the hearts of a group of them had almost faltered. Then again He turned to them in mercy; for He is compassionate towards them, ever-merciful.” (9: 117).





Two: The ones who spent money and fought for Islam before the Al-Hudaybiyah peace treaty are of a higher rank than those who did so afterwards

Allah says: ‘Those of you who gave and fought [for Allah’s cause] before the victory are not like others: they are higher in rank than those who gave and fought afterwards, although Allah has promised the ultimate good to all of them. Allah is well aware of all that you do.’ (57: 10).



Three: The people of Badr

Those who took part in the Battle of Badr have a special distinction. In the case of Hatib ibn Balta[ah, the Prophet said to Umar: ‘He [Hatib] took part in Badr. How would you tell: Allah might have looked at the people of Badr and said: “Do as you like; I have forgiven you all?”’



Four: Those who gave the al-Ridwan pledge

Allah says: ‘Allah was indeed well pleased with the believers when they pledged their allegiance to you under the tree. He knew what was in their hearts and so He sent down tranquillity upon them, and rewarded them with a speedy victory.’ (48: 18). The Prophet said: ‘None of the people who gave their pledges under the tree will enter Hell, Allah willing’.

Individual distinction applies as follows:

One: The four rightly-guided Caliphs

The highest distinction in the Muslim community goes to Abu Bakr, then to Umar ibn al-Khattab. This is universally agreed by the Sunni people. It is authentically reported in more than 80 versions that Ali said, as he was speaking from the platform in the main mosque in Kufah: ‘The best people in the Muslim community after the Prophet were Abu Bakr then Umar’. Needless to say, Ali would not have said this without firm evidence.

Next comes Uthman ibn Affan. Al-Bukhari relates a *hadith* narrated by Abdullah ibn Umar: ‘We used to draw comparisons between people during the Prophet’s time. We gave the best positions to Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman’. In another version, he adds:

‘This was reported to the Prophet and he did not object’. Sufyan al-Thawri said: ‘Whoever puts Ali ahead of Abu Bakr and Umar shows no respect to the Muhajirin and the Ansar’, because they chose Abu Bakr and Umar to be Caliphs first. Next comes Ali ibn Abi Talib. Thus, their ranking is the same as the order in which they became Caliphs.



Two: The ones promised entry into heaven

These were the four rightly-guided Caliphs, Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf, Saad ibn Abi Waqqas, Talhah ibn Ubaydillah, al-Zubayr ibn al-Awwam, Abu Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah and Saeed ibn Zayd. May Allah be pleased with them all. The Prophet stated that these ten will be in heaven. Other texts indicate that heaven was assured to Bilal, Thabit ibn Qays and Abdullah ibn Sallam.

Three: Members of the Prophet's household

These are five familial branches who are forbidden to take charity. These are the descendants of Ali, Ja'far, Aqil, the sons of Abu Talib, and the descendants of al-Abbas and al-Harith ibn Abd al-Muttalib. The Prophet says: 'Allah, the Mighty, the Exalted, chose Kinanah out of the Ismail's descendants, and

from Kinanah He chose the Quraysh. He then chose the Hashimites from among the Quraysh and chose me out of the Hashimites'. 'I remind you to fear Allah in [your attitude to] my household. I remind you to fear Allah in [your attitude to] my household'. Al-Abbas ibn Abd al-Muttalib complained to him that some of the people of Quraysh distanced themselves from the Hashimites. He said to him: 'By Allah, no one will have faith unless he loves you on account of your being my relatives'.



Needless to say, the Prophet's honourable wives belonged to his household. Allah says: 'Allah only wants to remove all that is loathsome from you, you members of the [Prophet's] household, and to purify you fully.' (33: 33). Allah chose them for His messenger and He made them his wives in this present life and in the life to come, and He gave them the title 'Mothers of the Believers'. The most distinguished among them were Khadijah, then A'ishah bint Abu Bakr. The rest were Sawdah bint Zimaah, Hafsa bint Umar, Umm Salamah, Umm Habibah bint Abu Sufyan, Safiyyah bint Huyay, Zaynab bint Jahsh, Juwayriyyah, Maymunah and Zaynab bint Khuzaymah. May Allah be pleased with them all.

Our duty towards the Prophet's companions, irrespective of their grades of distinction is as follows:



- A** To love and be loyal to them, to pray that Allah may be pleased with them and forgive them their sins, and to praise them as individuals and community. Allah says: ‘The believers, men and women, are friends to one another.’ (9: 71). ‘Those who come after them pray: “Our Lord! Forgive us and forgive our brethren who preceded us in faith. Leave

no malice in our hearts towards those who believe. Lord, You are compassionate, ever merciful.' (59: 10). The Prophet says: 'The mark of faith is to love the Ansar, and the mark of hypocrisy is to hate the Ansar''. **Ali said: 'By Him who splits the seed and creates man it is the unlettered Prophet's promise to me that "None but a believer loves me and none but a hypocrite hates me".'**

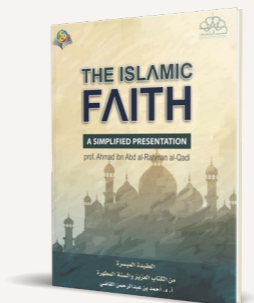


- B** To keep our hearts free of any ill-feeling towards them and to refrain from any verbal abuse to any of them. Allah says: '[Our Lord], leave no malice in our hearts towards those who believe. Lord, You are compassionate, ever merciful.' (59: 10). The Prophet says: 'Do not revile my companions. By Him who holds my soul in His hand, if any of you spends [for Allah's cause] the like of Mount Uhud in gold, he would not attain the equivalent of the fill of the cupped hands of any one of them, or even half of that'.

- C** To refrain from making any judgement about their differences, giving them every benefit of good intention and stating that they all acted to the best of their discretion. As such, they were either right and they would earn double reward, or wrong and they would earn a single reward. They have done great acts in the service of Islam and exerted their best efforts. All this should earn them the forgiveness of their sins, if any.
- D** To dissociate ourselves from the practice of the Shia, who exaggerate the high status of the members of the Prophet's household and go too far in hating and reviling the Prophet's other companions. Also to dissociate ourselves from the practice of others who dislike and criticise members of the Prophet's household.

This is an excerpt
of a larger book titled
**“The Islamic Faith,
A Simplified Presentation”**
by Abd Ar-Rahman
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