

**INTRODUCTION**

Sayyidunā 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ عَنْهُ is a prominent Sahābī of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ noted for his knowledge of Qur'ān and Fiqh. He was born approximately 17 years after Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. He was a uniquely short and a skinny man with a dark complexion. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ gave him the agnomen Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān while his title was Ibn Umm 'Abd. [Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā']

**ISLAM**

Once while he was shepherding sheep for 'Uqbah ibn Abī Mu'ayt, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ came with Abū Bakr رَضِيَ عَنْهُ. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ requested him to milk a virgin sheep, and miraculously, milk began pouring out of its udder. He embraced Islam after witnessing this miracle. [Musnad Ahmad]

He was the twenty second person to accept Islam and is thus from the Early Forerunners among the Muhājirīn who have been graciously praised by Allah سُبحانه وتعالى in the Glorious Qur'ān. [Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā']

**HIJRAH & BATTLES**

Sayyidunā Ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ عَنْهُ emigrated to Abyssinia and Madīnah. He accompanied Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in all the major battles. He participated in Badr, Uhud, Khandaq, Khaybar, Hunayn, Tabūk, and the Conquest of Makkah. He reports details of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ during each battle, which indicates his closeness to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. In the epic Battle of Badr, he gave the final fatal blow to the Pharaoh of this Ummah, Abū Jahl, facilitating his despatch to Hell. [Sunan Abi Dawud]

During the khilāfah of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رَضِيَ عَنْهُ, he continued his Jihād and fought in the Wars of Apostasy. He also participated in the Battle of Yarmūk and the Conquest of Hims. [Tārikh Tabarī]

**SERVICE TO RASŪLULLĀH صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ**

He remained attached to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and served him diligently. During travel, he would lay

Rasūlullāh's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ sleeping mat and keep his miswāk, shoes, and ablution water container. [Al-Tabaqāt al-Kubrā]

**KNOWLEDGE OF QUR'ĀN**

Sayyidunā Ibn Mas'ūd رَضِيَ عَنْهُ had a great attachment to the Qur'ān. He is reckoned as one of the most proficient Qurrā' of this Ummah and a distinguished Mufassir of the Glorious Qur'ān. He admits, "By the One besides Whom there is no deity, there is no Sūrah in the Book of Allah except that I know where it was revealed and the reason behind its revelation." [Sahīh Muslim] He has the distinction of being the first individual after Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to recite the Qur'ān publicly in Makkah. [Sīrah ibn Hishām]

He learnt a great portion of the Qur'ān directly from Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and he says:

By Allah! I have learnt approximately seventy Sūrahs directly from Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. By Allah! The Companions of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ know that I am the most knowledgeable regarding the Book of Allah. However, I am not the best of them. [Sahīh Muslim]

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ commanded his Companions:

Learn the Qur'ān from four people: From Ibn Umm 'Abd ('Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd), Mu'ādh ibn Jabal, Ubayy ibn Ka'b and Sālim—the freed slave of Abū Hudhayfah.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ listed his name first. [Sahīh al-Bukhārī]

He also commanded:

Let him who wishes to read the Qur'ān as it was sent down, read according to the qirā'ah of Ibn Umm 'Abd (i.e. 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd). [Musnad Ahmad]

**FIQH**

Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ عَنْهُ gave him orders to proceed to Kūfah and teach the people Qur'ān and develop their understanding of Dīn.



He disseminated the knowledge of Qur'an and Sunnah, leaving close to 4000 knowledgeable men in the city. Sayyidunā 'Alī رضي الله عنه was pleased to see so many Fuqahā' in Kūfah and remarked, "May Allah have mercy on Ibn Umm 'Abd. He has certainly filled this area with knowledge." "The students of 'Abd Allāh were the lanterns for this city," remarked Sa'īd ibn Jubayr. [Al-Kawtharī: Fiqh Ahl al-'Irāq wa Hadīthuhum] The Fuqahā' among the Sahābah would advise their students to cling to Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه, attesting to his extensive knowledge. [Fiqh Ahl al-'Irāq wa Hadīthuhum]

Sayyidunā 'Umar رضي الله عنه described him as a container full of knowledge. [Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'] Sayyidunā Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه told the people, "Do not ask me anything as long as this erudite man is among you." [Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā']

## VIRTUES

Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم stated:

I am satisfied for my Ummah with what Ibn Umm 'Abd is satisfied with. [Al-Mustadrak]

Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم announced:

If I were to appoint anyone a leader without any consultation, I would appoint Ibn Umm 'Abd ('Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd). [Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī]

Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم commanded:

Take as examples the two after me from my Companions, Abū Bakr and 'Umar; act upon the guidance of 'Ammar; and hold fast to the advice of Ibn Mas'ūd. [Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī]

Once, Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم commanded 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd to climb a tree and bring him something from it. His Companions looked at 'Abd Allāh's shin and laughed at its thinness. Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Why are you laughing? 'Abd Allāh's foot is heavier in the Balance than the mountain of Uhud." [Al-Tabaqāt al-Kubrā]

Sayyidunā 'Alī praised him in the following words:

He read the Qur'an, had a deep understanding of Dīn, and was knowledgeable of the Sunnah. [Al-Tabaqāt al-Kubrā]

## SUBLIME QUALITIES

Sayyidunā Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه was habitual in performing Salāt al-Tahajjud, as was the practice

of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم. His habit was to complete one recital of the Qur'an in a week out of Ramadān and in three days during Ramadān. [Al-Sunan al-Kubrā] He fasted every Monday and Thursday in emulation of the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم. [Al-Tabaqāt al-Kubrā] So engrossed he was in the remembrance of Allah, that his son says that it was difficult for his father to speak anything aside from the remembrance of Allah. [Majma' al-Zawā'id]

Despite his lofty rank in Islam, he thought little of himself and did not allow people to honour him. Moreover, he was totally content with Allah's Decree and wished not to be except in the condition Allah kept him in. [Sifat al-Safwah]

People told Sayyidunā 'Alī رضي الله عنه:

We have not seen a man better in character, gentler in teaching, better as a sitting companion, and more Allah fearing than 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd. [Al-Tabaqāt al-Kubrā]

"The person who resembled Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم in his ways, character, and in being an embodiment of Dīn was Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه," says 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Yazīd. "Ibn Mas'ūd would be away from us and in the house of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Companions of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم who were protected by Allah from any verbal or physical evil knew that Ibn Umm 'Abd was the closest from among them to Allah." [Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā']

## ADVICES

He said, "A person is not born as a scholar. Knowledge comes with learning." [Ihyā al-'Ulūm al-Dīn] He told his students, "Become sources of knowledge, lanterns of guidance, carpets of your house (i.e. stay indoors and away from fitnah), lanterns of the night [worship at night], clean hearted, and adorn simple clothes—you will be recognised in the sky and you will be hidden from the people on the earth." [Jāmi' Bayān al-'Ilm]

## DEMISE

He passed away in Madīnah in 32 AH at the age of 63. [Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā']

This is a brief biography of the Faqīh and Qārī' of the Ummah, Sayyidunā 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه, may Allah سبحانه وتعالى inspire us to appreciate his fragrant biography, absorb his extensive knowledge, and emulate his ways.



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