

companions to those between spouses, for both companionship and marriage give rise to rights and obligations. He dedicates Book XV of his magnum opus, *Ihyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, to “Etiquettes of Companionship, Brotherhood, and Cohabitation” (*Kitāb ādāb al-ṣuḥba wal-akhuwwa wal-mu'āshara*), where he elaborates that the intimacy of companionship entails eight duties: material assistance; personal aid; holding one’s tongue; speaking out; forgiveness; supplication; loyalty and sincerity; and relief from inconvenience and discomfort (*Ihyā'*, 4:69-141).

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See also: ABŪ BAKR; ANGELS; ANONYMOUS MENTIONS; ARK; CAVE; COMMUNITY; COMPANIONS OF THE PROPHET; DAY OF RECKONING; FACE OF ALLAH; FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP; GRAVES; HEIGHTS; HELL; HIJRA; AL-KHADIR; MADYAN; MŪSĀ, UPON HIM BE PEACE; PARABLES OF THE QUR'ĀN; PARADISE; PARENTS; PEOPLE OF AYKA; PEOPLE OF THE CAVE; PEOPLE OF THE

ELEPHANT; PEOPLE OF THE PIT; PEOPLE OF AL-RASS; SABBATH; SHU'AYB, UPON HIM BE PEACE; THAMŪD; YŪNUS, UPON HIM BE PEACE; YŪSUF, UPON HIM BE PEACE.

MUZAFFAR IQBAL AND NAJAH NADI AHMAD

COMPANIONS OF THE PROPHET

AṢḤĀB AL-RASŪL, ṢAḤĀBA

This article comprises the following sections: i. Definitions; ii. The Door of Companionship; iii. The Qur'ānic Mentions; iv. Their Tests, Trials, and Divine Succor; v. A Dynamic and Transforming Time; vi. Integrity; vii. Fallibility viii. Their Merits in (a) the Qur'ān and (b) Hadith; ix. Divine Honoring; x. Spiritual Etiquettes; xi. Their Love for the Qur'ān; xii. Transmitters of the Qur'ān xiii. Love for the Prophet; xiv. Role in the Preservation of the Qur'ān and Hadith; xv. Ranks and Categories; xvi. Total Number; xvii. End of the Era of the Companions; xviii. Scholarly Literature; xix. Bibliography.

Definitions

The term Companions of the Prophet, *aṣḥāb al-Rasūl*, often abbreviated to *ṣaḥāba* (sing. masc. *ṣaḥābī*; fem. *ṣaḥābiyya*) conjugates the verbal noun (*maṣdar*) of the verb *ṣaḥiba* (“he associated, kept company”)—from the root *ṣ-ḥ-b*, which bears the fundamental meanings of close relationship (*muqārana*, *muqāraba*) and cohabitation (*mu'āshara*) (Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs*; Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*; Fayrūzābādī, *Qāmūs*)—with one of the designations of the Prophet Muḥammad, “*Rasūl*; the Messenger” to form a construct which denotes a special use of the noun *ṣaḥīb*, distinct from its usual linguistic definition, yet remaining anchored in some ways in the basic meaning of the noun *ṣaḥīb*, which denotes anyone “who accompanies another, may it be a human being, animal, place, or time, and whether the companionship is physical—which is its original sense and the most common usage—or through concern or attention (*bi-l-ināya wa-l-himma*), as the poet says, ‘even if you are out of sight, you are not absent from my heart’ (Rāghib; cf. Farāhīdī; Jawharī; and Fayrūzābādī). “In common parlance (*al-urf*), however, *ṣaḥīb* (companion) is not used except for someone who generally accompanies another. The owner of a thing is called its *ṣaḥīb*; likewise, the one who has ownership rights” (Rāghib).

The Qur'ānic usage of the noun *ṣaḥīb* generally

denotes groups of people—companions of the Cave (*aṣḥāb al-kaḥf*, *q.v.* cf. Q18:9); companions of Madyan (*aṣḥābu madyan*, Q 22:44); companions of Paradise (*aṣḥābu-l-janna*, Q 2:82); companions of the Fire (*aṣḥābu-l-nār*, Q 2:217), but in three verses (Q 7:184; 34:46; 53:2), the Prophet, upon him blessings and peace, is called companion of the people to whom he was sent, and in one verse (Q 9:40), *ṣāḥib* is used for his companion Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, Allah be pleased with him (*q.v.*), and when he said to his companion, do not grieve (Q 9:40), which refers to the words of the Prophet to him during their Hijra (*q.v.*) journey together, when the two of them were in the cave. For more on the Qurʾānic usage of the noun *ṣāḥib*, see COMPANION.

Technical Definitions

A precise determination of who was a Companion of the Prophet is of crucial importance for the authenticity of Islam, because the Companions were the first transmitters of the Qurʾān and the Prophetic life. Therefore, be it a verse of the Qurʾān or one of his sayings, and it is only through a fully attested companionship that such transmission becomes authentic. The establishment of companionship also helps to differentiate between a *muttaṣil* (“connected”) and a *mursal* (*lit.* “hurried”) report, meaning a narration that is missing a link to the Prophet, thus going from a Follower to the Prophet without a Companion; another type of *mursal* is when a follower of the Followers (*ṭabīʿ al-ṭabīʿīn*) relates from a Companion, thus missing the linking *ṭabīʿ* (see, e.g., Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Maʿrifat*, al-nawʿ al-ṭāsiʿ, maʿrifat al-mursal; Nawawī, *Sharḥ Muslim*, faṣl fī al-ḥuruf mukhtaṣira).

One of the first definitions to be found in sources is by Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. ʿUmar b. Wāqid al-Aslamī (*ca.* 130–207/747–823), a historian and biographer of the Prophet—who is commonly known as al-Wāqidī. He defined a Companion as “anyone who saw the Prophet, upon him blessings and peace, after attaining adulthood (*al-ḥulum*), and who embraced Islam in a state that he understood issues of the Religion and was satisfied with them”, regardless of the duration of his company (*ṣuḥba*) with the Prophet, be that “even for an hour, but his Companions have different ranks according to the length of time of their Islam (*wa taqaddumihim fī-l-Islām*)” (*Uṣd*, muqaddima Ibn al-Athīr, faṣl nadḥkuru fihī man yuṭlaq ʿalayhi isma al-ṣuḥba).

Ḥadīth Scholars

Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Muḥḥira al-Juʿfī al-Bukhārī (194-256/810-870), the

author of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, defines a Companion as “anyone from among the Muslims who accompanied (*ṣaḥiba*) the Prophet, upon him blessings and peace, or saw him (*aw raʾāhu*)” (Kitāb aṣḥāb al-nabiyy ṣallā-Llāhu ʿalayhi wa sallama, bāb faḍāʾil aṣḥāb al-nabiyy ṣallā-Llāhu ʿalayhi wa sallama). This early definition was, however, inadequate for the more exacting demands of the legal theorists (*al-uṣulīyyīn*), as Taqī al-Dīn Abū ʿAmr ʿUthmān b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, generally known as Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ (d. 643/1246), the foremost hadith specialist of the seventh/thirteenth century and the author of the seminal *Muqaddimah fī ʿUlūm al-Ḥadīth* (“Introduction to the Sciences of Hadith”) points out—after referring to al-Bukhārī’s definition and adding the definition of Abū al-Muzaḥfar al-Samʿānī al-Marwazī (506-562/1113-1166), who also applied the term *ṣaḥābī* without qualification of length of time of the companionship to “anyone who related from the Prophet a Hadith, or even a single word,”—that the reason for such latitude is the nobility of the status of the Prophet (*li-sharfi manzilati-l-nabiyy ṣallā-Llāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*); they granted the status of Companion to anyone who saw him,” meaning, they did not want to deny anyone the high status of Companionship. However, he says,

Literally, and in common parlance, the noun *ṣaḥābī* applies only to those who had companionship of the Prophet—upon him blessings and peace—for an extended period of time, who often sat with him, followed his practices and took from him; and this is the definition of the theorists. I say, as already mentioned, [Abū Muḥammad] Saʿīd b. al-Musayyib [(15-94/637-715), one of the foremost jurists from among the Followers (the generation succeeding the Companions, Dhahabī, *Siyar*, Juzʾ 4, No. 88], did not regard as a Companion anyone who had not stayed with the Messenger of Allah for at least a year or two and who did not fight with him one or two battles. If the report is correct, then it reflects the position of the legal theorists. However, there is some difficulty in his choice of expression because it necessitates that we not regard as a Companion Jarīr b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Bajlī [Abū ʿAmr, or Abū ʿAbd Allāh, Jarīr b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Bajalī (d. 50/670), who converted to Islam some forty days prior to the death of the Prophet; Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *Istiʿāb*, 1:236-40] and others like him who fall short of fulfilling, in a literal sense, the stipulated condition, whereas counting them among the Companions has never been questioned. [Furthermore], we have narrated from Shuʿba