

ON THE TRUTHFULNESS OF ABŪ HURAYRAH IN NARRATING *HADĪTH*

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ABSTRAK

Artikel ini membicarakan keotoritian Abū Hurayrah r.a. sebagai perawi Hadith mencakupi dua pandangan yang bertentangan antara satu dengan yang lain. Pandangan pertama coba mempertikaikan keotoritian beliau dengan mengemukakan pelbagai alasan dan kritikan terhadap beliau, manakala pandangan kedua mempertahankan keotoritian dan keabsahan beliau sebagai perawi Hadith yang bertanggungjawab dan jujur dengan mengemukakan pelbagai bukti bagi menyokong pandangan tersebut. Hasil daripada perbincangan yang diutarakan membuktikan Abū Hurayrah r.a. adalah seangkatan dan setaraf dengan sahabat-sahabat Baginda Rasulullah s.a.w. yang lain dalam keotoritiannya meriwayatkan Hadith dan beliau tidak pernah melakukan perkara yang boleh menggugat keabsahan beliau sebagai perawi.

INTRODUCTION

The acceptance of the Companions (*Ṣaḥābah*) of the Prophet Muḥammad (p.b.u.h) is not equal in the heart of the *ummah* (Muslim community). It is because of human capacity of them, so that there are some differences of acceptance. It was predicted by the Prophet himself when he explained

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the positions of the Companions besides himself. To this story, al-Shāfi'ī,¹ narrated from Imām Mālik, tell about the Prophet's saying:

إن الله اختارني واختار أصحابي فجعلهم أصهاري وجعلهم أنصاري وإنه
سيجيء في آخر الزمان قوم ينتقصونهم الا فلا تناكحوهم الا فلا تناكحوا
إليهم الا تصلوا معهم الا فلا تصلوا عليهم حلة العنة.

Genuinely Allah has chosen me and chosen my Companions, Allah made them as my family and my assistances. And surely (next) in the end of the day there will be a group discredit the Companions, so remember! Don't you even wed them (the discredit makers), and also don't even your (children) be wedded by them, don't also you pray with them, and don't also pray for them (in grave). For, it is legal for them to be cursed (Narrated by al-Shāfi'ī).

During the era of the Companions, that is, after the death of the Prophet, the narration of *Ḥadīth* (Tradition of the Prophet) was expanded. The Companions told *Ḥadīth* in their circumstances or to the *tābi'īn* (the followers: a generation of the *ummah* who only met the Companions and not the Prophet). Here, then, there was a controversial examination to the roles of the Companions in narrating *Ḥadīth*, owing to the absence of legal justification whenever differences of narration no a *Ḥadīth* happened. It was because that the position of the Prophet could not be replaced by anyone else. The only way to solve the problem was consultation (*shūrā*) among the Companions, and examined the case from the perspective of intimacy between the Prophet and the Companions in discussion, who was the closest and who had the more knowledge about the Prophet's attitude on the matter being discussed. As an example, the was a controversial *Ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurayrah to other Companions on the illegitimate (*baṭal*) of fasting for a Muslim who woke up after the sun ascended while he had a *junūb* (unholy condition for performing a worship such as *ṣalāt* or fasting because of natural reason such a menstruation or doing some activities such as sexual penetration).

This narration had been a polemic among the Companions. The Companions became aware that the only way to solve the problem was asking to the Companions who had more knowledge on the Prophet's attitude in the case. They finally agreed that the more who had knowledge on the Prophet's domestic life were the Prophet's wives. So, they asked them and the answer

¹ See, *Muqaddimah al-'Awāṣim min al-Qawāṣim* (n.d.), Muḥib al-Dīn al-Khāṭib, (ed.) Cairo: Dār al-Maṭba'ah Salafiyah, p. 34.

that the *fatwā* (legal opinion) of the case saying that Abū Hurayrah's narration was true.

Besides, something problematic in narrating *Ḥadīth* in the area of the Companions was existence of a narration regarded as deviant from the usual tradition of the narrating itself, such as when a *tābi'īn* told a *Ḥadīth* to the Companions, not the reverse. For example, Abū Hurayrah accepted a *Ḥadīth* from Ka'b al-Akhbar, a *tābi'īn*. And this case has been discussed by the critics of *Ḥadīth* until today. This discussion is expanded, not merely in the context of searching the truth, but also has been burdened by various interests, signalled as propaganda of some political streams. Here, then, the Companions had been the objects of being discredited, and this, surely, produced a long tradition of apologetically and anti-theistic attitudes from one generation to the next of the *ummah*.

The criticism to the Companions seems to be appeared in line with the emergence of political rupture among the Companions, so that the stream of the narration of *Ḥadīth* was being disturbed. The illustration is this: a *Ḥadīth* told through the heart, while the heart itself was being bothered by a passion to defend the sides being regarded as the true sides. This stigma also happened to the neutral and moderate '*ulamā*' (Islamic scholars) of *Ḥadīth*. It is likely that the '*ulamā*' were not aware of a *Ḥadīth* told by Sufyān ibn Uyaynah, a *tābi' al-tābi'īn* (the followers of the followers; they who met the *tābi'īn*, but not the Companions), accepted by al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadīr al-Jīlānī, that the Prophet says:²

من نطق في أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بكلمة فهو صاحب هوى.

Whoever made a statement, even only a word, to discredit the Companions of the Prophet, surely he followed merely his passion.

This statement supports a maxim in the science of *Ḥadīth*, made by the '*ulamā*' of *Ḥadīth*, saying that all Companions of the Prophet are truthful ('*ādil*). In the sense that they have angelic soul (*malakah*), that is, having the characteristics a honest and dignity (*murū'ah*), being clean from any wrong doing and misconduct.

² 'Abd al-Mun'im Ṣāliḥ al-'Alī al-Azī (n.d.), *Difa`an Abi Hurayrah*, Beirut: Dār al-Qalam, p. 30 quoting *Ghanī li Ṭālib Ṭarīq al-Ḥaqq*, vol. I, p. 79.

EVALUATION TO THE TRUTHFULNESS OF ABŪ HURAYRAH

Stories of the life of the Companions, especially they were who closely related to the narration of *Ḥadīth*, were variously written and observed by the ‘*ulamā*’ of *Ḥadīth*, or even by the Orientalists and the Muslim writers. Some writers question about some parts of the stories of the Companions. Consequently, it affects to the validity of a *Ḥadīth* which was regarded before as cogent (*ṣahīh*). One of the doubts is referred to Abū Hurayrah, one of the Companions regarded as the most prolific narrator of *Ḥadīth*.

For the critics, Abū Hurayrah is only someone who intelligently searched popularity among the Companions, especially after the death of the Prophet, and preserved his popularity by acting as if he accepted many *Ḥadīth* from the Prophet and then circulated those *Ḥadīth* dishonestly. They also regard Abū Hurayrah as the enemy of Islam mantled by his popularity and examine all of his defects as a human being and regard him as the most dishonest Companion.

‘Ajjāj al-Khaṭīb³ describes their criticisms to Abū Hurayrah, as accused by Ibrāhīm ibn Yasar al-Niḍam saying that the great Companions such as ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī and ‘Ā’ishah extremely doubted the *Ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurayrah. Even Bashar al-Mārisī from ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb said that Abū Hurayrah was the most disbelieved *muḥaddīth* (narrator of *Ḥadīth*).

The accusations addressed to Abū Hurayrah were also elucidated by ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn saying that *Ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurayrah were denied by all humans in his age and he was the distrusted one among the Companions. An ‘*ālim* (Islamic scholar) of Mu‘tazilah, some writers say that he was a Shi‘ite ‘*ālim*, that is, Imām Abū Ja‘far al-Iskāfī, said that ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb had ever hit Abū Hurayrah owing to his telling too many *Ḥadīth* and he was angry too because of Abū Hurayrah’s lying in the name of the Prophet.

Shaykh Maḥmūd Abū Rayyah passionately criticizes Abū Hurayrah as only the one who crazily ate cakes (*Shaykh al-Muḍīrah*). Abū Rayyah even writes his book under the title *Shaykh al-Muḍīrah Abū Hurayrah*. Abū Rayyah⁴ explicates that ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ever said: there is no other Companion than this man of al-Daws (Abū Hurayrah) who dishonest most on the Traditions of the Prophet.

³ Ajjāj al-Khaṭīb (1981), *al-Sunnah Qabl al-Tadwīn*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, p. 455.

⁴ Abū Rayyah (1969), *Aḍwā ‘alā al-Sunnah Muḥammadiyyah*, Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, p. 135.

Non-Muslim orientalisists like Sprenger and Kramer say that Abū Hurayrah is: “the extreme of pious humbug”.⁵ In other words, Abū Hurayrah made those *Ḥadīth* by a drive to be a holy man, not being motivated to tell a lie.

O. Hashem in his book *Saqifah Awal Perselisihan Ummat [Thaqīfah as the Beginning of Ummah's Schism]*, sharply criticizes Abū Hurayrah. In this book, Abū Hurayrah is described as a man who had weak personality, and that ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb had ever hit him until bleeding after his duty from Baḥrayn as its governor. ‘Umar did that because Abū Hurayrah was accused to hide the *bayt al-māl* treasure, and titled him as the enemy of Allah and the enemy of the Muslims (*‘aduww Allāh wa ‘aduww al-muslimīn*). ‘Umar also did not trust *Ḥadīth*, even a single, narrated by Abū Hurayrah, and forbade him telling *Ḥadīth*.

O. Hashem also criticizes the way Abū Hurayrah played his political position. He accuses him as being a split politician. This double political role of Abū Hurayrah is seen when he approved Mu‘āwiyah in political arena, whereas in the field of religion supported ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. There was a story that he said: “It was delightful to eat on the table with Mu‘āwiyah and it was perfect to pray behind ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib.”

The *Ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurayrah reached the amount of 5374. To compare to all *Ḥadīth* narrated by all four *al-Khulafā’ al-Rāshidūn*, (the Righteous Caliphs) this amount is clearly major. Abū Bakr narrated 142 *Ḥadīth*, ‘Umar of 537 *Ḥadīth*, ‘Uthmān of 146, and ‘Alī of 586 *Ḥadīth*; the sum of all four only of 1411 *Ḥadīth*, and it means only 21% of all *Ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurayrah himself. Also, this amount closes in number to the Qur’ānic verses.

It is said that ‘Umar threatened to hit Abū Hurayrah if he told a *Ḥadīth*. Abū Hurayrah also admitted that he did not brave to say even a *Ḥadīth* in the era of ‘Umar. ‘Ā’īshah said that she did not hear the Prophet say anything told by Abū Hurayrah. ‘Alī entitled him as the *ummah*’s liar. The leading figures of the early *‘ulama’* said also like that. Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā says that if Abū Hurayrah passed away before ‘Umar, the *ummah* would not inherit the *Ḥadīth* full by superstition (*khurāfāt*), *ishkālāt* (problematic), *isrā’īliyyat* (stories told by the Jews), and *irrational Ḥadīth*.

It is also said that Abū Hurayrah was often being a witness of an event, although he did not there in the location. He only lived during a year and nine months under outer roofs (*ṣuffah*) of the Prophet’s mosque in Madinah,

⁵ See, H.A. R. Gibb & Kramer (1961), *Shorter Ecncyclopedia of Islam*, London, p. 10.

that is, in between Šafar year 7th of the Hijrah (after the migration), until Dhū al-Qa‘dah year 8th of the Hijrah. After that, he was in Baḥrain. Nevertheless, he told reports as a witness of events happened before and after that period. For example, he told that the Prophet ordered Abū Ṭālib to recite *shahādah* (the confession that there is no god but Allāh and that Muḥammad is the messenger of Allāh), when that ‘Alī’s father was dying, but Abū Ṭālib refused it. So that Abū Ṭālib died in a condition of an infidel. In fact, Abū Ṭālib passed away three years before the Hijrah, and Abū Hurayrah was only in the beginning of appearance in Muslim’s society 7th year after the Hijrah, that is, ten years after the death of Abū Ṭālib. And he told this *Ḥadīth* as an eyewitness. So, it is understood when Mu‘āwiyah gave him some amount of money for this narration of *Ḥadīth*. It is said that such kind of *Ḥadīth* of Abū Hurayrah is very much.

O. Hashem continuously criticizes Abū Hurayrah. He says that the early Muslim writers had seen the weaknesses of *Ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurayrah. The Muslim researchers verily knew that Abū Hurayrah got the stories of Old Testament from Ka‘b al-Akhbār during almost thirty years of friendship between the two, before he told his *Ḥadīth* in the era of Mu‘āwiyah.

O. Hashem’s criticism, however, seems not originally his own. He likely follows Abū Rayyah’s examination on Abū Hurayrah in the famous book: *Aḍwā ‘alā al-Sunnah al-Muḥammadiyah*. In this book and his other book, *Shaykh al-Muḍīrah Abū Hurayrah*, Abū Rayyah questions the belief of *Ahl al-Sunnah* (Sunrites) who thrust fully to the truthfulness of Abū Hurayrah, and regard him as the Companion who had very much *Ḥadīth*, even though his association with the Prophet was only in a short time.

From about the name, Abū Rayyah doubts the true Abū Hurayrah as a complete personality, both before and after being a Muslim. Abū Rayyah quotes the statement of Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr in his book of *al-Isti‘āb* saying that the name of this Companion is debatable whether in his own name or in his father. The differences of opinion on this could not be hold as a sound (*mu‘tamad*) evidence in his name during the era before or after being a Muslim.

The contradiction brings about some doubts and that there is no reliable name to be hold as true. His *kunya* (nick name) known as ‘Abū Hurayrah’, proves that he had no name. And his famous *kunya* made people forget his original name, which is controversial.

Besides his name, something debatable in Abū Hurayrah is his origin, except his own acknowledgment that he was a poor man, who can only eat from his hard work helping other people’s domestic work. It is said that he

originated from Banī ‘Ushayrah Salīm Ibn Fahm of Azdī clan of al-Daws, Yemen, South Arabia.

It is also said that Abū Hurayrah in his early association with the Prophet really showed his good intention, but it is not to be taken that he accompanied him on the basis of love and grace, as other Companions did. He accompanied the prophet for the reason of his safety belly, as told by Abū Hurayrah himself as narrated by Aḥmad, Bukhārī, and Muslim.

It is told that Abū Hurayrah ate daily at the Prophet’s or other Companions’ house, so that some of the Companions were bored by his coming. Abū Hurayrah was *Shaykh al-Muḍīrah*, a title to be given by ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, when the former was seen to eat the very delicious cake, *al-Muḍīrah*, with Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān. So, having prayed behind ‘Alī, he told the story of delicious cake in the Mu‘awiyah’s party, then ‘Alī called him the title.⁶

Shaykh al-Muḍīrah means a humiliation for the attitude of Abū Hurayrah who had split personality: he said that the best position for praying was behind ‘Alī, while in political life the best position was under Mu‘āwiyah. Here, then, for some historians, Abū Hurayrah was not only vogue in eating, but also had a good sense of humour, so that attracted people’s attention, and at the same time told many *Ḥadīth* by his sense of humour. In other words, Abū Hurayrah deceived people by telling *Ḥadīth* in order to be believed. Surely, however, he played with *Ḥadīth* and made his stories become *Ḥadīth*. Abu Hurayrah narrated many *Ḥadīth* until the amount of 5374 *Ḥadīth*. In his affirmation, however, the Companion most likely to *narrate Ḥadīth* was ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Aṣ an admitted that ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr wrote those *Ḥadīth* besides memorized them. Whereas Abū Hurayrah was limited only in memorizing. It is for this reason that he was hit until bleeding by ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb, who was famous for the prudence and carefulness in narrating *Ḥadīth*.⁷

Abū Rayyah gives an example how Abū Hurayrah told a lie. It is about a *Ḥadīth* saying that for whoever wakes up late during fasting while he is in unholy condition, there is no fasting for him at that day. This *Ḥadīth* was reported by al-Tirmidhī from Abū Hurayrah. This *Ḥadīth* was opposed by other Companions, and Abū Hurayrah admitted that he got the *Ḥadīth* from al-Faḍāl ibn ‘Abbās, and not directly from the Prophet.⁸

⁶ Abū Rayyah (1969), *op.cit.*, p. 171.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 167-174.

⁸ Abū Rayyah (n.d.), *Shaykh al-Muḍīrah Abū Hurayrah*, Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, p. 135.

From the above story, Abū Rayyah sees that it is clear about dishonesty done by Abū Hurayrah in the name of the Prophet, whereas he did not hear the *Ḥadīth* from the Prophet. Fortunately, this lie happened in the era of the Prophet, so that the Prophet knew it. But what happened, then, when there was no Prophet, and also no ‘Umar? Here, Abū Hurayrah freely narrated *Ḥadīth*, so that there are many *Ḥadīth* narrated by him which are not suitable with the real context of time.

Abū Rayyah quotes a statement of Rashīd Riḍā about the case of ‘Umar and Abū Hurayrah that if ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭab had a long age over the age of Abū Hurayrah, there would possibly be no *Ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurayrah in our literature today.

Abū Hurayrah taught many *Ḥadīth* compare to other great Companions such as the Companions called as the *al-Khulafā’ al-Rāshidūn* (the Righteous Caliphs) and the ten Companions guaranteed by the Prophet as those who would enter the heaven, the great Companions from the *Muhājirīn* (the migrants) and the *Anṣār* (the helpers), and many other leading figures of the Companions. Those Companions other than Abū Hurayrah who had very little in narrating *Ḥadīth* were not because of they had no time, but because of their prudence, and not driven by passion such as done by Abū Hurayrah.

Some scholars of *Ḥadīth* say that Abū Hurayrah was a liar who smartly hides his own defects. He could not say honestly about his own name, for example. And that Abū Hurayrah’s defects are various. Legally speaking, he is absolutely deceitful. So also, the ‘*ulama*’ of *Ḥadīth* did not like him because of his *tadlīs* (dishonesty). According to the ‘*ulama*’ of *Ḥadīth*, *tadlīs* is the brother of lying. Because, verily, whoever had a defect (*jarḥ*), like the accusation of *tadlīs* in his narration, all narrated by him is denied; even that his defects were not known except only once, as said by al-Shāfi’ī.⁹

Abū Rayyah also quotes the statement of Abū Ja‘far al-Iskāfi in *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* vol. I, p. 360, saying that ‘Umar hit Abū Hurayrah, and also quotes Ibn al-Athīr saying that because of too many *Ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurayrah, people doubt about the truth of the narration.¹⁰

Abū Hurayrah was also a Companion accepted *Ḥadīth* from the *tābi‘īn*,¹¹ such as from Ka‘b al-Akhbār. This Ka‘b al-Akhbār was a Jew pretending to

⁹ Abū Rayyah (1969), *op.cit.*, p. 175.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

¹¹ In the science of *Ḥadīth*, such narration is called *riwāyah al-akābir* ‘*an al-aṣāghir*, (narration of the major from the minor of the Companions of the Prophet) or *riwāyah al-ṣaḥābah* ‘*an al-tābi‘īn* (narration of the Companion from the follower).

be a Muslim. What Ka‘b’s believed in his heart was not Islam, but the truth of Jewry. And Abū Hurayrah was one of the Companions deceived by Ka‘b al-Akhbār, by getting many *Ḥadīth* from him. The *Ḥadīth* narrated by Ka‘b al-Akhbār are only the Jewish stories (*isrā’iliyyāt*), burdening reason with superstitions such as a *Ḥadīth* on a tree in heaven, where its shadow can only be gone through by a hundred year of driving.

Al-A‘mashī also said about the dishonesty of Abū Hurayrah, that is, when Abū Hurayrah arrived in Iraq together with Mu‘āwiyah, when a war happened between Mu‘āwiyah’s troop and ‘Alī’s in the year of 4st of the Hijrah. At that time, when Abū Hurayrah entered the mosque he kneeled down his body and hit his own bare head several times saying: “O, the people of Iraq! Do you think that I lie to Allāh and His Messenger causing me burnt next in the hell?”

This statement is evidence that dishonesty done by Abū Hurayrah to those of his admittance of *Ḥadīth* from the Prophet was widely spread and famous to various lands, and only being discerned by him when he was in Iraq. His dishonesty causes people talk about it in every single time and place.

The polemic on the truthfulness of the Companions in narrating *Ḥadīth*, especially on the truthfulness of Abū Hurayrah had been a long journey, more exactly since the Muslims being forced to accept the fact that there was a schism among the Companions in responding various things, including religious and political issues. It means that this case was a long unhappy conflict between the Sunnite and Shi’ite groups within the body of Muslim society.

For the Sunnite societies including the majority of Indonesian Muslims, the tradition of respect to the Companions are strongly hold. But when the influence of Orientalist thinking entered a new phase of Muslim’s thinking in examining their religious doctrines, slowly but surely the critical thinking in religious doctrines increased within the circles of Muslim’s scholars, especially those who had learned in the West. This critical thinking now becomes a characteristic of contemporary thought in Indonesia.

Concerning criticism of Abū Rayyah’s above, unsurprisingly, it is celebrated within the Orientalists. For example, G.H.A. Juynboll, a Dutch Orientalist has been passionately motivated to preserve and publish it in a modern context by issuing his: *The Authenticity of the Tradition Literature Discussions in Modern Egypt*, published by E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1969. This work of G.H.A. Juynboll, then, translated into Indonesian by Ilyas Hasan entitled: *Kontroversi Hadis di Mesir (1890-1960) [A Controversy of Ḥadīth in Egypt (1890-1960)]*, and published by Mizan, Bandung, in 1999.

Similar to Abū Rayyah's work, there was also a work by Indonesian O. Hashem, entitled; *Saqifah Awal Perpecahan Umat [Thaqīfah, the Early Ummah's Schism]*, published in 1980s in Lampung, Sumatera. This kind of historical criticism of *Ḥadīth*, concerning the truthfulness of the Companions, especially Abū Hurayrah, was also done by Dr Jalaluddin Rakhmat.¹²

DEFENDING ABŪ HURAYRAH

Concerning the name, there are a lot of names referred to this man of Yemen.¹³ The reliable of them is 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Shakhr and 'Umayr ibn Amīr.¹⁴ Normally, however, he is known by his nick name (*kunyah*), that is, Abū Hurayrah, a member of family of Sulaymān ibn Fahmī, and 'Azd clan of South Arabia.

Abū Hurayrah, literally means the merciful man of cat's daughter.¹⁵ His full name is 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Shakhr al-Dawsī al-Yamanī. He embraced Islam as he heard the propagation of his friend of village origin, that is, Ṭufayl ibn 'Amr al-Dawsī.¹⁶

Abū Hurayrah then, migrated to Medina. He came in the night of Khaybar war. He prayed *Subh* for the first time in Medina under the Imām of Siba' ibn 'Arfaṭah,¹⁷ an envoy of the Prophet during the Prophet waged war in Khaybar

¹² Jalaluddin Rakhmat (1992), *Islam Aktual: Refleksi Sosial Seorang Cendekiawan Muslim [Actual Islam: A Social Reflection of A Muslim Intellectual]*, Bandung: Mizan, 4th edition, pp. 162-169.

¹³ See, H.A. R. Gibb & Kramer (1961), *op. Cit.*, p. 10.

¹⁴ Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (1901), *al-Isti'āb fi Ma'rifah al-Aṣḥāb*, Hyderabad: Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-Nizāmiyyah, Vol. IV, pp. 205-206; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Aṣqalānī (1971), *al-Iṣābah fī Tamyiz al-Ṣaḥābah*, Vol. IV, Cairo: Dār Naḥḍah Miṣr, p. 202; al-Bukhārī (1986-1991), *Kitāb al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* Vol. III, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, p. 132; al-Ḥākim (1978), *al-Mustadrak Ma'a al-Talkhīṣ*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, Vol. III, p. 507; Al-Tirmidhī (1983), *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, Vol. I, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, p. 13; 'Abd al-Mun'im al-Ṣāliḥ al-'Alī al-Azī (n.d.), *op.cit.*, p. 17.

¹⁵ See, al-Bukhārī (n.d.), *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. IV, Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, p. 185; 'Abd al-Ḥusayn al-Musāwī (1964), *Abū Hurayrah*, al-Najāf: Maṭba'ah al-Haydariyyah, p. 19.

¹⁶ Al-Ḥākim (1978), *al-Mustadrak*, Vol. III, p. 259; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Aṣqalānī (1993), *Fath al-Bārī bi Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Vol. IX, Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, p. 164, and in Ibn Ḥajar al-'Aṣqalānī (1971), *op.cit.*, Vol. n, p. 217.

¹⁷ 'Abd al-Ghafūr 'Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Balūshī (1991), *Musnad Abū Hurayrah*, Medina: Maktabah al-Aymān, p. 19.

in 7H./629M.¹⁸ According to some biographers of the Companions, since then Abū Hurayrah had not been separated from the Prophet day or night.¹⁹ He had more opportunities to learn more and accept *Ḥadīth* from the Prophet, contrary to other Companions who were busy in handling their farms or businesses or busy in helping the Prophet in dealing with war or security.

During a period of three years, until the Prophet passed away, Abū Hurayrah took all of his opportunities to accept *Ḥadīth* said by the Prophet and memorised all events happened at that time. His living was dependently given by the Prophet and other Companions by giving his hand in return. He lived on the veranda of the mosque closed to the house of the Prophet. This space was called *al-ṣuffah*, so that those who lived there were called *‘aṣḥāb al-ṣuffah*.²⁰

Concerning the life of Abū Hurayrah, Khālīd Muḥammad Khālīd tells a story of him saying:

“I grew up as an orphan, and migrated as a poor... I accepted stipend as a servant to the family of Busrah bint Ghazwān for the sake of my belly. I served that family when they dwelled and lead their camel when they left. Now it is me, Allāh made me marry the daughter of Busrah, so thanks are to Allah promising this religion to be the pillar.”²¹

It is not clear about the life of Abū Hurayrah when he was young, and the historians have never said it, especially before he went to Medina in the night of war of Khaybar. Abū Hurayrah was only known after his short association with the Prophet. Nevertheless, there were a lot of comments on this Companion, both from other Companions, and even the Prophet himself. The Prophet’s saying, examined as cogent (*ṣaḥīḥ*) on this Abū Hurayrah, as reported by al-Ḥākim accepting from Abū ‘Abbās ibn Ya‘qūb, from al-‘Abbās Muḥammad al-Dawrā’, from Abū al-Ṣādiq al-Najjī, from Abī Sa‘īd

¹⁸ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Ibn ‘Uthmān al-Dhahabī (1988), *Siyar I‘lām al-Nubulā’*, Beirut: Mu’assasah al-Risālah, Vol. II p. 586.

¹⁹ Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir, *Muqaddimah Li Musnad Abī Hurayrah*, vol. XII p. 83, saying:

أسلم أبو هريرة رضى الله عنه سنة سبع من الهجرة وصحب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ولزمه إلى آخر حياته

See also ‘Abd al-Ṣamad Sharīf al-Dīn, *Muqaddimah Tuḥfah al-Ashrāf*. Vol. IX p. 8; ‘Ajjāj al-Khaṭīb (1971), *Abū Hurayrah Rāwiyyah al-Islām*, Cairo: Maktabah Wahbah, p. 70.

²⁰ ‘Ajjāj al-Khaṭīb (1981), *op.cit.*, p. 412.

²¹ See Khālīd Muḥammad Khālīd (1983), *Rijāl Ḥawl al-Rasūl*, Mahyuddin Syaf (tr.), Bandung: Diponegoro, p. 491.

al-Khudrī, saying that the Prophet had ever said: “*Abū Hurayrah is the ocean of knowledge.*” Another *Ḥadīth* says: “*I really see that there is no other man asking me on this Ḥadīth besides you, for you have seriousness to Ḥadīth.*”²²

According to historians, even though Abū Hurayrah associated with the Prophet latter than the other Companions, his gap, however, was being supported by his thirsty of knowledge, as the above *Ḥadīth* says it. Unsurprisingly, his achievement was really delightful, even in a certain discipline of knowledge he was number one, that is, in narrating *Ḥadīth*, defeating the other Companions. He had strong and deep power in memorizing *Ḥadīth*. Besides, according to the historians, the memorizers of *Ḥadīth* had still the same opinion that writing *Ḥadīth* in the era of the Prophet was prohibited.²³

Historical data of the life of Abū Hurayrah believed to be true by the historians of the Companions, especially Abū Hurayrah, is the statement of Abū Hurayrah himself saying:

قلت يا رسول الله إني أسمع منك حديثا كثيرا أنساه , فقال : ابسط
ردائك فبسطته قال ففرق بيديه ثم قال ضمه فضمته فما نسيت شيئا
بعده

“*O, The Messenger of Allāh! I heard many Ḥadīth from you but I often forget, and then the Prophet prayed by his sign, he ordered me to stretch my scarf, then the Prophet took by his hands, and said: tie it. Then, I tied it. After that I did not forget even a little.*”²⁴

A similar narration was also told by Abū Hurayrah himself that the Prophet said the following:²⁵

من يبسط رداءه حتى يفرغ من حديثي ثم يقبضه إليه فلا ينسى شيئا
كان قد سمعه مني

Whoever spread his rag and then take it for him, he will not forget what he heard from me.

Marwān ibn Ḥākam, a brother of Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān told that one day he tested Abū Hurayrah’s capability of memorizing. Abū Hurayrah was invited and sit beside him, and he was asked to tell the *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet.

²² Al-Ḥākīm (1978), *al-Mustadrak*, p. 509; al-Bukhārī (n.d.), *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 36; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAṣqalānī (1993), *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 418.

²³ Ismā‘īl al-Ṣan‘ānī (1960), *Subul al-Salām*, vol. I, Beirut: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, p. 14; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAṣqalānī (1971), *op.cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 203; al-Dhahabī (1981-1983), *Siyar A`lam al-Nubala`*, Vol. II, Beirut: Mu`assassah al-Risālah, p. 632.

²⁴ Al-Bukhārī (n.d.), *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 41 and 215.

²⁵ Khalid Muḥammad Khalid (1983), *op.cit.* p. 494.

Doing this, Marwān asked his writer to write what was being told by Abū Hurayrah in the other side of the wall. One year later, Abū Hurayrah was invited again, and asked to read again the *Ḥadīth* being told one year ago. Surprisingly, there is no single word to be forgotten by him.²⁶

Those arguments also say that Abū Hurayrah, besides having a powerful memory, diligent and grace from the pray of the Prophet, he also had a different way of living compare to other Companions.

A narration says:²⁷

إن إخواننا من المهاجرين كان يشغلهم الصفق بالأسواق وإن إخواننا من
الأنصار كان يشغلهم العمل في أموالهم وإن أبا هريرة كان يلزم رسول
الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بسبع بطنه ويحضر مالا يحضرون ويحفظ ما
لا يحفظون

Verily our brothers of the Migrants (Muhājirīn) are busy with their business in the market, our brothers of the Helpers (Anṣār) also busy with their wealth. Whereas Abū Hurayrah, he always accompanies the Prophet, getting food and knowledge, he is present while they are absent and he memorizes while they do not.

Historians say that Abū Hurayrah has a good conduct, which is inherent in him. He has amazing strong soul in taking noble duty. His patience was also his powerful force to get away from various seductive passions. It is proven by Abū Hurayrah that his poverty made him to be patience, although there were many opportunities to make him well-off. Sa'īd al-Musayyab says:

رأيت أبا هريرة يطوف بالسوق ثم يأتي أهله فيقول : هل عندكم من شيء
فإن قالوا لا , قال : فإني صائم

I have seen Abū Hurayrah walking around the market and went back home. To his family he asked: have you something with you? And if they answered no, so he said: in fact I am fasting.²⁸

Abū Hurayrah is a Companion famously known as the one who was diligent in worship and in memorizing the Qur'ān. However, he was not known as a courageous Companion and he did not also courage to tell his opinion to others. He admitted himself as a weak and poor man. Al-Bukhārī, sourced from al-A'rāj, says:

²⁶ *Ibid.* p. 496.

²⁷ Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAṣqalānī (1971), *op.cit.*, Vol. III, p. 152.

²⁸ 'Ajjāj al-Khaṭīb (1981), *op.cit.*, p. 114.

قال أبو هريرة إني كنت امرأ مسكنا أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم على ملء بطني

Abū Hurayrah said: Verily I am a poor man, being a servant of the Prophet to fulfil my belly need.

Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn reports a story on hunger experienced by Abū Hurayrah, said by Abū Hurayrah himself:

قال لقد رأيتني أصرع بين منبر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وحجرة عائشة فيقال مجنون وا بي جنون وما بي إلا الجوع

*Abū Hurayrah said: "You really saw me fell to 'ground in between the pulpit of the Prophet and the room of 'Ā'ishah. And then I was said to be crazy (by the people), actually I did not crazy, I was only hungry."*²⁹

The *Ḥadīth* sourced from Abū Hurayrah, were then written by Hammān ibn Munabbih, a famous *tābi'īn* student of Abū Hurayrah. He wrote *Ḥadīth* from Abū Hurayrah and stored in a book, which later called as the paper (*ṣaḥīfah*) of Abū Hurayrah, This *ṣaḥīfah* was found by Dr. Hamidullah with two old manuscripts in Damascus and Berlin. To prove the validity of the *ṣaḥīfah*, a careful and long research had been done. In fact, this *ṣaḥīfah* was really written by Hammān ibn Munabbih. Those *Ḥadīth* were strengthened by the existing data of *Ḥadīth* existed in the *Musnad* of Aḥmad³⁰ and were collected in the *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*.

Hammān ibn Munabbih says: "I heard Abū Hurayrah said: There is no other Companions besides me in narrating *Ḥadīth* than 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr because he could write whereas I could not."³¹ The reason why Abū Hurayrah had more *Ḥadīth* is the following:³²

²⁹ Abu Jalil `Isa (1980). *Ijtihad Rasulullah SAW*, Ma'mum Muhammad Murai *et al.* (tr.), Bandung: Al-Ma'arif, p. 33.

³⁰ Ibn Ḥanbal (n.d.), *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad*, Vol. II, Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, p. 312.

³¹ Ibn Ḥajar al-`Aṣqalānī (1993), *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 207.

³² *Ibid.* vol. I, p. 214.

عن أبي هريرة قال : إن الناس يقولون أكثر أبو هريرة ولو لا إيتان في كتاب الله ما حدثت حديثا م يتلو : إن الذين يكتُمون ما أنزلنا من البينات والهدى ... إلى قوله ”الرحيم” . إن إخواننا من المهاجرين كان يشغلهم الصفاق بالأسواق وإن إخواننا من الأنصار كان يشغلهم العمل في أموالهم وإن أبا هريرة كان يلزم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لسبع بطنه ويحضر ما لا يحضرون ويحفظ ما لا يحفظون

From Abū Hurayrah. he says: Indeed people say that Abū Hurayrah has more Ḥadīth. If I do not know two verses of the Qur’ān, I will not tell a Ḥadīth. And then he recites the verse: Inna al-ladhīna yaktumūna mā anzalnā min al-bayyināti, until the word of al-Raḥīm. Verily our brothers of Muhājirīn are busy with their business in the market, and our brothers of Anṣār are busy with their wealth (farms). Whereas Abū Hurayrah always accompanies the Prophet owing his full belly (qanā‘ah), he can present and they cannot, and he can memorize and others cannot.

The powerful memory of Abū Hurayrah was because of the pray of the Prophet. It is not only based on the admittance of Abū Hurayrah himself, but also based on the witness of other Companions. Zayd ibn Thābit, for instance, says:

كنت أنا وأبو هريرة واخر عند النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال ادعوا فدعوت أنا وصاحبي وأمن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ثم دعا أبو هريرة فقال : أَللّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسئَلُكَ مِثْلَ مَا سئَلُكَ صَحْبَايَ وَأَسئَلُكَ عِلْمًا لَا يَنْسَى فَأَمَّنَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَلْنَا وَنَحْنُ كَذَلِكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ , قَالَ : سَبِقَكُمَا الْغُلَامُ الدَّوْسُ

I, Abū Hurayrah and others were besides the Prophet. And then he said: “Please pray”. And then my friends and I prayed, whereas the Prophet said amen. And then Abū Hurayrah prayed: Oh Allāh! I beg you as what my friends had asked, and I beg you the knowledge not to forget. And the Prophet also said amen. And then we said: Oh the Messenger of Allāh! We want also a prayer like that. He said: This son of Daws had gone before you.³³

Abū Hurayrah lived as a worshipper and a scholar. He was known as a teacher of Ḥadīth and a *fatwā* (legal opinion) giver in Medina. He was involved in wars and statecraft affairs.³⁴ It was told in history that in the era of ‘Umar ibn

³³ *Ibid.* vol. I, p. 215.

³⁴ Abū Hurayrah, besides had been a governor in Bahrayn, also waged war in the era of the Prophet such as in the campaigns of Faṭḥ Makkah, Hunayn, Ṭā’if, and Tābuk. Al-Ṭahāwī (2001), *Sharḥ Ma’ānī al-Āthar*, Vol. II, Beirut: Dār āl-Kutub

Khaṭṭāb, he was chosen as a governor of Bahraiyn. Having been deposed he refused to be re-elected in order to preserve his own dignity, his wealth being taken, and his butt being hit. He was afraid of committing punishment without any knowledge and talking without mercy. He told it in front of ‘Umar, seemingly as an expression of his disappointment and as an denigration to ‘Umar who had accused him and deposed him as a governor of Bahrain.

After his resignation as a governor of Bahraiyn, he more likely lived in Medina, until the rest of his life. In the era of Marwān ibn Ḥākam, he also assisted some statecraft affairs such as being a vice-governor of Medina.³⁵

Abū Hurayrah passed away in 59 Hijriyah at the age of 78, said also at 58 or 57 years old. Something clear was that Abū Hurayrah was involved in praying for the dead body of ‘Ā’ishah and in that year also Abū Hurayrah died. To his funeral there were Ibn ‘Umar, Abū Sa‘īd al-Khuḍrī and also Marwān ibn Ḥākam.

Abū Hurayrah was an ordinary man, not as a Prophet, but he was not to be burdened by any defects showing that he was dishonest man, *Ḥadīth* lie teller, etc. This performance of honest man does not mean that all of his *Ḥadīth* are cogent (*ṣaḥīḥ*). To know its validity is by observing each chain of narration. In the whole of his life, Abū Hurayrah focussed to preserve and spread *Ḥadīth*. He said: “I divide my whole night into three parts: for praying, for sleeping, and for memorizing *Ḥadīth*.”

At the time when false *Ḥadīth* makers came, saying that their *Ḥadīth* were coming from the Prophet, they used the name of Abū Hurayrah and misused his popularity in narrating *Ḥadīth*, by simply saying “*an Abī Hurayrata*” (from Abū Hurayrah). By these actions, it was most likely that Abū Hurayrah’s popularity and his position as *Ḥadīth* teller from the Prophet was disturbed. Fortunately, however, there were *Ḥadīth* scholars who dedicatedly removed every forgery entered in Abū Hurayrah’s collection of *Ḥadīth*. Such is the perspective of *Ahl al-Sunnah* in seeing Abū Hurayrah as a Companion of the Prophet, similar to the other Companions. There was one thing to note by other Companions about him, that is, his largest collection of *Ḥadīth* defeating ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr ibn Aṣ, the one who was admitted by Abū Hurayrah as the Companion having the biggest number of *Ḥadīth*, and also defeating ‘Ā’ishah who had more opportunities in associating with the Prophet because of his position as the most intelligent wife of the Prophet.

al-‘Ilmiyyah, p. 15; ‘Abd al-Ghafūr al-Balūshī (1991), *op.cit.*

³⁵ H.A. R. Gibb & Kramer (1961), *op.cit.*, p. 10.

Such perspectives were the product of the tradition of narration from one generation to the next. To make the reason more clearly, we can also see Abū Hurayrah's role in narrating *Ḥadīth* as elucidated by Muslim scholars of this group (Sunnites). According to their views, Abū Hurayrah was not only popular in narrating *Ḥadīth*, but also being known as a Muslim leading scholar who gave *fatwā* to the society based on the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*. He did also make legal opinion and mastered *sharī'ah* affairs. All these capabilities made him different from other Muslims. The verses of the Qur'ān in his narration were no more than one hundred, which then being written by Ishāq ibn Rahawayh in his *Musnad*, being published by Dr. 'Abd al-Ghafūr 'Abd al-Ḥaqq Ḥusayn al-Balūshī in 1991 M..

Abū Hurayrah was actively involved in an institution of *fatwā* for more twenty years. He was one of five great *muftis* (legal opinion givers): Ibn 'Abbas, Ibn 'Umar, Abū Sa'īd, Jābir and Abū Hurayrah himself. This institution of *fatwā* was known after the death of 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān. Being a governor of Bahrain, Abū Hurayrah frequently told his *fatwā* along with 'Umar's *fatwā* delegated to him as a head of local government.³⁶

'Ajjāj al-Khaṭīb explains that Abū Hurayrah got *Ḥadīth* from other Companions such as Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb, al-Faḍl ibn 'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-Muṭālib, Ibn Abī Ka'b, 'Usāmah ibn Zayd, 'Ā'īshah *Umm al-Mu'minīn*, Baṣrah ibn Abī Baṣrah, and Ka'b al-Akhbār (the last one was in the generation of *tābi'in*).³⁷ Whereas the Companions accepted the *Ḥadīth* from Abū Hurayrah, were, among others: Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn 'Umar, Anas ibn Mālik, Wathīlah ibn Aqṣā', Jābir ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī and Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī.

Al-Bukhārī³⁸ says that 800 (eight hundred) men or more students of *Ḥadīth* from the Companions and the *tābi'in* and shortly after that, narrated *Ḥadīth* from Abū Hurayrah. They who belong to the generation of *tābi'in* are *imāms* (religious leaders) and leading scholars in *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and scholars of *Ḥadīth* were also the students of Abū Hurayrah. Among them are: Bashīr ibn Nāḥiq, Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Zayd ibn al-Musayyab, Sulaymān ibn Yassar, Shafī ibn Matī', Shahr ibn Khawsab, 'Amīr al-Shu'bi, 'Abd Allāh ibn Sa'd (a client of 'Ā'īshah), 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Uṭbah al-Ḥadhālī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ḥarmaz al-A'rāj, 'Abd al-Ghazālī ibn Marwān, 'Urwah ibn Jābir, Aṭa' ibn Abī Rabbah, Aṭa' ibn Yassar, 'Umar ibn Khaldah (judge of

³⁶ 'Ajjāj al-Khaṭīb (1981), *op.cit.*, p. 428.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Ibn Ḥajar al-'Aṣqalānī (1968), *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, Vol. XII, Beirut: Dār al-Ṣadir, p. 265; al-Dhahabī (1988), *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. 579 and 585.

Medina), Ammar ibn Dinār, al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad, Qabishah ibn Du‘ayb, Kathīr ibn Marrah, Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn, Muḥammad ibn Muslim al-Zuhrī. They who narrated the *Ḥadīth* from Abū Hurayrah and wrote them are: Muḥammad ibn al-Mundakar, Marwān ibn al-Ḥākam, Maymūn ibn Maḥrām, and Hammān ibn Munabbih.

Ḥadīth narrated by Abū Hurayrah had been written by some of them: Abū Idrīs al-Khawlanī, Abū Bakr ibn ‘Abd al-Rahmān, Abū Sa‘id al-Muqabbar, Abū Šāliḥ al-Samān, etc. Such *Ḥadīth* told by Abū Hurayrah were written by the *imāms* of *Ḥadīth* from the group of *Ahl al-Sunnah* in their own books. Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal narrated in his *Musnad* as many as 3848 *Ḥadīth*, including the repetitive ones. Imām Bāqī ibn Mukhalad told as many as 5374 *Ḥadīth* in his *Musnad*. Imām al-Bukhārī and Muslim jointly narrated 325 *Ḥadīth*. Al-Bukhārī as himself narrated 93 *Ḥadīth*, whereas Muslim told as many as 189 *Ḥadīth*.

Examinations of Abū Hurayrah in connection with his narration of *Ḥadīth* from the Prophet were coming from various circles. A story of examination is the following:

‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb, through a long dialogue and examination, because of his prudence in the activities of narrating *Ḥadīth* in order to contaminate with the *Qur’ān*, finally agreed Abū Hurayrah to narrate *Ḥadīth*. ‘Umar said: “Did I with you at someone’s home?” Abū Hurayrah answered: “Yes, and you know it. But why you asked me that?” ‘Umar said: “(Do you know) why I asked you that?” Abū Hurayrah said: “Verily the Messenger of Allah said today:

من كذب علي متعمدا فليتبوء مقعده من النار

Whoever told a lie in the name of me deliberately, he should be ready for being placed in the hell.”

Then ‘Umar said:

أما إذا . فاذهب فحدث

*If it was like that, now go and spread your Ḥadīth.*³⁹

‘Ajaj al-Khaṭīb comments that by this statement ‘Umar gave easy ways and trusted him to spread the *Ḥadīth*. It is told that ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar says:⁴⁰

³⁹ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Aṣqalānī (1971), *op.cit.*, Vol. VII, p. 107.

⁴⁰ Al-Tirmidhī (1983), *op.cit.*, Vol. V, p. 684; Ibn Ḥanbal (n.d.), *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad*, Vol. II, p. 3.

كنت الزمنا لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم واعلمنا بحديثه

You (Abū Hurayrah) are the most consistent man to associate the Prophet and the one who know most of his Ḥadīth.

In another narration Ibn ‘Umar says that Abū Hurayrah had better and more knowledge on Ḥadīth than himself.⁴¹ Ubay ibn Ka‘b says:

Abū Hurayrah was a courageous man, he asked a lot to the Prophet on everything, while we had not any courage to ask. And when we were deputised by Ibn ‘Umar to ask some justification to ‘Ā’īshah concerning Ḥadīth on dead body narrated by Abū Hurayrah, the Ḥadīth of which is:⁴²

من شهد الجنائزة حتى يصلى فله قيراط من شهد حتى تدفن كان له
قيرطان

“Whoever involved in handling dead body until he performed ṣalat, for him a reward as heavy as one qirāt and whoever involved and handling the dead body until he brought with him to the grave, for him a reward as heavy as two qirāṭs.”

Ubay ibn Ka‘b had an answer from ‘Ā’īshah saying that Abū Hurayrah was right (ṣadaqa Abū Hurayrah).

Ṭalḥah ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh says: “We were sure that verily he heard (Ḥadīth) what we did not hear.” Zayd ibn Thābit says: “When someone asked me on something, I gave him an advice to ask Abū Hurayrah.” Ibn ‘Abbās says: “When someone came and asked me on something, I asked Abū Hurayrah: ‘Give him fatwā O, Abū Hurayrah, verily you emerged as a place to solve the problems.’” Ka‘b al-Akhbār says: “I did not see anyone who read the Tawrāt (Old Testament) and know more knowledge on it besides Abū Hurayrah.” Muḥammad ibn Amārah ibn ‘Ammār ibn Ḥazm says:

“Verily, one day I know the man who knows most of the Ḥadīth and his congregation was always filled by people whereas he was the teacher narrating Ḥadīth to the Companions who did know the Ḥadīth, and then Abū Hurayrah narrated to them.”

Abū Ṣāliḥ al-Sam‘ānī says: “Abū Hurayrah was the strongest man in memorizing the Prophet’s Ḥadīth.” Imām al-Shāfi‘ī says: “Abū Hurayrah was the strongest man in memorizing the Prophet’s Ḥadīth, at his time.” Imām al-Bukhārī says:

⁴¹ Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAṣqalānī (1971), *op.cit.*, Vol. VII, p. 264.

⁴² *Ibid.* vol. III, p. 152.

“There were 800 (eight hundred) people narrated Ḥadīth from Abū Hurayrah and he was the strongest man in memorizing the Prophet’s Ḥadīth, at his time.”

Imām al-Dhahabī says:

“Abū Hurayrah was the best man in memorizing what being heard from the Prophet and knew everything about the letters and he was the strongest man in memorizing Ḥadīth, so that he knew when a narration was wrong.”

Ibn Kathīr says: *“Abū Hurayrah was reliable, memorizer, humble, worshipper, ascetic (zuhud), and his good works were a lot.”* Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī says: *“Verily Abū Hurayrah was the best memorizer of every narrator of Ḥadīth at his time. And there is no one of the Companions comparable to him.”* Abū Ṣāliḥ says: *“Abū Hurayrah was the best memorizer of Ḥadīth from the circle of the Companions.”*⁴³ It is said in another narration that Abū Hurayrah was the best memorizer of the Prophet’s Ḥadīth.⁴⁴

The above statements state admiration of scholars of Ḥadīth to Abū Hurayrah, known as the one who narrated most among the Companions. Nevertheless, this enormous admiration and trust naturally did not stop a continuous research on Ḥadīth narrated by Abū Hurayrah. The apprehension is that the big name of Abū Hurayrah was being misused, that is, to spread false Ḥadīth by various motivation and interests. Hence, a research on Ḥadīth is a long journey, as long as the life journey of Muslims itself, through ages and centuries.

So, based on the researches of Ḥadīth critics on Ḥadīth based on Abū Hurayrah, written in the sound (*mu’tamad*) books of Ḥadīth like the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, it is concluded⁴⁵ that the most cogent (*ṣaḥīḥ*) chains of narration are the following:

- i. Yaḥyā ibn Abū Kathīr, from Abū Salāmah, from Abū Hurayrah.
- ii. Al-Zuhri, from Sa’id ibn al-Musayyab, from Abū Hurayrah.
- iii. Ibn ‘Awnī, from Ayyūb, from Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn, from Abū Hurayrah.

⁴³ Al-Dhahabī (1988), *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 597.

⁴⁴ See *Tārīkh Ibn Asākir* p. 47 and 482; ‘Ajjāj al-Khaṭīb (1981), *op.cit.*, pp. 432-435.

⁴⁵ See, *al-‘Ilāl wa Ma’rifat al-Rijāl*; p. 204; *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl li al-Dhahabī*, Vol. III, p. 280; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī (1968), *op.cit.*, Vol. III, p. 220; Aḥmad Muḥammad Shakir, *Sharḥ Musnad Aḥmad*, Vol. I, p. 149; ‘Abd al-Mun‘im al-Ṣāliḥ al-‘Alī al-Azī (n.d.), *op.cit.*, p. 269.

- iv. Mālik, from al-Zuhri, from Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab, from Abū Hurayrah.
- v. Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah, from al-Zuhri, from Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab, from Abū Hurayrah.
- vi. Ma'mar, from al-Zuhri, from Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab, from Abū Hurayrah.
- vii. Ismā'īl ibn Abū Ḥākim, from 'Ubaydah ibn Abū Sufyān al-Ḥadrami, from Abū Hurayrah.
- viii. Ma'mar, from Hammān ibn Munabbih, from Abū Hurayrah.

CONCLUSION

It is a story of Abū Hurayrah, a main witness of the life of Prophet Muḥammad s.a.w. His truthfulness was being debatable in certain circles, especially in the circle of *Shi'ite* Muslims. But his role as an eyewitness of the Prophet's life was astonishing. By his love and loyalty, he was constantly involved in the last three years life of the Prophet, something being a grace for Abū Hurayrah, for there was no other Companion can accompany the Prophet as himself. His poverty was the main reason why he could not live like the other Companions, the majority of which were being involved in their businesses or farms. His poverty, then, had placed himself to be a man being asked on the Prophet's affairs by the other Companions or by the *tābi'in* living in his age. He became a mediator or the main teller of the *Ḥadīth* accepted directly from the Prophet. His teachings became an alternative to those who had not opportunities to "hear and see" the Prophet's teachings and conducts, as their main concern to follow his tradition. This way of teaching or narrating *Ḥadīth*, happened natural and brought about a system of narration (*isnad*) in *Ḥadīth*, something which could not be found in any other history of religions in this world.