

THE SEVEN PROLIFIC
NARRATORS AMONG
THE SAHĀBAH

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INTRODUCTION

The Ṣahābah are those believers who enjoyed the privilege of having lived in the Prophet ﷺ's company. Although there are some differences of opinion regarding the exact qualifications necessary for being a Ṣahābī, the majority of scholars have held that the term Ṣahābī refers to every Muslim who associated with the Prophet ﷺ for any length of time and died upon Islām. His near relations, close friends, attendants, as well as ordinary Muslims who saw him ﷺ even once, are generally included within this definition. It was the Ṣahābah who reported the ḥadīth corpus from the Prophet ﷺ. They represent the primal authorities from whom, via the Tābi‘ūn, the traditions of Islām are handed down.

Not all the Ṣahābah related ḥadīths from the Prophet ﷺ. The *Musnad* of Abū ‘Abd ar-Rahmān Baqī ibn Makhlad, which is said to have been the largest collection of ḥadīths, was said to contain ḥadīths related by 1300 Ṣahābah. In his *Talqīḥ Fuhūm al-Athar*, Imām Ibn al-Jawzī gives the names of 1060 of them along with the number of ḥadīths related by each. From 1060, 878 Ṣahābah related less than ten ḥadīths each, 60 Ṣahābah related 10-20 ḥadīths each, and the remaining 123 Ṣahābah related twenty or more ḥadīths each. Thus, it becomes clear that the majority of the ḥadīths that have reached us have been related by a few hundred Ṣahābah. The *Muwaṭṭa* of Imām Mālik (*rahimahullāh*) contains ḥadīths from 98 Ṣahābah, the *Musnad* of Imām Ṭayālisī contains ḥadīths from 281 Ṣahābah, and the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal contains ḥadīths from around 700 Ṣahābah. The *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Imām Bukhārī contains ḥadīths from 208 Ṣahābah while the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Imām Muslim contains ḥadīths from 213 Ṣahābah. 149 Ṣahābah are common narrators between the two works.

From among the Ṣahābah, seven narrators have reported more than a thousand ḥadīths, and they are known as the *Mukthirūn*.¹ All of them enjoyed the privilege of long association with the Prophet ﷺ, had tremendous thirst for his ḥadīths, and could speak with authority about what he said and did. They lived for a considerable time after his demise when they handed down the mass of ḥadīths they learned to the succeeding generations. In contrast to them, the knowledge that was gathered by other Ṣahābahs who either passed away earlier or were killed in battles did not spread among the Muslims and was instead transmitted by the

¹ The reporters of many traditions.

likes of these seven Ṣahābah.² In this article, I give a short introduction to each Ṣahābī who is considered from among those who transmitted the most ḥadīths and mention the number of ḥadīths transmitted by them as stated by several scholars. Additionally, I mention the most reliable and strong narrator from each of them, as well as the number of ḥadīths related by them.

THE MUKTHIRŪN AMONG THE ṢAHĀBAH

The Ṣahābah that have narrated more than a thousand narrations are labelled by the scholars as being those from the *Mukthirūn*. There are seven³ such Ṣahābah, including Abū Hurayrah, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar, Anas ibn Mālik, ‘Ā’ishah bint Abī Bakr, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās, Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh, and Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī; although some scholars just mention the first six in the list. Shaykh Aḥmad Shākir (*rahimahullāh*) said:

The scholars have mentioned the number of each of their ḥadīths. They relied upon what [Imām] Ibn al-Jawzī stated in [the book] *Talqīḥ Fuhūm al-Athar* — which has been published in India — and in counting their ḥadīths, scholars relied upon the *Musnad* of Imām Baqī ibn Makhlad⁴ (*rahimahullāh*), because it is the most comprehensive compilation [of ḥadīth].

Interestingly, Imām Nawawī mentions only six Ṣahābah and does not mention Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (*rahimahullāh*). He said, ‘The most prolific narrators among the Ṣahābah were Abū

² Muḥammad Zubayr Ṣiddīqī, *Hadīth Literature: Its Origins Development & Special Features* (The Islamic Texts Society, 2012), 14-15.

³ As-Sakhawī, *Fath al-Mughīth bi Sharḥ Alfiyyah al-Ḥadīth* (Riyadh: Dār al-Manāhij, ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Khuḍayr ed, 1426 AH), 3:97-98.

⁴ Imām Abū ‘Abd ar-Rahmān Baqī ibn Makhlad compiled the narrations of the Ṣahābah (*rađī Allāhu ‘anhum*) in his *Musnad* and mentioned the number of their narrations. He mentioned the *ashāb al-ulūf* meaning: those from whom more than two thousand ḥadīths have been reported, then the *ashāb al-alf* meaning: those from whom less than two thousand ḥadīths have been reported, then the *ashāb al-mi’īn* meaning: those from whom less than a thousand but more than a hundred ḥadīths have been reported. Imām Baqī’s *Musnad* is from among the most important sources of the Sunnah. Imām Ibn Ḥazm (*rahimahullāh*) said, ‘Musnad Baqī: He (Baqī ibn Makhlad) has narrated approximately 1300 Ṣahābah, and ordered each of their ḥadīths according to the chapters of fiqh. Thus, his work is both a *Musnad* and a *Muṣannaf*.’ Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad at-Tilmisānī, *Nafḥ at-Tīb*, 1:581. We have not heard of the presence of this book in any Islamic library, and we do not know for sure whether all of it is lost, or whether some of it can be found in the remains that survived the destruction of Andalusia. Aḥmad Shākir, *al-Bā’ith al-Hathīth* (Damascus: Mu’assasah Risālah Nāshirūn, 2015), 249.

Hurayrah, followed by Ibn ‘Umar, Ibn ‘Abbās, Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh, Anas ibn Mālik, and ‘Ā’ishah (*rađī Allāhu ‘anhūm*).⁵

Imām Suyūṭī (*raḥimahullāh*) lists all seven Ṣahābah starting from Abū Hurayrah (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) and ending with Abū Sa‘īd al-Khuḍrī along with the number of their ḥadīths. Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Awwāmah comments on his statement saying, ‘In mentioning the numbers of ḥadīths narrated by these Ṣahābah, the scholars relied upon the *Juz*⁶ of Ibn Ḥazm (*raḥimahullāh*): *Asmā’ as-Ṣahābah ar-Ruwāt wa li Kulli Wāhid minhum min al-‘Adad*,⁷ and *Talqīḥ Fuhūm Ahl al-Athar* of Imām Ibn al-Jawzī.⁸

Imām Ibn Kathīr mentioned the statement of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (*raḥimahullāh*):

Six of the Companions of the Prophet (صلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) related much from him and were granted a long life: Abū Hurayrah Ibn ‘Umar, ‘Ā’ishah, Jābir ibn Abdillāh, Ibn ‘Abbās, and Anas. Abū Hurayrah was the most prolific of them in terms of ḥadīth and reliable transmitters took ḥadīth from him.⁹

Thereafter, Imām Ibn Kathīr said, ‘I add to them: ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr, Abū Sa‘īd, and Ibn Mas‘ūd; but he passed away early and therefore Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal did not consider him a part of the ‘abādilah (the four ‘Abdullāhs).’ In the footnotes, Shaykh Aḥmad Shākir has also mentioned the names of ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd and ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ after the seven Ṣahābah, even though the number of each of their ḥadīths is less than a thousand. According to Imām Ibn al-Jawzī, the number of ḥadīths reported by ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) is 848 and according to the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad, the number of his ḥadīths is 892. As for ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*), then according to Imām Ibn al-Jawzī, the number of ḥadīths

⁵ An-Nawawī, *At-Taqrīb wa ‘t-Taysīr* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, 1st edn, 1985), 93.

⁶ This is a collection of ḥadīths handed down on the authority of one single individual, be he or she a Companion, or a member of any succeeding generation. The term *Juz* is also applied to collections of ḥadīths that were compiled on a specific subject, such as intention, and so forth. Muḥammad Zubayr Ṣiddīqī, *Hadīth Literature: Its Origins Development & Special Features* (The Islamic Texts Society, 2012), 10.

⁷ It was first published with his *Jawāmi‘ as-Sīrah*, and then separately in one big volume.

⁸ As-Suyūṭī, *Tadrīb ar-Rāwī ‘alā Taqrīb an-Nawawī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, Muḥammad ‘Awwāmah ed, 1st edn, 1985), 188.

⁹ Ash-Shahrazūrī, *Muqaddimah Ibn as-Ṣalāḥ* (Dār as-Salām, 2020), 348.

he reported is 700 and according to the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad, the number of his ḥadīths is 722.¹⁰

‘Allāmah ‘Irāqī (*rahimahullāh*) said:

Those who narrated a lot from the Prophet (ﷺ) were six: Anas ibn Mālik, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar, ‘Āishah aş-Şiddīqah, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās, — and he is *al-baḥr*¹¹ — Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh, and Abū Hurayrah. The most prolific of the six was Abū Hurayrah... and Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī.¹²

Although he mentioned six in the beginning of his statement, he added the name of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī at the end, making the total number seven.

There is no one among the Ṣahābah whose narrations exceed a thousand besides the above seven Ṣahābah, and the total numbers of their ḥadīths include the repeated ḥadīths, because the scholars [of ḥadīth] consider every chain a separate ḥadīth. The reason behind the few narrations of senior Ṣahābah like Abū Bakr (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*) — despite his precedence to Islām and close adherence the Prophet (ﷺ) — is his early demise before the spreading of ḥadīth, and the preoccupation of people with acquiring it, listening to it, and memorising it. Abū Bakr (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*) was mostly preoccupied with accompanying the Prophet (ﷺ), helping him, and thereafter taking charge of his own caliphate. The total amount of ḥadīths that he narrated is 142,¹³ which is a number that does not match his status due to the reasons mentioned.

Imām Aḥmad ibn ‘Umar al-Qurṭubī said regarding Abū Bakr (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*):

It is decisively known and undeniably certain that he has memorised from the Prophet (ﷺ) more than every other Ṣahābī, and he acquired such knowledge that no one else

¹⁰ Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bā’ith al-Ḥathīth* (Damascus, Mu’assasah ar-Risālah Nāshirūn, 2015), 251.

¹¹ This is in reference to ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās. He was named *al-baḥr* due to the vastness of his knowledge. Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī (d. 925 AH), *Fatḥ al-Bāqī ‘alā Alfiyyah al-‘Irāqī* (Beirut: DKI), 15.

¹² Al-‘Irāqī, *Sharḥ at-Tabṣirah wa at-Tadhkīrah* (Beirut: DKI), 3:14-15.

¹³ As-Suyūṭī, *Tadrīb ar-Rāwī ‘alā Taqrīb an-Nawāwī*, 2:218.

did. This is because he was [the Prophet ﷺ's] intimate friend and adherent companion, who did not separate from him whilst travelling, at home, at nighttime, at daytime, during hardship, and during ease. Hence, he was not free to narrate ḥadīths, as he busied himself with more important tasks, and other [Ṣahābah] took the responsibility of narrating ḥadīths.¹⁴

Shaykh Muḥammad Ādām al-Īthyūbī gathered all the names of these Ṣahābah in a poem. He said:

المُكْثِرُونَ فِي رِوَايَةِ الْحُبْرِ مِن الصَّحَّابَةِ الْأَكَارِمِ الْعَرَزِ

أَبُو هُرَيْرَةَ يَلِيهِ أَبْنُ عُمَرَ فَانَّسُ فَزَوْجُهُ الْهَادِي الْأَبْرَ

ثُمَّ أَبْنُ عَبَّاسٍ يَلِيهِ جَابِرُ وَبَعْدَهُ الْخُدْرِيُّ فَهُوَ الْآخِرُ¹⁵

*The prolific narrators in narrating reports,
among the Ṣahābah, the honourable forerunners:*

*Abū Hurayrah, followed by Ibn ‘Umar,
then Anas, followed by the wife of the benevolent guide.¹⁶*

*Thereafter, Ibn ‘Abbās, followed by Jābir,
And after him al-Khudrī, he is the last.*

Abū Hurayrah

Abū Hurayrah (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*) stands at the head of the list of ḥadīth transmitters due to the sheer bulk of his narrations. He was born 21 years before *hijrah* and passed away in 59 AH. Scholars differ about his name and the name of his father. ‘Allāmah Zurqānī says: ‘There are several differences of opinions regarding his name and the name of his father, and there are

¹⁴ Al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Mufhim limā Ashkala min Kitāb Talkhīṣ Muslim*, 6:237.

¹⁵ ‘Alī ibn Ādām al-Īthyūbī, *Mashāriq al-Anwār al-Wahhājah wa Maṭāli‘ al-Asrār al-Bahhājah fī Sharḥ Sunan al-Imām Ibn Mājah* (Riyadh: Dār al-Mughnī, 2006), 1:49.

¹⁶ “The wife of the benevolent guide” refers to ‘Ā’ishah (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anhā*).

differences regarding which [opinion] of them is most preferred.¹⁷ However, the most famous and widely accepted opinion is that during the days of ignorance, his name was ‘Abd ash-Shams ibn Sakhr. When he accepted Islam, the Messenger of Allah (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) named him ‘Abd ar-Rahmān. Imām Ḥakim (raḥimahullāh) narrates with his chain that Abū Hurayrah (raḍī Allāhu ‘anh) said, ‘My name in the pre-Islamic period of ignorance was ‘Abd Shams ibn Ṣakhr. Then, the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) named me ‘Abd ar-Rahmān.’¹⁸ He was from *Daws*, one of the tribes of Yemen.¹⁹

He was regarded by the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) himself as the most anxious of all the Muslims to acquire knowledge of ḥadīth. From the time he accepted Islām, until the Prophet’s demise, he constantly adhered to his company and memorised his teachings, thereby sacrificing all worldly pursuits and pleasures. Imām Tirmidhī narrates with his chain to Ibn ‘Umar (raḍī Allāhu ‘anh) that he said to Abū Hurayrah: ‘O Abū Hurayrah, you are the one who stayed with the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) the most from among us and the one who memorised his ḥadīth the most.’ Abū ‘Isā said, ‘This ḥadīth is *hasan* (sound).’²⁰ In his book, *Abū Hurayrah: Rāwī al-Islām*, Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Ajāj al-Khaṭīb mentions the close connection he kept with the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). He said:

He remained attached to the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) until the end of his life. He confined himself to his service, and he took the noble knowledge from him (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). He would follow him, enter his home, perform *hajj* and go in battles with him. His hand would be in his hand. He would accompany him in everything he did whether at night or during the day so that he may acquire abundant and pure knowledge from him.²¹

The number of his ḥadīths

‘Allāmah Ibn aş-Ṣalāḥ said:

¹⁷ Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Bāqī Zurqānī, *Sharḥ Zurqānī ‘alā ‘l-Muwaṭṭa’* (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2015), 1:34.

¹⁸ Imām Ḥakim ibn ‘Abdullāh an-Naysāpūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā ‘ṣ-ṣahīḥayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1990), 3:579.

¹⁹ Muṣṭafā as-Sibā‘ī, *The Sunnah and Its Role in Islamic Legislation* (IIPH), 368-369.

²⁰ At-Tirmidhī, *Jāmi‘ at-Tirmidhī* (Egypt: Shirkat Maktabat wa-Maṭba‘at Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalbī, 1975), 5:684.

²¹ Muḥammad ‘Ajāj Khaṭīb, *Abū Hurayrah Rāwiyat al-Islām* (Cairo: Maktabat Wahbah, 1982), 69-71.

The most prolific of the Ṣahābah in terms of transmitting ḥadīth from the Messenger of Allah (صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ) was Abū Hurayrah. That [judgement] was related from Sa‘īd ibn Abi ’l-Hasan²² and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, and it is an obvious fact not hidden from any ḥadīthologist. He was the first scholar of ḥadīth (*ṣāḥib al-ḥadīth*). We read that Abū Bakr ibn Abī Dāwūd as-Sijistānī said, ‘I saw Abū Hurayrah in a dream while I was in Sijistan arranging his ḥadīth. I said, “I love you.” He said, “I was the first scholar of ḥadīth in the world.”’ We also heard that Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (*rahimahullāh*) said, ‘Six of the Companions of the Prophet (صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ) related much from him and were granted a long life: Abū Hurayrah Ibn ‘Umar, ‘Ā’ishah, Jābir ibn Abdillāh, Ibn ‘Abbās and Anas. Abū Hurayrah was the most prolific of them in terms of ḥadīth and reliable transmitters took ḥadīth from him.’²³

‘Allāmah ‘Irāqī (*rahimahullāh*) mentions the names of six Ṣahābah who were the most prolific in terms of transmitting ḥadīth and thereafter states: ‘Abū Hurayrah (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) was the most prolific of them but [Imām] Ibn aş-Ṣalāḥ did not mention the order of those who narrated the most after Abū Hurayrah (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*).’ ‘Allāmah ‘Irāqī (*rahimahullāh*) also added Abū Sa‘īd al-Khuḍrī as the seventh Ṣahābī who narrated a lot.²⁴

²² Sa‘īd ibn Abi ’l-Hasan Yasār al-Baṣrī (d. 100AH/719CE) was the brother of the famous al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām an-Nubalā*, 4:588-9.

²³ Ash-Shahrazūrī, Muqaddimah Ibn aş-Ṣalāḥ (Dar as-Salam, 1st edn, 2020), 347.

²⁴ Al-‘Irāqī, *Sharḥ at-Tabsirah wa ’t-Tadhkīrah* (Beirut: DKI), 3:15-16.

The total number of his ḥadīths is 5374²⁵ according to the *Musnad* of Imām Baqī ibn Makhlad.²⁶ From that, Imām Bukhārī and Imām Muslim both narrated 325 ḥadīths; Imām Bukhārī narrated 93 ḥadīth alones, and Imām Muslim narrated 89 ḥadīths alone. More than 800 people narrated from Abū Hurayrah (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*).²⁷ Imām Suyūṭī (*rahimahullāh*) said, ‘Abū Hurayrah narrated 5374 ḥadīths. Shaykhān (Imām Bukhārī and Muslim) both narrated 325 of it, Imām Bukhārī narrated 93 alone and Imām Muslim narrated 89 alone.²⁸ More than 800 people narrated from him (Abū Hurayrah *raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*), and he was the strongest narrator among them (i.e. the *Şahābah*).’²⁹

Imām Ibn al-Jawzī (*rahimahullāh*) said regarding the number of his ḥadīths, ‘Abū Hurayrah: He has reported 5374 ḥadīths.’³⁰ ‘Allāmah ‘Irāqī (*rahimahullāh*) said, ‘The statement of Baqī ibn Makhlad indicates that Abū Hurayrah narrated the most as he narrated 5374 ḥadīths.’ Shaykh Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī said, ‘Abū Hurayrah is the most prolific among them as he narrated 5374 ḥadīths.’³¹ Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Awwāmah comments on the large number of Abū Hurayrah (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*)’s ḥadīths saying:

²⁵ Al-‘Irāqī, *Sharḥ at-Tabṣirah wa ‘t-Tadhkīrah* (Beirut: DKI), 3:15.

²⁶ Orientalists and those who follow them show astonishment at the powerful memory of Abū Hurayrah (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*) but were they to view the matter with more justice and with more insight into the society in which Abū Hurayrah lived, they would neither be surprised nor incredulous. Memorization, for certain, is one of the distinctive abilities of the Arabs. Among the Companions and the Successors, we know of wonderful stories of retentive memories... It is not odd to say that Abū Hurayrah (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*) had a powerful memory, for we must remember that, as is related in the *Musnad* of Baqī ibn Makhlad, that Abū Hurayrah related a total of 5374 ḥadīths. That number is obviously minute when compared to the 700,000 that Imām Aḥmad and Abū Zur‘ah memorised. So why should we be so surprised? There were Arabs in the past that memorised a total of 5000 long poems, and there are many examples of this throughout Arab history. Now, considering the long period of time that Abū Hurayrah accompanied the Messenger of Allah (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), it is not surprising that he related more than 5000 ḥadīths, especially when we consider his retentive memory. Muṣṭafā as-Sibā‘ī, *The Sunnah and Its Role in Islamic Legislation*, 372-3.

²⁷ Aḥmad ash-Shaykh Najī, *Ad-Daw’ al-Lāmī’ al-Mubīn ‘an Manāhij al-Muḥaddithīn* (Beirut: DKI), 122.

²⁸ These three numbers have come in *Kashf an-Niqāb* of Ḥāfiẓ al-‘Alā’ī and it is correct. Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Awwāmah, *Tadrīb ar-Rāwī ‘alā Taqrīb an-Nawāwī*, 189.

²⁹ As-Suyūṭī, *Tadrīb ar-Rāwī ‘alā Taqrīb an-Nawāwī* (Dar al-Yusr and Dar al-Minhāj, 2016), 5:188.

³⁰ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talqīḥ Fuhūm al-Athar fi ‘Uyūn at-Tārīkh wa ‘s-Siyar* (Beirut: Dār al-Arqam, 1997), 263.

³¹ Al-‘Irāqī, *Sharḥ at-Tabṣirah wa ‘t-Tadhkīrah* (Beirut: DKI), 3:15.

It is necessary to clarify that this large quantity of Abū Hurayrah's narrations include all that has been related from him from the authentic, inauthentic, and repetitions. After sieving them out, only a quarter of this number remains. To add to this, the narrations that Abū Hurayrah (*rađī Allāhu 'anh*) is alone in narrating from the rest of the Ṣahābah is very little and rare. Thus, the criticisms of the hateful is obliterated. This is also what is said regarding the numbers of the other Ṣahābah; that there are repetitions, authentic, weak, and ḥadīths that the Ṣahābī was not alone in transmitting.³²

The most reliable narrator from Abū Hurayrah

Scholars differed regarding who the most reliable (*athbat*) narrator is from Abū Hurayrah (*rađī Allāhu 'anh*). The first opinion is that it is Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab, as stated by Imām Abū Ḥātim and 'Alī ibn al-Madīnī. Imām Ibn al-Madīnī thereafter said, 'After him (Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab, the most reliable) is Abū Salamah ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān, Abū Ṣāliḥ as-Sammān, and Ibn Sīrīn. The second opinion related from Imām Ibn Ma'īn is that he mentioned the following names without distinguishing between the first and the next, 'The reliable narrators of Abū Hurayrah (*rađī Allāhu 'anh*) are: Ibn al-Musayyab, Abū Ṣāliḥ, Ibn Sīrīn, al-Maqburī, al-A'raj, and Abū Rāfi'. Nevertheless, we can conclude that Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab was from among the most reliable narrators, if not the most reliable.

Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab ibn Huzn al-Qurashī al-Makhzūmī (d. 94 AH) was one of the seven jurists (*fūqahā'*) of Madīnah and the most senior of them.³³ He has been mentioned in the chains of 1231 ḥadīths of *al-Kutub at-Tis'ah* (the nine books).³⁴ From Abū Hurayrah (*rađī Allāhu 'anh*), he is reported to have narrated 681 ḥadīths. Imām Ibn Ḥajar mentions regarding his status, '[He is] one of the reliable scholars and great jurists, there is an agreement that his *mursal* narrations

³² As-Suyūṭī, *Tadrīb ar-Rāwī 'alā Taqrīb an-Nawāwī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, Muḥammad 'Awwāmah ed, 1st edn, 1985), 188-189.

³³ An-Nawawī, *Tahdhīb Asmā' wa l-Lughāt* (Beirut: DKI), 1:219.

³⁴ *Al-Kutub at-Tis'ah* includes Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Sunan an-Nasā'i, Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī, Sunan Ibn Mājah, Sunan ad-Dārimī, Muwaṭṭa Imām Mālik, and Musnad Imām Aḥmad.

are the most authentic. ‘Alī ibn al-Madīnī said regarding him, “I do not know, among the *tābi‘ūn* anyone with more knowledge than him.”³⁵

‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar

The second most prolific narrator of ḥadīth was Abū ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb al-Qurashī al-‘Adawī (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*). He was born 10 years before *hijrah*. He accepted Islām early with his father in Makkah and migrated with him whilst he was young. He was either thirteen or fourteen years old at the time of the battle of *Badr* but he participated in the battle of *Khandaq* when he was fifteen years old and the battles after it. He maintained a strict neutrality in conflicts that erupted among the Muslims following the assassination of ‘Uthmān (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*). ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar’s association with the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), his kindship with Ḥafṣah Umm al-Mu’minīn, and with certain other Ṣahābah offered him a superb opportunity to learn ḥadīths; and his long life provided him with the time to spread ḥadīths among the Muslims who assiduously sought them.³⁶ The Messenger of Allah (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said regarding him, ‘Indeed ‘Abdullāh is a pious man.’³⁷ He lived for 60 years after the demise of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and passed away in Makkah in 73 AH, three months after Ibn az-Zubayr (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*) was killed.³⁸

The number of his ḥadīths

The total number of his ḥadīths is 2630.³⁹ This is the number mentioned in the *Juz* of Ibn Ḥazm and Imām Ibn al-Jawzī’s *Talqīh Fuhūm al-Athar*. Imām Ibn al-Jawzī (*raḥimahullāh*) states, “‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar narrated 2630 ḥadīths.”⁴⁰ Allāmah ‘Irāqī and Shaykh Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī said, ‘Ibn ‘Umar (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*) narrated 2630.’⁴¹ Imām Nawawī (*raḥimahullāh*) mentioned this in his commentary of *Bukhārī*, ‘He narrated from the Prophet (2630) ḥadīths. Imām

³⁵ Fahad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘Ammār, *Ma‘rifat ar-Ruwāt al-Mukthirīn wa Athbat Aṣḥābihim* (Riyadh: Maktabah Rushd, 2003), 176.

³⁶ Muḥammad Zubayr Ṣiddīqī, *Hadith Literature: Its Origins Development & Special Features* (The Islamic Texts Society, 2012), 20.

³⁷ *Muttafaq ‘alayh* report. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 3741 and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 140:2479.

³⁸ An-Nawawī, *At-Talkhīṣ Sharḥ Jāmī’ as-Ṣaḥīḥ* (Riyadh: Dār Ṭaybah, 1st edn, 2008), 2:442-243.

³⁹ Fahad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘Ammār, *Ma‘rifat ar-Ruwāt al-Mukthirīn wa Athbat Aṣḥābihim* (Riyadh: Maktabah Rushd, 2003), 91.

⁴⁰ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talqīh Fuhūm al-Athar fi ‘Uyūn at-Tārīkh wa ’s-Siyar* (Beirut: Dār al-Arqam, 1997), 263.

⁴¹ Al-‘Irāqī, *Sharḥ at-Tabsirah wa ’t-Tadhkirah* (Beirut: DKI), 3:15.

Bukhārī and Muslim both narrated 170; Imām Bukhārī narrated 81 ḥadīths alone, and Imām Muslim narrated 31 ḥadīths alone. He narrated the most ḥadīths after Abū Hurayrah.⁴²

Mawlānā Zakariyyā Kandhlawī regarding him, ‘He is from those [Ṣahābah] who narrated a lot. It has been said that he reported 2630 ḥadīths.’⁴³ In his *Tahdhīb Asmā’ wa ’l-Lughāt*, Imām Nawawī mentions that he narrated 1630: ‘He narrated 1630 ḥadīths from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).’⁴⁴ However, this is incorrect. Imām Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī followed him in this number in his *Sharḥ al-Arba‘ūn* in the beginning of the third ḥadīth’s commentary. Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Awwāmah says:

The correct [number] is that he narrated 2630 ḥadīths. This is how it has come in Imām Ibn Ḥazm’s book, *Asmā’ as-Ṣahābah wa ar-Ruwāt*. He (Imām Ibn Ḥazm) has mentioned him alongside others who narrated thousands of ḥadīths. Likewise, this is how the number has come in Imām Ibn al-Jawzī’s, *Talqīḥ Fuhūm Ahl al-Athar*.⁴⁵

The most reliable narrator from Ibn ‘Umar

The most reliable narrator from ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*) was Imām Nāfi‘ mawlā Ibn ‘Umar (d. 117 AH). Imām al-Marwazī said, ‘I asked Imām Aḥmad, “Who is more reliable: Sālim or Nāfi‘?” He smiled and replied, “Allah knows best.” I said, “What does your heart incline to?” He replied, “I consider — and Allah knows best — Nāfi‘ [to be more reliable].”’ According to Imām Bukhārī, the chain in which Imām Mālik narrates from Nāfi‘ from Ibn ‘Umar is the most reliable chain of transmission, known as ‘Silsilat adh-Dhabab’ (the Golden Chain). Imām Nāfi‘ has been mentioned 2844 times in the chains of the ḥadīths of *al-Kutub at-Tis‘ah* and has related 2616 ḥadīths from Ibn ‘Umar (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*). He is a reliable narrator who was also a *faqīh* (jurist).⁴⁶

⁴² An-Nawawī, *At-Talkhīṣ Sharḥ Jāmi‘ as-Ṣahīḥ* (Riyadh: Dār Ṭaybah, 1st edn, 2008), 2:442.

⁴³ Zakariyyā Kandhlawī, *Awjaz al-Masālik* (Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, 2003), 1:301.

⁴⁴ An-Nawawī, *Tahdhīb Asmā’ wa ’l-Lughāt* (Beirut: DKI), 279.

⁴⁵ As-Suyūṭī, *Tadrīb ar-Rāwī ‘alā Taqrīb an-Nawawī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, Muḥammad ‘Awwāmah ed, 1st edn, 1985), 191.

⁴⁶ Fahad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘Ammār, *Ma‘rifat ar-Ruwāt al-Mukthirīn wa Athbat Aṣḥābihim* (Riyadh: Maktabah Rushd, 2003), 93.

Anas ibn Mālik

The next Ṣahābī who narrated a lot was Anas ibn Mālik ibn an-Nadr al-Khazrajī. He was ten years old when the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) migrated to Madīnah. Imām Bukhārī narrated in his *At-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* with his chain to Imām Zuhrī, who said that Anas (raḍī Allāhu ‘anh) reported, ‘The Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) arrived in Madīnah when I was ten years old.’⁴⁷ He was a young boy during the battle of *Badr* but still went with the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) to assist him. Besides the Battle of *Badr*, he participated in many other battles with the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). In *Al-Īṣābah*, Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar narrated from Ishāq ibn ‘Uthmān: ‘I asked Mūsā ibn Anas, “How many battles did Anas participate in with the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)?”’ He replied, ‘Eight battles.’⁴⁸ He served the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) for ten years⁴⁹ and the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) supplicated for him to be blessed with a long life, abundant wealth, and children, all which were granted to him. He passed away in 93 AH at 103 years old,⁵⁰ and he was the last of the Ṣahābah to pass away in Baṣrah.⁵¹

The number of his ḥadīths

The total number of his ḥadīths is 2286.⁵² Imām Ibn al-Jawzī (*rahimahullāh*) states, ‘Anas ibn Mālik (raḍī Allāhu ‘anh) narrated 2286 ḥadīths.⁵³ Allāmah ‘Irāqī and Shaykh Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī said, ‘Anas (raḍī Allāhu ‘anh) narrated 2286 ḥadīths.⁵⁴ Imām Suyūṭī has also mentioned this number: ‘Anas ibn Mālik (raḍī Allāhu ‘anh) has narrated 2286 ḥadīths.⁵⁵ Shaykh Aḥmad Shākir commented, ‘According to Ibn al-Jawzī, the number of his ḥadīths is 2286 and 2178 of them has been reported in the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad (*rahimahullāh*).⁵⁶ Imām Nawawī mentions the number of his ḥadīths: ‘He has reported from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) 2286 ḥadīths. Imām Bukhārī

⁴⁷ Al-Bukhārī, *At-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* (Hyderabad: Dā’irat al-Ma‘ārif al-‘Uthmāniyyah), 2:330.

⁴⁸ Al-‘Asqalānī, *Al-Īṣābah fī Tamyīz as-Ṣahābah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1415 AH), 1:276.

⁴⁹ An-Nawawī, *At-Talkīḥ Sharḥ Jāmī’ as-Ṣahāb* (Riyadh: Dār Ṭaybah, 1st edn, 2008), 2:499.

⁵⁰ Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Iṣṭī’āb fī Ma‘rifat al-Asḥāb* (Beirut, Dār al-Jīl, 1992), 1:109.

⁵¹ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talqīḥ Fuhūm al-Athar* (Beirut: Dār al-Arqam, 1997), 110.

⁵² Fahad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘Ammār, *Ma‘rifat ar-Ruwāt al-Mukthirin wa Athbat Asḥābihim* (Riyadh: Maktabah Rushd, 2003), 14.

⁵³ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talqīḥ Fuhūm al-Athar fī ‘Uyūn at-Tārīkh wa ’s-Siyar* (Beirut: Dār al-Arqam, 1997), 263.

⁵⁴ Al-‘Irāqī, *Sharḥ at-Tabṣirah wa ’t-Tadhkirah* (Beirut: DKI), 3:15.

⁵⁵ As-Suyūṭī, *Tadrīb ar-Rāwī ‘alā Taqrīb an-Nawawī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, 1st edn, 1985), 191.

⁵⁶ Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bā’ith al-Ḥathīth* (Damascus, Mu’assasah ar-Risālah Nāshirūn, 2015), 250.

and Muslim both narrated 168 of his ḥadīths; Imām Bukhārī narrated 83 of it alone, and Imām Muslim narrated 71 alone.⁵⁷

The most reliable narrator from Anas ibn Mālik

There is a difference of opinion regarding who is the most reliable from Anas ibn Mālik (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*). The first opinion is that it is Imām Zuhrī, followed by Qatādah, and then Thābit. Imām Ibn Ḥātim has mentioned this. The second opinion is that it is Qatādah followed by Thābit, and this has been mentioned by Imām Abū Dāwūd.

The full name of Imām Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī is Muḥammad ibn Muslim ibn ‘Ubaydullah ibn ‘Abdillāh ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī (d. 124 AH). He has been mentioned 5729 times in the chains of the ḥadīths of *al-Kutub at-Tis‘ah*. He has narrated 99 ḥadīths from Anas (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*). Imām Abū Dāwūd said, ‘The total number of Zuhrī’s ḥadīths is 2200 ḥadīths.’ Imām Ibn Ḥajar says regarding his status, ‘The *faqīh* (jurist), the *hāfiẓ*, there is consensus upon his eminence and precision.’

As for Imām Qatādah ibn Di‘āmah as-Sadūsī (d. 117/118 AH), he has narrated 413 ḥadīths from Anas (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*) based on *al-Kutub at-Tis‘ah*. Imām Ibn Ḥajar mentions his status as, ‘reliable and precise.’

Imām Thābit ibn Aslam al-Bunānī (d. after 120 AH) narrated 238 ḥadīths from Anas (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*) based on *al-Kutub at-Tis‘ah*. His status is mentioned in *at-Taqrīb* as: ‘reliable and a worshipper.’

As evident, from the three narrators, only Imām Zuhrī (*rahimahullāh*) was a jurist, a quality which gives his narrations an extra merit.⁵⁸

‘Ā’ishah bint Abī Bakr

⁵⁷ An-Nawawī, *At-Talkhīṣ Sharḥ Jāmi‘ as-Ṣaḥīḥ* (Riyadh: Dār Ṭaybah, 1st edn, 2008), 2:499.

⁵⁸ Fahad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘Ammār, *Ma‘rifat ar-Ruwāt al-Mukthirin wa Athbat Ashābihim* (Riyadh: Maktabah Rushd, 2003), 4-6.

Umm al-Mu'minīn 'Ā'ishah bint Abī Bakr al-Humayrā⁵⁹ (*rađī Allāhu 'anhā*) occupies the fourth place among the *mukthirūn*. She was born around seven years before *hijrah*. She was naturally endowed with a retentive memory and a developed faculty; having memorised a large number of the ancient Arab poems, on which she was a recognised authority. During her lifetime, she was also honoured for her expertise in medicine and Islamic law.⁶⁰ Her virtues were many, the most notable one being that she was granted superiority over all females. Anas (*rađī Allāhu 'anh*) reported that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said, 'The superiority of 'Ā'ishah over all women is like the superiority of *tharīd* (dish made of meat and bread) over all other foods.'⁶¹ She was known for her outstanding knowledge. 'Allāmah Zurqānī said, 'The daughter of Abū Bakr aş-Siddīq, the Mother of the Believers, the most knowledgeable of all women.'⁶² Furthermore, she was qualified enough to independently issue *fatāwā* (religious juridical verdicts) amongst the galaxy of Ṣahābah. Qāsim ibn Muḥammad said, "'Ā'ishah would issue verdicts independently in the time of Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, and those after them.'⁶³ She passed away in 57 AH and was buried in the cemetery of *al-Baqī'*.⁶⁴

The number of her ḥadīths

The total number of her ḥadīths is 2210.⁶⁴ Imām Ibn al-Jawzī (*raḥimahullāh*) states, "'Ā'ishah Umm al-Mu'minīn narrated 2210 ḥadīths.'⁶⁵ 'Allāmah 'Irāqī and Shaykh Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī said, "'Ā'ishah (*rađī Allāhu 'anhā*) narrated 2210.'⁶⁶ Imām Suyūṭī also mentions this number. He says, "'Ā'ishah, Umm al-Mu'minīn, narrated 2210 [ḥadīths].'⁶⁷ In his *Talkhīs*, Imām Nawawī said regarding her, 'There are many authentic reports regarding her virtues, and she is one of the six Ṣahābah who narrated the most from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). She narrated 2210 ḥadīths. Imām Bukhārī and Muslim both narrated 174 of these ḥadīths; Imām Bukhārī narrated 54 ḥadīths

⁵⁹ Muḥammad Zubayr Şiddīqī, *Hadīth Literature: Its Origins Development & Special Features* (The Islamic Texts Society, 2012), 21.

⁶⁰ At-Tirmidhī, *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī* (Egypt: Shirkat Maktabah wa-Maṭba'ah Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalbī, 1975), 5:706.

⁶¹ Az-Zurqānī, *Sharḥ Zurqānī 'ala 'l-Muwaṭṭa'* (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2015), 1:26.

⁶² An-Nawawī, *At-Talkhīs Sharḥ Jāmi' aş-Ṣahīḥ* (Riyadh: Dār Ṭaybah, 1st edn, 2008), 2:321.

⁶³ Zakariyyā Kandhlawī, *Awjaz al-Masālik* (Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, 2003), 1:267.

⁶⁴ Fahad ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz al-'Ammār, *Ma'rifat ar-Ruwāt al-Mukthirīn wa Athbat Aṣḥābihim* (Riyadh: Maktabah Rushd, 2003), 213.

⁶⁵ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talqīḥ Fuhūm al-Athar fī 'Uyūn at-Tārīkh wa 's-Siyar* (Beirut: Dār al-Arqam, 1997), 263.

⁶⁶ Al-'Irāqī, *Sharḥ at-Tabṣirah wa 't-Tadhkirah* (Beirut: DKI), 3:15.

⁶⁷ As-Suyūṭī, *Tadrīb ar-Rāwī 'alā Taqrīb an-Nawawī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1st edn, 1985), 191.

alone, and Imām Muslim narrated 68 ḥadīths alone.⁶⁸ In his *Tahdhīb*, he mentions the exact same thing verbatim and then follows it up with: ‘A large number from among the Ṣahābah and *tābi‘ūn* narrated from her, and her virtues and merits are well-known.’⁶⁹

The most reliable narrator from ‘Ā’ishah

The most reliable narrators from ‘Ā’ishah (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anhā*) as stated by Imām Ibn ‘Uyaynah are Qāsim, ‘Amrah, and ‘Urwah. Imām Ibn ‘Uyaynah has considered Masrūq and ‘Urwah to be on the same level and Imām Zuhri has given preference to ‘Urwah over ‘Amrah. Imām Ibn ‘Uyaynah has described the chain that goes via Qāsim as a chain ‘intertwined with gold’. He says, ‘‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar narrating from Qāsim from ‘Ā’ishah is intertwined with gold.’ Qāsim ibn Muḥammad al-Madanī (d. 106 AH) narrated 499 ḥadīths from ‘Ā’ishah (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anhā*). Imām Ibn Ḥajar said regarding his status, ‘He is reliable and is one of the *fuqahā’* of Madīnah.’ As for ‘Urwah ibn az-Zubayr (d. 94 AH), he narrated 2125 ḥadīths from ‘Ā’ishah (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anhā*). He was also a *faqīh*, as stated in *at-Taqrīb*. Lastly, ‘Amrah bint ‘Abd ar-Rahmān al-Anṣāriyyah (d. 103 AH) narrated 310 ḥadīths from ‘Ā’ishah (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anhā*)⁷⁰ and was also a *faqīhah* in her own right. All these three narrators had a close connection with ‘Ā’ishah (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anhā*) and so they each learned knowledge directly from her. Thus, all three are considered the most reliable narrators of ‘Ā’ishah (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anhā*).

‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās

The next Ṣahābī is Abū al-‘Abbās ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*), the cousin of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). He was born three years before *hijrah*. He was called *al-bahr* (the ocean) and *al-habr* (the scholar) due to the vastness of his knowledge. The Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) supplicated for him, ‘O Allah, teach him the book (i.e. the Qur’ān).’⁷¹ ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*) would honour him, and rely upon his knowledge. On many occasions, ‘Umar (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*) gave him preference over the young and old. Other than being one of the Ṣahābah who narrated the most from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) in ḥadīth, he was also the one from whom a lot

⁶⁸ An-Nawawī, *At-Talkhiṣ Sharḥ Jāmi‘ as-Ṣaḥīḥ* (Riyadh: Dār Ṭaybah, 1st edn, 2008), 2:320.

⁶⁹ An-Nawawī, *Tahdhīb Asmā’ wa al-Lughāt* (Beirut: DKI), 351.

⁷⁰ Fahad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘Ammār, *Ma‘rifat ar-Ruwāt al-Mukthirīn wa Athbat Aṣḥābihim* (Riyadh: Maktabah Rushd, 2003), 213-215.

⁷¹ Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 75.

of *fatāwā* (religious verdicts) were narrated.⁷² The Prophet (ﷺ) passed away when he was fifteen years old. Ibn al-Qaṭṭān says, ‘He did not hear from the Prophet (ﷺ) except around ten ḥadīths.’⁷³ Imām Ibn Hajar (*rahimahullāh*) states that this estimation is incorrect, because the *Ṣaḥīḥs* of Imām Bukhārī and Muslim alone contain more than ten ḥadīth related by him directly from the Prophet (ﷺ). There is, however, no doubt that the number of ḥadīths related by him directly from the Prophet (ﷺ) is very small in comparison to what he related via other *Ṣaḥābah*.⁷⁴ He passed away in *Tā’if* in 68 AH and Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyah prayed his funeral prayer.⁷⁵

The number of his ḥadīths

The total number of his ḥadīth is 1660.⁷⁶ Imām Ibn al-Jawzī (*rahimahullāh*) states, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās narrates 1660 ḥadīth.’⁷⁷ Allāmah ‘Irāqī and Shaykh Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī said, ‘Ibn ‘Abbās (*radī Allāhu ‘anh*) narrated 1660.’⁷⁸ Imām Suyūṭī (*rahimahullāh*) mentions the same number. He says, ‘Ibn ‘Abbās narrated 1660 [ḥadīths].’ Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Awwāmah comments, ‘Shaykhān (Imām Bukhārī and Muslim) both narrated 95 ḥadīths; Imām Bukhārī narrated 120 ḥadīths alone, and Imām Muslim narrated 49 ḥadīths alone.’⁷⁹ Imām Nawawī (*rahimahullāh*) said, ‘He narrated 1660 ḥadīths from the Prophet (ﷺ).’⁸⁰ Shaykh Aḥmad Shākir comments under the number of his ḥadīths, ‘According to Ibn al-Jawzī, he narrated 1660 ḥadīths, and in *Musnad Aḥmad*, 1696 of his ḥadīths have been reported.’⁸¹ Given the repetitions in the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad, differences of this kind are not far-fetched. Thus, the increase in the amount of ḥadīths of *Musnad Aḥmad* can be explained as mere repetitions of the same ḥadīths.

⁷² An-Nawawī, *At-Talkhīṣ Sharḥ Jāmi‘ as-Ṣaḥīḥ* (Riyadh: Dār Ṭaybah, 1st edn, 2008), 2:385.

⁷³ Fahad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘Ammār, *Ma‘rifat ar-Ruwāt al-Mukthirīn wa Athbat Aṣḥābihim* (Riyadh: Maktabah Rushd, 2003), 107.

⁷⁴ Muḥammad Zubayr Ṣiddīqī, *Hadīth Literature: Its Origins Development & Special Features* (The Islamic Texts Society, 2012), 21.

⁷⁵ An-Nawawī, *At-Talkhīṣ Sharḥ Jāmi‘ as-Ṣaḥīḥ* (Riyadh: Dār Ṭaybah, 1st edn, 2008), 2:386.

⁷⁶ Fahad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘Ammār, *Ma‘rifat ar-Ruwāt al-Mukthirīn wa Athbat Aṣḥābihim* (Riyadh: Maktabah Rushd, 2003), 107.

⁷⁷ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talqīḥ Fuhūm al-Athar fi ‘Uyūn at-Tārīkh wa ’s-Siyar* (Beirut: Dār al-Arqam, 1997), 263.

⁷⁸ Al-‘Irāqī, *Sharḥ at-Tabsirah wa at-Tadhkirah* (Beirut: DKI), 3:15.

⁷⁹ As-Suyūṭī, *Tadrīb ar-Rāwī ‘alā Taqrīb an-Nawawī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, Muḥammad ‘Awwāmah ed, 1st edn, 1985), 191.

⁸⁰ An-Nawawī, *At-Talkhīṣ Sharḥ Jāmi‘ as-Ṣaḥīḥ* (Riyadh: Dār Ṭaybah, 1st edn, 2008), 2:386.

⁸¹ Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bā’ith al-Ḥathīth* (Damascus, Mu ‘assasah ar-Risālah Nāshirūn, Ahmad Shākir ed, 2015), 250.

The most reliable narrator from Ibn ‘Abbās

Imām Ibn al-Madīnī has stated that the most reliable narrator from Ibn ‘Abbās (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) is Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr. Imām Ibn Ma‘īn has deemed Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr and Ṭāwūs to be of the same calibre. Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr al-Asadī (d. 95 AH) related 770 ḥadīths from Ibn ‘Abbās (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) based on *al-Kutub at-Tis‘ah*. His status mentioned in *at-Taqrīb* is, ‘Reliable, trustworthy and a jurist.’ As for Ṭāwūs, he is Ṭāwūs ibn Kaysān al-Yamānī Abū ‘Abd ar-Rahmān. Some have suggested that his name was Dhakwān and Ṭāwūs⁸² was his title. He related 418 ḥadīths from Ibn ‘Abbās (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) based on *al-Kutub at-Tis‘ah*. His status mentioned in *at-Taqrīb* is, ‘Reliable, a jurist, and virtuous.’⁸³

Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh

The next Ṣahābī is Abū ‘Abdillāh — and some say Abū Muḥammad and Abū ‘Abd ar-Rahmān — Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh ibn ‘Amr ibn Ḥarām al-Anṣārī as-Salāmi (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*). He is a Ṣahābī and the son of a Ṣahābī. He participated in nineteen battles with the Prophet (ﷺ). It has been reported on the authority of Abu Zubayr who heard Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh say, ‘I fought in the company of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in nineteen battles. I did not participate in the Battle of Badr and the Battle of Uhud as my father prevented me. After ‘Abdullāh (his father) was martyred on the Day of Uhud, I never lagged behind the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and joined every battle (he fought).’⁸⁴ He was the last Ṣahābī to pass away in Madīnah in 78 AH at the age of 94.

The number of his ḥadīths

The total number of his ḥadīths is 1540.⁸⁵ Imām Ibn al-Jawzī states, ‘Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) narrated 1540 ḥadīths.’⁸⁶ ‘Allāmah ‘Irāqī and Shaykh Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī said, ‘Jābir

⁸² This is the title of Dhakwān ibn Kaysān Al-Yamānī. Although some scholars are of the opinion that his name was, in fact, Ṭāwūs, others called it a title. Imām Yaḥyā ibn Ma‘īn said. ‘He was given the title *Tawūs* because he was the best-looking (like the outstanding beauty of a peacock) of the *qurrā’*’.

⁸³ Fahad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘Ammār, *Ma‘rifat ar-Ruwāt al-Mukthirīn wa Athbat Aṣḥābihim* (Riyadh: Maktabah Rushd, 2003), 107-108.

⁸⁴ Muslim An-Naysābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (1813).

⁸⁵ Fahad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘Ammār, *Ma‘rifat ar-Ruwāt al-Mukthirīn wa Athbat Aṣḥābihim* (Riyadh: Maktabah Rushd, 2003), 57.

⁸⁶ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talqīh Fuhūm al-Athar* (Beirut: Dār al-Arqam, 1997) 263.

(*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) narrated 1540.⁸⁷ Imām Suyūṭī (*rahimahullāh*) mentions the same number. He says, ‘Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) narrated 1540 ḥadīths.’⁸⁸ Imām Nawawī (*rahimahullāh*) said regarding him, ‘He is from the senior Ṣahābah and from among those who narrated the most from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). He narrated 1540 ḥadīths from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). Imām Bukhārī and Muslim both narrated 58 ḥadīths; Imām Bukhārī narrated 26 ḥadīths alone, and Imām Muslim narrated 126 aḥadīth alone.’⁸⁹ Shaykh Aḥmad Shākir comments on the number of his ḥadīths saying, ‘He has narrated 1540 ḥadīths and 1206 of them have been reported in the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad.’⁹⁰

The most reliable narrator from Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh

Among the most reliable narrators from Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh is ‘Aṭā’ ibn Abī Rabāḥ al-Qurashī (d. 114 AH). He related 301 ḥadīths from Jābir (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) based on *al-Kutub at-Tis’ah*. Imām Ibn Ḥajar said regarding his status, ‘He is reliable, a jurist, and virtuous. However, he would make *irsāl*.⁹¹ The next reliable narrator from Jābir (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) is ‘Amr ibn Dīnār al-Athram al-Jumahī (d. 126 AH). He related 216 ḥadīths from Jābir (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) based on *al-Kutub at-Tis’ah*. Imām Aḥmad said regarding him, ‘Amr is the most reliable (*athbat*), then [it is] ‘Aṭā’ and Ibn Jurayj. Imām Ibn al-Madīnī said, ‘Ibn ‘Abbās had six companions: ‘Aṭā’, Ṭāwūs, Mujāhid, Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr, Jābir ibn Zayd, and Ḥikrāmah. The most knowledgeable regarding all of them was ‘Amr ibn Dīnār. He met all of them. And the most knowledgeable regarding them and ‘Amr ibn Dīnār was Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah and Ibn Jurayj.’ Imām Shu‘bah says regarding ‘Amr ibn Dīnār, ‘I have not seen anyone like ‘Amr in precision.’ Imām Ibn al-Qatṭān said, ‘Amr is more reliable according to me than Qatādah.’ He is considered as a reliable and precise narrator.⁹²

Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī

⁸⁷ Al-‘Irāqī, *Sharḥ at-Tabṣirah wa ’t-Tadhkirah* (Beirut: DKI), 3:15.

⁸⁸ As-Suyūṭī, *Tadrīb ar-Rāwī ‘alā Taqrīb an-Nawawī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, 1st edn, 1985), 191.

⁸⁹ An-Nawawī, *At-Talkhīṣ Sharḥ Jāmī’ as-Ṣaḥīḥ* (Riyadh: Dār Ṭaybah, 1st edn, 2008), 2:366.

⁹⁰ Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bā’ith al-Ḥathīth* (Damascus, Mu ’assasah ar-Risālah Nāshirūn, Aḥmad Shākir ed, 2015), 250.

⁹¹ When a *tābi’ī* omits the name of a Ṣahābī and narrates directly from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). This is seen as a flaw in the chain of transmission as it may be that a *tābi’ī* might have been narrating from another *tābi’ī* and not a Ṣahābī.

⁹² Fahad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘Ammār, *Ma’rifat ar-Ruwāt al-Mukthirin wa Athbat Aṣḥābihim* (Riyadh: Maktabah Rushd, 2003), 57-59.

His full name is Sa‘d ibn Mālik ibn Sinān al-Anṣārī, Abū Sa‘īd al-Khuḍrī (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*). He was born around ten years before *hijrah*. His father and his son were also Saḥābah. He was thirteen years old during the battle of *Badr* so he did not participate in it,⁹³ but he participated in twelve battles after it with the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). His father was martyred in the battle of *Uḥud*. Ḥanẓalah ibn Abī Sufyān al-Jumahī reports from his teacher that they said, ‘There was none among the junior Saḥābah more knowledgeable (*afqah*) than Abū Sa‘īd.’ Like Abū Hurayrah (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*), he had been one of the *Aṣḥāb aṣ-Suffah* (People of the Veranda) who lived on the porch of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)’s dwelling by the mosque in order to dedicate themselves to an austere life of prayer and learning.⁹⁴ He passed away in Madīnah at the age of 94 in 74 AH.⁹⁵

The number of his ḥadīths

The total number of his ḥadīths is 1170.⁹⁶ Imām Ibn al-Jawzī states, ‘Abū Sa‘īd al-Khuḍrī has narrated 1170 ḥadīth.’⁹⁷ ‘Allāmah Ḥarāqī and Shaykh Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī said, ‘Abū Sa‘īd al-Khuḍrī (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*) narrated 1170.’⁹⁸ After mentioning the number of ḥadīths related by the first six Saḥābah, Imām Suyūṭī (*raḥīmahullāh*) says, ‘Other than these six Saḥābah, there is no one among the Saḥābah whose ḥadīths are more than a thousand besides Abū Sa‘īd al-Khuḍrī (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anh*) for he has narrated 1170 ḥadīths.’⁹⁹ Imām Nawawī mentioned the number of ḥadīths related by him, saying, ‘1170 ḥadīths have been reported from him from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). They (i.e. Imām Bukhārī and Muslim) both narrated 43 of his ḥadīths; Imām Bukhārī narrated 16 ḥadīths alone, and Imām Muslim narrated 52 ḥadīths alone.’¹⁰⁰ Shaykh Aḥmad Shākir comments on him saying, ‘According to Ibn al-Jawzī, he narrated 1170 ḥadīths, and 958 of them have been reported in the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad.’¹⁰¹

The most reliable narrator from Abū Sa‘īd al-Khuḍrī

⁹³ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talqīh Fuhūm al-Athar* (Beirut: Dār al-Arqam, 1997), 110-111.

⁹⁴ Muḥammad Zubayr Ṣiddīqī, *Hadith Literature: Its Origins Development & Special Features* (The Islamic Texts Society, 2012), 22.

⁹⁵ An-Nawawī, *At-Talkhīṣ Sharḥ Jāmī aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ* (Riyadh: Dār Ṭaybah, 1st edn, 2008), 533.

⁹⁶ As-Sakhāwī, *Fatḥ al-Mughīth*, 3:97. As-Suyūṭī, *Tadrīb ar-Rāwī*, 2:219-20, and *Sharḥ Tabsirah*, 3:16.

⁹⁷ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talqīh Fuhūm al-Athar* (Beirut: Dār al-Arqam, 1997), 263.

⁹⁸ Al-Ḥarāqī, *Sharḥ at-Tabṣirah wa ‘t-Tadhkīrah* (Beirut: DKI), 3:15.

⁹⁹ As-Suyūṭī, *Tadrīb ar-Rāwī* ‘alā *Taqrīb an-Nawawī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, 1st edn, 1985), 191.

¹⁰⁰ An-Nawawī, *At-Talkhīṣ Sharḥ Jāmī aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ* (Riyadh: Dār Ṭaybah, 1st edn, 2008), 533.

¹⁰¹ Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bā’ith al-Ḥathīth* (Damascus, Mu’assasat ar-Risālah Nāshirūn, 2015), 250.

Three people can be considered as the most reliable narrators from Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*). The first is al-Mundhir ibn Mālik Abū Nađrah al-Bašrī (d. 108/109 AH). He related 45 ḥadīths from Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) based on *al-Kutub at-Tis‘ah*. He is considered reliable and Imām Abū Ḥātim has given him preference over ‘Atīyyah al-‘Awfī. As for ‘Atīyyah al-‘Awfī, he is ‘Atīyyah ibn Sa‘d al-‘Awfī (d. 111). He related 11 ḥadīths from Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) based on *al-Kutub at-Tis‘ah*. Imām Ibn Ḥajar mentions regarding him in *at-Taqrīb*: ‘He is *ṣadūq* (honest but not precise), he makes a lot of mistakes and was a *shī‘ī* and a *mudallis* (hid the name of his teacher when narrating).’ Lastly, ‘Aṭā’ ibn Yasār al-Hilālī (d. 94 AH) related 23 ḥadīths from Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) based on *al-Kutub at-Tis‘ah*. He is deemed reliable but there is a difference of opinion regarding his transmission from Ibn Mas‘ūd (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*).¹⁰²

CONCLUSION

From among the Ṣahābah, seven narrators reported more than a thousand ḥadīths, and they are known as the *Mukthirūn*. The most prolific of them was Abū Hurayrah (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*), as he transmitted 5374 ḥadīths. The second most prolific was ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*), as he transmitted 2630 ḥadīths. The third was Anas ibn Mālik (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) who transmitted 2286 ḥadīths, followed by Umm al-Mu’minīn ‘Ā’ishah, who transmitted 2210 ḥadīths. In fifth place is ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās who transmitted 1660 ḥadīths, followed in sixth place by Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh, who transmitted 1540 ḥadīths. Lastly, Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (*rađī Allāhu ‘anh*) transmitted 1170 ḥadīths, making him the last of the seven Ṣahābah who transmitted the most ḥadīths from the Prophet (صلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

The names of some Ṣahābah who also narrated a lot of ḥadīths from the Prophet (صلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) were also given, such as ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-Āṣ and Ibn Mas‘ūd. However, because their numbers were not more than a thousand, they could not technically be included in the category of the *Mukthirūn*, as the scholars stipulated that term for only those Ṣahābah who narrated more than a thousand ḥadīths. Although it appears as if they narrated very large quantities, it was clarified that their numbers include repeated ḥadīths, as well as those that

¹⁰² Fahad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘Ammār, *Ma‘rifat ar-Ruwāt al-Mukthirīn wa Athbat Aṣḥābihim* (Riyadh: Maktabah Rushd, 2003), 167-168.

could be inauthentic. Furthermore, the seven Ṣahābah lived at a time when memorising was a common practise among the Arabs, and they — among others — dedicated their lives for the purpose of acquiring knowledge and spreading it to others. Therefore, it makes the large quantities of ḥadīths related by them much more comprehensible.

The Ṣahābah were the primal authorities from whom the teachings of Islām were handed down. Allāh Ta‘alā has declared their reliability and uprightness in several places in the Qur‘ān such as: *{Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. And those with him are firm with the disbelievers and compassionate with one another. You see them bowing and prostrating in prayer}, seeking Allah’s bounty and pleasure. The sign of brightness can be seen on their faces from the trace of prostrating in prayer}*.¹⁰³ Likewise, He declared that He is pleased with them: *{...Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him. This is only for those in awe of their Lord}*.¹⁰⁴ Therefore, we do not question their reliability. In terms of precision, however, the Ṣahābah had varying strengths and among them. The Mukhtirūn did not only have strong retentive memories, but also dedicated their lives to spreading the teaching that they acquired from the Prophet (صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم).

May Allāh be pleased with them all.

¹⁰³ Qur‘ān 48:29.

¹⁰⁴ Qur‘ān 98:8.

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