

The Hijrah and our Journey towards an Islamic Life (Part 1 of 2)

Allah(the Almighty) says:

There is, in their stories, instruction for men endowed with understanding. (TMQ, 12:111)

It was the year 638 CE, and Umar al Farouq(ra) was the Amirul Mu'minin. His Governor in Basra was Abu Musa Al Ash'ari(ra). It was his observation to the Khalifah, that his memos carried no dates, that prompted Umar(ra) to set a calendar for Muslims, after consultation with his companions. They had many events to choose from for the beginning of the calendar. There was the birth of the Prophet(saw), or the beginning of his mission; the 'Laylatul Qadr' when the Qur'an was revealed or the battle of Badr; or even the Fath of Makkah. But they chose none of these. They went for the year of the Hijrah- the migration of the Prophet(saw) and his companions from Makkah to Madinah, in the thirteenth year of the call. From then on, events in Islamic History are recorded by it.

There must have been far reaching reasons for this decision, especially knowing the foresightedness of Umar(ra), a person whose suggestions were, on more than one occasion, supported by Allah(swt) in verses of the Qur'an. What follows is an attempt to identify some of these reasons.

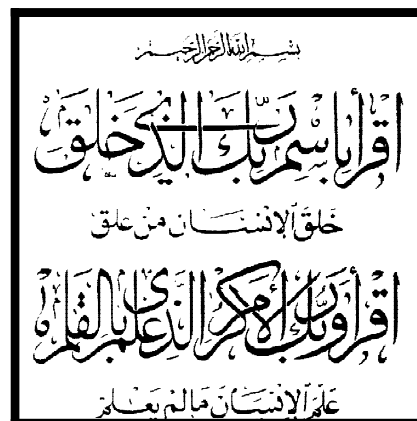
One scholar wrote: "It is, indeed, a

unique occasion to ponder that the Islamic Era did not start with the victories of Islamic wars, nor with the birth or death of the Prophet(saw), nor with the Revelation itself. It starts with Hijrah, or the sacrifice for the cause of Truth and for the preservation of the Revelation. It was a divinely inspired selection. God wanted to teach man that struggle between Truth and evil is eternal. The Islamic year reminds Muslims every year not of the pomp and glory of Islam but of its sacrifice and prepares them to do the same."

Looking deeper, we can say that, Islam, even from the name, means a total and absolute submission to Allah(swt) in all affairs:

Say: 'Truly my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are(all) for Allah, The Cherisher of the worlds: No partner hath He: This am I commanded, and I am the first of those who submit to His will(Muslims). (TMQ, 6:162,163)

This total submission was not possible in Makkah, at that time, so the Muslims had to migrate, as part of the process of establishing it. This process is a continuous one, especially when deviation occurs. The unique event of Hijrah is probably that single event which in itself gives the most comprehensive set of guidelines and lessons on how this process could be successfully accomplished.



We therefore need to study the event with a view to extract those lessons. First, we start by narrating the story.

The Prophet(saw) had for more than ten years called his people towards Islam. Only a few accepted the call. Most of those who rejected turned to persecuting those who followed him(saw) in order to turn them back. When the Prophet(saw) realized that Makkah was rebellious, and that it could not be the expected home of Islam, he started looking outside for an alternative, an alternative that could give sufficient support and protection to the new system that guarantees that whoever wants to submit to Allah(swt) could do so without any hindrance from anybody. This effort was preceded by the revelation of the Surahs of Isra and Kahf (Surahs seventeen and eighteen respectively), which, from their contents and messages, prepared the believers, mentally and psychologically, for the inevitable

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sacrifice for the sake of Aqeedah. [Have a careful look at the stories of the 'migration' of the people of the cave to the cave, that of Musa to Khidr for the sake of knowledge and the movements of Dhul Qarnain in the earth for the establishment of justice and the protection of the weak. Before that, the attempt of Fir'aun to eject Musa(as) and his followers, and his subsequent destruction. There was also the categorical assertion:

Their purpose was to scare thee off the land, in order to expel thee; but in that case they would not have stayed (therein) after thee, except for a little while. (This was our) way with the Messengers We sent before thee: thou wilt find no change in Our ways. (TMQ, 17:76-77)]

The Prophet(saw) travelled to Ta'if to invite them to the deen, but they refused. Then he(saw) took the opportunity of the Hajj season to talk to the various delegations that came. It was in this effort that Allah(swt) brought him a group of people from Yathrib, who were to accept the Deen and become its hosts and protectors. After meeting them in two successive seasons, a pledge was taken from them to host the new Deen and help it and its followers, and they swore allegiance to that. When this famous pledge-the pledge of Aqabah- took place, and with the approval and directive of Allah(swt), the Prophet(saw) commanded the believers to start the Hijrah to Yathrib- which became Al-Madinah after his arrival(saw), later. The believers(may Allah be pleased with them) started the movement in earnest, but individually, for fear that the disbelievers might understand what was going on and stop them. Most of them left secretly, except for a few, including Al Farouq Umar(ra). It is said that he announced his departure, with a challenge.. ' whoever wants his children to become orphans let him follow me!'

By the nature of the Hijrah and the

surrounding circumstances, including the distance, a four hundred kilometer journey to a new place with neither relatives nor friends, the believers could only take little or none of their belongings. Suhaib Ar Rumi(ra) had to sacrifice all his earnings to be allowed to go by the kuffar, while Abu Salamah(ra) had to surrender his wife and little child! Not even the Prophet(saw) could do anything about his daughter Zainab(ra), whose husband, Abul `Aas, prevented her from migrating. All these, setting aside the emotions that accompany leaving permanently, the 'homeland.'

All those who could migrate migrated, except those asked by the Prophet(saw) to remain behind, As Siddiq Abubakr and Ali Ibn Abi Talib(ra). Abubakr(ra) used to ask the Prophet(saw) for permission but he would tell him.. 'wait, may be Allah will give you a companion.' By Allah's plan, all this time the kuffar did not realize the implications of the movement. They thought, probably, they were being rid of the 'nuisance' of the 'fanatics.' By the time they realized, all were gone except the Prophet(saw), so they felt they had to take an immediate and firm decision. The emergency meeting of the council, at Darun Nadwah, was called, and after deliberations, an infamous and notorious decision informed by the suggestion of Iblis(may Allah curse him), posing as a Shaykh from Najd (Tsohon Najadu), was taken. It was to sponsor twelve strong men representing each of the clans to kill the Prophet(saw) with the strike of a single man. This was recorded by the Qur'an:

Remember how the unbelievers plotted against thee, to keep thee in bonds, or slay thee, or get thee out(of thy home).They plot and plan, And Allah too plans, but the best of planners is Allah. [TMQ, 8:30]

Angel Jibril(as) came with the instruction to the Prophet(saw) not to

sleep in his house that night! Before that all the necessary plans for the journey have been made. The necessary provision has been prepared. Two camels have been purchased by Abu Bakr and given to an unbeliever who was reliable and well informed on the road system to Yathrib, who was to serve as their guide to keep. With all roles assigned, and duties assigned, the Prophet(saw) left his house, leaving behind his committed cousin and companion, Ali(ra), on his bed, to hand over to the kuffar their valuables they left with him for safekeeping. He also left behind him the attackers 'guarding' the door, but sleeping. He even put some sand on their heads to show them that they could not do anything to one whom Allah(swt) protected! Through a hole at the back of Abu Bakr's house, the two companions headed for the cave in the mountain of Thaur, on a road diametrically opposite to the road to Madinah! The unbelievers, having realized that the Prophet(saw) was not in his house, and that he passed them sleeping, knew that the worst, to them, was about to happen! With a support of footprint experts, a search team was dispatched after them. With expertise and determination they traced the prints to the mouth of the cave! But the signs at the cave tended to belie this expertise. 'This spider web must have been here since time immemorial, and no humans could have entered the cave recently!' they concluded. And there was no other trace to follow! Inside the cave, it was a combination of love, sacrifice and confidence. When they first arrived, As-Siddiq(ra) entered and cleared it of any harmful creatures, lest the Prophet(saw) be harmed. At one point, after they entered, he had to block a hole in the cave with his foot, while the Prophet(saw) had a nap on his lap. He was stung by a scorpion, but that pain was less important to him than the convenience of the Prophet(saw) in his sleep. He did not move. It was his tears, out of pain, that woke his

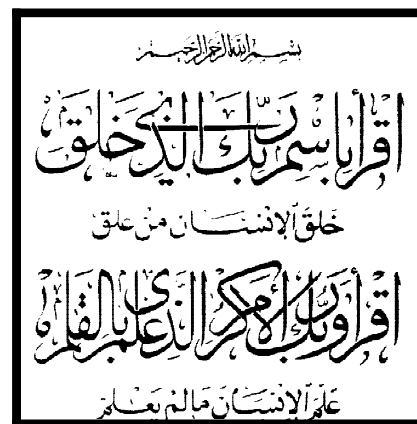
beloved friend and mentor, Al Mustafa(saw). When the chase was on, Abubakr(ra) was also worried about the Prophet's safety. At one point he remarked.. 'if any one of them was to look beneath his feet he would see us.' But the ever confident Messenger(saw) was ready to comfort him.. 'Oh Abu Bakr! What do you think about two people, the third of whom is Allah!?'

The Qur'an has, eternally, recorded that as follows:

If ye help not(the Prophet), (it is no matter): for Allah did indeed help him, when the unbelievers drove him out: being the second of the two, they two were in the cave, and he said to his companion, 'have no fear, for Allah is with us': then Allah sent down his peace upon him, and strengthened him with forces which ye saw not, and humbled to the depths the word of the unbelievers. But the word of Allah is exalted to the heights: for Allah is Exalted in might, Wise.[TMQ, 9:40]

As Abu Bakr(ra) was in the service of his Companion(saw), members of his family were also busy playing their roles in this unique situation. Asma'(ra), his daughter, brought food they prepared with her sister A'isha(ra). His son, Abdullah(ra), was to stay in Makkah all day to collect information and to study the prevailing mood there. At sunset he returned to the cave to report on his mission, so that an appropriate decision could be taken, and he then went back to Makkah before sun break-so that nobody could sense his movements. During the day, Amir Ibn Fuhayrah, the rearer of Abubakr's sheep, will come and graze them around the cave so as to destroy the footprints, pass the night there and give them some milk to drink. This was the life for three nights, after which they felt it was safe to go out. They met their unbeliever guide, Abdullah ibn Urayqit, at their appointed meeting place and proceeded on their journey.

And in line with the overall plan, they followed unknown routes along the coast of the Red sea. Back in Makkah, a reward of one hundred camels was promised for anyone who could get the Prophet(saw) and his companion(ra), dead or alive! It seemed not many people were eager, or felt competent. But Suraqah Ibn Malik had a 'worthwhile' try. After hearing news of their sighting, he sneaked away from the people to try his luck. When he approached them his horse could not go further, and its legs got stuck in sand. He had to ask his arrows whether to go further or go back. Despite the negative outcome of the arrows' draw, Suraqah decided to try again. The same thing happened as before, and this time a huge outburst of sand followed the release of the horse's legs. The Prophet(saw) had actually prayed to Allah(swt) to protect them from him. Suraqah actually realised that and was, as such, frightened and submissive. That was to be his golden opportunity to join the Deen of those he was chasing! He requested for a 'peace and security' guarantee from the Prophet(saw), which he was granted. In addition, the ever-confident Messenger of Allah(saw) gave him the promise of wearing the bracelets of Khosroe(the Persian king)! This was fulfilled during the time of Al Farouq(ra) after the conquest of the Persian empire. So Suraqah(ra) came out after them, and returned home turning people away from them. Allahu Akbar. The blessed company continued their journey without any interruption until they reached Madina, calling to Islam those they met whenever the opportunity arose. Of course there were some other episodes along the road, one of which is related here. There was a generous lady, Ummu Ma'bad, whose tents were along the road. But because of famine she did not have anything to offer the 'unknown' honorable guests. The Prophet(saw), with her permission, milked the 'dry' sheep to their fill and for the use of their hosts. Her



husband was quick to know who these guests were when she told him their story upon his return home. It was only at this time the people of Makkah knew the whereabouts of the Prophet(saw), when some men of the Jinn roamed the streets of Makkah singing...

'May Allah reward the two companions who stopped by the tents of Ummu Ma'bad...'

By that time, the Muslims were eagerly waiting for the arrival of the Prophet(saw) and his companion. On Monday the 12th day of Rabi'uth thani, exactly twelve days on road, they arrived at Quba, on the outskirts of Madina. He was welcomed by the jubilating Muslims. As Anas(ra) asserted, he saw no day in Madina brighter than that day.

Upon arrival, the Prophet(saw) set out with the task of building and integrating the new community of believers. For that, three instruments were needed: the Mosque which was to be the center; a brotherhood that could cement the community; and a code of regulations relating them with their neighbours, spelling the rights of each. The Mosque was built, and the 'constitution' that gave the Muslims their 'Ummatic' position was written. The creation of the brotherhood was perhaps the most significant. Every two Muslims were formally made brothers, each of the other. This brotherhood carried obligations and rights, going as far as to mutual inheritance after death. Even though this right was abrogated

with the revelation of the details of the rules of inheritance, all other rights stayed. It was a classical example of real brotherhood, when the Ansar(helpers) shared all what they had with their Muhajirun(immigrants) brothers. They were ready to share everything, to the extent that one Ansari told a Muhajir, ' My brother..... look at my wives and choose the one you love most and I will divorce her for you to marry!' Blessed are both the Muhajirun and Ansar(ra), their Leader, and those who followed them with goodness!

.... the indigent Muhajirs, those who were expelled from their homes and their property, while seeking grace from Allah and (His) good pleasure, and aiding Allah and His Messenger: Such are indeed the truthful;- and those who before them, had homes (in Madinah) and had adopted faith,- show their affection to such as came to them for refuge, and entertain no desire in their hearts for things given to the (latter), but give preference over themselves, even though poverty was their (own lot). And those saved from the covetousness of their own souls,- they are the ones that achieve prosperity. And those who came after them say: 'Our Lord forgive us, and our brethren who came before us into faith and leave not, in our hearts, rancour (or sense of injury) against those who have believed. Our Lord ! Thou art indeed full of Kindness, Most Merciful.' [TMQ, 59:8-10]

In part two we will, in sha Allah, discuss some of the lessons to be learnt.

Muhammad Ashiru Sani

Words of Wisdom

Ten things that are of no benefit

1. A knowledge that is not applied;
2. A deed which is accompanied by neither sincerity to Allah(swt) nor imitation of the Prophet(saw);
3. Wealth that is hoarded- its collector neither enjoys it in this

world nor puts it forward for his benefit in the hereafter;

4. A heart that is empty of the love of Allah and the emotional desire to meet Him(swt);
5. A body that is wasted for something other than the obedience and service of Allah(swt);
6. A love(of Allah) that is not guided or controlled by the pleasure of the Loved One, or obedience to His commands;
7. A time that is wasted in other than making up for a lost opportunity or gaining virtue and nearness (to Allah);
8. Thought that delves into what is of no use;
9. Service for one whose service does not bring you near to Allah and will not bring you any good in your world;
10. Your fear and desire in one whose forelock is in the Hands of Allah, as such he is a prisoner in His grip, and he does not control any harm, benefit, life, death or resurrection for himself.

The greatest of these losses are two, which are the root of every loss: loss of heart and loss of time. The loss of the heart is due to preferring the world over the hereafter; and the loss of time is due to over ambition. All disasters converge in the following of whims and desires, and over ambition. While all good lies in the following of the guidance, and preparedness for the (inevitable) meeting (with Allah(swt)). May Allah help.

The surprise is in one who when confronted by a desire turns his effort and hope to Allah(swt) so that He fulfills it for him, but he never thinks of asking Allah(swt) for the life of his heart after it died of ignorance and turning away; or asking for its cure from the sickness of desires and ambiguities. But when the heart is dead, it doesn't feel its

deviation!

Ibnul Qayyim, Al Fawa'id, page 153.

Announcements

Annual Conference and AGM

This year's NMF Annual Summer Conference and AGM will be held on Saturday and Sunday 24th and 25th August, 1996. The venue is Al-Muntada al-Islami Educational Centre, 7 Bridges Place, Parsons Green, London SW6 4HR.

Watch out for details in the invitation to be sent to you. We encourage brothers and sisters to endeavour to attend. Your attendance is our success, insha-Allahu.

Births

The family of **Br. Muhammad Aliyu Shitu** has been blessed with a baby boy on Sunday, 1st Muharram, 1417. He was named Muzammil. May Allah make him a good Muslim, ameen.

The family of **Br. Sahalu B. Junaidu** has been blessed with a baby girl on Monday, July 1st, 1996 in Scotland. She was named Haajara. May Allah make her a good Muslima, ameen.

Graduation

Br Isah M. Ahmed has successfully completed his PhD in Liquid Crystals from Strathclyde University, Glasgow, Scotland.

