

Hijrah of Hearts: The Greatest Kind of Hijrah

Praise be to Allah Who has ordained the [hijrah](#) (migration) of hearts and the hijrah of bodies on His servants and has made these two kinds of migration everlasting throughout the ages. We Muslims should follow the example of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) by modeling ourselves after his guidance and course of life and following in his footsteps in terms of talking and behaving. Allah Almighty has ordered us to do this, saying, {Verily in the messenger of Allah ye have a good example for him who looketh unto Allah and the last Day, and remembereth Allah much} (Al-Ahzab 33:21).

By the beginning of the month of Muharram, people start talking much about the Prophet's Hijrah in sermons, lectures, and the mass media. Such speeches are mostly mere stories by which people pass the time; and in a few days, the matter is neglected and forgotten without affecting people's souls or being regarded as a model to follow in manners and behavior. Rather, it has become an annual custom that people speak of without understanding or acting according to the meaning of hijrah.

Linguistically speaking, the word hijrah in Arabic indicates separating oneself from others bodily, spiritually, or in speech. Legally speaking, it means departing from disbelieving countries, evil people, or evil deeds and dispraised practices. The hijrah in this sense is among the traditions of Ibrahim (peace and blessings be upon him) who said, {Lo! I am going unto my Lord Who will guide me} (As-Saffat 37:99). The verse refers to Ibrahim's emigration from the country of disbelievers, seeking faith. Some of his offspring accompanied him to Ash-Sham, where [Al-Aqsa](#) Mosque is located in Palestine, and then, accompanied by some others of his offspring, he moved to Al-Hijaz, where the Sacred Mosque is situated in Makkah. This is stated in the invocation mentioned in the verse that reads "Our Lord! Lo! I have settled some of my posterity in an uncultivable valley near unto Thy holy House" (Ibrahim 14:37).

Hijrah was also established by Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) as he twice ordered his Companions to immigrate to Abyssinia to preserve their faith when the disbelievers in Makkah began torturing them severely. The Prophet, however, remained in Makkah calling people to Allah, in spite of the great harm he received. Then Allah Almighty permitted him to immigrate to Madinah. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) allowed his Companions to go to Madinah, and, accordingly, they began emigrating, leaving their homes and properties, seeking the bounties and satisfaction of Allah, and helping Allah's cause and His Messenger. Allah praised those Muhajirun (immigrants to Madinah) and promised them great reward. That is why Hijrah is mentioned in the Qur'an associated with jihad. Further, the Muhajirun became the best of the Prophet's Companions, as they sacrificed everything one may cherish; namely home, property, family, and relatives, in order to preserve their faith and to please Allah.

Emigration has become an established fact that will not cease until Judgment Day, as stated in the hadith that reads "Hijrah will not end until repentance ends, and repentance will not end until the sun rises in the west (that is immediately before the Judgment Day)." Hence, whoever cannot declare his religion in a particular place must move to another place where he can freely declare his faith. Moreover, Allah Almighty has threatened whoever can emigrate for the above-mentioned reason and does not: "Lo! As for those whom the [angels](#) take (in death) while they wrong themselves, (the angels) will ask: In what were ye engaged? They will say: We were oppressed in the land. (The angels) will say: Was not Allah's earth spacious that ye could have migrated therein? As for such, their habitation will be hell, an evil journey's end; Except the feeble among men, and the women, and the children, who are unable to devise a plan and are not shown a way. As for such, it may be that Allah will pardon them. Allah is ever Clement, Forgiving" (An-Nisaa' 4:97-99).

This is, in fact, a strongly worded threat to whoever neglects emigration, when needed, without a legal excuse. Allah's earth is spacious, and without doubt, there are many good places where one may practice one's religion freely. In accordance with this meaning, Allah Almighty says, {Whoso migrateth for the cause of Allah will find much refuge and abundance in the earth} (An-Nisaa' 4:100).

Furthermore, Allah compensates those who emigrate for the properties left behind. The Almighty says, {To those who leave their homes in the cause of Allah, after suffering oppression, we will assuredly give a goodly home in this world; but truly the reward of the Hereafter will be greater; if they only realized (this)!} (An-Nahl: 41–42).

Among the different kinds of hijrah is the abandonment of wrongdoings such as acts of disbelief, polytheism, hypocrisy, and other evil deeds and bad morals. Addressing Prophet Muhammad, Allah Almighty says, {And idols, shun} (Al-Muddaththir 74:5). Avoiding idols, as stated in the verse, also implies denouncing them as well as the people who glorify them. Besides, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) tells us that a Muslim is the one who avoids harming Muslims with his tongue and hands, and an emigrant is the one who abandons all what Allah has forbidden. The hadith indicates that one should forsake any deed, rule, word, food, or anything Allah Almighty has prohibited, as well as forbidden gaze and forbidden hearing. All such matters should be forsaken completely.

Another kind of hijrah is to desert wrongdoers such as disbelievers, hypocrites, immoral people, and the like, as Allah Almighty says, [And bear patiently what they say and avoid them with a becoming avoidance] (Al-Muzzammil 73:10). Here, Allah orders His Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him) to be patient with those foolish persons who belie him among his people, and to forsake them without blaming them.

The highest form of hijrah is the hijrah of the hearts to Allah through worshiping Him sincerely in secret and in public. In this form of hijrah, the true believer should not intend anything with his words and deeds except gaining Allah's pleasure and should not love except Allah and whoever is loved by Allah. Similarly, hijrah to Allah's Messenger can be fulfilled by following him and giving priority to obeying his orders over anybody else's.

To conclude, discussing hijrah cannot be fulfilled by just narrating the stories and incidents of the Prophet's Hijrah, nor by holding ceremonies and then, all of a sudden, everything ends, leaving no trace in the soul or effect on the behavior. Unfortunately, many of those who talk about hijrah every new year do not know its meaning or act according its objectives. They may even act in contrast with such meanings and objectives; and thus talking about hijrah becomes mere words, which are of no avail.

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