



The Road to Madinah

**Meaning, Story, Lessons
and Heroes of the Prophet's Hijrah**

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Table of Content

Introduction	3
Hijrah: Meaning and Story	5
True Meaning of Hijrah.....	6
• Five Important Areas for a True Hijrah.....	9
Story of the Hijrah	12
Lessons and Reflections	21
Hijrah Still Offers Valuable Lessons	22
Perfect Planning and Reliance on Allah	25
• Perfect planning	26
• Reliance on Allah	30
For Muslim Minorities	34
• True Spirit of Citizenship	35
• Peaceful Co-Existence	37
• Developing the Community	38
• Noble Characters and Behavior	40
Lessons for New Muslims	43

The Road to Madinah

TABLE OF CONTENT

- 2 -



- Put Your Trust in God..... 44
- A Professional Guide..... 46
- In Madinah 47

Hijrah Heroes50

Abu Bakr As-Siddiq.....51

Umm Salamah.....54

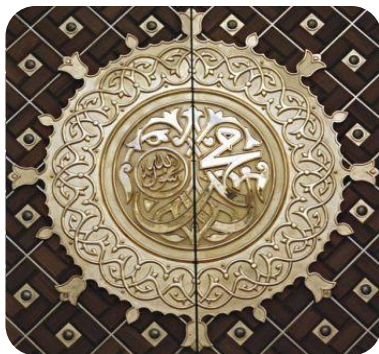
`Umar ibn Al-Khattab62

Asma' Bint Abi Bakr67



Introduction

It is the new Hijri Year; the 1434th anniversary of the Prophet's immigration to Madinah; a special moment that evokes a long journey of tireless work to deliver the message of Allah to humanity, the message of light, mercy, compassion, solidarity, and justice.



As this dear occasion approaches, we remember the incomparable dedication of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and his companions, the matchless sacrifices they offered, the pains and tears of those devoted heroes who preferred to give up their homes, wealth, comfort, families, and everything but not the call and message they were entrusted with.



Thanks to their noble endeavor, about one billion and half of humans are blessed with Islam throughout the world; the call of Athan is made 24 hours around the globe; the light of faith continues to shine on hearts and souls.

This book, *The Road to Madinah*, is part of our special coverage of the great event of Hijrah. The book chapters cover the Hijrah meaning, story, reflections, lessons, and the stories of a selected number of the companions, the heroes of Hijrah, who set a great example in dedication, faith and sacrifice.



Hijrah: Meaning and Story

- True Meaning of Hijrah
- Story of the Hijrah





True Meaning of Hijrah¹

As Muslims around the world celebrate the *Hijri* New Year, everyone is focused on remembering and telling the story of Prophet Muhammad's migration from Makkah to Madinah and the hardships he had to endure in the preparations and on the way. Everyone memorizes the beautiful song the *Ansar* greeted him with, and every Muslim longs to visit Madinah for its special place in the Prophet's heart.



Within a modern setting where we have cars, planes and internet, a trip in the desert on camel-back to reach a distant oasis with sword-wielding infidel thugs in pursuit becomes more of a folktale than a true-life experience rich with lessons we could all learn and practice until the end of time, no matter how modern or educated we are.

¹ An article written by Sahar El-Nadi.



Very few of us realize that *Hijrah* did not end as soon as Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) reached Madinah safely and was welcomed with the famous song. Most Muslims are not aware that *Hijrah* actually extends until our present day so each one of us could enjoy some of its benefits.

True, the first immigrants (*Muhajerun*) at the time of the Prophet have a special privilege over the rest of us, but let's also remind ourselves that this door of mercy was not totally closed to the rest of the nation after them. Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"A Muslim is someone who spares people the harm of his tongue and his hand, and a migrant is someone who migrates away from what God has forbidden".

This amazing statement actually gives us great hope that we too could be eligible for some of the rewards of "*muhajerun*", here is how:

The simple meaning of the word *Hijrah* (migration) is to move from one place to the other and take up residence there. Today, people immigrate to other countries to make a better living: find better jobs, education, or marriage opportunities, yet, by Islamic standards, the scope is much wider.



The reasons behind the move have to comply with Islam. Seeking a better living for self and family is indeed a great cause and it is actually encouraged in Islam, but it becomes greater if one leaves a place where he is restricted in practicing Islam or pressured into destructive beliefs and habits, and migrates to a new place where he and his loved ones could enjoy more freedom to practice Islam in a more supportive environment.

In parallel, another dimension of *Hijrah* happens discreetly in the heart, and eventually reflects on one's behavior and relationship with the rest of the world. This is the type of *Hijrah* mentioned in the Prophet's statement: migrating "away from what God has forbidden" not just physically by moving to a new place, but also spiritually and ethically, by choosing good over evil and ethics over corruption, and pledging to withstand the tribulations of struggling to stay on that path for life.

This implies being knowledgeable and mindful of God's commands and prohibitions in the Quran and Sunnah, being strong enough to control one's urges, being aware of the world around us, and seeking to rise in rank in the sight of God by constantly working to be a better person and a better Muslim. Obviously this is something we could all do every day, and it's not a



coincidence that the Prophet mentioned good manners – sparing people the harm of tongue and hand- in conjunction with *Hijrah* in this hadith.

■ Five Important Areas for a True Hijrah

To attain true *Hijrah*, here are the five areas we have to work on:

Faith: A weak faith is the first enemy of a prospect immigrant. The first immigrants would have never left all their possessions behind and migrated unless they had faith as solid as mountains in God’s words and His prophet’s leadership. Like them, we should work on strengthening our faith to be able to pull away from what God has forbidden.

Knowledge: Our second enemy on the path of *Hijrah* is ignorance. Only with good knowledge could our faith see us through the trials and tests of staying on the straight path. This knowledge should not be limited to religious information only, but should also include modern sciences and arts, history, philosophy, world news, other cultures and other religions. Muslims had a glorious civilization only when they knew the true meaning of knowledge.

Acts of worship: The lifeline of the soul is its connection to its Creator. Worship not only brings us



closer to God and supplies us with essential strength, resolve and tranquility, but also humbles us enough to see we're only creatures like the rest of the creation, and that we have to maintain an ethical relationship with the universe and other people. While migrating away from what God has forbidden, we have to have a new destination to migrate to, and that destination is determined by the degree of our closeness to Him through worship.

Desire: The Quran describes eloquently the different types of human desire "*nafs*", and it is the responsibility of each of us to discover which type they belong to and follow the Quranic wisdom on how to deal with its tricks. Controlling one's urges and desires is detrimental to how much success in this life one achieves as a migrant to God.

Ethics : A person who is full of great concepts and no deeds to prove it is a loser. Unless we can "walk the talk" there would be no hope for us to strengthen our will to reach our goals and our resistance to distractions. And unless our Islamic ethical system is apparent through our everyday behaviors and manners, there is no hope for us to be true Muslims either according to the Prophet's hadith. For what good is it to veil, pray and fast then steal, lie and gossip? When the Prophet begins by describing a Muslim as someone who is well



mannered, he is actually reminding us that Islam is a practical code of ethics not just a set of spiritual concepts.

In short, a true immigrant is an ethical, well-mannered and pious Muslim, and that is what we should all strive to be everyday of our lives.




Story of the Hijrah¹

When the persecution of the people of Makkah against the Muslims grew intense, Allah commanded them to emigrate so that they could establish the religion of Allah in a land where they could worship Him.



Allah chose Madinah as the land of Hijrah (emigration for the sake of Allah). The Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him) saw in a dream that he was immigrating to that city. It was narrated from Abu Musa that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: **“I saw in a dream that I was emigrating from Makkah to a land in which there are date palms, and I thought that it was Al-Yamamah or Hajar, but it turned out to be Madinah, Yathrib.”**□ (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

¹ Republished at OnIslam.net, with slight modifications, from islam-qa.com.



Al-Bukhari also narrated on the authority of `A'ishah that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said to the Muslims: **"I have been shown the land to which you will immigrate: it has palm trees between two lava fields, two stony tracts."**□ So, some people immigrated to Madinah, and most of those people who had previously immigrated to the land of Ethiopia, returned to Madinah.

Commenting on this hadith, Al-Hafiz wrote: "The harrah (stony tract) is land whose stones are black. This dream was different from the dream mentioned above in the hadith of Abu Musa in which the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was not sure where that land was. Ibn At-Teen said: The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was shown the land of immigration in a way that could apply to Madinah and to other places; then he was shown the feature that is unique to Madinah so it became clear which land that was."□

With regard to the first Companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) to emigrate, Al-Bara' (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "The first ones who came to us of the Companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) were Mus`ab ibn `Umayr and Ibn Umm Maktum. They started to teach us the Qur'an. Then `Ammar, Bilal, and Sa`d came, then `Umar ibn Al-Khattab came with twenty others. Then the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) came,



and I never saw the people of Madinah rejoice more than that. They rejoiced so much that I saw the girls and boys saying, "This is the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him), he has come" (Al-Bukhari).

The following hadith sums up many of the events of the Prophet's emigration: It was narrated on the authority of `A'ishah that he Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said to the Muslims: **"In a dream I have been shown your place of immigration, a land of date palm trees, between two lava fields, the two stony tracts."**□ So, some people immigrated to Madinah, and most of those people who had previously immigrated to the land of Ethiopia returned to Madinah. Abu Bakr also prepared to leave for Madinah, but the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said to him, **"Wait for a while, because I hope that I will be allowed to emigrate also."**□ Abu Bakr said, "Do you indeed expect this? May my father be sacrificed for you!"□ The Prophet said, **"Yes."** So Abu Bakr stayed behind for the sake of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) so that he could accompany him. He fed two she-camels he owned for four months.

One day, while we [`A'ishah is still narrating] were sitting in Abu Bakr's house at noon, someone said to Abu Bakr, "This is the Prophet (peace and blessings be



upon him) with his head covered, coming at a time at which he never used to visit us before." Abu Bakr said, "May my father and mother be sacrificed for him. By Allah, he has not come at this hour except for something important." So the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) came and asked permission to enter, and he was admitted. When he entered, he said to Abu Bakr: **"Tell everyone who is present with you to go away."** Abu Bakr replied, "There is no one here but you are my family. May my father be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allah!" The Prophet said, **"I have been given permission to emigrate."** Abu Bakr said, "Shall I accompany you?" The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said, **"Yes."** Abu Bakr said, "O Messenger of Allah, may my father be sacrificed for you, take one of these two she-camels of mine." The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) replied, **"(I will accept it) with payment."** So we prepared the baggage quickly and put some journey food in a leather bag for them. Asma', the daughter of Abu Bakr, cut a piece from her waist belt and tied the mouth of the leather bag with it, and for that reason she was named *dhat al-nitaqayn*, the One with Two Waist-belts.

Then the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) and Abu Bakr reached a cave on the mountain of Thawr and stayed there for three nights. `Abdullah ibn Abi Bakr, who was an intelligent and wise youth, stayed (with them) overnight. He would leave



them before daybreak so that in the morning he would be with the Quraysh, as if he had spent the night in Makkah. He would keep in mind any plot made against them, and when it became dark he would (go and) inform them of it. `Amir ibn Fuhayrah, the freed slave of Abu Bakr, used to bring the milch sheep (of his master, Abu Bakr) to them a little while after nightfall. So they always had fresh milk at night, the milk of their sheep. `Amir ibn Fuhayrah would then take the flock away when it was still dark (before daybreak). He did the same on each of those three nights. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) and Abu Bakr had hired a man from the tribe of Banu Ad-Dayl from the family of Banu `Abd ibn `Adiy as an expert guide, ... he was of the religion of the polytheists of the Quraysh, but the Prophet and Abu Bakr trusted him and gave him their two she-camels and made an appointment with him to bring their two she-camels to the cave of the mountain of Thawr in the morning after three nights had passed. And (when they set out), `Amir ibn Fuhayrah and the guide went along with them and the guide led them along the coast.

Ibn Shihab said: `Abdur-Rahman ibn Malik Al-Mudliji, who was the nephew of Suraqah ibn Malik, told me that his father informed him that he heard Suraqah saying: The messengers of the Quraysh came to us declaring that they had assigned for the persons who would kill or arrest the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be



upon him) and Abu Bakr, a reward equal to their blood-money. While I was sitting in one of the gatherings of my tribe, a man from them came to us and stood while we were sitting, and said, "O Suraqah! I have just seen some people far away on the shore, and I think they are Muhammad and his companion."□ Suraqah added: I realized that it must have been them. But I said, "No, it is not them, but you must have seen so-and-so, and so-and-so whom we saw setting out."□I stayed in the gathering for a while and then got up and left for my home. I ordered my slave-girl to get my horse, which was behind a hillock, and keep it ready for me.

Then I took my spear and left by the back door of my house dragging the lower end of the spear on the ground and keeping it low. Then I reached my horse, mounted it and made it gallop. When I approached them (i.e., Muhammad and Abu Bakr), my horse stumbled and I fell down from it. Then I stood up, got hold of my quiver and took out the divining arrows and drew lots as to whether I should harm them or not, and the lot which I disliked came out. But I remounted my horse and let it gallop, giving no importance to the divining arrows. When I heard the recitation of the Qur'an by the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) who was not looking around although Abu Bakr kept doing that, suddenly the forelegs of my horse sank into the ground up to the knees, and I fell down from it. Then I rebuked it and it got up but it could hardly lift its forelegs from the ground, and when it stood up straight



again, its forelegs caused dust to rise up in the sky like smoke. Then again I drew lots with the divining arrows, and the lot which I disliked came out. So I called to them to let them know they were safe. They stopped, and I remounted my horse and went to them. When I saw how I had been hampered from harming them, it came to my mind that the cause of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) would become victorious. So I said to him, "Your people have assigned a reward equal to the blood-money for your capture." Then I told them all the plans the people of Makkah had made concerning them. Then I offered them some journey food and goods but they refused to take anything and did not ask for anything, but the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, **"Do not tell others about us."** Then I requested him to write for me a guarantee of security. He ordered `Amir bin Fuhayrah to write it for me on a piece of animal skin, then the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) went on his way.

When the Muslims of Madinah heard that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) had departed Makkah and was heading towards them, they started going to the harrah (stony tract formed of lava) every morning. They would wait for him till the heat of the noon forced them to return. One day, after waiting for a long while, they returned home, and when they went into their houses, a Jew climbed up onto the



roof of one of the forts of his people to look for something, and he saw the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) and his companions dressed in white clothes, as if they were emerging out of a desert mirage.

The Jew could not help shouting at the top of his voice, "O Arabs! Here is your great man whom you have been waiting for!" So all the Muslims rushed to pick up their weapons and went to meet the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) on the lava field. The Prophet turned to the right and alighted in the land of Banu `Amr ibn `Awf. This was on a Monday in the month of Rabi` Al-Awwal. Abu Bakr stood receiving the people while the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) sat and kept silent. Some of the Ansar (Helpers), who came and had not seen the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) before, began greeting Abu Bakr, but when the sunshine fell on the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) and Abu Bakr came forward and shaded him with his cloak, only then did the people recognize the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him).

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) stayed with Banu `Amr ibn `Awf for ten nights and established the mosque that was founded on piety, the Mosque of Quba'. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) prayed in it and then mounted

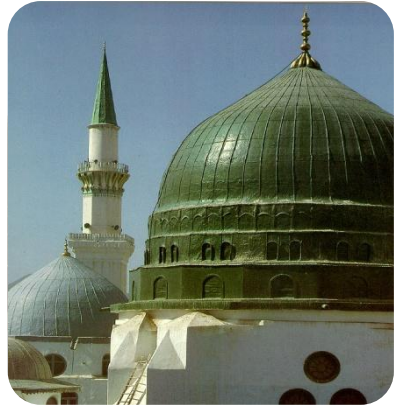


his she-camel and moved on, accompanied by the people till his she-camel knelt down at the place where the Mosque of the Prophet now stands in Madinah. Some Muslims used to pray there in those days, and that place was a yard for drying dates belonging to Suhail and Sahl, two orphan boys who were under the guardianship of As`ad ibn Zurarah. When his she-camel knelt down, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said, **"This place, Allah willing, will be our place."** The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) then called the two boys and told them to name a price for that yard so that he might take it as a mosque. The two boys said, "No, but we will give it as a gift, O Messenger of Allah!" The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) refused to take it as a gift and insisted on buying it from them.

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) built a mosque there. He himself helped in the construction. He started carrying unburned bricks for its building and while doing so, he would say, **"This load is better than the load of Khaybar, for it is more pious in the sight of Allah and purer and better rewardable."** He was also saying, **"O Allah! The actual reward is the reward in the Hereafter, so bestow Your Mercy on the Ansar and the Muhajirun (Immigrants)."**

Lessons and Reflections

- Hijrah Still Offers Valuable Lessons
- Perfect Planning and Reliance on Allah
- Lessons for Muslim Minorities
- Lessons for New Muslims





Hijrah Still Offers Valuable Lessons¹

A new year begins. Islamic history is full of days and great occasions that are good to celebrate - taking from them that which guides us to the right path in difficult times.



The noble Hijrah from Makkah to Madinah is one of the grandest events in the history of Islam. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) gives us through the two migrations - the first Hijrah of the Muslims to Ethiopia and his own to Madinah, then called Yathrib - many lessons and examples. He teaches us that change requires hard work and sacrifice.

When the followers of the Prophet were harmed in Makkah and could find no one to champion them and

¹ By Dr. Muzammil Sidiqqi.



feared sedition, the Prophet reviewed all the countries of the neighboring world for a place to command them to migrate to. If they went any region in the Arabian Peninsula they would be returned to Quraysh. Persia was overlooked because the Persians were idolaters, and the Romans, though people of the book, were known for being tough and tyrannical. The Prophet thought Ethiopia would be the best. He ordered the companions to migrate to Ethiopia **"Go to Ethiopia,"** he told them, **"there is a king there who is just."** This Hijrah was termed the migration to the abode of safety, while the migration to Madinah was termed the migration to the abode of belief.

We thus learn from the Prophet that when we plan for something we should make our plans considering all aspects of the situation. He planned for the method of travel, the provisions and who would lead the way. When everything was meticulously planned, he put his faith in Allah.

In the grand welcome the Prophet received upon arriving in Madinah we find lessons and examples. For the people of Madinah welcomed him and the immigrants with great hospitality, knowing that they would have to share with the immigrants their money and homes and become their family - for the immigrants had left their families behind in Makkah - and asked rewards only from Allah. In this way, the Prophet



achieved brotherhood between the Ansar (helpers of the Prophet) and the Muhajirun (migrants), and they became an example of the depth of belief.

The lessons and examples in the life of the Prophet and the Hijrah to Madinah should not simply be seen as a historical story to enjoy reading or hearing but one that we should consider a model for our own actions, so that we may truly be one of his followers.

O! Lord, do not deny us the joy of looking upon Your noble face for our failings or the intercession of the Prophet or Heaven.



Perfect Planning and Reliance on Allah¹

If greatness of historical events is measured by their constructive influences and decisive resultant effects on the motion of life as well as the march of human beings on earth, the value of such events is – besides this – known through the elevated morals, noble principles and ethical demeanors that co-occur with these events.



Hence, the Hijrah event was by all measures an outstanding milestone. It yielded great fruits, displayed lofty principles and values in action, and expounded Prophet Muhammad's (peace and blessings be upon him) prominent skill in planning as well as putting his whole trust in Allah the Almighty.

This can be seen in so many situations and incidents that took place throughout the course of Hijrah. Some of

¹ Article by Dr. Ali Al-Halawani



these will be cited here to help Muslims emulate them and put them into action in due, similar contexts. Two of the many perfect aspects of the Prophet's personality that appeared during the Hijrah event will be highlighted here: the Prophet's paramount ability to plan, and putting his full trust in Allah following observing all the possible material means.

■ Perfect planning

No doubt the Hijrah witnessed a number of extraordinary incidents that show Allah's perfect care for His Prophet and his personal safety. Foremost among these is the fact that Allah provided him with unseen aides besides showering mercy and tranquility upon him. The Qur'an states this as saying, **{And Allah sent down His tranquility upon him and supported him with soldiers [i.e., angels] you did not see}**. (At-Tawbah 9:40) However, the flow of incidents was guided by the natural laws set by Allah to manage this present life and govern all that takes place therein. This can be seen in what follows.

- As soon as the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) was commanded to emigrate to Madinah he entrusted Abu Bakr As-Siddiq, his closest friend and companion, with the information. Two she-camels were purchased and prepared for the journey by the latter. The Prophet agreed to take one of them for




himself, known as Al-Qaswaa' afterwards, provided that he would pay its price.

- In order to deceive the Quraishites, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) told `Ali ibn Abi Talib, his cousin and companion, to sleep in his bed and cover himself with his green mantle and assured him full security under Allah's protection and told him that no harm would come to him. It is remarkable that `Ali was then less than twenty years old!
- The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) hired a guide who knew the desert's pathways very well to guide them throughout the way to Madinah to ward off any possibility of getting lost. It is also remarkable that the guide who is known by the name `Abdullah ibn Urayqit was then still a disbeliever. However, the divinely-guided Prophet hired him on the basis of having two basic qualities: professional experience as a guide and his well-known honesty.
- When the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) set out for Madinah they went out from the latter's house through a skylight or a wicket in order to evade the Quraishites who were resolved on capturing them.



- In order to further camouflage their escape, the Prophet and Abu Bakr took an unusual route to Madinah. Instead of taking the road to Madinah in north side of Makkah as the polytheists would expect, they walked along a least expected road south of Makkah leading to Yemen. They reached the cave known by the name Thawr where they stayed for three days until the search for them lessened.
- `Abdullah ibn Abi Bakr used to mix with the Quraishites in their gatherings in order to collect information and then visit the Prophet and his father at the cave to apprise them of the latest situation in Makkah. His sister, Asma' bint Abi Bakr used to carry food provisions to the Prophet and her father twice a day. In addition, `Amir ibn Fuhairah who was tending his master Abu Bakr's flock, used to follow both `Abdullah and Asmaa' to erase their footprints. This is due to the fact that the Arabs were famous for tracking and through these footprints they could have figured out which road the Prophet and his companion have taken and the whole plan would have failed.
- The great caution exercised by the Prophet and Abu Bakr in all their actions throughout the journey. Whoever asked Abu Bakr about the identity of his honorable companion (i.e., the Prophet), he would



reply that he was a man who guided him on his way. The questioner would think that Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was a guide, in terms of roads, whereas Abu Bakr used to mean guide to the way of righteousness. (Al-Bukhari) Thus, using his wit, Abu Bakr answered the questioner without revealing the Prophet's identity or resorting to telling lies.

- Choosing Madinah as the final destination was not a passing thought or a mere chance. Rather, it was a well-studied decision and a predetermined fate. This is due to the strategic geographic location Madinah then enjoyed that would give the forthcoming Muslim state a great influence on stirring events and happenings all over the Arabian Peninsula. Added to this the unique demographical structure as it encompassed the three Jewish tribes: Banu Qainuqa`, Banu Quraizah and Banu An-Nadir side by side with the Arabs who belonged to the Aws and Al-Khazraj tribes. Besides, the people of Madinah had amicable relations with Da`wah as they met with the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) twice in `Aqabah where they swore allegiance to him. Thus, they were prepared for receiving Muslims as well as the Prophet as a first step towards establishing the first Muslim state.



■ Reliance on Allah

In this pattern that is characterized by putting the Prophet's full trust in Allah as well as cherishing the material means or natural laws set by Him in the universe, the Hijrah incidents succeeded in a row. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was so protected and supported by Allah Almighty that all the Quraishites' malicious schemes were defeated. It was Allah's Will that the plans of Prophet Muhammad succeed and those of the disbelievers fail. He says in the Ever-Glorious Qur'an, **{Allah has already set for everything a [decreed] extent}**. (At-Talaq 65:3) And, regarding Dhul Qarnain, Allah says, **{Indeed, We established him upon the earth, and We gave him to everything a way [i.e., means]. So he followed a way}**. (Al-Kahf 18:84-85)

In a narration by Imam Ahmed on the authority of Asmaa' bint Abi Bakr (may Allah be pleased with her) that she said, "We prepared food provision for them... they set out going around the mountains of Makkah until they found the mountain which they chose as their [temporary] resort. Upon seeing a man in front of the cave, Abu Bakr said, "O Prophet of Allah! He could see us!" The Prophet replied, **"No! There are angels that cover us with their wings"**. The man sat to relieve himself facing [the mouth of] the cave. Thereupon the

Prophet said, **"If he could see us, he would not do that."** (Musnad Ahmed)

Despite all the efforts the Prophet has exerted to camouflage the Hijrah event and maintain its secrecy, the Quraishites reached the mouth of the cave where he and Abu Bakr were hiding. This means that when the required human effort is exhausted, comes the aid from Allah Who never lets down or abandons His Prophet and/or his worshippers in a way that may deliver them to His and their adversaries. The Almighty reaffirms this meaning in the Qur'an that He will protect His Prophet when he is forsaken and/or unattended by all other supporters. The companions were scattered at that time as many of them have emigrated to Madinah earlier, while some remained in Makkah. Thus, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) had no one else left beside him at that very time except Allah and Abu Bakr...

{If you do not aid him [i.e., the Prophet] – Allah has already aided him when those who disbelieved had driven him out [of Makkah] as one of two, when they were in the cave and he [Muhammad] said to his companion, "Do not grieve; indeed Allah is with us." And Allah sent down His tranquility upon him and supported him with soldiers [i.e., angels] you did not see and made the word of those who disbelieved the lowest,




while the word of Allah – that is the highest. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise}.(At-Tawbah 9:40)

Thus, following taking care of all material means in terms of planning and preparing for the action, the Prophet put his trust in Allah and declared his complete dependence on Him Alone and he earnestly directed his face along with his heart towards Allah seeking His mercy, guidance and assistance. In short, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) put his trust in Allah without negligence of material means.

This is a great lesson that needs to be learnt by each and every Muslim who should have strict faith that Allah's help will descend when one's human means are exhausted and that s/he should be confident that victory is always from Allah who states, **{And victory is not except from Allah, the Exalted in Might, the Wise}**. (Aal `Imran 3:126)

To conclude, human effort in the world of observing material means cannot be neglected or made little of by Muslims especially those who shoulder the responsibility of inviting others to the way of Allah under the pretense of depending on Allah and leaving everything to Him. If Prophet Muhammad – though was well protected by Allah – observed all possible human material means to



make his plan work out, no doubt we would be more entitled to observe all possible means and use all our cunning and planning skills to make our designs succeed. We have to do all what we can then leave the results to Allah Who knows better than any of His creatures.



For Muslim Minorities¹

The Emigration to Madinah (*Hijrah*) was a turning point in Muslim history that has many inspiring lessons, especially for Muslim minorities.

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be on him) and his Companions set wonderful examples that Muslims should learn from and translate into practice in all aspects of life.

After the Prophet and his Companions' migrated to Madinah, previously known as Yathrib, it became the second most important city in Islam, after Makkah. Though Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be on him) never forgot his love for Makkah, he remained in Madinah until he breathed his last; he protected and developed it. Prophet Muhammad and his Companions



¹ An article written by Dr. Wael Shihab.



spared no effort to cultivate Madinah and turn it into a developed, civilized city.

Muslims living in majority non-Muslim countries, whether emigrants or natives, have important lessons to draw from the Hijrah occasion.

■ True Spirit of Citizenship

Once settled in Madinah, Prophet Muhammad and his Companions from Makkah loved and cared about it the same way they were concerned about Makkah, their original home.

Out of his great love and care for Madinah, Prophet Muhammad declared it as a sacred, inviolable city, the same way Makkah had been a sacred city. Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) said,

"Verily [Prophet] Ibrahim declared Makkah sacred and supplicated (for blessings to be showered) upon its inhabitants, and I declare Madinah to be sacred as Ibrahim had declared Makkah to be sacred. I have supplicated (Allah for His blessings to be showered) in its *sa'* and its *mudd*(two standards of weight and measurement) twice as did Ibrahim for the



inhabitants of Makkah." (Muslim, *Sahih*, hadith no. 1360)

Prophet Muhammad and his Companions exerted their utmost efforts to defend their country, Madinah, against foreign aggression and attacks. They fought all invading forces which attacked and targeted their city, even when aggressors were from their original tribes and cities. In the 5th. year of Hijrah, for example, the Prophet and his Companions courageously defended Madinah against the allied tribes led by Quraish, which had gathered in large numbers to invade the city.

After the conquest of Makkah in the eighth year after Hijrah, Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be on him) and his prominent Companions returned back to Madinah to stay there until the end of their lives. Some people thought that the Prophet would return to Makkah after the Muslim victory; however, he (peace and blessings be on him), along with prominent Companions, went back to Madinah and continued serving it and working for its betterment.

Muslim minorities, in Europe, Americas and elsewhere around the world, should be faithful and loyal citizens to their countries where they live. There is no conflict between faithful citizenship and preserving one's faith.



Muslims should precede others in serving their communities and working for their interest and wellbeing.

■ Peaceful Co-Existence

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be on him) and his Companions established good relations with other communities living in Madinah. There was a large Jewish community as well as some other Arab tribes who had not accepted Islam. The Prophet (peace and blessings be on him) prepared a *mithaq* (a covenant or a constitution) for organizing relations between these communities. The covenant of Madinah laid down broad principles on which cordial relations would be established between Muslims and non-Muslims. Protection of life and property, and freedom of thought and of worship were guaranteed. Among the principles of the covenant are:

“The Jews and the Muslims, . . . each group must support the other against anyone who fights the people of this document (covenant of Madinah). Their relationship shall be one of mutual advice and consultation, and mutual assistance and charity rather than harm and aggression . . . Charity and goodness are clearly distinguishable from crime and injury, and there is no responsibility except for one’s own deeds. God is the guarantor of the truth and good will of this covenant. This covenant shall constitute no protection



for the unjust or criminal.” (See *Sirat Ibn Hisham*, pp. 110-111)

Muslim minorities, therefore, should not only peacefully co-exist with other communities of their country, but they should also support and assist them in goodness as much as they can. In doing so, Muslims are following the path of the Prophet (peace and blessings be on him) and his Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) who worked for the interest and wellbeing of all communities living with them in Madinah.

■ **Developing the Community**

On arriving in Madinah, the Prophet (peace and blessings be on him) built his masjid to provide social and educational services for the community. People used to gather to hold educational and spiritual sessions in the Prophet’s masjid. Social celebrations and gatherings—such as weddings—took place in the masjid. People discussed various concerns of the city in the Prophet’s masjid, which was not confined to the performance of Prayers.

Before Hijrah, Yathrib was a polluted city. When the Prophet's Companions came from Makkah to Madinah,



many of them fell sick. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) asked them to clean the city and rid it from its dirt. He (peace and blessings be upon him) supplicated Allah to bless Madinah and protect it against plagues and illness. `Aishah, may Allah be pleased with her, said: "We came to Madinah and it was the most polluted land of Allah. The water there was most stinking." (See Al-Bukhari, *Al-Jami` As-Sahih*, hadith no. 3926)

Moreover, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) asked his Companions to dig wells in different parts of the city. It is mentioned that more than 50 wells were dug in Madinah, and that afterwards there was enough clean water for everyone. Also, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) encouraged the Companions to cultivate the land and grow gardens. He told them that any one who would cultivate any dead land, would own it. Many people started working and cultivating and soon there was enough food for everyone. (See Ar-Ruba`i, *Fath Al-Ghaffar*, 3:1294)

Muslim minorities should actively participate in the development of their communities. Islamic centers, particularly in the West, should provide educational and social services for all communities. Masjids should play a vital role in marinating good and fair relations with other communities. Muslims, following the example of the



Prophet and his Companions, should exert their utmost efforts to promote and develop their countries.

■ Noble Characters and Behavior

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be on him) and his Companions were the most honest, faithful, trustworthy, loyal, and truthful people that the world has ever known. In Madinah, they dealt faithfully and honestly with all people, irrespective of their faith, race, or cultural background. They loved goodness and wellbeing for all. The Companions refused to stay idle or be dependent on others; they rather engaged in work and trade to earn their lawful livelihood and benefit their community.

Ibrahim ibn Sa`d narrated from his father from his grandfather: `Abdur-Rahman ibn `Awf said, "When we came to Madinah as emigrants, Allah's Messenger established a bond of brotherhood between me and Sa`d ibn Ar-Rabi`. Sa`d ibn Ar-Rabi` said (to me), 'I am the richest among the Ansar (the people of Madinah who welcomed and helped the Prophet and his Companions), so I will give you half of my wealth and you may look at my two wives and whichever of the two you may choose I will divorce her, and when she has completed the prescribed waiting period (before marriage) you may marry her.' `Abdur-Rahman replied, "I am not in need of all that. [Another narration of the



hadith reads: May Allah bless you in your family and property.] Is there any marketplace where trade is practiced?' He replied, "The market of Qainuqa`." `Abdur-Rahman went to that market the following day and brought some dried buttermilk (yogurt) and butter, and then he continued going there regularly. Few days later, `Abdur-Rahman came having traces of yellow (scent) on his body. Allah's Messenger asked him whether he had got married. He replied in the affirmative. The Prophet said, **'Whom have you married?'** He replied, 'A woman from the Ansar.' Then the Prophet asked, **'How much did you pay her?'** He replied, '(I gave her) a gold piece equal in weigh to a date stone (or a date stone of gold)! The Prophet said, **'Give a walimah (wedding banquet) even if with one sheep .''** (Al-Bukhari, *Al-Jami` As-Sahih*, hadith no. 2048)

The Qur'an praised and commended the morals and characters of the early Muslim community in Madinah, saying,

"And those who before them, had homes (in Madinah) and had adopted the 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 them 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.” (Al-Hashir 59:9)

Muslims living in majority non-Muslim countries, should never hesitate to give priority to public interest and the social welfare of their communities over their own personal benefits. They should be good examples for others in faithfulness, trustworthiness, cooperation in goodness, honesty, etc., which are the traits of true Muslims.

In short, the Hijrah occasion revives noble morals and characters of Muslims. It could be once again a turning point in Muslims’ lives if they learn and implement its golden lessons: the universal messages of peace, love, human brotherhood, development, noble morals, and wellbeing.



Lessons for New Muslims¹

The early Muslim community suffered a lot before they were ordered to leave Makkah and go to Madinah.

The persecution exercised against Muslims increased especially after the death of Prophet Muhammad's beloved wife, lady Khadijah and his uncle, Abu Talib. At a certain point, it was necessary to look for a new soil to plant the seed of Islam, to spread the word of God, and to practice Islam in a secure and receptive environment.

I am not going to give a detailed account of the events of the Prophet's emigration to Madinah. Such details can be found in the Hadith Collection of al-Bukhari (hadith no. 245). However, I am going to mention some lessons that can be drawn from this great event in the history of Islam.



¹ An article written by Mohsen Haredy.



The first lesson is patience. By patience I mean enduring the hardships put forward by the people of Quraish to check the tide of Islam. Muslims were boycotted; they were not allowed to buy and sell in the open market or engage in any business. However, they persevered and accepted the tribulation.

After the command of emigrating to Madinah, Muslims left behind everything they loved, their families, friends, their country, etc. Why did they do that? Because they put their trust in God and cherished hope in His mercy that He will make a way out for them. In Madinah, Muslims were free to practice their religion and they were able to establish a new state.

New Muslims can learn from this lesson that there is some light at the end of the tunnel. You might be treated badly or ridiculed by your families, neighbors and friends. Therefore, do like what the early Muslims did; endure the hardships with patience. Do not lose hope. Rest assured that your decision to take Islam your way of life will not let you down.

■ **Put Your Trust in God**



Nothing on earth should make you give up. See how the Prophet behaved when he was in the cave and the people of Quraish were following him. His friend Abu Bakr reported that: "I was in the company of the Prophet in the cave, and on seeing the traces of the pagans, I said, "O Allah's messenger if one of them (pagans) should lift up his foot, he will see us." He said, "What do you think of two, the third of whom is Allah?" (Al-Bukhari)

Put your trust in God and be sure that He is always there to help you.

Although the people of Quraish were hostile towards the Prophet and wanted to put an end to his life and message, they used to call him the truthful and the trustworthy. They used also to entrust him with their valuables. What a contradiction!

His honesty was put to test when he was ordered to emigrate. What would he do with the valuables entrusted with him? Would he use it to make his emigration plan successful? Would he give it to his followers? On the contrary, the Prophet asked his cousin Ali ibn Abi Talib to delay his emigration for three days so that he can return to people their valuables.

We learn from this situation that when you are put to test, do not forget your principles. Do not forget what



your religion asks you to do. Islam urges you to be honest with all people, Muslims and non-Muslims. If a colleague or friend entrusts you with something and it happens that you are not in good terms with him, do not give yourself excuses misusing the trust. You have to return it to him immediately. By this you will be teaching him something about Muslim's ethical code.

■ A Professional Guide

When the Prophet and Abu Bakr decided to leave Makkah, they wanted to get the job done professionally. Therefore, they hired Abdullah ibn Urayqit, a non-Muslim who was a professional guide in Makkah, to act as their guide. Lady Aishah reported that: "Allah's messenger and Abu Bakr had hired a man from the tribe of Bani Al-Dil from the family of Bani `Abd ibn `Adi as an expert guide, and he was in alliance with the family of Al-`As bin Wa'il Al-Sahmi and he was on the religion of the people of Quraish. The Prophet and Abu Bakr trusted him and gave him their two she-camels and took his promise to bring their two she-camels to the cave of the mountain of "Thawr" in the morning three nights later. And (when they set out), `Amir ibn Fuhairah and the guide went along with them and the guide led them along the sea-shore." (Al-Bukhari)



We learn from this situation that there is no problem to seek the help of people of other faiths as long as they are qualified enough and have more experience than Muslims. If it happens that a new Muslim is in trouble and the solution to his trouble is in the hand of someone who belongs to another religion, he should seek his help as long as he is a trustworthy person.

If there is a vacant job for which two persons apply, Islam teaches that proficiency comes before piety. Take the professional even he is not Muslim. By this, you are doing the Muslim who is not qualified enough a favor. He will learn more and gain more experience so that next time he will be accepted.

■ In Madinah

After the Prophet arrived to Madinah, the people of Madinah welcomed him and protected him as they would protect themselves and their families. The Prophet ordered that each Helper (one of the *Ansar*) would have an Emigrant (*Muhajir*) brother. In their new life after conversion, new Muslims should interact with their Muslim community and they have to adapt to the customs of their community. New Muslims are the emigrants and Muslim communities are the helpers (*Ansar*). Muslim communities should welcome new Muslims and help them.



Another important lesson of the Hijrah is how the Prophet approached those who showed interest in Islam. When he met the first delegation of the *Khazraj* he just told them about Islam and only urged them to read the Quran. Next year he told them about the acts of worship, manners and virtues. In the second *`Aqabah* pledge, the *Ansar* accepted to protect the Prophet and his followers as mentioned above.

This is how new Muslims should be approached. First, they have to be convinced of God's oneness. In later stages, they can learn how to perform the Prayer, pay the Zakah, observe fasting, etc.

It is noteworthy that what we celebrate on the month of *Muharram* is the beginning of applying the Islamic calendar because the emigration took place in the month of *Rabi` al-Awwal* not in *Muharram*.

So, let's make the new Hijri year a new start for all of us.

Let's make it a turning point in our life.

Let's start a new leaf.

Let's purify our intentions in every action we do and make it only to please God the Almighty.



*Let's apply the actual meaning of Hijrah as the Prophet is reported to have said: "**An emigrant is the one who abandons what Allah has made unlawful.**" (Al-Bukhari)*



Hijrah Heroes

- **Abu Bakr As-Siddiq**
- **Umm Salamah**
- **`Umar ibn Al-Khattab**
- **Asma' Bint Abi Bakr**
- **Suhaib ibn Sinan**



Abu Bakr As-Siddiq¹

`Abdullah ibn `Uthman ibn `Amir ibn `Amr from a branch of the Quraysh tribe. His father, `Uthman, was known as Abu Quhafa. His mother, Salma, was also known as Umm Al-Khayr.



From his early years, Abu Bakr was known for his good and upright nature. He was honest and truthful and came from a noble family. These things won him respect among the people. His goodness also won him the friendship of young Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). The two became fast friends in early boyhood. The friendship was to prove lifelong and history making.

When he grew up, Abu Bakr became a rich merchant, but he remained very kindhearted. When he saw someone in trouble, his heart melted and he did his best to help him. If his money could remove suffering, he did not care how much he had to spend. Once he gave away 35 thousand dirhams out of his total fortune of 40

¹ By Abdul Wahid Hamid.



thousand. He was so honest in his dealings that people kept their money with him. But above all, Abu Bakr had a sincere heart and a firm will. Nothing could stop him from doing what he thought was the right thing to do.

When the Makkans were intent on putting out, once and for all, the light of Islam, Allah commanded the Prophet to move to Madinah. In the burning heat of the midday sun, there was a knock at Abu Bakr's door. The Messenger of Allah sought permission to enter, and after everyone else had left the room, he told Abu Bakr, "**I must leave for Madinah tonight.**"

"Will I also have the honor of going with you?" asked Abu Bakr eagerly. "**Of course,**" came the reply. "**Get things ready.**"

Abu Bakr was beside himself with joy. "I have been looking forward to this day for months," he exclaimed. "I have kept two camels specifically to carry us to Madinah."

It was Abu Bakr who made all the arrangements for the historic journey. For three days he and the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) lay hidden in the cave of Thawr. Abu Bakr's slave tended flocks of goats near the cave all day and supplied them fresh milk for



food. His son `Abdullah brought news about what the Makkans were doing.

The Makkans were searching for the Prophet like mad hounds. Once they came right to the mouth of the cave. Abu Bakr grew pale, fearing not for himself, but for the Prophet. However, the Prophet remained perfectly calm. **"Do not fear,"** he said to Abu Bakr. **"Certainly Allah is with us."**

Of all the companions, Abu Bakr had the honor of being with the Prophet during the most critical days of his life. Abu Bakr knew full well what this honor meant and did full justice to the trust put in him.

After the Prophet's death, Abu Bakr was chosen as the caliph. He served for only two years, three months, and ten days before he, too, passed away. During this short period, Abu Bakr was able to do great things for Islam that made his name immortal and placed him among the greatest men of all times.



Umm Salamah¹

Umm Salamah! What an eventful life she had! Her real name was Hind. She was the daughter of one of the notables in the Makhzum clan nicknamed "Zad Ar-Rakib" (which means the provision for the traveler) because he was well known for his generosity, particularly to travelers. Umm Salamah's



husband was `Abdullah ibn `Abdul-Asad and they both were among the first people to accept Islam. Only Abu Bakr and a few others, who could be counted on the fingers of one hand, became Muslims before them.

As soon as the news of their becoming Muslims spread, the Quraysh reacted with frenzied anger. They began hounding and persecuting Umm Salamah and her husband. But the couple did not waver or despair and remained steadfast in their new faith.

¹ By Abdul Wahid Hamid.



The persecution became more and more intense. Life in Makkah became unbearable for many of the new Muslims. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) then gave permission for them to immigrate to Abyssinia. Umm Salamah and her husband were in the forefront of these seekers of refuge in a strange land. For Umm Salamah, it meant abandoning her home and giving up the traditional ties of lineage and honor for something new, pursuing the pleasure and reward of Allah.

Despite the protection Umm Salamah and her companions received from the Abyssinian ruler, the desire to return to Makkah, to be near the Prophet and the source of revelation and guidance, persisted.

News eventually reached the emigrants that the number of Muslims in Makkah had increased. Among them were Hamzah ibn `Abdul-Muttalib and `Umar ibn Al-Khattab. Their faith had greatly strengthened the community, and the Quraysh, they heard, had eased the persecution somewhat. Thus a group of the emigrants, urged on by a deep longing in their hearts, decided to return to Makkah.

The easing of the persecution was brief, as the returnees soon found out. The dramatic increase in the number of Muslims following the acceptance of Islam by Hamzah and `Umar had infuriated the Quraysh more



than ever. They intensified their persecution and torture to a pitch and intensity not known before. So the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) gave permission to his Companions to immigrate to Madinah. Umm Salamah and her husband were among the first to leave.

The Hijrah of Umm Salamah and her husband, though, was not as easy as they had imagined. In fact, it was a bitter and painful experience and a particularly harrowing one for her.

Let us leave the story now for Umm Salamah herself to tell:

When Abu Salamah (my husband) decided to leave for Madinah, he prepared a camel for me, hoisted me on it and placed our son Salamah on my lap. My husband then took the lead and went on without stopping or waiting for anything. Before we were out of Makkah, however, some men from my clan stopped us and said to my husband, "Though you are free to do what you like with yourself, you have no power over your wife. She is our daughter. Do you expect us to allow you to take her away from us?"

They then pounced on him and snatched me away from him. My husband's clan, Banu `Abdul-Asad, saw



them taking both my child and me. They became hot with rage.

“No! By Allah,” they shouted, “we shall not abandon the boy. He is our son and we have a first claim over him.”

They took him by the hand and pulled him away from me. Suddenly, in the space of a few moments, I found myself alone and lonely. My husband headed for Madinah by himself and his clan had snatched my son away from me. My own clan, Banu Makhzum, overpowered me and forced me to stay with them.

From the day when my husband and my son were separated from me, I went out at noon every day to that valley and sat at the spot where this tragedy had occurred. I would recall those terrible moments and weep until night fell on me.

I continued like this for a year or so, until one day a man from the Banu Umayyah passed by and saw my condition. He went back to my clan and said, “Why don’t you free this poor woman? You have caused her husband and her son to be taken away from her.”

He went on trying to soften their hearts and play on their emotions. At last they said to me, “Go and join your husband if you wish.”



But how could I join my husband in Madinah and leave my son, a piece of my own flesh and blood, in Makkah among the Banu `Abdul-Asad? How could I be free from anguish and my eyes be free from tears were I to reach the place of Hijrah not knowing anything of my little son left behind in Makkah?

Some realized what I was going through and their hearts went out to me. They petitioned the Banu `Abdul-Asad on my behalf and moved them to return my son.

I did not now even want to linger in Makkah until I found someone to travel with me and I was afraid that something might happen that would delay or prevent me from reaching my husband. So I promptly got my camel ready, placed my son on my lap, and left in the direction of Madinah.

I had just about reached Tan'im (about three miles from Makkah) when I met Uthman ibn Talhah. (He was a keeper of the Ka`bah in pre-Islamic times and was not yet a Muslim.)

"Where are you going, daughter of Zad Ar-Rakib?" he asked.

"I am going to my husband in Madinah."

"And there isn't anyone with you?"

"No, by Allah. Except Allah and my little boy here."

"By Allah, I shall never abandon you until you reach Madinah," he vowed.

He then took the reins of my camel and led us on. I have, by Allah, never met an Arab more generous and noble than he. When we reached a resting place, he would make my camel kneel down, wait until I dismounted, lead the camel to a tree and tether it. He would then go to the shade of another tree. When we had rested, he would get the camel ready and lead us on.

This he did every day until we reached Madinah. When we got to a village near Quba' (about two miles from Madinah) belonging to the Banu `Amr ibn `Awf, he said, "Your husband is in this village. Enter it with the blessings of God."

He turned back and headed for Makkah.

Their roads finally met after the long separation. Umm Salamah was overjoyed to see her husband and he was delighted to see his wife and son.



Great and momentous events followed one after the other. There was the battle of Badr, in which Abu Salamah fought. The Muslims returned victorious and strengthened. Then there was the battle of Uhud, in which the Muslims were sorely tested. Abu Salamah came out of this very badly wounded. He appeared at first to respond well to treatment, but his wounds never healed completely and he remained bedridden.

Once, while Umm Salamah was nursing him, he said to her, "I heard the Messenger of Allah saying whenever a calamity afflicts anyone he should say, 'We belong to Allah and to Him shall we return; O Allah, with You I leave my plight for consideration, reward me for my affliction and give me something better than it in exchange for it.'"

Abu Salamah remained sick in bed for several days and then he passed away. With his blessed hands, the Prophet closed the eyes of his dead Companion and invoked Allah to forgive Abu Salamah, raise his degree among those who are rightly guided, take charge of his descendants who remain, make his grave spacious, and grant him light in it.

Umm Salamah remembered the prayer her husband had quoted from the Prophet and began repeating it, "O Lord, with you I leave this my plight for consideration...."



But she could not bring herself to continue with “O Lord, give me something better than it in exchange for it.” She kept asking herself, “Who could be better than Abu Salamah?” But after a while she completed the supplication.

Umm Salamah did not know a person better than Abu Salamah. She was not aware that Allah spared for her the best ever person—the Prophet himself. He (peace and blessings be upon him) married her, and so it was that Allah answered the prayer of Umm Salamah and gave her better than Abu Salamah. From that day on, Hind Al-Makhzumiyah was no longer the mother of Salamah alone but became the Mother of All Believers (Umm Al-Mu’mineen).




`Umar ibn Al-Khattab¹

To write an essay, an editorial, or even a book about someone is not an impossible thing. Rather, it is something tenable and achievable. It only needs some basic information on the person, his life, deeds, stances, ideologies, and others' opinions of him. This is true of most of the ordinary people whom we meet every day and elsewhere. But this is not feasible when it is an occasion to write on a personality such as `Umar ibn Al-Khattab.



You may not believe me if I say that to write on `Umar for me was a lifetime dream. It is a wish also that if Allah gives me a boy child, I will certainly name him after `Umar. I do feel like there is some sort of intimacy between me and him (on my part of course!). Sometimes I imagine myself living during the era of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and his

¹ By Dr. Ali Al-Halawni.



honorable Companions. Who among the Companions would I like to be then? `Umar is my first choice. This is not to underestimate any of the other honorable Companions in any way— Allah forbid! But, as I have just mentioned, I feel that I want to be like him in his courage, strength, firmness, justice, magnanimity, modesty, etc.

When I read about his strength, it is as if I am watching him training the young men of Makkah on bodybuilding by lifting stones and rocks on mountains. When I hear about his firmness and resolve, it is as if I am watching him asking the Prophet to order `Abbad ibn Bishr to kill someone who once offended Allah and His Messenger. When I am told about his courage, it is as if I am watching him challenging the whole tribe of Quraysh when he resolved to migrate to Madinah. When I read about his death, I feel as if I myself am bleeding as if I were the one who was stabbed by the dagger in the dirty hand of Abu Lu'lu'ah the Magian.

There are many traditions that speak of the high regard that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) had for `Umar. Relating a vision he had seen, the Prophet said that he has never seen a genius like `Umar who could do the same. This means that `Umar was considered by the Prophet a unique man who could do things that could not be emulated by others no matter how hard they tried.



History testifies to the unprecedented deeds done by `Umar, either immediately after embracing Islam or through his career as the Commander of the Faithful. In fact, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was able to delve deeply into the hearts of his men to know by faithful intuition and inspiration the qualities of those around him and their inherent characteristics. Through that ability, the Prophet knew for what situations each was perfectly fit, to what kind of work each was qualified, when to recall one for an incident, and when to dismiss and overlook him.

In the same vein, a number of traditions have come down to us which speak of the Prophet's assessment of `Umar.

Before the reversion of `Umar to Islam, the prayer of the Prophet is on record: "O Allah! Glorify Your faith by (the reversion of) `Umar."

There are also many Prophetic traditions that speak of the high esteem that the Companions of the Prophet had for `Umar. `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud said, "`Umar's submission to Islam was a fath (victory), his migration was a victory, his imamate was a blessing, and I have seen when we were unable to pray at the House (the Ka`bah) until he submitted to Islam."

Also, the comment of `Ali ibn Abi Talib on the migration of `Umar has to be written by letters of light on the pages of history:

I never knew anyone migrated unless secretly except `Umar, for he, when he resolved on migration, girt on his sword and slung over his bow and grasped in his hand its arrows, and went to the Ka`bah where in its quadrangle were the chiefs of the Quraysh, and he went round about it seven times, then prayed two rak`ahs at the Station of Ibrahim, and went to each, one by one, in their circles and said, "May the faces be foul! If anyone desires that his mother be bereaved of him and his child be left an orphan and his wife a widow, and if there be such a one, let him meet me behind this valley." But no one followed him.

Thus, while almost all the other Muslims left Makkah secretly, `Umar publicly declared that he was proceeding to Madinah. He even challenged the Quraysh tribe that if any one of them had the courage to stop him, he was welcome to try his strength with him. Not even a single member of the Quraysh had the courage to prevent him from completing what he was set on doing, and no one accepted the challenge to measure swords with him.

Truly, death is more pleasant than living in a state of cowardice and humility! What is courage if it is not



daring death when it calls upon the courageous? And who is more daring than the courageous who believes that he is on the right side? Even you can now listen to `Umar as if he were saying "To die for the right is better than to live for falsehood. Courage is recommended, cowardice is detestable, and falsehood is vulnerable to vanish!"

`Umar continued to live simply till he met his own death. One of his companions reminisced about `Umar's days, "When he walked, he did so quickly as to get someplace; when he spoke, he was loud enough to be heard; and when he hit, it would hurt." He was a man of purpose and mission and action. He left a legacy to be emulated, but at the same time it is not easy to follow.



Asma' Bint Abi Bakr¹

Asma' bint Abi Bakr belonged to a distinguished Muslim family. Her father, Abu Bakr, was a close friend of the Prophet and the first caliph after his death. Her half-sister `A'ishah was a wife of the Prophet and one of the Mother of the Believers. Her husband, Az-Zubayr ibn Al-`Awwam, was one of the special personal aides of the Prophet. Her son `Abdullah became well-known for his incorruptibility and his unswerving devotion to Truth.



Asma' herself was one of the first persons to accept Islam. Only about seventeen persons including both men and women became Muslims before her. She was later given the nickname Dhat An-Nitaqayn (the One with Two Waistbelts) because of an incident connected with the departure of the Prophet and her father from Makkah on the historic Hijrah to Madinah.

¹ By Abdul Wahid Hamid.



Asma' was one of the few persons who knew of the Prophet's plan to leave for Madinah. The utmost secrecy had to be maintained because of the Quraysh's plans to murder the Prophet. On the night of their departure, Asma' prepared a bag of food and a water container for their journey. Not finding anything to tie the containers with, she decided to use her waistbelt (*nitaq*) but followed her father's suggestion to tear it into two. The Prophet commended her action and from then on she became known as the One with the Two Waistbelts.

When it came her turn to emigrate from Makkah, soon after the departure of the Prophet, Asma' was pregnant. She did not let her pregnancy or the prospect of a long and arduous journey deter her from leaving. As soon as she reached Quba' on the outskirts of Madinah, she gave birth to a son, `Abdullah. The Muslims shouted "*Allahu Akbar*" (Allah is the Greatest) and "*La ilaha illa Allah*" (There is no god but Allah) in happiness and thanksgiving because this was the first child to be born to the *Muhajirun* in Madinah.

Suhaib ibn Sinan¹

{Of the believers are men who are true to that which they covenanted with Allah. Some of them have paid their vow by death (in battle), and some of them still are waiting; and they have not altered in the least} (Al-Ahzab 33:23).



In these modern times of sophisticated technology, people have a real need to satisfy their spiritual desires in the same way that they strive hard to cater to their bodily needs. Part of achieving this is to epitomize the shining examples of the Prophet's Companions and study their biographies with special reference to their enormous contribution to the unique event of the Hijrah.

Among the Prophet's Companions who played a notable role in the migration to Madinah is Abu Yahya, Suhaib ibn Sinan who was born surrounded by comfort

¹ By Dr. El-Sayid Amin.



and luxury: his father was a famous governor in Iraq long before the advent of Islam. Young Suhaib was captured along with a large number of young boys in his community by some Greek invaders and spent years in bondage in the Byzantine Empire. Later, on reaching Makkah, he sacrificed his money and surrendered his soul and exposed his heart to experience the light of his *iman*.

On reaching Makkah he became a staunch Muslim and a firm believer in the new faith. Suhaib had a chance for his heart to see the new faith in its real shape and to hear directly from the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). Later, he pledged to be loyal to his new faith.

Suhaib was persecuted and harassed for becoming a Muslim; hence he resolved to migrate to Madinah in the company of the Prophet and Abu Bakr, but the Qurayshi oppressors foiled his plans. They even placed guards over him to prevent him from leaving and taking his wealth. Later, Suhaib managed to migrate to Madinah, but he had to leave everything behind. He arrived in Madinah with nothing. Upon seeing him, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) greeted him cheerfully and said, "O Abu Yahya! A profitable sale! A profitable sale!" And the following Qur'anic verse was revealed:



{And there is a type of man who gives his life to earn the pleasure of God. And God is full of kindness to His servants} (Al-Baqarah, 2:207).

It is clear from what is mentioned above that Suhaib was a man who possessed unique traits, and the most distinguishing of those traits was his inner sense of sacrifice. He sacrificed his possessions because of his religion. He sacrificed the false faith of the Greeks and became a Muslim by choice. Suhaib (may Allah be pleased with him) migrated with his soul before he migrated with his body. He yearned to accompany the Prophet, although the shackles of oppression hindered him. He was a role model for us, and his personal experience in the Hijrah should be a shining example to us all.

All of us possess good traits, some more than others, but it is high time to trigger good acts, good intentions, and good faith within ourselves. It is high time to reevaluate our approach to our religion, our creed, our religious commitment. People like Suhaib (may Allah be pleased with him) moved on earth while leaving their hearts hovering in high heavens. We need to do this, or at least to imitate this. We need to fill our hearts with purity. We need to inch closer and closer to Allah by seizing these refreshing opportunities and Islamic occasions. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said,



“Truly in the body there is a morsel of flesh which, if it be whole, all the body is whole and which, if it be diseased, all of it is diseased. Truly it is the heart.”

Suhaib and other Companions were deeply moved by faith rather than reason. We need to declare full submission to the commands of Allah in order to rid ourselves of material trappings, in the same way Companion Suhaib did. When we taste the real meaning of hijrah, when we turn over a new leaf with Allah, and when we allow our pure hearts to lead us on the true track, we will never derail or get lost, but rather we will end up guiding by example, and ruling by example. Allah Almighty says,

{Is not the time ripe for the hearts of those who believe to submit to Allah's reminder and to the truth which is revealed, that they become not as those who received the Scripture of old but the term was prolonged for them and so their hearts were hardened, and many of them are evil-livers} (Al-Hadid 57:16).