Title: Hijra in the Quran and Sunnah

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Hijra in the Quran and Sunnah
Hijra in the Quran
The word hijra and its derivatives are mentioned in many verses of the Quran. The majority of these verses contain praises and promise rewards to those who emigrated for the cause of God and to those who aided them.

The emigrants are entitled the highest honor and praise for having made a great sacrifice in the cause of God. He 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 realised (this)!” [Quran 16:41].

Allah the Almighty promises those who leave their homes for His sake a mercy specially from Himself, His good pleasure,gardens of eternal delight and the ultimate reward of Divine propinquity. It is due to sacrificing one’s own kith and kin, wealth and property, businesses and homeland as well as everything that proves to be a hindrance in Allah’s cause that one earns the ultimate reward. Allah says, “Those who believe, and suffer exile and strive with might and main, in Allah's cause, with their goods and their persons, have the highest rank in the sight of Allah. they are the people who will achieve (salvation). Their Lord doth give them glad tidings of a Mercy from Himself, of His good pleasure, and of gardens for them, wherein are delights that endure: They will dwell therein forever. Verily in Allah's presence is a reward, the greatest (of all)” [Quran 9: 20-22].

Allah also promises mercy and forgiveness to those who suffered hardships and exile and fought in His cause with patience and constancy. He says,“Those who believed and those who suffered exile and fought (and strove and struggled) in the path of Allah,- they have the hope of the Mercy of Allah. And Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful” [Quran 2: 218].

“But verily thy Lord,- to those who leave their homes after trials and persecutions,- and who thereafter strive and fight for the faith and patiently persevere,- Thy Lord, after all this is oft-forgiving, Most Merciful” [Quran 16: 110].

The promise of provisions and paradise is another grant to those who migrated for Allah’s cause. He says,
“Those who leave their homes in the cause of Allah, and are then slain or die,- On them will Allah bestow verily a goodly Provision: Truly Allah is He Who bestows the best provision. Verily He will admit them to a place with which they shall be well pleased: for Allah is All-Knowing, Most Forbearing” [Quran 22: 58-9].

Allah’s reward is all of those who have left their homes and suffered harm in His cause. Both males and females are promised Allah’s acceptance into paradise—no distinction is made between them. Allah says, “And their Lord hath accepted of them, and answered them: "Never will I suffer to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female: Ye are members, one of another: Those who have left their homes, or been driven out therefrom, or suffered harm in My Cause, or fought or been slain,- verily, I will blot out from them their iniquities, and admit them into Gardens with rivers flowing beneath;- A reward from the presence of Allah, and from His presence is the best of rewards" [Quran 3: 195].

The sacrifice of one’s home and kin for the sake of Allah the Almighty and His Messenger does not go unrewarded and, in addition, Allah encourages Muslims to migrate for comfort and prosperity. He says,
“He who forsakes his home in the cause of Allah, finds in the earth Many a refuge, wide and spacious: Should he die as a refugee from home for Allah and His Messenger, His reward becomes due and sure with Allah. And Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful” [Quran 4: 100].

Those who made the sacrifice of adopting voluntary exile from their homes for the sake of Islam and those who gave them asylum are granted the same status—they become members of one society . Allah says,
“Those who believed, and adopted exile, and fought for the Faith, with their property and their persons, in the cause of Allah, as well as those who gave (them) asylum and aid,- these are (all) friends and protectors, one of another. As to those who believed but came not into exile, ye owe no duty of protection to them until they come into exile; but if they seek your aid in religion, it is your duty to help them, except against a people with whom ye have a treaty of mutual alliance. And (remember) Allah seeth all that ye do” [Quran 8: 72].

“And those who accept Faith subsequently, and adopt exile, and fight for the Faith in your company,- they are of you. But kindred by blood have prior rights against each other in the Book of Allah. Verily Allah is well-acquainted with all things” [Quran 8: 75].

The duty of a Muslim is to move from a place where he is persecuted and suppressed for his religion, even if this involves forsaking home and brethren. Allah says,“When angels take the souls of those who die in sin against their souls, they say: "In what (plight) Were ye?" They reply: "Weak and oppressed Were we in the earth." They say: "Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to move yourselves away (From evil)?" Such men will find their abode in Hell,- What an evil refuge!” [Quran 4: 97].

Allah’s forgiveness is not only promised to those who migrated for the sake of God, but it is also a grant of mercy to those who received them in their homes and shared their wealth with them. Allah says,
“Let not those among you who are endued with grace and amplitude of means resolve by oath against helping their kinsmen, those in want, and those who have left their homes in Allah's cause: let them forgive and overlook, do you not wish that Allah should forgive you? For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful” [Quran 24: 22].

The emigrants were not the only ones who made sacrifices for the sake of Allah and His Prophet. The sacrifices made by the Ansar in helping the emigrants establish homes and livelihoods in their new home were of no small value. Indeed, the love they showed, secured for them a reward of great measure, one that is only possible from God. He says,“Those who believe, and adopt exile, and fight for the Faith, in the cause of Allah as well as those who give (them) asylum and aid,- these are (all) in very truth the Believers: for them is the forgiveness of sins and a provision most generous” [Quran 8: 74].

Allah praises the Ansar, the people of Medina who accepted Islam and who took in the Prophet [peace and blessings be upon him] and the emigrants who came to them as refugees. They did not welcome the refugees as a duty; but their generous hospitality was out of devotion, affection and love. Allah says,“But those who before them, had homes (in Medina) 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” [Quran 59: 9].

The Quran does not only mention the term hijra and its derivatives in reference to the physical hijra of the Prophet [peace and blessings be upon him] and his followers. It goes beyond this to the metaphorical scope of the concept of hijra.

Allah the Almighty orders men to suspend sexual relations with their wives as a means of punishment to disobedient wives. He says, “Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard in (the husband's) absence what Allah would have them guard. As to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (Next), refuse to share their beds, (And last) beat them (lightly); but if they return to obedience, seek not against them Means (of annoyance): For Allah is Most High, great (above you all)” [Quran 4: 34].

A similar meaning is found in the next verse wherein prophet Ibrahim’s father rejects his message and invitation to Truth. The spiritual lesson from this is that even if the father rejects the light, the son will never do so even if has to forfeit his father’s love and renounce his home. There is no sanctity associated with a particular place just because it is the place of one’s birth. The most important thing is religion and the freedom to practice it. The Quran states, “(The father) replied: "Dost thou hate my gods, O Abraham? If thou forbear not, I will indeed stone thee: Now get away from me for a good long while!" [Quran 19: 46].

Prophet Muhammad [peace and blessings be upon him] is instructed to keep a psychological distance between him and the disbelievers, though he must not do so grudgingly. He must, at all times deal with them kindly and with mercy, and dissociate himself from them in a dignified manner,
“And have patience with what they say, and leave them with noble (dignity)” [Quran 73: 10].

Both the physical and metaphorical sense of the term hijra are expounded in two verses describing the disbelievers’ abandonment of the Quran, treating it as an foolish nonsense. Allah says,
“"In arrogance: talking nonsense about the (Qur'an), like one telling fables by night” [Quran 23: 67].

“Then the Messenger will say: "O my Lord! Truly my people took this Qur'an for just foolish nonsense" [Quran 25: 30].

Hijra in the Sunnah
The command to embark on a hijra did not end with the Prophet’s migration to Medina. It is true that the Prophet [peace and blessings be upon him] said after he arrived in Medina, “There is no hijra after the Conquest (of Mecca)” i.e. there is no need for people to leave Mecca after it has become an abode of Islam since Muslims are no longer persecuted in it for their religion. However, migration continues to be part of man’s life on this earth. We are not entirely deprived of its benefits and rewards as it will continue to be an obligation in its metaphorical sense, the hijra of the heart, until the Last Day as attested to in the following hadiths:
“Hijra will never come to an end until repentance comes to an end” [Ahmad].

The idea of the spiritual dimension of hijra is encapsuled in the hadith which states:
“The muhajir is the one who avoids what Allah the Almighty has prohibited” [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].
“A Muslim is someone who spares people the harm of his tongue and hand, and a muhajir (migrant) is someone who migrates from what God has forbidden” [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].