

A CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS IN THE COURSE OF MIGRATIONMIGRATION TO
ABYSSINIA
615 A. D.

In the fifth year of Be'that (mission) in the month of Rajab, a first party of eleven men and four women from the Muslim converts migrated to Abyssinia, following the Prophet's advice to seek refuge abroad.

Encouraged by the first migration, the Prophet permitted others to follow. Accordingly thirtythree men and eighteen women left Mecca individually or in small groups and fled to Abyssinia.

Jaffer b. Abu Talib with fifty others followed them. Thus a total of onehundred and sixteen refugees reached Abyssinia in safety.

MIGRATION TO
YATHRIB
622 A. D.

In the spring of the thirteenth year of Prophet's Be'that (mission) some of his followers began migration to Yathrib (Madina). Within two months, about onehundred and fifty Meccans succeeded in reaching Madina.

On receipt of God's command, the Prophet accompanied by Abu Bekr escaped in the dark of a night and hid in the cave of Mount Thowr. After three days when the pursuit of enemies subsided, it was Monday the 5th Rabi-ul-Awwal or 21st of June 622 A.D., they were started on their journey to Madina.

On Monday the 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal- 28th June 622 A.D.- thirteen years after his Be'that (mission) Prophet Muhammad arrived at Quba, a suburb town 2 miles from Madina after a prolonged journey of nearly 250 miles from Mecca.

On Friday the 16th Rabi-ul-Awwal- 2nd July 622 A.D. at noon he halted at Ranawna- midway between Qoba and Madina received by the Meccan and Madinian converts, performed the first Friday congregational prayers. After prayers, the Prophet in grand ceremonious procession entered Madina on the same afternoon.

(From Early History of Islam)

Professor H.M. Wilson in his Glossary of Terms gives the following method :

" Multiply the Hijrah year by 2977, the difference between 100 solar and as many lunar Mohammedan years; divide the product by 100, and deduct the quotient from the Hijrah year; add to the result 621,569 (the decimal being the equivalent of the 15th July, plus 12 days for the change of the Kalendar) and the quotient will be the Christian year from the date at which the Muhammedan year begins; thus, Hijri 1269 x 2.977 is equal to 3777.8 which divide by 100 - 37,778 and 1269 - 37.778 - 1231.222; this plus 621.569 - 1852.791; the decimals corresponding to 9 months and 15 days i.e. the 15th October, which is the commencement of Hijri year 1269. The reverse formula for finding the corresponding Hijrah year to a given Christian year, is thus laid down. Subtract 622 from the current year; multiply the result by 1.0307; cut off decimals and add .46; the sum will be the year, which, when it has a surplus decimal requires the addition of 1 : thus, 1852-622= 1230; 1230 x 1.0307= 1267.761; 1267.76 plus .46 = 1268.22, add therefore 1, and we have the equivalent Hijrah year 1269.

H I J R A T

WHEN DID IT ACTUALLY TAKE PLACE ?

Mr. Thomas Patric Hughes, B.D., M.R.A.S. in his book A Dictionary of Islam describes on page 174 the meaning and timing of migration of the Prophet of Islam in these words:

" HIJRAH lit. 'migration' (1) the departure of Muhammad from Makkah (2) the Muslim era (3) the act of a Muslim leaving a country under infidel rule (4) fleeing from sin.

The date of Muhammad's flight from Makkah was the fourth day of the first month of Rabi (Rabi-ul-Awwal) which by the calculation of Mr. Gausin de Percevel was June 20th, A .D. 622. The Hijrah, or the era of the " Hegira" was instituted seventeen years later by Khalifa Umar, which dates from the first day of the lunar month of the year viz Muharram, which day in the year when the era was established fell on Thursday the 15th of July A.D. 622. But although Umar instituted the official era, according to Al-Tabari the custom of referring to events as happening before or after the Hijrah originated with Muhammad himself."

H I J R A T

THE LESSONS WE DERIVE FROM IT

Fourteen centuries have now elapsed since the migration of the Prophet of Islam and his newly converted Muslims to distant lands following inhuman persecution at the hands of the Quraishi infidels. Their migration ^{had} made such ^{an} impressive impact that a new chapter opened in the history of Islam. Not only this, but it marked the beginning of a new Muslim era which has come to be known as Hijrat.

But one may wonder why is Hijrat so significant in the history of Islam and what are the lessons we derive from the migration of Muslims from their homelands to new lands.

The history of Arabia tells us of untold hardships, ferocious persecutions and inhuman tortures suffered by the Prophet and his handful converts on the proclamation of Islam opposed to idol worship. The main object of the Quraishi infidels was to destroy Islam and prevent it from spreading. Had it not been for the staunch faith of the Muslim converts and their steadfastness against heavy odds, the divine message of Islam would have soon disappeared in oblivion. Such was the impact of the truth that they did not succumb to any pressure from the infidels.

Another factor worth emulating is the love and reverence those Muslims cherished for the Prophet of Islam and their trust hence their firm obedience to him. It was their faith in the Prophet as a divine messenger and ⁱⁿ the truth ^{of} his message that inspired them to cooperate with the Prophet in furthering the cause of Islam.

That Islam is not a religion of fanaticism and that it fully respects the safety of human life and dignity is also to be learnt from this historical event of Hijrat. Had it not been for this fact, the Prophet would not have advised his newly converts to migrate from Mecca. When the Quraish were bent upon to annihilate the Muslims, it was this migration that helped in protecting their lives.

Man by nature is deeply attached to the land where he was born. He finds it extremely painful to migrate from his homeland where he had grown up and prospered. It calls for greater courage and higher aim of life to migrate to distant lands, leaving behind all his attachments. For the Prophet and his followers, it was not merely the protection of their lives but the noble aim of protecting Islam and the spreading of its true message to the outside world that made them undertake the migration.

That the first country to be chosen for migration was Africa is also worth noting. Despite the fact that the emigrating Muslims had to face the hardship of crossing the sea to reach Ethiopia, yet they went there. The message of Islam which they conveyed to the people there left its marks and made deep impression upon the minds of the people. Moreover this event proves the universality of Islamic message and the special concern of the Prophet for the down-trodden negro race.

Of all these historical events, the climax was in the migration of the Prophet himself and his grand entry into Yathrib which later changed its name to Madinat-un-Nabi (the City of the Prophet). No sooner the Prophet settled down, he undertook the construction of a mosque, since known as Masjid-un-Nabi, with himself working hand in hand with his followers and labourers. Thus setting an example of Islamic brotherhood and mutual cooperation. The mosque became the centre of the daily congregational prayers and a place of acquiring divine knowledge and guidance for the people.

The Prophet's settlement at Madina and his subsequent establishment of Islamic brotherhood became the foundation-stone of Islamic civilization. By establishing an Islamic State there and providing a practical system of Islamic rule of equity and justice, the Prophet proved to the world that Islam is not a mere dogma and collection of rituals but a complete way of life which included political science and a system of how to run a truly welfare state.

When celebrating the completion of the 1400 years of Hijrat and entry into the 15th century, let us make deep study of Islamic history and draw inspiration of the great sacrifices made by early Muslims in the protection and spread of Islam.

HAZRAT ALI'S GREAT DEVOTION TO THE PROPHET
ON THE NIGHT OF MIGRATION

Beholding with alarm the exodus of the followers of the Prophet and dreading the consequences of the new alliance of Mohammed and his followers with the people of Yathrib, the Qoraish formed a strong conspiracy to prevent his escape to Yathrib. They kept close watch over the movements of the Prophet and took measures to put him to death. They held a council to discuss how they should do away with Muhammed. One opined that he should be imprisoned in a cell having but a little hole, through which he should be given scanty food till he died. Another suggested that he should be banished. These proposals were rejected by others lest he should possibly find means of release and help to avenge. At length they decided to force into the Prophets dwelling the same night, and appointed one man from each of their separate families to join the murderous attack upon Muhammad in order to baffle the Hashimites to avenge themselves upon any particular member or family, as it would obviously be impossible for them to incur the risk of entering into feud with all the families.

This secret conspiracy was hardly at work, when the angel Gabriel appeared to the Prophet, informed him of the scheme against him, and communicated to him the permission of Allah to his hijrat or exile from Mecca to Yathrib that very night.

By the time the murderers began to assemble before the dwelling of the Prophet, he appraised his favourite cousin, Ali, of the impending danger, and of his intention to leave the house at once for good. He directed Ali to lie down on the bed in his place and cover himself with his (the Prophet's) well known green mantle. Unhesitatingly Ali carried out the instruction and Mohammed, repeating the first eight verses of Sura YaSeen of the Holy Quran, sallied forth unobserved by the assailants as if they were stricken with blindness.

When all the assassins had been assembled, "they (in the words of W. Irving) paused at the door and looking through a crevice, beheld, as they thought, Mohammed wrapped in his green mantle, and lying asleep on his couch. They waited for a while consulting whether to fall on him while sleeping or wait until he should go forth. At length they

burst open the door and rushed towards the coach. The sleeper started up but instead of Mohammed, Ali son of Abu Talib stood before them. Amazed and confounded they demanded "Where is Mohammed?" "I know not," replied Ali sternly, and walked forth, nor did any one venture to molest him"

John Davenport describes the incident in the following words:

"After surrounding the house, the assassins then forcibly entered it, but finding instead of their purposed victim, the youthful Ali, calmly and resignedly awaiting the death intended for his Chief, so much devotedness excited the pity even of those men of blood, and Ali was left unharmed".

Ali's devotion to the Prophet without fear to run therefrom the risk of his own life was much appreciated by the All-knowing Judge of man, the merciful God, who sent down the angels Gabriel and Michael to guard him from the murderous mob; and informed the Prophet on his way to Madina of his approval of Ali's resignation to His will, with the words contained in verse 203 Sura II of the Quran:

"And of men there is one who selleth his soul for the sake of seeking the pleasure of God; and God is gracious unto his servants."

THE CAVE ON
MOUNT THOWR

Leaving the house the Prophet met Abubekr, whom he required to accompany him, and both of them proceeded in the dead of night, as quickly as they could, towards the south, a direction opposite Medina towards which Mohammed thought the Meccans would naturally suppose him to have gone. Speeding about one an hour and a half, they approached a rocky summit of Mount Thowr, by a rugged and difficult path. There they found a low cavern with an opening hardly sufficient to admit them singly Abubekr crept into it first, cleansed it sweeping all round, then the Prophet entered and took shelter into it along with Abubekr. During the night, the spider worked a thick web over the opening of the cave, a bushy plant grew up near it and a pigeon laid eggs forming its nest thereat, so that the cave to all appearances looked deserted for long.

The Qoreish, exasperated at the sudden and successful escape of their intended victim, set a reward of hundred camels for Muhammed's capture, alive or dead. Scouts were set on to search out the fugitive in every direction, and they explored every haunt in the neighbourhood, some miles round the city. They arrived near the cave wherein the Prophet

was hidden. Abubekr ~~came~~ became uneasy and fearful of the imminent danger of being discovered. He began to whine and said trembling to the Prophet "What if our persuers should find us out" ? He are but two." "Don't be afraid " replied he, "Allah is with us". Approaching the cave, the Providential spider's web and the pigeon's nest with eggs convinced the Qoreish scouts that the place was solitary for a long time. They turned back without looking into it.

THE PROPHET'S

MIGRATION-622 A.D. Muhammad passed three days with his calm unwavering trust in God in this cave upon the barren rock of the wild track together with Abubekr naturally in suspense. At the close of the third day when the heat of the pursuit had subsided and the busy curiosity of the first agitation relaxed, Ali provided them with camels in charge of a guide to lead them to Medina by an unfrequented route. By the evening of Monday, the 5th of Rabi-ul-Awwal or 21st June 622 A.D. they were well started on their journey.

On the second day of their journey, when they were thinking themselves beyond the probability of being persued, they beheld in the distance behind them the fast approaching form of a man- Soraqa bin Malik- who, tempted by the reward set upon the head of the prophet, had not yet given up the search. At the sight, Abubekr again began to tremble for fear of being captured, and cried out, "We are lost". Mohammed comforted him again saying " Don't be afraid, Allah is with us". So saying, the Prophet prayed to God for protection; and lo i as the persuer advanced, his charger reared and sank motionless on the ground and the rider was hopeless. Bewildered and astounded, Soraqa was convinced of heavenly interference, and entreated the forgiveness of the Prophet, promising not to betray him. The Prophet prayed for him and his charger got up, and he rode back to Mecca. Mohammed was again free to persue his course along the sea coast.

A MIRACLE Before his encounter with his persuer, the Prophet had reposed for a while at Qadid in a tent belonging to a noble lady, Gnm Ma'bad, of that place. When he got up to resume his journey, he performed ablutions preparatory to his after-noon prayers, throwing water over a plant close by the tent. The plant was found the next day to have grown up to a tree laden with fruits and with leaves bigger than ever it had. The people who tasted its fruits, found them to be very delicious and having a pleasant flavour. The tree was henceforth considered as blessed, and the sick got cured with its fruits and leaves. It soon acquired a wide fame. People

from distant places thronged around it. Some ten years afterwards it shed its fruits all of a sudden. The incident coincided with the day of the Prophet's death. About thirty years later, on the day of Ali's assassination, fruits of the tree again fell down all at once, and it never produced any fruit again. The people, however, contented themselves with its leaves for getting cure of their diseases. At last, on the day of the murder of Husain, the grandson of the Prophet, at Karbala a red fluid was found flowing profusely from its trunk and the tree dried up.

(From Early History of Islam)

A PRIMARY FACTOR IN THE RISE OF CIVILIZATION

There are several important topics in the human sciences that I discovered with the aid of the Qura'n that have not yet been discussed by these sciences. One is the topic of migration. The topic is discussed only in its historical dimension i.e. the movement of peoples from one point to another. From the tone in which the Qura'n discussed emigration and migrants, from the life of the Prophet and in general, from the concept of migration held in early Islam, I came to realize that migration despite what Muslims imagine, is not merely a historical event.

The understanding that Muslims have of the hijra is that a number of the companions migrated from Mecca to Abyssinia and Madina on the orders of the Prophet. They imagine that migration has the general sense in the history of the movement of a primitive or semi-civilized people from one place to another, as a result of geographical or political factors, and that for Muslims, migration represents simply an event that took place in the life of the Muslims and the Prophet of Islam. But from the tone in which migration is discussed in the Qura'n, I came to perceive that migration is a profound philosophical and social principle. Then turning my attention to history, I realized that migration is an infinitely glorious principle, and that it constitutes a totally fresh topic, one by no means as simple as history and historians have made it out to be. Even the philosophers of history have not paid attention to the question of migration as it truly deserves, for migration has been the primary factor in the rise of civilization throughout history.

All the twentyseven civilizations that we know of in history have been born of a migration that preceded them; there is not a single exception to this rule. The converse is also true, that there is no case on record in which a primitive tribe has become civilized and created an advanced culture without first moving from its homeland and migrating.

I deduced this topic, which is of great relevance to both history and sociology, from Islam and the tone in which the Qura'n discussed migration and commands permanent and general migration.

All the civilizations in the world- from the most recent, the civilization of America, to the most ancient that we know of, the civilization of Sumer- came into being on the heels of a migration. In each case, a primitive people remained primitive as long as it stayed in its own land, and attained civilization after understanding a migration and establishing itself in a new land. All civilizations are, then, born of the migrations of primitive people.

A PRELUDE TO THE SUCCESSFUL MIGRATION
OF THE PROPHET TO MADINA

History records prolonged battles and enmity in Yathrab between the two prominent tribes of Banu Aws and Banu Khezraj. Asaad bin Zurara, a chief of Banu Khazraj, once travelled to Mecca to gain support for his tribe and collect some fighting equipment for his army in order to combat the Quraish, their arch-enemy. Having good old relationship with Ataba bin Rabia, he put up at his house in Mecca. He disclosed his intention for coming to Mecca and requested for his help.

In reply Ataba said that it was not possible to accede to his request ~~that~~ as they themselves were faced with rather unusual problems in those days. That someone had risen in Mecca who talked ill of their gods and was opposing their ways of life. And by his sweet tongue, he could attract the young ones towards his preaching and this was causing a rift among themselves. That he was staying in the cave of Abu Talib during the offseason and was coming out only during the Haj season and sitting at Hajare Ismail in the Kaaba, he was inviting people towards his newly proclaimed faith.

Asaad disappointed decided to return home without contacting any other leader of the clan. Before he returned, he was going to visit the Kaaba in accordance with their old custom. ~~xxxxxxx~~ Lest he came under the influence of the Prophet in the course of the Tawaf (circumambulation), Ataba suggested to him to put cotton in his ears so that he did not hear any of the preaching by the Prophet.

Asaad then entered the Kaaba and commenced with the Tawaf. In the course ~~with~~ of the first round, his eyes fell on the Prophet sitting at the Hajare Ismail surrounded by Banu Hashim who were protecting him. He was decided that he would not come into contact with the Prophet and hence kept aloof of him. However in the course of completing the Tawaf, he suddenly thought that how foolish it was of him to do so and what would be reply to questions about the Prophet and his preaching on his return to Madina.

Forward he went to the Prophet of Islam where he was sitting and in accordance with the custom of those days, he saluted thus ' ANA'IM SABAHAN' to which the Prophet replied ' MY LORD HAS PRESCRIBED A BETTER GREETING THAN THIS AND AT THE TIME OF VISITING EACH OTHER, ONE SHOULD UTTER " SALAMUN ALAIKUM".

Thereafter Asaad requested the Prophet to explain his aims and objects and shed some light on his teachings. The Prophet upon this request recited the following verses of the holy Qura'n:

" Say : Come I will recite what your Lord has forbidden to you - (remember) that you do not associate anything with Him and show kindness to your parents, and do not slay your children for (fear of) poverty- We provide for you and for them- and do not draw nigh to indecencies, those of them which are apparent and those which are concealed, and do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden except for the requirements of justice; this He has enjoined you with that you may understand.

And do not approach the property of the orphan except in the best manner until he attains his maturity; and give full measure and weight with justice- We do not impose on any soul a duty except to the extent of its ability; and when you speak, then be just though it be (against) a relative, and fulfil Allah's covenant; this He has enjoined you with that you may be mindful."

(Anam v.152 & 153)

These verses had provided guidance for the Arabs who were suffering from age-old scourge of inter-tribal wars for over 120 years and various forms of barbarism. Recitation of these verses by the Prophet had such a deep impact on the mind of Asaad that he instantly converted and accepted Islam. He pleaded to the Prophet to send a missionary to Madina so as to convey the message of Islam to the people there.

On his return to Madina, Asaad naturally must have described to the people of his impressions about the Prophet and his message. Besides the visits paid by other Muslim converts paid a way for a successful migration and settlement of the Prophet at Madina.