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Lesson 15: Migration



Migration For The Sake Of Religious Attainment

وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنفِرُوا كَافَّةً فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِن كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ

It is not for the believers to go forth totally; but why should not a party of every section of them go forth, to become learned in religion, and to warn their people when they return to them, that haply they may beware? (At-Tawba 9: 122).

To become learned in religion means to strive for the attainment of a deep and meaningful understanding of the religion, its fundamental beliefs and jurisprudence. Sometimes, this goal can be for worldly desires, social status, a desire to learn, to argue, debate and for amusement. And so as not to fall behind with regards to friends, and sometimes it is for the sake of religion itself, for Allahﷻ, paradise and for the sake of saving the Nation of Islam. The above Ayah recognizes the latter as the one of value, where they warn their people and invite them to the path of Allahﷻ “that haply they may beware”...

The Prince of the Believers Imam Aliؑ advises his child “Be Learned in religion for the learned are the inheritors of the Prophets”¹. Imam Husseinؑ, on the night of Ashura, Praised Allahﷻ in sentences such as Praise Allahﷻ that has made me learned in religion.²

Imam Sadiq (as) was asked what to do if something happens to the Imam, to which he replied with the above Ayah and the advice that from each city and each group of people some must act for the sake of knowing their Imam.³

Individuals from each location must go to religious center points for the sake of attaining religious knowledge and return to their own locations until such time that all locations have enough religious

scholars to satisfy that area's needs. Yes, migration is an inherent part of faith. Migration should be either for the defense of religion, or for acquiring religious knowledge.

Therefore, the acquisition of knowledge in religion and then passing on the knowledge and teaching the people of one's birthplace is an obligation that is lifted from the rest if fulfilled by others. So for the students of Islamic Seminaries, there are two obligatory migrations, one is from their hometown towards the Islamic Seminaries and learning centers, and the other from those centers back to their own homeland. So, remaining in Islamic Seminaries, with the exceptions of the teachers themselves, is not permitted.

Of course, acquiring this knowledge is not just about jurisprudence, but all of the sciences related to religion and able to be researched, in detail and in depth.... "to become learned in religion."

Religious knowledge is of value where the scholar is aware of the times and surroundings and of the devilish ways and tactical strategies of the enemy so that they can warn and make aware. In that way the speech of one Islamic scholar can be relied upon... to become learned... to warn their people (it is possible to have one scholar per area that would be enough as proof to act upon).

Scholars must go after people and not wait for their invitation "when they return to them" and not wait for everyone's unwavering support and following because a group of people from every area will never accept the path of religion and God – "that haply they may beware".

The Historic Migration of The Prophet (pbuh)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ آوَوْا وَنَصَرُوا أُولَئِكَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يُهَاجِرُوا مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ وَلَايَتِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ حَتَّى يُهَاجِرُوا

Those who believe, and have emigrated and struggled with their possessions and their selves in the way of God, and those who have given refuge and help -- those are friends one of another. And those who believe, but have not emigrated -- you have no duty of friendship towards them till they emigrate... (Anfal 8:72).

In the thirteenth year after the Revelation and after ten years of public invitation to Islam by the Prophet (pbuh) the disbelievers of Mecca have not yet stopped harming and persecuting the Prophet (pbuh) and Muslims, and day by day they increased the persecution against them until they conspired to kill the Prophet (pbuh) and destroy Islam from its roots.

With the Prophets (pbuh) knowledge and the self-sacrifice and devotion of Imam Ali (pbuh), a night was prepared for the migration of the Prophet (pbuh) and the Prophet (pbuh), on the first of the month of Rabi'Alawal, began his journey towards a cave called "Thawr"⁴ and by way of miracle, stayed hidden

there for three days. During that period only Imam Ali (pbuh) brought him food and news from outside.

In the end, the Prophet (pbuh) advised Imam Ali (pbuh), based on the announcement of the migration of Muslims to Yathrib and bringing his family along with him, continued his journey towards Yathrib and after travelling approximately 400 kilometers arrived in Qiba on the 12th day of Rabi'Alwal and the rest of the migrants also continued to arrive in Qiba.

The people of Yathrib prepared for the coming of the Prophet (pbuh) and migrants to their city and greeted them with open hearts. The name of the city was changed from Yathrib to Madinat Al Nabi and Madinat Al Rasool⁵. At the point, in order to prevent and distance the city from division, the Prophet paired up the approximately three hundred migrants and Ansar⁶ as brothers and poured brotherhood upon them, and the base for the first Masjid of Islam was founded and Masjid Qiba was built.

The migrants are those that believed in the Prophet in Mecca and because they were under considerable pressure there, they left their homes and belongings in Mecca to join the Prophet in the migration and the Ansar are the Muslims of Medina that gave the Prophet (pbuh) and the migrants a place amongst them and supported them.

Generally, nations mark the most important events faced in their social, scientific, and religious history and know it as a conjunctive to the narrative of their history, such as the birth of the Messiah (pbuh) for Christians, or the Year of the Elephant (the year in which the army of Abraha from Yemen attacked Mecca but were divinely annihilated) to the Arabs, both examples having set the beginning of the year.

From the point of view that the religion of Islam is the most complete and comprehensive heavenly religion and at the same time is independent of all other religions, and so Muslims did not mark the beginning of their calendar with the birth of the Messiah (pbuh), nor with the Year of the Elephant notwithstanding it was the same year in which the Prophet (pbuh) was born. Not even the year in which the Revelation came down upon the Prophet was marked as the start of the Islamic history. But the migration to Medina in which an independent Islamic government was formed and Muslims were able at that point to act freely, the Prophet (pbuh) personally declared the Hijri calendar. As such we can derive from “from the first day” in the Ayah

لَمَسْجِدٍ أُسِّسَ عَلَى التَّقْوَىٰ مِنْ أَوَّلِ يَوْمٍ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَقُومَ فِيهِ{

{فِيهِ رِجَالٌ يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَتَطَهَّرُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُطَهَّرِينَ

A mosque that was founded upon godfearing from the first day is worthier for thee to stand in; therein are men who love to cleanse themselves; and God loves those who cleanse themselves. (Al Tawba 9: 108).

As being the building of Masjid Qiba as well as being for the foundation for the Hijri year as the first action taken by the Prophet in the migration was the building of Masjid Qiba. Indeed, if it was not for the migration, most, if not all of Islam, would have been limited and destroyed.

Of course, in the dawn of Islam two migrations were faced: One in the fifth year after the Revelation in which a group of Muslims migrated to Ethiopia, and the other in the 13th Year after Revelation, the migration from Mecca to Medina.

The Effects And Blessings Of Migration

Most of the disasters that befall us are a result of drowning ourselves in creature comforts and leaving migration that is the source of building foundations. If all the great Muslim minds, experts and professionals that are in the west migrate to back to their own countries, not only is it a blow to the enemy but also a cause of strength for Islam and Islamic nations.

Migration is not limited to the Prophet (pbuh), but rather migration from an environment of disbelief, idol worship, and sin, for the salvation of religion, faith and for leaving the environment of disobedience to Allahﷻ, is obligatory. So in answer for those who give the excuse of unhealthy environment for their polluted self and perpetration of sin, the reply will be that *Was not Gods Earth large enough for you to migrate elsewhere... ?*:

{كُنَّا مُسْتَظْعِفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَسِعَةً}

'We were abased in the earth.' The angels will say, 'But was not God's earth wide...'(An Nissa 4:97).

Of course, with attention to the term “abased”, it becomes apparent that if one is able to uphold the good and forbid the evil, that one must carry that obligation out and not leave that society in order to repair it.

Imam Sadiq (pbuh) states that if you live on a land in which there is disobedience of Allahﷻ, migrate from there to another land.

إذا عصي الله في أرض أنت فيها فاخرج منها إلى غيرها70

So migration for the purpose of obtaining knowledge and migration for the sake of distributing ones knowledge to others are both obligatory.

1. (Bihar Al Anwar (بحار الأنوار) V1 P216

2. (موسوعة كلمات الامام)

3. (تفسير نور الثقلين – Tafseer Nūr al-Thaqalayn)

4. Literally means “Bull”

5. Meaning the City of the Prophet and the City of the Messenger.

6. Ansar are what the people of Yathrib are referred to upon accepting the migrants.

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